The involvement of the Local and Regional Authorities in the European Semester – Analysis of the 2018 National Reform Programmes

Findings of the study

Metis GmbH

September 2018
Overview of the study

- Executive summary
- 1. Introduction
- 2. Methodology
- 3. Summary report on main findings
  - Total scores of LRA involvement in the NRP per country
  - Territorial dimension
  - Involvement of LRAs in the NRP
  - Obstacles to Investment
  - Institutional capacity
  - Partnership and Multi-Level Governance (MLG)
  - Comparative analysis
- 4. Conclusions
- 5. References
- Annex 1: Country Fiche template
- Annex 2: Assessment in detail
- Annex 3: Total scores of LRA involvement
- Country Fiches of each NRP in an extra file
The scale of LRA involvement in the EU 27

Dimension

- **Territorial dimension**
  - Disparities, challenges and needs
  - Impact/Coverage
  - Specific policies

- **Involvement of LRAs in the NRP**
  - Preparation
  - Implementation
  - Evaluation
  - Europe 2020
  - European Pillar of Social Rights

- **Obstacles to Investments**
  - Territorial perspective
  - Role of LRAs
  - Related policies

- **Administrative capacity**
  - Administrative capacity of LRAs related to the implementation of the NRP and the EU 2020 pathway
  - Administrative capacity related to investment policies
  - Institutional capacity-building

- **Partnership and MLG**
  - Coordination among the tiers of administration
  - Cooperation models
  - Wider partnership (multi-actorship)
Methodology

- In order to rank the quality of information provided in the NRP, a simple and straightforward scoring system was used.

- The scores range from 0 up to 2 points per dimension, in which 0 means that no reference to LRAs is included, 1 stands for an explicit but general reference to LRAs and a score of 2 shows a specific reference to LRAs.

- The Study evaluated the NRPs according to 17 dimensions, allowing for a maximum overall score of 34 points.
Comparative Analysis (2016 – 2017)

Change over the last year:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>AT</th>
<th>BE</th>
<th>BG</th>
<th>CY</th>
<th>CZ</th>
<th>DE</th>
<th>DK</th>
<th>EE</th>
<th>EL</th>
<th>ES</th>
<th>FI</th>
<th>FR</th>
<th>HR</th>
<th>HU</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>+</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IE</td>
<td>++</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Scores classified according to the following intervals:

- 0
- 1 - 16
- 17 - 20
- 21 - 24
- 25 - 28
- 29 - 32

Overall score:

- 1 - 13
- 14 - 21
- 22 - 25
- 26 - 33

2017

2018
Observed patterns

- **Territorial dimension:** significantly higher scores for Western European EU-14 than for the Eastern European countries (mainly CEEC); may reflect a higher awareness of the territorial dimension of challenges and policies.

- Only a small number of EU-13 countries (five), but the clear majority of EU-14 countries (12) include a reference to the role of LRAs in the preparation of the NRPs.

- **Obstacles to investment:** Strong involvement of LRAs is found on the one hand side for Northwest European countries with a long tradition of LRA involvement, on the other hand side for post-communist CEEC and Mediterranean countries with presumable investment backlog.

- The role of **administrative capacities** is mainly addressed in the NRPs of countries carrying out a public sector reform.

- **Partnership and MLG:** High scores for the three federations among the MS, i.e. AT, BE, DE as well as for other Northern European countries with a long-standing tradition in local self-government. The other fact reflected in high scorings is ongoing public-sector reform.
Policy fields

- The prevalent recurrent topic of LRA involvement in the NRPs is **social inclusion**. The topic has a clear territorial dimension since it concerns primarily regions with high unemployment.

- Further policy areas mentioned frequently:
  - Employment initiatives
  - Education programmes
  - Improvements to the business environment

- The general picture broadly fits to the findings in the Territorial Analysis of the Country Reports (CRs) done by CoR.
Conclusions

- The overall picture remains similar to 2017. Highest scores can be found in Central and Northwest European EU-15 countries with a long tradition of regional self-governance.

- Countries with ongoing or recently implemented administrative reforms show a tendency for a more intense coverage of LRA involvement than comparable countries without such reform programmes.

- The prevalent recurrent topic of the NRPs is social protection. The aftermath of the economic crisis leaves its mark on the issues where LRA responsibilities are explicitly involved (public budgets or measures to ease unemployment).

- Almost all MS involve LRAs in the implementation of policies in line with the European Pillar of Social Rights, however mostly without referring to it directly.