



**INTERact**

*Sharing Expertise*

# Evaluation of European Territorial Cooperation Programmes

## Strategic and Regulatory Framework

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1. Strategic framework and importance of Lisbon and Gothenburg objectives.
2. Legal requirements: EU and other.
3. Experience of previous SF period and why have changes been introduced?





# 1. Strategic framework and importance of Lisbon and Gothenburg objectives

Many good programmes do not always add up to good policy, good programme documents do not necessarily translate into good projects and good projects do not always ensure the success of a programme (EVALSED).



## Evolution of the strategic context:

- Lisbon Agenda and European Sustainable Development Strategy.
- Wider EU.
- Policy level of evaluation.
- Management concepts in the MS administrations and in the EC.



## Policies:

- Community cohesion policy.
- Lisbon Agenda.
- European Sustainable Development Strategy.
- European employment strategy.
- Horizontal policies.
- Territorial dimension.
- Greater European integration.



## Challenges:

- Globalisation.
- Climate change.
- Energy.
- Demographic change.
  
- Economic crisis.



Policies - Your programme:

How does your programme objective and scope fit into the general policy framework on the EU level?

Are the projects so far selected contributing to the achievement of wider objectives?



## European Territorial Cooperation Objective

Inter-regional cooperation activities financed by the EU since 1990; INTERREG I, II and III (IV is used as well).

### Current challenges:

- Limited funds.
- Learning from past!
- More complex administration.
- Somewhat limited recognition and support on EU level.



## Intensity of cooperation:

Degrees of cooperation (1 = least developed cooperation)

6. Implementation.
5. Decision.
4. Strategy / Planning.
3. Coordination / Representation.
2. Information.
1. Meeting.



## Tools to keep the programme targeted:

- Programming.
- Project selection.
- Monitoring.
- Evaluation.



## New context: on-going evaluation:

- Greater flexibility.
  - Strategic approach.
  - Evaluation plan.
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- Looking at a priority level.
  - Rather strategic than operational focus.

*Evolution, not complete revision, is the aim.*



## 2. Legal requirements for evaluation of European Territorial Cooperation Programmes

- EC legal provisions: 1083/2006
- EC guidance and methodological papers:
  - Working Document No 1: Ex Ante Evaluation.
  - Working Document No 2: Monitoring and Evaluation Indicators.
  - Working Document No 5: Indicative Guidelines on Evaluation Methods: Evaluation During the Programming Period.
  - Draft Working Paper No 7: Reporting on core indicators for the ERDF and the Cohesion Fund (being discussed by COCOF).
  - EVALSED.
- Programme and national context.



## Ex ante evaluation - scope:

- Relevance.
- Internal coherence.
- External coherence.
- Impact.
- Risk.



## Evaluation during the programming period:

- Mid-term evaluation approach still possible but not encouraged.
- Plan early and start early, seek collaboration.
- Monitoring important as well.

Evaluation must be performed  
(1083/2006)!



## General challenges of territorial cooperation programmes:

- Quality of monitoring systems.
- Quality of data available.
- Better linking of macro and micro data.
- Capacity of evaluators.
- Capacity of staff responsible for evaluation.
- Language issue in evaluation.



According to EVALSED, evaluation is:

- Judgement
- Based on information.
  
- An exercise that assesses the relevance, performance and success of on-going and completed programmes.



## What does evaluation do?

- Provides answers to worthwhile questions.
- Can reduce uncertainty and improve planning and implementation.

*Evaluation is a continuous learning tool for how to better design, implement and deliver public policies and programmes.*



## What improvements can evaluation make?

- Ensure or assess relevance of programme.
- Assess intensity and eligibility of interventions.
- Analyse early results and processes.
- Assess actual results and outcomes.
- Capture unintended consequences.



## Functions of evaluation:

- Strategic function - should assess the contribution of the OP to domestic and European strategies.
- Operational function - how to improve programme implementation. How is the programme delivered?



## **Purpose of evaluation:**

- Planning/efficiency.
- Accountability.
- Implementation.
- Knowledge production.
- Institutional strengthening.



### 3. Experience of previous SF period and why have changes been introduced?

#### 2000-2006 mid-term evaluation experience

- Broad requirements.
- Rigid deadline.
- ToR not adapted to specific needs.
- Done at the same time for many programmes.
- Difficulties in accessing main stakeholders.
- Low survey response rates.
- Difficulties to obtain updated contextual statistics.



## Ex post evaluation of INTERREG II

- Was completed in 2003.
- Many of recommendations implemented, including in 2007-2013.
- The most notable one - cooperation as an Objective of the regional policy.

*Did your Programme use it?*



## Evaluation: mid-term evaluation experience

- Collaborative evaluations.
- One evaluation exercise for several programmes.
- Consultations between evaluation teams.
- Single country studies contributing to the evaluation exercise.
- CADSES and North-West Europe attempted comparison of their programmes with other transnational programmes.
- Good examples: France-Spain IIIA, France-Switzerland IIIA, PAMINA IIIA, North West Europe IIIB, Peace & Ireland-Noerthern Ireland.

*Benchmarking proved to be useful tool in evaluating cooperation programmes*