

**IN ITINERE EVALUATION
EVALUTAION 2010-2011-2012**

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In itinere evaluation 2010-2012

Abstract

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Med Programme 2007-2013 ¹	The on-going evaluation 2010-2012 ²
<p style="text-align: center;">Eligible Regions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cyprus: the entire country • France: 4 regions - Corse, Languedoc-Roussillon, Provence Alpes Côte d'Azur, Rhône-Alpes. • Greece: the entire country • Italy: 18 regions : Abruzzo, Apulia, Basilicata, Calabria, Campania, Emilia-Romagna, Friuli-Venezia Giulia, Lazio, Liguria, Lombardy, Marche, Molise, Umbria, Piemonte, Sardinia, Sicily, Tuscany, Veneto. • Malta : the entire country • Portugal : 2 regions - Algarve, Alentejo • Slovenia: the entire country • Spain: 6 autonomous regions - Andalusia, Aragon, Catalonia, Balearic islands, Murcia, Valencia - and the two autonomous cities - Ceuta and Melilla. • United-Kingdom: 1 region of economic programming - Gibraltar <p style="text-align: center;">Managing structures</p> <p>Managing Authority (MA): Provence Alpes Côte d'Azur (PACA) Region</p> <p>Joint technical secretariat (JTS): PACA Region, including :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Liaison office of Valencia: coordination between Med et ENPI CBC Mediterranean programmes (neighbourhood) - Liaison office of Thessaloniki: coordination and capitalisation work with partnerships and programmes of IPA (pre-accession) countries <p>Certifying Authority (CA): Caisse des Dépôts et Consignations (CDC)</p> <p>Audit Authority (AA): Commission Interministérielle de coordination des contrôles (CICC)</p> <p>Monitoring Committee (MC): representatives of each Member State, MA, AA, CA, representatives from liaison offices, and economic and social partners.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Priority axes and financial allocation</p> <p>At the programme level: 256 million €, of which 193 million are ERDF (European Fund of Regional Development)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Axe 1: Strengthening innovation capacities : 77 million €, of which 58 million are ERDF • Axe 2: Protection of the environment and promotion of a sustainable territorial development: 87 million €, of which 66 million are ERDF. • Axe 3: Improvement of mobility and territorial accessibility : 51 million €, of which 38 million are ERDF • Axe 4: Promotion of a polycentric and integrated development of the Med space: 26 million €, of which 19 million are ERDF • Axe 5: Technical assistance: 15 million €, of which 12 million are ERDF. <p style="text-align: center;">www.programmemed.eu</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">GOALS OF THE EVALUATION: IN ITINERE STRATEGIC EVALUATION (EC WORKING DOC n°5)</p> <p>The terms of reference, as well as our proposal, refer to the EC recommendations concerning strategic on-going evaluation and, in particular, to the following points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Macroeconomic impact of Structural Funds • Relevance and consistency of strategies at national/regional level • Proposals for adjustment to the context • Thematic and strategic concentration principle • Inventory of good practices • Impact indicators • Other means of achieving the impact sought (benchmarking) <p>As the evaluation process is anticipated to take 36 months, we have methodologically and chronologically set specific goals for our initiative:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2010: overview • 2011: strategic adjustments • 2012: monitoring and conclusions <p style="text-align: center;">OUTPUTS</p> <p>The deliverables of the on-going evaluation were:</p> <p>A methodological paper</p> <p>3 annual reports 2010+2011+2012</p> <p>A set of recommendations (2011)</p> <p>A « benchmarking » working document</p> <p>16 working notes were produced, either:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At the request of the Monitoring Committee: for example to focus on 'transport' projects in order to provide information for a possible change in the original financing plan. • To anticipate the analysis, conclusions or recommendations of the annual reports 2010, 2011 and 2012. • To share the evaluators' point of view on new programme issues and stakes. <p>Participation in 45 meetings :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The annual events of the programme in this period: Thessaloniki, Barcelona, Nicosia. - Selection Committees and preparatory meetings with applicants - Programme Monitoring Committees (Greece, Spain, Cyprus, Portugal) - Task Force and Preparatory Working Group meetings - Technical meetings with the MA and JTS - Meetings with Member States representatives <p>38 projects were thoroughly evaluated over the 3 years of the evaluation process.</p>

¹ Programme agreed on 20 December 2007 by the European Commission.

² Contract signed on 7 January 2010 with the PACA Region.

PERSPECTIVE, ISSUES AND COOPERATION AREA

During 2000-2006 programming period, two distinct programmes, MEDOCC and ARCHIMEDES, shared the same cooperation area, with a focus on association with adjacent non-Member States or adjacent Candidate Countries, essentially in the east and south.

Since 2007 (current programming period), the two areas have been brought together in one and the same programme, with a dual emphasis on association with pre-accession countries (IPA - Balkans) and coordination with ENPI MED (southern Mediterranean shore).

The first difficulty is that the cooperation area is located in a zone of major geopolitical and economic issues exceeding the scope of the objectives of an INTERREG programme, unlike in certain other contact areas with non-Member States such as the Baltic Sea Area, for example.

The second difficulty which is specific to the MED programme lies in the geographical extent of the cooperation area. The diversity of territories and socio-economic situations between Member States emerges as soon as we go beyond the phase of analysing major indicators. The analysis instruments available in the Operational Programmes (OPs) are either too simplistic (such as the SWOT analysis) or out of date.

The third difficulty is related to foresight. What types of work can support the OP in building realistic operational objectives? Work is currently in hand (e.g. ESPON³) or is continually in operation, such as EUROSTAT⁴ statistics. These types of work have been little used so far. For its part, the INTERACT⁵ programme addresses the need to analyse good practices and to establish links between programmes and between projects. Conversely, it makes little contribution to the issue of the programme's territorial impact.

The 2007-2013 MED OP reflected all these complex factors, but without targeting significantly its choices. The consequences of this are as follows:

- (1) Local partners who are "accustomed" to the programme tend to be favoured and this has led to a large number of applications in the 2008 and 2009 first calls for projects.
- (2) A high level of expectations has been generated with regard to strategic projects, which are expected to effectively take this complexity into account, and consequently to yield more effective results.

3 main challenges for the programme's governance:

- The first challenge was to **make the programme more consistent with regional issues**, improving the way in which these orientations are transposed into implementation documents, from OP to calls for projects.
- The second challenge was to design **a new type of governance architecture**, since the programme faced **geographical "enlargement"** from MEDOCC to MED, **the arrival of new Member States** and the **establishment "ex-nihilo"** of a Management Authority and a Joint Technical Secretariat by the PACA region in Marseilles.
- The third challenge was to succeed **in the everyday management** of a major €256 million programme and of over 100 projects programmed since June 2010.

MAJOR CHANGES SINCE 2010

The programme changed significantly over these three years (see diagram below). On the project side, calls for strategic projects were designed and implemented, as well as 'targeted' projects and a final call for (capitalisation) projects. On the programme side, a capitalisation process was launched. It should be noted that only some of these changes were part of the programme's initial agenda.

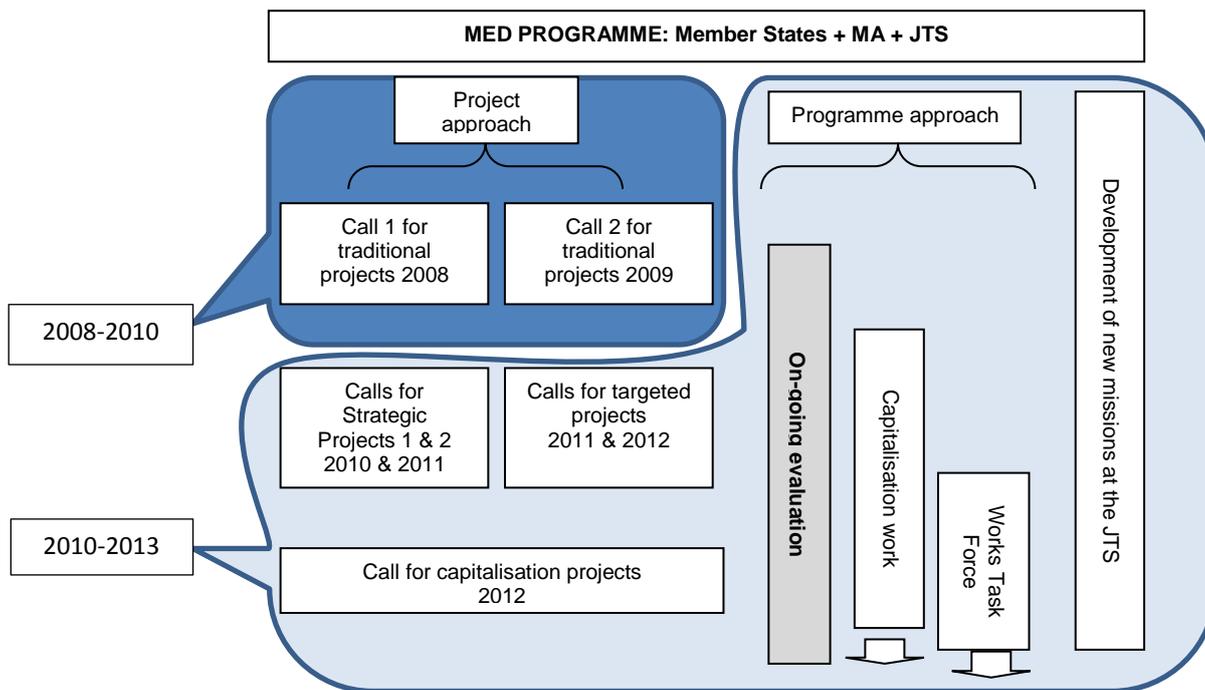
³ European Spatial Planning Observation Network

⁴ Statistical Office Of The European Union

⁵ European programme created especially for assisting territorial cooperation programmes (practical support, training and advice to European Territorial cooperation programmes on management techniques, financial issues, European regulations, communication, strategic orientation and policy development). – Source: http://www.interact-eu.net/about_us/about_interact/22/2911

On the programme's partnership side, each meeting's objective has been clarified. A 'working group format' has been selected and began to operate for meetings on strategic projects. The participants were involved collectively in the project selection process. Within the JTS, the appointment of persons with more transversal missions facilitates exchanges in regular meetings and functions (contact points, project selection, capitalisation, etc.).

The working process initiated by the MA/JTS with regard to the capitalisation, evaluation as well as the use of experience feedback in the new programme development **is exemplary**. At this stage it represents the first break from previous programming generations, where the results of projects and programme were only taken into account and analysed at the end of the programming period, and hence often too late to exert any impact.



RESULTS AT THE PROJECT LEVEL

From 2008 to 2013, the programme selected 102 traditional projects, 7 strategic projects, 19 targeted projects and 13 capitalisation projects. The on-going evaluation conducted from 2010 to early 2013 could thoroughly measure the whole implementation cycle of traditional projects (partly including result analysis), but was only able to assess the selection process and the beginning of strategic and targeted projects.

All 'traditional' projects have been selected using the same **application form, which doesn't leave much room to insert the information** relevant for selection, e.g. in terms of results and deliverables. It is therefore difficult to expect that projects give today information that wasn't initially required.

At the end of this evaluation, at the beginning of 2013, important changes in programme administration and project monitoring allowed very significant progress to be made. Today, the gap between the actual content of projects and the available information has been drastically reduced.

The application form: the application format was unsatisfactory. In particular, it didn't allow the practical nature of the project to be reflected and did not give project partners the opportunity to develop a logical framework for their activities.

Implementation: the certification system that differs from one Member State to another, in addition to the length of time taken to repay expenses was a particular handicap when confronted with the severe economic crisis in Southern Europe. After quite a long period of adaptation, Presage management tool was judged positively by a majority of Med beneficiaries.

Results: In addition to the deliverables, evaluation analysed the form of results as follows:

Main types of outputs	Form of results
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Methodological or technical guide - Benchmarking or diagnosis studies - Strategic document setting out the components of a Mediterranean strategy - Method document (European charter) - Road map (Methodological tools) - Tool box - Database - On-line platform 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Creation of a territorial cluster of public/private companies and public bodies connected with the theme - Obtaining a legal framework for an association between organisations - Implementation of a shared database of tools and knowledge - Building and coordinating a network to implement common policies on key themes (transport, culture, environment, and agriculture) related to the development and cohesion of a Mediterranean Euroregion - Introduction of local pilot schemes which are all related to innovation, whether of a technical, organisational or even territorial kind, through transfer of know-how from one region to another - Increased stimulus for territories through public-private partnerships - Public policy governance tools (action plans, strategic plans and implementation plans) - Transferable governance models

The complexity of situations/projects:

The in-depth interviews and analysis of projects results (particularly deliverables) reveal that situations are complex. The types of situations/projects are very diverse.

- At the conclusion of their work, some 'traditional' projects appear to be projects that could be categorised as 'strategic'.
- Others appear to be a combination of local projects, where the transnational element has generally been achieved but with very limited ambition.
- High quality projects and results which have not benefited from the right partnership to produce results and which are very unlikely to result in any sustainability.

Strategic, targeted and capitalisation projects

The strategic projects follow their work plan. At the local level, partnerships foster the implementation of planned pilots. These local partnerships enhance the project's added value at a local level, more than in traditional projects. **Considering financial management**, consumption of strategic projects is delayed. This is partially explained by the fact that these projects have wider partnerships which are more difficult to manage for the lead partner of the work package 1 "management". **Capitalisation**: since the launch of projects, it appears that significant effort has been made to implement joint activities between strategic projects or between a strategic project and other projects.

Targeted projects: at first sight, the rallying of new partners would appear to be a success for the programme but, on the other side of the coin, we are talking about 24 months projects, that are 2 years from the end of the programme, and whose financial and technical implementation must be efficient.

Capitalisation projects: despite greater 'constraints' as for traditional projects' application forms, many applications show similar difficulties as the ones presented under the call for traditional projects: often weak definition of results and still confusion between outputs and outcomes. **Partnership**: capitalisation projects seem to have a better capacity of attracting partners from different territories than other types of calls for projects. Their success will partly depend on the programme's requirements in terms of results.

RESULTS AT THE PROGRAMME LEVEL:

The evaluation worked on 2 areas of analysis:

- 1) **Programme governance and implementation**: positioning, expectations and feedback from programme stakeholders, decision-making process within the programme and communication between its different bodies, selection process and programme planning, programme management and organisation, internal monitoring and evaluation system.
- 2) **Specific 'work streams'** launched or planned under the programme: capitalisation, communication, evaluation, **preparation of the future programme** (Task Force in particular).

The difficulties and, sometimes, the shortcomings observed at the end of the on-going evaluation (related to communication, administrative management, transnational decision-making process) simply reflect the size of the task and the fact that the organisational and structural gaps, in part dating from before the implementation of the existing programme, could not be corrected in full in the time available under this programme. This simple observation reveals the necessity to be able to use feedback to analyse the choices made throughout the programming period to derive good practices to roll out and mistakes not to be repeated.

The developments observed since the launch of the evaluation process have borne fruit in terms of the requirements of the new programming process:

- On-going optimisation of processes
- Thematic and strategic concentration in calls for projects
- Simplification of proceedings for beneficiaries (advice and administrative support: problem solving approach)
- Shared desire to implement a capitalisation process early in the existing programme and to evaluate in a continuous way rather than at mid-term
- Looking ahead to the preparation of the future programme (proposed creation of a Task Force from 2011 and launch of outsourced assistance missions to define and draw up the new programme from autumn 2012).

RECOMMENDATIONS: THE 9 MAIN GUIDELINES FOR 2014-2020

We believe that the construction of the future programme is a joint effort that must rely on:

- The achievements of the current programme 2007-2013, and the great number of experiments conducted since 2010: capitalisation process, calls for strategic and targeted projects. The first two recommendations refer to this point.
- An analysis of the positioning of this programme within the cooperation area, i.e.:
 - Taking into account the relationship between means and expected results.
 - Integrating the programme in various mainstream, thematic programmes and other cooperation programmes of the area.
 - Integrating the needs of territories of the MED area by 2014.
 This is the subject of recommendations 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7.
- The orientation of the programme towards a global quality approach both in terms of management and governance, i.e., improvement of the effectiveness of management processes and governance that would open the way for a macro-regional strategy. This is the subject of recommendations 8 and 9.

(1) Mutualisation tools	Developing and exploiting in a sustainable way a shared tool for promoting knowledge from the programme: 'MED Library'
(2) Feedback process	Mapping the programme implementation process to ease closing operations, define implementation procedures for the new programme and optimise the quality and effectiveness of programme management processes <i>Option 1 : Organising 'feedback' workshops</i> <i>Option 2 : Conduct a survey of programme management stakeholders to identify, reproduce and optimise the recorded practices</i>
(3) Programme diagnosis and strategy	Propose a positioning for the MED Programme in relation to the general offer of European programmes. Seek convergence with mainstream programmes. Analyse the feasibility of major plans to develop a Mediterranean exchange area; emergence of a macro-regional approach.
(4) Types of calls for projects	Calls for projects keeping with the programme strategy : <i>Option 1 : Programme strategy focussed on meeting the needs of the cooperation area</i> <i>Option 2 : Target the programme on a few main themes relating to the MED area whilst opening up the programme to new groups (these themes and these groups to be identified by current work of development of the new programme)</i>
(5) Targeting groups	Incorporate thinking about the type of partners expected and set out the rules for multiple applications in calls for projects (as was the case for strategic projects)

(6) Application format	In addition to improvements in PRESAGE, also give the applicants the option of adding 'annexes'
(7) Evaluating applications	Organise tailored selection procedures for each type of call for projects. Provide the evaluators with the necessary tools to improve the effectiveness of the work to be done.
(8) Centralised certification	One of the key factors to accelerate the implementation of activities in compliance with the time schedule. It generates a significantly heavier burden in terms of project monitoring for the JTS team. Need to create a tripartite working group (Task Force type): Certification Body JTS / MA and Member States representatives. Publication of a framework document "joint guide for financial management"
(9) Communication and governance : organisational options	Operate through feedback the traceability procedures currently being implemented in order to make strategic choices for the future. <i>Option 1 : developing each programme function within the appropriate level of governance</i> <i>Option 2 : Set up an internal communication plan</i> <i>Option 3 : Bring in external expertise according to the requirements of each function</i> <i>Option 4 : Define communication procedures with other programmes</i>