



## ESF project “Methods and tools to support the public administration reform” (RiformAttiva)

Italy

### Key facts

#### SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE OF THE OPERATIONAL PROGRAMME

‘Improvement of the performance of public administration’

#### TARGET GROUPS



Regions and local governments

#### BENEFICIARY ORGANISATION

Department of Public Administration

#### PROJECT DURATION

July 2017- July 2020

#### COORDINATOR

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#### PARTNERS

Italian national association of local governments (ANCI)

#### BUDGET

**EUR 5,837,999.97**

ESF contribution

**EUR 1,969,553.25**

National contribution



#### PROJECT/ORGANISATION WEBSITE



<http://bit.ly/2007nal>

[www.funzionepubblica.it](http://www.funzionepubblica.it)



@FormezPA @pongovernance

### Activities implemented

#### PROJECT IN NUMBERS



Administrations involved in experimentation and diffusion



Events



Civil servants involved in the project activities



Operational plans approved

#### MAIN PROJECT TASKS



Development of an implementation method for each of the four public sector reform areas (Administrative simplification; General civic access; Performance assessment; and Human resources planning) in collaboration with 17 pilot administrations



Extension and generalization of the implementation method to 108 public administrations



Diffusion of the implementation method to additional 100 public administrations.

## Project journey: from conception to delivery

### INITIAL STAGE

#### CONTEXT OF THE PROJECT

The project's rationale and its dynamics can be brought back to two interrelated and key features of the political and administrative context in Italy: **political instability** and the **'implementation gap'** in public sector reform. Moreover, reforms designed by the central level of government are put into effect by other levels of government in a **heterogeneous** way, based on the different institutional and managerial capacities. Regional and local governments, in particular, are often required to implement new reforms without additional resources and in conditions of austerity.

#### PURPOSE OF THE PROJECT

The RiformAttiva project was conceived to **enhance the effectiveness of the public sector reforms** approved by the Minister of Public Administration in 2016-2017, by accompanying local and regional public administrations in developing **specific implementation methods and tools**. Its focus was on **four areas** of reform: Administrative simplification; General civic access; Performance assessment; and Human resources planning based on competencies. Public administrations were to become protagonists of change, rather than subjects, and had to develop the necessary know-how to sustain change over time.

### PROJECT PHASE

#### MAIN CHALLENGES FACED, AND DIFFICULTIES ENCOUNTERED

Among the main problems encountered, the **change of government** that slowed down the project and changed its contents. Another issue has been the **varied commitment** of the administrations involved in the project and the heterogeneous competencies of the local working groups. Another relevant obstacle during the project implementation has been carrying out the **procurement procedures** to consultancy organizations to be involved in the subsequent stages of RiformAttiva.

#### KEY DEVELOPMENTS AND EVENTS DURING THE IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS

The first stage of the project started with a call to which **17 pilot public administrations** adhered, signing the two-year **collaboration agreements** with the Department of Public Administration. The Department's technical agency, Formez, coordinated the project activities. The first step was the preparation and the implementation of working plans, through training and local meetings. Each of the pilot administrations could put forward its candidature for two project themes. A total of **25 plans** were approved and 22 implemented. Of these, 17 plans of 13 administrations have been formally approved by the Department. Plans included objectives, activities and resources.

### RESULTS, IMPACTS

#### KEY RESULTS AND SUCCESS FACTORS

Results have been achieved at both the **national and local levels**. The project activities have had a bottom-up impact on the secondary regulation issued by the Department of Public Administration in each area of reform. Results for the pilot administrations are highly diversified. Each of the 13 administrations has developed **tailored tools** that have been presented and diffused to others and all pilot administrations have benefited in terms of strengthened competencies. In some administrations, organizational structures and processes have been remodeled.

#### (EXPECTED) IMPACT ON BUSINESS, AS WELL AS ON THE ADMINISTRATIVE SYSTEM IN GENERAL

On the longer term, the project is expected to **improve the effectiveness** of public administration reforms and thus lessen the **administrative burden** on citizens and businesses. Two areas of RiformAttiva (administrative simplification and FOIA) have a great and direct impact on the society. On the former, the project has developed a standard set of forms, guidelines for one-stop shops and for interoperability. The other two areas concern internal management systems and, as such, have an indirect effect on the society by enhancing the efficiency and effectiveness of the public sector.

### REFLECTIONS

#### LESSONS LEARNT: THE ROLE OF ESF FINANCIAL SUPPORT

The usefulness of pilot experimentations before scaling up reforms has been demonstrated. Lessons learned at the local level include the **imperative of project management skills** and the need to have working groups that are not only highly competent on the issue addressed but also authoritative and able to ensure **organizational commitment** throughout the project implementation.

Without the ESF support there would not have been any funding specifically addressing the implementation of reforms.

## Personal experiences



'The RiformAttiva project was conceived as a project dedicated to accompanying the implementation of public sector reforms approved by one government. When the government changed, public sector reform themes and priorities changed. Therefore, the project had to adjust its contents to remain relevant for the government in charge.'

Project coordinator

'We developed an innovative online platform where all institutions involved in authorizing an entrepreneurial or building activity would convene. It is months we are waiting national level institutions to sign the formal agreement to adhere to it, although all other administrations have signed it and the tool is operational. This is very frustrating.'

Beneficiary local administration

The study "Progress Assessment of the ESF Support to Public Administration" (PAPA) aims to present specific cases of ESF-funded public administration reform and capacity building initiatives. The contractor prepared 30 case studies and factsheets on ESF supported projects funded in 17 beneficiary countries of Thematic Objective 11 during the programming period 2014-2020.

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PPMI

Find out more about the project by following the link <http://bit.ly/2Gfn35A> or scan the QR code using your smartphone camera.

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