



RESULTS-BASED PROGRAMMING IN PRACTICE: THE ITALIAN *OBIETTIVI DI SERVIZIO*

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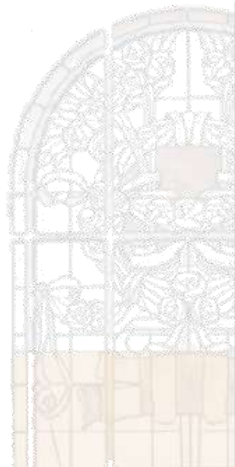
Outline

I. WHAT OBIETTIVI DI SERVIZIO ARE

- The performance framework
- From a performance reserve to a programming scheme

II. CHALLENGES FOR RESULTS-ORIENTED PROGRAMS

- Choice of indicators
- Intervention logic design and project selection
- Mechanisms to enhance performance





The performance framework

Obiettivi di servizio introduced as a performance framework (originally strengthened through financial incentives) within the 2007-2013 NSRF (encompassing Structural Funds and domestic regional policy financing)

In the 2007-13 programming cycle the upgrade in the provision of public services is deemed crucial in order to improve the quality of life of citizens and the business environment in Mezzogiorno

Mezzogiorno regional (and local) authorities are asked to make additional efforts to achieve minimum standards in those policy areas where the level and quality of public services is lagging behind compared to other areas of the country





Main features of the performance framework

- 8 (NUTS2) regions in Mezzogiorno + Ministry of Education involved
- 4 objectives/policy areas (education, child and elderly care, waste management and water service) and 11 statistical indicators chosen through a deliberative process (in 2006-2007)
- same targets for all regions (minimum standard level)
- regional action plan to reach targets (not only Structural Funds involved)
- reward for targets reached by 2013 and gap reduced in 2009 (3 billion Euro to be invested in the same policy areas)





From a performance reserve to a programming device

Obiettivi di servizio had serious implementation troubles in 2010-2011. The delay in the allocation of the mid term reward, the redeployment of resources (reserve downsized to 1 billion Euro) and the weak governance of the system made financial incentives less and less powerful.

In early 2012 the system was eventually transformed: all features of the performance framework remain (objectives, indicators, action plan) but the financial incentives.

The original reserve was allocated among participant authorities as a conditional grant. Regional authorities and the Ministry of Education must use the resources for actions strictly linked to results originally planned in the performance framework. The Action Plan has to be consequently updated.





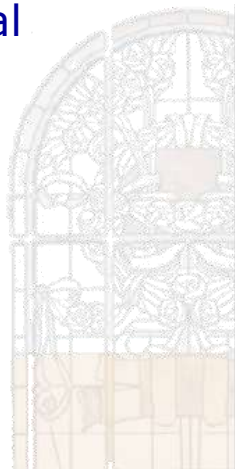
A different role for the central government coordinating authority (DPS)

IN THE ORIGINAL SCHEME (PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK STRENGTHENED BY FINANCIAL INCENTIVES):

DPS had no role in the appraisal of the intervention logic designed by regional authorities to achieve the objectives. The reward was based on targets achieved, whatever the strategy implemented through the action plan at regional level.

IN THE NEW SCHEME (PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK STRENGTHENED BY STRICTER RESULTS- BASED PROGRAMMING):

DPS appraises updated Action Plans and action proposals. Financial resources are granted to regional authorities (and the Ministry of Education) only when DPS approves the proposal, after an interactive and iterative process.





Challenges for 2014-2020 programs

The Obiettivi di Servizio experience can provide useful insights into the challenges that 2014-2020 programmes will face to respond to the performance turn of cohesion policy:

A. CHOICE OF INDICATORS

- How to cope with indicator quality requirements

B. INTERVENTION LOGIC DESIGN AND PROJECT SELECTION

- How to design (and appraise) the intervention logic
- How to ensure that projects are consistent with expected results

C. MECHANISM TO ENHANCE PERFORMANCE

- Effectiveness of rewards and sanctions to strengthen the performance orientation of programs





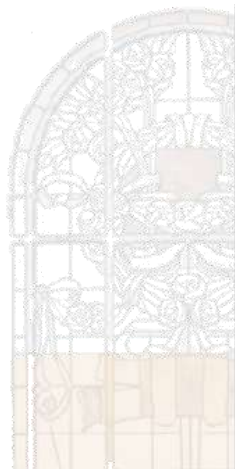
Indicator quality requirements





Obiettivi di Servizio indicators (and targets) have been selected through a deliberative process with regional and central authorities, data producers with the support of independent experts. Reference to 3 criteria:

- ❖ MEASURABILITY
- ❖ ACCOUNTABILITY
- ❖ PUBLIC UNDERSTANDING AND SHARING

The CPR for 2014-2020 introduces a general ex ante conditionality (Annex V) on statistical system and result indicators requiring each result indicator to comply with some requisites:

- ❖ ROBUSTNESS AND STATISTICAL VALIDATION
- ❖ CLARITY OF NORMATIVE INTERPRETATION
- ❖ RESPONSIVENESS TO POLICY
- ❖ TIMELY COLLECTION
- ❖ PUBLIC AVAILABILITY OF DATA



POLICY AREA/ OBJECTIVE	INDICATOR	Centre-North		Mezzogiorno		Target 2013 Mezzogiorno	
		Baseline Value	Last available value	Baseline Value	Last available value		
	Improve students competence, reduce drop-outs and broaden population's learning opportunities	% Early school leavers	16,8	16,2	25,5	22,3	Reducing the percentage to 10%
		% Students with poor competency in reading	14,9	16,6	35,0	27,5	Reducing the percentage to 20%
		% Students with poor competency in mathematics	19,3	19,5	47,5	33,5	Reducing the percentage to 21%
	Increase the availability of child and elderly care to favour women's participation in the labour market	% Municipalities with child-care	47,6	52,7	21,1	35,8	Increasing the percentage to 35%
		% Children in child care	15,5	15,9	4,2	5,2	Increasing the percentage to 12%
		% Elderly beneficiary of home assistance	3,5	4,9	1,6	2,3	Increasing the percentage to 3,5%
	Protect and improve the quality of the environment, in relation to urban waste management	Kg of urban waste landfilled	263,8	216,6	395,3	347,8	Reducing the amount to 230 kg per head
		% of recycled urban waste	31,6	40,4	8,8	19,1	Increasing the percentage to 40%
		% Percentage of composted waste	29,1	47	2,6	13,4	Increasing the percentage to 20%
	Protect and improve the quality of the environment, in relation to integrated water service	% of water distributed	71,5	71,9	59,4	60,3	Increasing the percentage to 75%
		% Population served by advanced waste water treatment plants	77,6	81,0	62,5	66,4	Increasing the percentage to 70%



Challenges in the choice of indicators

ROBUSTNESS AND STATISTICAL VALIDATION

Obiettivi di Servizio indicators are all based on statistical sources. It does not necessarily mean that they are robust (e.g. water service and elderly care).

CLARITY OF NORMATIVE INTERPRETATION

One indicator cannot be sufficient to clarify the desired effects of the policy and hence its normative interpretation (e.g. waste management, child and elderly care)

RESPONSIVENESS TO POLICY

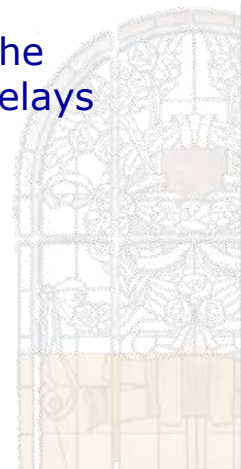
It varies greatly among indicators: some have a more direct link with policy action (e.g. childcare dissemination), others have a more indirect and light causality link (e.g. education). There is a policy bias risk if the indicator is responsive but does not represent completely the desired change.

TIMELY COLLECTION

Major effort needed to improve the timely collection (and the territorial disaggregation) of statistics feeding indicators: TA funds devoted to improve the availability of statistics+ monitoring of on-going surveys to prevent possible delays

PUBLIC AVAILABILITY OF DATA

Data regularly published. But also a continuous dialogue is needed with data producers and regional authorities to propose solutions, facilitate mutual understanding and sharing of methodological issues





The intervention logic design (and project selection)

In the appraisal process the wide intervention logic of the Action Plan is looked at (not only actions proposed for financing, but also investments funded with other financial sources and other non financial actions needed in order to achieve results), through an interactive and iterative process aimed at leading regional authorities to:

- design strategies in the logical sequence, from expected results to needed actions
- consider all available financial sources, conditions, responsibilities to reach the expected results (including pre-conditions)
- increase integration between regional and ordinary policy sides
- choose actions guided by objectives and indicators (those provided within the performance framework, but additional indicators are also possible)
- focus on the time span needed to implement investments, on places and on target groups where a change is mostly needed (and hence either identify projects already in the plan or design very strict selection procedures for future calls)





Challenges in the intervention logic design (and appraisal)

- **Capacity:** the intervention logic is often difficult to design and to describe (narrative, table, graphs?); methodological and sector specific know-how needed + data at sub regional level
- **Scope:** difficult to influence the whole policy mix through *Obiettivi di Servizio* (easier for child and elderly care in convergence regions because of additional resources of a national programme that can finance also operating costs)
- **Complexity:** Even more difficult with objective/indicators affected by many external factors (e.g. education, waste management and water service)
 - lighter causality link,
 - institutional pre-conditions
 - need of coordination between different authorities and offices involved





Challenges in project selection

Projects already identified:

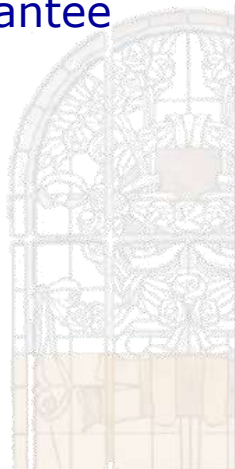
- Individual projects not consistent with objectives/indicators
- projects look consistent with objectives/indicators. However there are doubts on whether they are the most effective way to use resources:
 - for instance there are doubts on the causality link
 - or there is experience that without some pre-conditions in place it cannot work

Projects not yet identified, to be selected through calls

- selection criteria, delivery mechanisms, localisation, timetable need to be well specified...

Are competitive calls the best selection procedure in order to guarantee that projects really respond to results?

Are sub-regional allocations/programs a possible solution?





Different tools to strengthen programme performance

2000-2006:

EU n+2

EU Performance reserve (4%)

ITA CSF pre-conditions to access financing and additional performance reserve (6%)

2007-2013

EU n+2

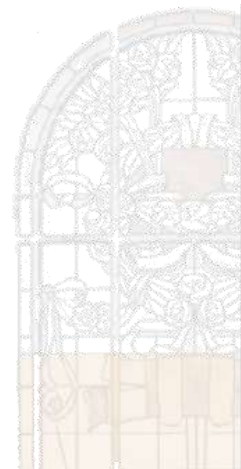
ITA *Obiettivi di Servizio* (old and new)

2014-2020

EU n+2 (n+3)

EU Ex-ante conditionalities

EU Performance framework (reserve and sanctions)





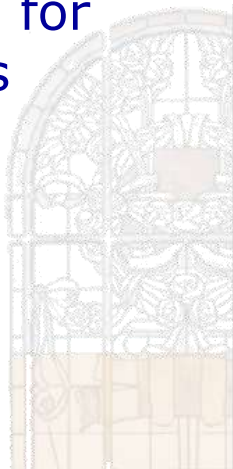
... measuring different kind of indicators
and leading to different consequences

	ACCESS TO FINANCING	SANCTION	REWARD
PRE-CONDITIONS	ITA CSF EU ITA ODS new EAC		ITA 6% PR
FINANCIAL ABSORPTION		EU N+2 EU PF	EU 4% PR EU PF
IMPLEMENTATION STEPS		EU PF	EU PF
OUTPUTS		EU PF	EU 4% PR EU PF
RESULTS	ITA ODS new (expected)		ITA ODS old (achieved)



Challenges in strengthening performance orientation

- it is very difficult to link reward (and sanctions) to results within SF (programming cycle)
- pre-conditions are not enough to ensure result orientation – acts or strategies are not enough if actions do not follow (experience of the 2000-2006 performance reserve);
- milestones of the 2014-2020 performance framework will neither ensure result orientation because they mostly concentrate on financial, implementation and output indicators;
- many doubts on reward and sanctions based on output, for methodological problems in target setting; however it is good for focusing on specific actions
- implementation steps maybe more promising (they can strengthen the intervention logic design??)

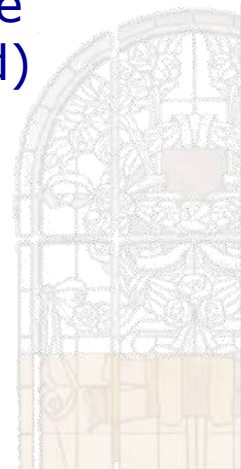




OBIETTIVI DI SERVIZIO ACTION PLANS v. 2014-2020 OPs

In 2014-2020 Operational Programs:

- Objectives and indicators are not “exogenous” (can be more focused on the scope of the program, hence the intervention logic may be easier to design)
- Result indicators and targets identified and quantified at OP level (more widespread methodological capacity needed)
- There is not the need to go much in detail in the definition of actions (however this would need to be done in the implementation stage, challenges are only postponed)





LESSONS FOR INCREASING RESULT ORIENTATION OF FUTURE OPs

- more focused OPs with project details (???)
- major capacity building effort at OP level; know-how needed on:
 - quality standard, unit cost, technology available (to identify and quantify output and input indicators and link them with results)
 - regulatory framework and all place specific factors influencing the achievement of expected results (to define a timetable of all needed actions)
- widespread capacity building effort needed at OP level to identify and quantify result indicator but some methodological coordination action and technical assistance resources at MS level to guarantee the overall quality of indicators (with some economies of scale)





THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION

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