

CO-CREATING ERASMUS+ AND THE EUROPEAN SOLIDARITY CORPS

28 & 29 JANUARY 2020, ULB CAMPUS SOLBOSCH BRUSSELS, BELGIUM

B6 - Measuring progress, defining success

Summary of the discussion

The Commission introduced the concept of the new monitoring and evaluation framework, which needs to be developed for all new spending programmes. We elaborated on the necessity of setting up such a performance framework, its main features and principles. Some of the leading questions to keep in mind were the representativeness of the indicators in terms of objectives and the challenges of measuring results and impacts at the right place and the right time.

Main outcomes/ operational conclusions of the session

The following four questions were put forward for group discussion:

How do you measure progress today? Input? Output? Result? Impact?

Participants stressed the need for proportionality and clarity in terms of setting objectives, impact assessment, evaluation and data collection. Time and budget constraints should also be taken into account in relation to the size and type of project. From the application process onwards, more guidance would be welcome on the collection of both quantitative data and qualitative input.

How do you balance meeting reporting needs and reducing administrative burden?

Participants agreed that reporting should be a continuous process throughout the project timeline. It should be driven by simple and useful questions, accompanied by clear instructions on how to complete them and to ensure that respondents provide the relevant qualitative and quantitative data. Increased digitalization is needed and expected for the next programme.

How do you report this information and use it for decision-making?

Participants wished that programme indicators would be stable from the start, alongside clear objectives, in a way that they could easily translated at project level. Overall, there was a demand for stronger guidance in the form of toolkit or templates. Numerous participants mentioned successful tools such as the NL Impact Tool or the UK Impact+ Tool as best practices examples.

How to capture the right data at the right moment?

Participants mentioned that there is a need for a coordinated approach when it comes to data gathering, between organisations, national agencies and evaluating bodies, as well as across different tools. It would allow for more consistency and comparability of data, and ensure that indicators are relevant to the qualitative data collected captured through peer group sessions or surveys. Further, participants requested more accessibility to the data available, via public or targeted dashboards for example. Further, data exercises should include wording on how the information is processed for privacy purposes, in consistency with the GDPR. Overall, participants were welcoming this opportunity to co-create the new generation of programme. They were well aware of the challenges to set up the new program, with simpler procedures to cater for all, while strengthening performance based reporting. It was a very fruitful session. Thank you all for your ideas and commitment to the programme.