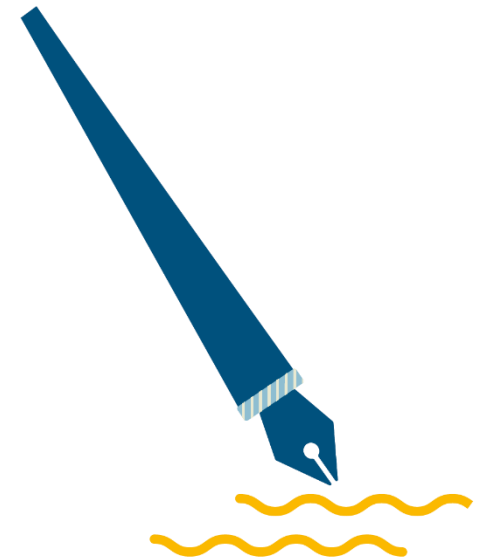


Annual Implementation Report

Interreg Programme Management for
Beginners

17-18 October 2017 | Madrid, Spain

Ivana Lazic, Interact Programme



Legal background

Article 14 of Regulation (EU) 1299/2013 (ETC)

“By 31 May 2016 and by the same date of each subsequent year until and including 2023, the managing authority shall submit to the Commission an annual implementation report”.*

(*) For the reports submitted in 2017 and 2019, the deadline referred to in paragraph 1 shall be 30 June.

The main purpose:

To assess the overall implementation progress of the Programme

The procedure

The AIR to be submitted to the EC by the MA of the Programme through SFC2014:

- by 31 May
- by 30 June (2017, 2019, Final);

Within 15 working days the EC informs the MA if the report is **admissible**

The EC examines the annual and final implementation report and informs the MA of its observations within two months (five months in case of the final report).

The EC may make observations concerning issues which significantly affect the implementation of the programme.

... MA provides all necessary information with regard to such observations and, where appropriate, inform the EC, within 3 months, of measures taken

Scope of the AIR

Annual implementation reports contains key information on:

- implementation of the programme and its priorities;
- reference to its financial data;
- reference to common and programme-specific indicators and quantified target values (including changes in the value of result indicators where appropriate);
- findings of all evaluations of the programme that have become available during the previous financial year;
- any issues which affect the performance of the programme, and the measures taken
- the milestones defined in the performance framework (**only in 2017, 2019 and the final report**).

Light reports vs. regular reports

Annex X of the Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2015/207 of 20 January 2015

| PART A (every year) | PART B (2017) | PART C (2019, Final) |
|---|--|--|
| Identification of the Programme | Assessment of the implementation of the CP | Assessment of the programme contribution to achieving the Union strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth |
| Overview of the implementation of the Programme | Progress in implementation of the evaluation plan | |
| Overview of the implementation of the Priority Axis | Results of the information and publicity measures (communication strategy) | Issues affecting the performance of the programme and measures taken – performance framework |
| Synthesis of evaluation | Financial info at the priority and the programme level | |
| Issues affecting the performance of the CP | | |
| Citizens summary | | |

Overview of implementation (AIR Ch. 2)



- Information of late start in 2016 / Finalisation of programme documents/ Designation / Closure of 2007-2013 programme
- Setting up of programme bodies / Staffing / Human resources / JS selection and contracting / eMS
- MC setting up and meetings (numbers and content, e.g. 1st call material and projects; received complaints; revision of CP)
- Programme launch event / Information and publicity activities / Communication strategy and plan for 2017
- Programme finances / Indicators and performance framework

Challenges during 2016 (AIR Ch. 5)

Delays in programme set-up and implementation

- ...compensated by quality programme and programme documents
- Esp. regarding setting up the management structures and development of management and monitoring system
- Setting up of programme bodies / Late start of one office
- Description of establishing programme bodies and shifts of workloads
- Process of approving DMCS and updating it, incl. how to approach AA recommendations
- Integrating Performance Framework into IPA CBC



Challenges during 2016 (AIR Ch. 5)

First call(s) for proposal and applications

- Low quality of applications in one priority leading to risk of not fulfilling 2018 targets (Performance Framework)
- 39% of 1st call applications did not pass administrative and eligibility assessment (mainly due to ineligible partners) leading to danger of decommitment in 2018
- Too much workload for JS during project assessment (tackled)



Further information sources

Questions and answers regarding model for the implementation reports for Increased Growth and Jobs (Goal I) and ETC (Goal II):

http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/en/information/legislation/guidance/

Stage of Interreg implementation

Source of data – DG Regio website

<https://cohesiondata.ec.europa.eu/funds/erdf#>

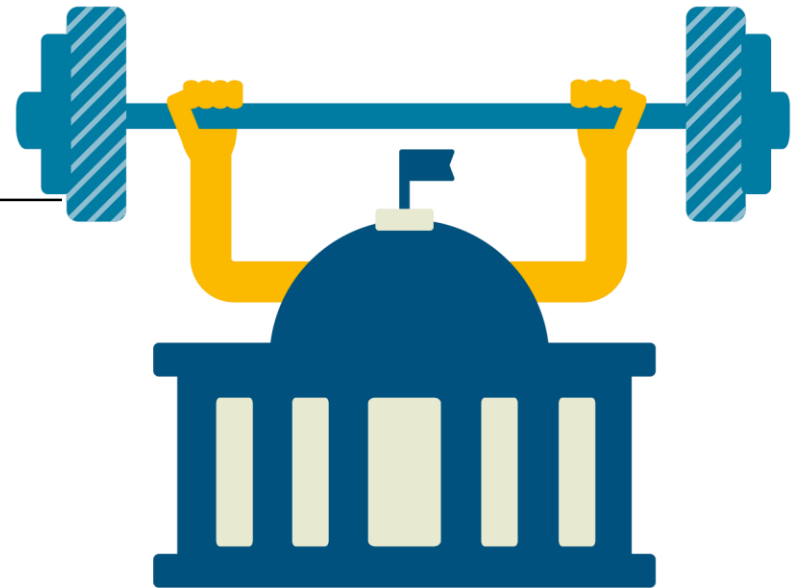


Performance framework Evaluation

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Results Orientation VS Performance Framework

Interlinked but distinct:

- Results orientation is wider and locates the programme in its context
- Performance Framework is about efficient implementation of the programme and it will not answer the impact question

No performance framework or no reserve?

| Category of resources | Performance framework | Performance reserve |
|--|-----------------------|---------------------|
| European Territorial Cooperation goal | Yes | No |
| Youth Employment Initiative and matching ESF funding | Yes | No |
| Technical assistance | No | No* |
| SMEs initiative | No | No* |

Performance framework – Why?



- Monitor that implementation is as planned
- Financial & Output indicators & Key Implementation Steps
- Keeping it as simple as possible (minimise number of indicators)
- Cover the priority axis
- Setting realistic milestones and targets

Financial indicators

- ✓ Must be included
- ✓ *Total amount of eligible expenditure entered into the accounting system of the certifying authority and certified*



Output indicators

- ✓ Must be included
- ✓ *Not additional – chosen from among indicators already selected for the programme*
- ✓ Limited number (majority of resources allocated)

Key implementation steps

- ✓ To be used when necessary (i.e. when there are no or only insignificant outputs). ***When no measurable output is expected by the end of 2018***

Output indicators and key implementation steps correspond to more than 50% of the financial allocation to the priority



What does it all mean?

- Targets and milestones for output indicators representing majority of expenditure
- Mid-term and end of programme formal review
- Possible financial consequences

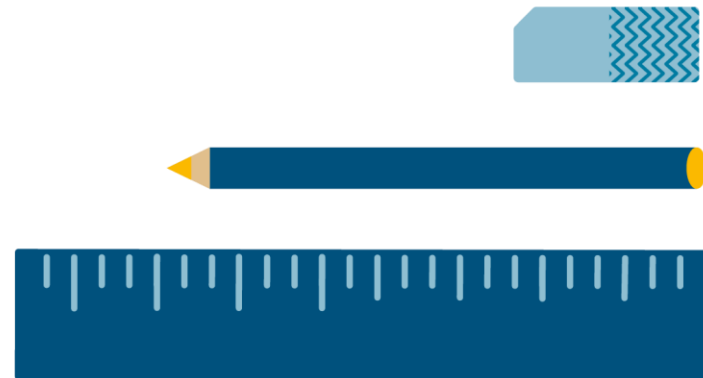
European Commission and performance framework

- Examines based on the content of the OP and information on setting of milestones and targets
- It is carried out by the programme desk officers taking into account the guidance provided
- EC verifies if appropriate indicators have been selected
- Checks if both the milestones and targets meet their criteria

The Commission may ask for additional explanations and milestones and targets to be adjusted.

Revision of milestones and targets may be possible in duly justified cases and in addition to amendments resulting from changes in allocations for a given priority (Annex II of the CPR indicates what may constitute a "duly justified case")

And what about evaluation?

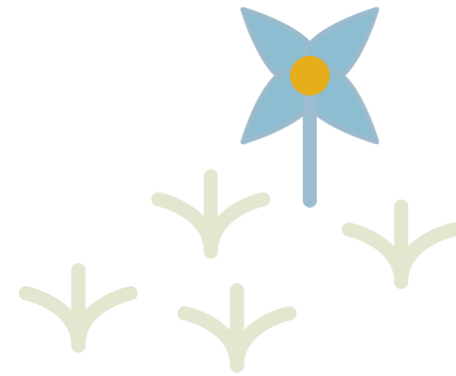


What does the Regulation say?

Article 54 CPR

(Evaluation should)

- Ensure that resources for funding and managing the evaluations are appropriate.
- Improve the quality of programmes through proper planning, including through identification and collection of necessary data.
- Evaluate impact in relation to EU2020 targets



Article 56(3) of CPR

- During the programming period, the managing authority shall ensure that evaluations, including evaluations to assess **effectiveness, efficiency and impact**, are carried out for each programme on the basis of the evaluation plan and that each evaluation is subject to appropriate follow-up in accordance with the Fund-specific rules.
- At least once during the programming period, an evaluation shall assess how support from the ESI funds has contributed to the objectives for each priority.
- All evaluations shall be examined by the monitoring committee and sent to the Commission.

This means:

- Each specific objective (and expected results) should be covered to allow conclusions for each priority axis
- The extent will differ according to nature of result, available evidence...
- The evaluation plan should provide a framework to plan impact evaluations

Evaluation plan

Article 114(1) of CPR

”an evaluation plan shall be drawn up by the managing authority or Member State for one or more operational programmes. The evaluation plan shall be submitted to the monitoring committee no later than one year after the adoption of the programme”

Role of the Evaluation plan

- Adequate time allocated
- Proper methods applied
- Data available

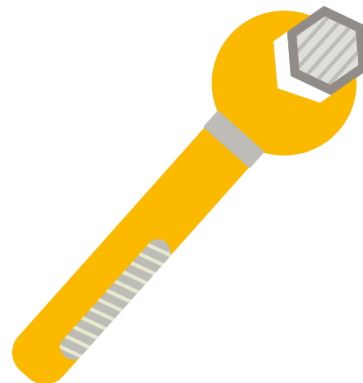
Elements of Evaluation plan

- Objectives, coverage, coordination
- Evaluation framework
- Planned evaluations

Commission recommends that the plan is made publicly available the same way as the OP

Evaluation Type – Operational (Process & Procedures)

- How can effectiveness & efficiency be measured?
- Output indicators are quantitative, what about the qualitative aspects & how to ensure it?
- Are monitoring/financial data & programme implementation documents enough for operational evaluation?





Effectiveness & efficiency of programme management system & structures

- How are the interactions between the programme bodies ? Are their functions and responsibilities clearly established?

Effectiveness & efficiency of application and selection process

- How well is the programme reaching out to applicants?
- How effective is the application process in terms of call procedures, support to applicants and tools provided?
- Is the project assessment and selection process sound, transparent and fair, aiming at high quality projects to be funded?

Effectiveness & efficiency of programme communication

- Is the strategy for programme communication sound? Does communication contribute to reaching the specific programme management objectives?
- How effective are the approaches for reaching the communication objectives (e.g. for involving competent partners)?



Evaluation Type – Impact Evaluations

- What kind of data do we need for impact evaluation (theory-based), additional to the ones needed for Operational Evaluation?
- How to collect data for the impact evaluations? What should be taken into consideration in the first place?
- Many InterReg programmes doubt that Result Indicators can really tell them about the impact of their programme.
- Can result indicators really tell us something about the impact of our programme? How to choose the right ones? Examples/best practice?

Example: Interreg V-A Czech Republic – Poland

Evaluation questions

Impact evaluation:

Questions on program's impact...

- Has the cross-border capacity to deal with emergencies and crisis situations increased due to Interreg V-A Czech Republic – Poland program?*
- Has the regional tourist turnout increased due to Interreg V-A Czech Republic – Poland program?*
- Has the level of employment of graduates improved due to Interreg V-A Czech Republic – Poland program?*
- Has the intensity of cooperation between institutions and communities in the border region increased due to Interreg V-A Czech Republic – Poland program?*
 - *If so, how much?*
 - *If so, how?*
 - *If so, why?*
 - *If so, is the benefit sustainable in the long term?*
 - *If so, is the benefit adequate to the finances expended?*
 - *If not, why?*
 - *If not, how to adjust the intervention logic and / or the functioning of the investment priority of the program?*
- Which impacts of interventions implemented can be expected in the program area with a longer time span?*
- Are there any unintended (positive and negative) effects of interventions?*
- Has program's complementary links contribute to more effective achievement of its objectives?*
 - *If so, which links do contribute, with which program or funding instrument and within which of the thematic objectives?*
- What is the most common (typical) intervention in each of the investment priority? (In terms of frequency of occurrence)*
- Do these typical interventions contribute to meeting the goal of the investment priority?*
 - *If so, under what circumstances?*

Cooperation works

All materials will be available on:

www.interact-eu.net