**Second Meeting of the RIS3 Monitoring Working Group**

**4 May 2017**

**Topic 3: Indicators, targets and methods**

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## Template 1 –Participatory Exercise

**Comments to the plenary session** (interesting/surprising elements, questions left open, issues raised, etc.)

The following issues have been discussed/commented by the participants:

1. A generic comment was about the nature of the whole monitoring process: Three main phases were identified: Phase A – setting indicators, Phase B – collecting data and consolidate them into final results, Phase C – interpreting the results. Phase A & C are considered to be more critical than Phase B (collection of data).
2. Setting targets based on historical performance data is an obvious path for the planners. Target values can be set against national level. Also a benchmark approach (either against regions of the same country or at an EU level) can be applied.
3. Running surveys for collecting data that are not available from statistical databases might prove useful for the monitoring exercise. Two kinds of surveys were discussed: (a) ex ante and/or ex post for the beneficiaries of the calls and (b) a periodic survey (for example every 2 years) with a fixed set of firms within the region that correspond to different dimensions (size, sector, geographic location, etc.). This kind of ‘industry barometer’ might prove very useful to assess results and impacts due to RIS3 implementation.
4. Stakeholders can play a very important role to the above process and if properly engaged, might lead to a concrete local/regional data collection system.
5. An important factor to assess is the cost associated to the surveys as well as the capacity of the administrative personnel assigned to the design and implementation of the surveys.

**Challenges related to each of the three topics** (Identify the three main ones)

The following have been identified as main challenges for MAs/RAs:

1. Timing and availability of data (especially for result indicators) since their collection and processing are out of the control of the Regional Managing Authorities.
2. Attribution of the results to the initially planned interventions and policies is a rather ambiguous and difficult task to perform.
3. In some cases national statistics are available whereas regional are not. How is it possible to move from national to regional level? Extrapolation could be a method to use.
4. In many cases in the recent past, restriction of access to datasets from Regional MA’s staff has been reported. National/Central authorities give only predefined reports and not raw data for further processing regionally.
5. It is important for regional authorities to stay close to industry and build trust between stakeholders and regional authorities. Monitoring from office is not enough for RIS3 goals.
6. How do you cope with indicators that are constructed by data that are not available in first place? How do you set baseline and target values for this kind of indicators?
7. Surveys are about getting data from SMEs. In some cases for SMEs it is conditional to give data when applying for a specific CfP and/or get the final payment as beneficiaries. In the case they are not beneficiaries you have to give them incentives/rewards in order to achieve higher response rates.
8. Specific skills for personnel appointed as team members responsible for the monitoring system are required. For example research and social sciences, experience in evaluation, economics and statistics, etc.

The participants did not identify the three main challenges, however the synthesis of the above shows that the single most important challenge for an effective RIS3 monitoring system is to get as early as possible a clear image of how policies are implemented and what kind of outputs and results are achieved.

**What type of support at the EU, National and Regional level would be useful to tackle the main challenges?**

1. In the case of the surveys where little or no experience is recorded:
* there is a need to have concrete examples of surveys to follow;
* guidance on how you persuade stakeholders to participate in the surveys would be valuable.
1. In the case of the missing complete datasets, support from national authorities regarding access to databases for process and analysis at a regional level is required.
2. The idea for the extension of the scope of the Innovation Union Scoreboard to cover RIS3 at the EU level has been expressed. That would give a set of indicators more suitable for RIS3 planners and monitoring systems respectively.
3. Regional authorities should seek for enhancement of their personnel with employees with specific technical skills required for running effectively a monitoring system. Another possibility would be the delegation to personnel with that kind of skills from other departments.