



pro oeconomia
Evaluation and Economic Research Foundation

**Evaluation research of indicators of
the Development of Eastern Poland Operational Programme**

Summary of the report

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The purpose of the research was to assess the adequacy of selected indicators measuring achievement of objectives of the Development of Eastern Poland Operational Programme (DEP OP) as well as to verify their assumed target values by drawing up forecasts of the values of indicators for the years 2013 and 2015. This purpose has been achieved by the following research elements:

- 1) assessment of the adequacy of indicators, including proposing new indicators in case of their negative evaluation;
- 2) verification of target values in view of their consistency with SMART criteria;
- 3) drawing up forecasts of indicators for the years 2013 and 2015.

Selection of the categories of interventions for projects was also assessed, taking into account, in particular, the issue of the selection correctness in view of achievement of objectives of the Lisbon Strategy. Additionally, the analysis referred to the possibility of reflecting the issue of equal opportunities for men and women in the research. The following research tools have been used: document analysis, statistical and econometric analysis, as well as interviews with representatives of institutions participating in the programme implementation.

The first step of the assessment of indicators was to analyse whether the indicators were correctly defined. The indicators were assessed in view of compliance with the following criteria: accuracy, measurability, effectiveness, ease of interpretation and stability. 42 indicators were assessed in total (sub-indicators for sub-groups, e.g. men and women, were assessed separately). As a result of the analysis, changes or redefinition of five indicators were proposed, as well as minor modifications of four indicators. Despite deficiencies of indicators described in the report, the system of indicators as a whole was assessed positively. Significant modifications to the following indicators have been proposed in the report:

- Number of new economic entities established in the area of business environment institutions (BEI) (parks of science and technology, incubators of entrepreneurship, clusters, etc.): removing the clusters from the indicator, which are not business environment institutions, was proposed.
- Number of BEI established: objectives of the program may be achieved by existing and newly established BEI; consequently, replacing *established* with *supported* was proposed.
- Percentage of graduates from technical universities and from specialisation of mathematics and natural sciences of the total number of graduates from universities: the implementation of the DEP OP has no impact on the value of the indicator; a new indicator was proposed: *Percentage of first year students at technical universities and students of mathematics and natural sciences specialisations of the total number of first year students*.
- Number of organised exhibition events: the indicator does not reflect the success or size of events; replacing it with *Number of exhibitors participating in organised exhibition events* was proposed.
- Number of inbound tourist arrivals to Eastern Poland: the indicator disregards non-tourist arrivals with tourist elements (e.g. conferences) and ignores the length of the stay; replacing it with *Overnight stays in collective accommodation facilities* was proposed.

The next element of the research pertained to forecasting the values of indicators for 2013 and 2015, as well as assessing achievability of target values recorded in the DEP OP. Forecasts prepared in many instances significantly differ from target values assumed. This is usually due to system reasons, rather

than special conditions related to individual indicators. The first one refers to the time of target value estimation (2007), when full data on the implementation of the first financial perspective for Poland were not available yet and the material that could have provided a basis for comparison and indicator calculation was limited. Potential beneficiaries, who were a source of the data for some estimations, often had no experience in determining target values. Additionally, these values were determined with the application of the prudent approach. We agree with such approach, since we assume that although variances from the target value should be limited, irrespective of whether they are positive or negative, non-achieving the assumed value is more serious issue. Forecasts made resulted in recommending:

- increasing target values in case of nine indicators;
- reducing target values in case of nine indicators.

One of the research elements pertained to the assessment of the correctness of allocating projects to categories of interventions in the context of eligible costs, as consistent or inconsistent with objectives of the Lisbon Strategy. The purpose was to establish what part of ERDF funds (among the ones already covered by contracts) is allocated for financing projects supporting the achievement of objectives of the Lisbon Strategy, and to propose countermeasures. In accordance with *Detailed description of priority axes* this share should have equalled 43.98%. The analysis revealed that out of ERDF funds contracted until the research, 30.3% support objectives that might be considered objectives of the Lisbon Strategy.

Low share of funds supporting objectives of the Lisbon Strategy at the current stage of the programme implementation results from uneven launch of projects in various areas. In particular, this refers to the whole priority axis II: *Infrastructure of an information society* that supports the implementation of objectives of the Lisbon Strategy. The implementation of projects within this axis would significantly increase this share. Taking into account this issue as well as unutilised funds in measures within axis I, the share of costs related to Lisbon Strategy equals 32.5%. In our opinion, non-achieving the value assumed in the programme is due to the assumption adopted for the purposes of determining this value that projects within measure III.1 Systems of municipal public transport are to support objectives of the Lisbon Strategy within category 28 *Intelligent transport systems* and category 52 *Promoting clean municipal transport*. However, these projects better suited to category 25 *Municipal transport* (they were classified by the beneficiaries in such way), while only their elements refer to the aforementioned categories. Taking into account these projects as supporting the Lisbon Strategy would result in increasing the ratio to 48.2%.

An additional task of the evaluator team during the research was to analyse the possibility of reflecting the issue of equal opportunities for men and women in the system of indicators of the DEP OP. Currently, this issue is included in one indicator: *Number of students who benefit from effects of project implementation during the year*. Potentially, this issue could be taken into account without creating additional indicators by dividing the following existing indicators:

- number of created work places with respect to RTD – only research posts;
- percentage of graduates from technical universities and from specialisation of mathematics and natural sciences of the total number of graduates from universities (version proposed by us: *percentage of first year students ...*);

- number of posts co-financed under technical assistance;
- main objective indicator – number of gross created jobs.

However, it is necessary to emphasise that the existing system of indicators is not prepared for automatic feeding of the data for proposed indicators. Consequently, in order to calculate their values, the system would have to be developed and the reporting duties of the beneficiaries would have to be extended. Alternatively, the data for the purposes of the indicator could be gathered manually, based on reports on projects completed.