Application of the principle on partnership and multi-level governance in Cohesion Policy programming 2021-27

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The partnership principle

A **collective process** of involving authorities at European, national, regional and local levels as well societal players for the programming, implementation, monitoring and evaluation Cohesion Policy.

This process differs largely between:
- Member States,
- Programmes, and
- Programming phases
Place-based policy making

- Better thematic balance and focus
- Collective commitment and broad ownership

How does the document address EU green and digital objectives?

- **EU Green Deal**
  - Specific local and regional instruments are proposed: 40%
  - The local and regional context is considered: 60%
  - Objectives are generally considered: 20%
  - No specific reference: 0%
  - Don't know: 0%

- **EU Digital Strategy**
  - Specific local and regional instruments are proposed: 40%
  - The local and regional context is considered: 60%
  - Objectives are generally considered: 20%
  - No specific reference: 0%
  - Don't know: 0%
Unutilised potential

Little evolution in the implementation of the partnership principle

Partnership Agreements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>2014-20</th>
<th>2021-27</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Balanced representation of stakeholders</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transparent selection procedures</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td>85%</td>
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<td>Sufficient time to prepare</td>
<td>79%</td>
<td>85%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Equal treatment of feedback</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>76%</td>
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Challenges according to LRA

- Mobilisation of relevant stakeholders
- Some stakeholders tried to push for particular interests
- Ensuring representativeness through the involved stakeholders
- Adapting to measures to contain further spreading of the COVID-19 virus
- Too short time window for the stakeholder involvement
Slowed down processes

Effects of the pandemic on the application of the partnership principle

- It required a shift to digital solutions: 90%
- It slows down procedures: 80%
- Planned processes are postponed: 70%
- Other tasks reduced time spent for good partner involvement: 60%
- Increased flexibility for programming reduced inclusion of a large variety of players: 50%
- Other funding possibilities reduces the interest among partners: 40%

Other funding possibilities reduces the interest among partners.
Recommendations

- **Reinforce the European Code of Conduct on Partnership**
  - EU: Code of Conduct also for Agricultural Policy and Next Generation EU
  - MS: Remain critical on the partnership, express a need for place-specific programmes.

- **Enable the partnership to contribute to place-based policies**
  - EU: Extend the time to notify partners about events to 15 working days
  - EU / MS: Share experiences and lessons learnt

- **Provide detailed information in line with green and digital transitions**

- **Capitalise on lessons learnt for online stakeholder engagement**
Thank you!

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