

**Resumo executivo en inglés da
Evaluación ex ante do PO FEDER
Galicia 2014-2020**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

PRELIMINARY NOTE: this executive summary is part of the Ex Ante Evaluation of the Galicia ERDF Operational Programme 2014-2020 carried out by Regio Plus Consulting. Its objective consists in offering an answer to the basic evaluation questions. Therefore, its Reading offers a synthetic overview, although partial, of the Ex Ante Evaluation main findings. The last chapter of this evaluation contains a summary of the proposed recommendations aimed at improving the quality and design of the OP.

How has the Ex Ante Evaluation process been organised?

The evaluation is an exercise regulated by the general provisions of the ESI Funds included in the Regulation (EU) No. 1303/2013 laying down common provisions on the ERDF, the ESF, the Cohesion Fund, the EAFRD and the EMFF (articles 54, 55, 56 and 57). Following this Regulation, the objective of the evaluation is “to improve the quality of the design and implementation of programmes, as well as to assess their effectiveness, efficiency and impact”. In particular Article 55, related to the Ex Ante Evaluation, points out that it should allow improving “**the quality of the design of each programme**”.

The areas to be covered by the Ex Ante Evaluation are specifically determined by the point 3 of Article 55. These areas can be grouped into the following five components, as defined by the “Guidance Document on Ex Ante Evaluation” for the 2014-2020 Operational Programmes:

- + The analysis of the Programme’s strategy.
- + The study of the indicators included and of the monitoring and evaluation provisions.
- + The evaluation of the consistency of financial allocations.
- + The assessment of the contribution to the Europe 2020 Strategy.
- + The Strategic Environmental Assessment.

The development of the Evaluation has been efficiently included in the programming through an **iterative** and **interactive** process that has ensured and improved the quality of this programming. Thus, the conclusions and recommendations raised by the Evaluation have been included in discussions and have generated a new information flow that has helped the definition of the elements that have been included in the final version of the Operational Programme.

Is the Diagnosis on the cooperation area relevant?

The Galicia ERDF Operational Programme elaboration process has included a comprehensive regional socioeconomic diagnosis based on a complete set of reliable indicators that cover the main intervention areas of the programme. This has allowed defining the basic regional features in those fields that fall under the ERDF field of action.

The Ex-Ante Evaluation has contributed to the quality of this diagnosis through a series of contributions that have improved the scope of the analysis as well as the quality of the indicators' system that sustain the assessment of the Galician socioeconomic situation.

All this has resulted in a document "*Galician Socioeconomic and Territorial Diagnosis for the elaboration of Galicia's ERDF and ESF 2014-2020*" that addresses the key factors for territorial development in Galicia and satisfactorily identifies present needs and challenges. Consequently, the Ex-ante Evaluation endorses the quality of the diagnosis that has been used to draw up a **coherent strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats matrix**.

Is the OP's Strategy correctly defined? Which interrelation degree presents?

The programming of the ERDF in Galicia has adopted a coherent approach with the Europe 2020 Strategy for Smart, sustainable and cohesive growth and with the progress towards economic, social and territorial cohesion.

The intervention logic allows representing this strategy through a model articulated across eight Priority Axis, excluding Technical Assistance, as shown in the following table:

EJE	OT	PRIORIDAD DE INVERSIÓN		OBJETIVO ESPECÍFICO	
1	1	1.1	Enhancing research and innovation infrastructure (R&I) and capacities to develop R&I excellence and promoting centres of competence, in particular those of European interest	1.1.2	Reinforcement of R&D institutions and creation, consolidation and improvement of scientific and technological infrastructures
		1.2.	Promoting business R&I investment, product and service development, technology transfer, social innovation and public service applications, demand stimulation, networking, clusters and open innovation through smart specialisation	1.2.1	Impulse and promotion of R&I activities led by firms and support to the creation and consolidation of innovative enterprises and support to innovative public procurement.
				1.2.3	Promotion and generation of frontier knowledge and development of emerging technologies and knowledge oriented towards societal challenges.
2	2	2.3.	Strengthening ICT applications for e-government, e-learning, e-inclusion and eHealth	2.3.1	Promote digital public services, digital alphabetisation, e-learning, e-inclusion and e-health.
				2.3.2	Promote e-government, e-culture and digital trust
3	3	3.1.	Promoting entrepreneurship, in particular by facilitating the economic exploitation of new ideas and fostering the creation of new firms	3.1.2	Creation of new firms and enterprise parks, in particular by improving access to finance and to advanced support services.
		3.4	Supporting the capacity of SMEs to grow in regional, national and international markets, and to engage in innovation processes	3.4.1	Promote SME's growth and consolidation, in particular by improving financing, technology and access to advanced support services, including the agricultural, fishing, marine, touristic, cultural, commercial and building rehabilitation, as well as SMEs and independent workers dedicated to retail and itinerant trade.
				3.4.3	Promote the internationalisation of SMEs
4	4	4.1.	Promoting the production and distribution of renewable energy sources	4.1.2	Increase the share and distribution of renewable energies for thermic uses, in particular biomass, biogas, bio combustibles for transport in compliance with the Renewable Energy Plan 2011-2020 and with regional planning.
		4.2.	Promoting energy efficiency and renewable energy use in firms	4.2.1	Progress in the assessment and improvement of energy efficiency in firms, particularly in SMEs
		4.3.	Supporting energy efficiency and renewable energy use in public infrastructures and in the housing sector	4.3.1	Improve energy efficiency and reduce carbon emissions in buildings and in public infrastructures and services.
		4.5.	Promoting low-carbon strategies for all types of territory	4.5.1	Promote sustainable urban mobility: clean urban transport, collective transport, rural-urban connections, improvement in road networks, bike and pedestrian mobility, electric mobility and development of clean energy supply.

EJE	OT	PRIORIDAD DE INVERSIÓN		OBJETIVO ESPECÍFICO	
5	5	5.1	Supporting dedicated investment for adaptation to climate change	5.1.1	Knowledge development and planning related to climate change adaptation and risk prevention, including early warning systems, monitoring and evaluation.
		5.2	Promoting investment to address specific risks, ensuring disaster resilience and developing disaster management systems	5.2.1	Increase investment for prevention and management of population related risks, including civilian protection.
6	6	6.1.	Addressing the significant needs for investment in the waste sector to meet the requirements of the environmental <i>acquis</i>	6.1.1	Developing sorting, selective collection and treatment of waste, including actions for cycle closing, enclosing management plans and investment in infrastructure.
		6.2.	Addressing the significant needs for investment in the water sector to meet the requirements of the environmental <i>acquis</i>	6.2.1	Comply with the Water Framework Directive through investment in sanitation infrastructure, waste water purification and re-use, and improvement of water quality.
		6.3.	Protecting, promoting and developing cultural and natural heritage	6.3.1	Promote the protection, improvement and development of the cultural heritage.
				6.3.2	Protect, develop and promote natural areas, in particular those of touristic interest.
6.4.	Protecting biodiversity, soil protection and promoting ecosystem services including NATURA 2000 and green infrastructures	6.4.1	Promote the management, protection and maintenance of natural areas and their biodiversity, in particular protected areas, including measures to address problems of erosion, salinisation, desertification, deforestation and low presence of organic matter on the soil.		
9	9	9.7	Investing in health and social infrastructure which contribute to national, regional and local development, reducing inequalities in terms of health status, and transition from institutional to community-based services	9.7.1	Investment in social and health infrastructure that contributes to the national, regional and local development and reduces health inequalities.
10	10	10.5	Investing in education, training and vocational training for skills and lifelong learning by developing education and training infrastructure	10.5.1	Improvement of education and health infrastructures.

The Ex-Ante Evaluation has checked that all the elements of the programming chain are interrelated. All Investment Priorities are linked to a Specific Objective. These Specific Objectives are also the logic consequence of the actions to be carried out under each of the Investment Priorities included in the different Axis of the OP.

Are the selected objectives relevant with regard to the socioeconomic diagnosis?

The assessment of the programming relevance is based, first on the scope of the detected weaknesses and strengths and their existing complementarities and, second, on the defined objectives. The Ex Ante Evaluation reaffirms that all the identified weaknesses are addressed by at least one specific objective and the specific objectives are convenient for the leverage of the perceived strengths.

Therefore, the Ex-Ante Evaluation team considers that there exists a **coherent planning on the right path** and with potential to address the different weaknesses detected on the framework of the selected Thematic Objectives. These Thematic Objectives cover a large amount of the objectives established by the European regulation excluding TO 7, 8 and 11. The ERDF OP includes an exhaustive approach in line with the socioeconomic diagnosis for Galicia and the Partnership Agreement with Spain.

Is the internal structure of the Galicia ERDF OP coherent?

The Programme shows an **elevated internal coherence** due to its soundness and consistency. The articulation of the proposed Axis and the type of actions included in each Investment Priority contribute to the achievement of the specific objectives.

Furthermore, the assessment of synergies highlights the contribution of each specific objective to the achievement of the others and also the degree of sensitivity towards them. The degree of interrelations is high and only two Investment priorities are categorised as Independent. This fact improves the global functioning of the Galicia ERDF PO and eases the attainment of all its objectives.

More than a half of the investment priorities are considered strategic or influential. The main strategic priorities are those linked to smart growth that pretend to promote an R&D&I linked to the improvement of the Galician business environment, particularly SMEs, with a notable impact on competitiveness and technological levels (Priorities 1.1, 1.2 and 3.4) as well as IP 2.3 which aims at improving the use and quality of ICT and their access.

Investment Priorities under TO 4, aimed at easing the transition towards a low-carbon economy, have also an important influential nature due to their impact on industrial competitiveness, their capacity to create new business opportunities as well as their positive environmental impact. On the other hand, the priorities linked to the

improvement of educational infrastructures (TO 10) have also an elevated structural potential to facilitate the progress in the rest of priorities included in the Galicia ERDF OP.

In general, those priorities related with environmental preservation and valorisation have a clearer sensitive and independent nature (6.1, 6.2 and 6.3). Finally, Priority 9.7, dealing with social and health infrastructures, shows a clear independent character. However, the complementarity of this last priority with the objectives pursued by the Galicia FSE OP is high because evidently the achievement of these objectives depends on the quality and resources of the social infrastructures available in the region.

Are horizontal principles ensured through appropriate provisions?

The appropriate strategic programming described in the sections below has been enforced by the application of the **partnership principle** during the whole programming process. Therefore, there has been a high degree of cooperation in the definition of the Programme's Strategy. Public consultations have been opened in order to get input from all interested stakeholders.

The integration of the **gender perspective** has been already ensured in the needs assessment and the territorial Diagnosis by including information disaggregated by sex and by identifying existent gender gaps. However, the priorities and objectives included in the Galicia ERDF OP do not directly address equal opportunities between men and women although they may have an indirect positive influence on it. In addition, the programme includes adequate implementing criteria for an accurate monitoring of this horizontal principle. Finally, the proposed indicators for monitoring are, when relevant, desegregated by sex which will allow a quantification of the actions' incidence or impact on gender equality.

Regarding the principle of **equal opportunities and non-discrimination**, the socioeconomic diagnosis used as a reference for the Galicia ERDF OP satisfactorily analyses the poverty situation and social exclusion in Galicia with a full chapter specifically dedicated to this subject. Regarding the OP's Strategy, only TO 9 foresees some actions aimed completely at facilitating the integration of people with special needs (elder, dependent or people with disabilities). However, although the rest of TOs do not directly affect the principle of non-discrimination, they may have an indirect positive impact on the promotion of this principle. The inclusion of adequate implementing criteria in the Galicia ERDF OP reinforces the observation of this horizontal principle.

Finally, the horizontal principle of **sustainable development** is visible, first, in the programming of specific actions directly linked to sustainability, and second, in the transversal integration of the principle into all the specific objectives through the inclusion of dedicated criteria for the selection of operations. In addition, its

consideration is ensured by the development of the *Strategic Environmental Evaluation* procedure.

Which is the degree of external coherence of the Galicia ERDF OP?

The assessment of the external coherence weights the matching of the programme with other national or European programmes and instruments. Therefore, the programme is assessed against the European Commission's general orientations and the different objectives, strategies and actions that are included in the Spanish Partnership Agreement.

There is full coherence between the Galicia ERDF OP and the Spanish Association Agreement due to the correct enforcement of the cooperation and multilevel governance principles during the programming process. Identically, the defined Thematic Objectives adequately fit in the priority areas defined by the 2014 National Reform Programme for Spain.

Due to this conciliation between regional planning and national objectives of the Cohesion Policy there is no need for additional justifications regarding the typology of projects to be financed because they are already foreseen in the different regional and sectorial policy frameworks. Moreover, the decentralisation in the programming and management of EU Funds ensures the consideration of regional peculiarities, which undoubtedly contributes to an increased specialisation.

Therefore, the ERDF programming in Galicia is correctly inserted in the national strategic framework in the sense that the actions included in the OP complement a larger development strategy at national level.

Similarly, the programming is also coherent with those strategic policy strategies of the Xunta de Galicia. Consequently, the Galicia ERDF OP is in line with the main structural and sectorial regional policy instruments addressing the intervention fields under the scope of the ERDF. In this sense, the ERDF OP will directly contribute to the achievement of the objectives set at regional level.

On the other hand, the strategic design and scope of the OP are in line with the Europe 2020 Strategy, fact that ensures its contribution to the objectives of smart, sustainable and inclusive growth.

Additionally, **other potential complementarities are observed regarding other EU financial instruments**. The complementarity degree is particularly elevated regarding Horizon 2020, LIFE and COSME.

Which is the financial coherence degree of the Galicia ERDF OP?

The OP's internal coherence must be reinforced by a financial coherence able to translate potential synergies in actual effects and measurable impact.

The total ERDF support for the 2014-2020 programming period reaches **883.369.308 euros** without taking into account the 220.842.327 euros of the additional national matching contribution. The decided financial internal distribution complies with EU regulations in terms of thematic concentration.

Regarding the principle of thematic concentration, in conformity with Article 4 of the EU Regulation 1301/2013, the criteria attached to transition regions is applicable to Galicia the fact that its GDP per capita matches the levels of the more developed regions.

A concentration of at least 60% of the total investment in TO 1, 2 and/or 3 and/or 4 is required at national level. For this purpose the Technical Assistance allocation is disregarded. At the same time, the allocation to TO 4 must be at least a 15% of the total. In order to comply with these requirements, the Spanish Central Administration required a minimum thematic concentration of 55% and at least 6% of the resources allocated to TO 4.

The Galicia ERDF Operative Programme concentrates 66.6% of the total regional ERDF funding to Thematic Objectives 1, 2, 3 and 4 excluding Technical Assistance (in compliance with Article 18 of Regulation EU 1303/2013). TO 4 concentrates 17.6% of the funding. Therefore, the Galicia ERDF OP complies with the minimum funding required at national level regarding ERDF thematic concentration.

At the same time, considering budgetary availability, **the Galicia ERDF OP offers an adequate response to address the main needs identified** by the territorial Diagnosis. This is supported by two fundamental aspects:

- + There exists an elevated correlation between the Thematic Objective and the needs identified during the socioeconomic diagnosis as well as the consequent financial allocations.
- + The efficiency of the planned investment must be highlighted because more than 90% has a potential to generate positive synergies. This means that the interrelations among investment priorities reinforce the achievement of the OP's objectives and increase its overall impact on Galician territory.

This is explained by the large allocation of resources in those specific objectives that have a large influential capacity on the others (influential); or in those objectives presenting high dependency, that is, whose development or success largely depends on the achievement of other objectives; or, finally, in those objectives with high

leverage capacity but also easily influenced (strategic). In particular, the Strategic and Influential Investment Priorities accumulate more than 80% of the total funding.

To sum up, the financial commitments of the Programme have been distributed adequately with the aim of resolving the most important problems that affect the territory. Resources are properly allocated to efficiently achieve the objectives and results expected for 2020.

Is it appropriate the quality of the formulated coordination, monitoring and dissemination systems?

The Indicators' System included for the monitoring and evaluation is the result of a precise work carried out by the different involved entities and also by the evaluation team. **The resulting system is considered relevant and proportionate to the specific monitoring and evaluation needs of the programme** because:

- + It is based on a limited number of indicators.
- + It considers, to the maximum possible extent, the regulatory common indicators.
- + It enforces the programme's intervention logic by offering a complete and satisfactory picture of projects' achievements and the progress towards selected objectives.

The assessment of the indicators' relevance has been carried out against pertinence, significance, quantification, reliability and utility criteria. All indicators comply with these mentioned criteria.

The most complex issue regarding result indicators is the assessment of their significance. Indicators are influenced not only by the degree of execution of the type of actions under each Investment Priority but also by external factors with high influence on the indicators' performance which surpasses the control of planned actions. In this sense, it is important to remind the budgetary limitation of the OP, which only represents a 2% of the 2013 regional GDP.

The estimation of baselines and targets has been carried out considering historical data, the experience of the 2007-2013 programming period and the evolution of the different socioeconomic aspects present in the Diagnosis. The evaluation team confirms that the selected indicators comply with the features of the so-called "SMART" Indicators.

Finally, the milestones for 2018, as well as the final targets are realistic, achievable and relevant. They have been established considering the experience accumulated during the previous programme together with a joint cooperation with managing centres and taking into account the annual budget allocation.

Which is the expected contribution of the OP to the Europe 2020 Strategy objectives for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth?

The Europe 2020 Strategy has been taken into account during the programming of the ERDF in Galicia for the period 2014-2020. The idea behind is to leverage additional resources in order to advance in the direction established by the Strategy.

The Galicia ERDF OP will have, coming from the regional level, an elevated positive impact on all the objectives set by the European Strategy for growth. In particular, given the selected Thematic Objectives and the financial distribution among priorities, it must be highlighted the potential impact of the Galicia ERDF OP on the objectives related to R&D&I, energy or the environment. The impact on education as well as on poverty and social exclusion is also ensured by the inclusion of certain Thematic Objectives that are relevant for these fields. Finally, the impact of the Galicia ERDF OP on employment should not be underestimated due to the contribution of the OP to competitiveness and sustainability of Galicia. Therefore, **the contribution of the Galicia ERDF OP to the Europe 2020 Strategy Objectives is considered as adequate.**