A3 - Magic formula of simplification

Summary of the discussion

The discussions aimed to identify what could be done for National Agencies and other bodies to facilitate the tasks of beneficiaries and, in particular, how the journey throughout the project life-cycle (application, management and reporting) could be made simpler for all actors involved.

Main outcomes/operational conclusions

The discussions were broken down into 5 smaller groups comprising of different stakeholders (National Agencies' representatives, project coordinators, participants, etc.) and were very lively. A lot of valuable ideas and suggestions were put forward, which are summarised below.

Guidance documents, templates and IT tools: stability needed across the board. Documents and templates need to be available on a timely basis, including final report templates at application stage to avoid surprises (data collection needs, potential budget cuts, etc.). Documents should be shorter and focus on the essentials. A sector specific Programme guide rather than an all-encompassing one was proposed. Structure of documents should be improved, e.g. align reporting with application document. Requirements should be adapted to target group (low budget, newcomers, etc.). The Organisation ID should store data to avoid repetition with each application, such as on previously granted projects. It has been suggested to develop automatic reminders for deadlines and to pay more attention to coherence in application of rules across participating countries.

Training: more training is needed at all levels. It needs to start at the Commission level (to National Agencies) and cascade down so that all actors that need training can benefit (National Agencies, organisations, participants, experts, etc.).

Language: language needs to be understandable and the terminology adapted to the action funded / sector / target group / etc. Proposal to add more glossaries of terms and more translations into national languages.

Support tools: more video tutorials, FAQs, examples of best practices, informal communication channels, etc. should be made available. Limitations in digital apps should be considered, i.e. they are expensive and not for all target groups.

Information and communication: more info needed on novelties in the new programme, particularly on the new partnerships and lump sums; closer links needed between centralised and decentralised actions.