

1.3.3 The following steps for the evaluation have been carried out:

- 1) The first step, following the standard approach is the appraisal of the socio-economic analysis and the relevance of the strategy to the needs identified.

In this case examination and appraisal of the relevant problems will take place in this phase, looking at the potential risks of absorbing the Structural Funds, concentrating on the management capacities.

Long term development strategies regarding the need to improve effectiveness of public administration have also been considered.

Methods encompassed mainly desk research (analysis of documents outlined above). Findings of this assessment were discussed with TA OP MA staff.

- 2) The second step is an evaluation of the rationale of the strategy and its consistency and policy mix.

Mainly on the basis of desk research an assessment of the rationale of the strategy was made and an opinion of the evaluators on the internal consistency prepared. Split of activities between TA OP and SOP's/ROP was examined, opinion of experts assigned to other OP's considered on issues like the justification of resources allocated to the types of activities as project development, training, publicity & information, project- and financial management, control, information system, etc.).

In this phase short term specialists have been assigned to help focus the assessment of effectiveness and efficiency of proposed training activities in the OP's as well as the development needs and feasibility of the proposed SMIS.

- 3) The third step is an appraisal of the coherence of the strategy with EU and national policies and the National Strategic Reference Framework for Romania.

Based on desk research an assessment of the external coherence was made. Documents reflecting strategies for future administrative reform were also taken into account.

- 4) The fourth step is an evaluation of the expected results and impacts.

The indicators proposed in the draft OP have been checked on the basis of the SMART principles and also their quantification. Their possible aggregation from project to priority and program level has been assisted by specialist short term expert.

- 5) The final step is the appraisal of the proposed implementation system for managing, monitoring and evaluating the Programme.

Evaluation in this phase followed two paths, in an interlinked manner: one is to assess whether TA OP itself can be implemented in a smooth and lawful way against relevant regulations and demand, the other is whether TA OP can effectively contribute to overcome the identified problems potentially hindering the implementation of other SOP's/ROP. Work in this phase encompassed assessment of staff's and systems' availability for the right management of the TA OP.

Evaluator's remark on the evaluation process:

1) adequacy of the ToR

Essential elements of the ToR that are considered necessary to draft proper ex-ante evaluation report of the TA OP were drawn up adequately, therefore no changes have been proposed to this end.

2) dialogue and feedback and dissemination of the draft results

Evaluation findings were discussed with MA staff and TA OP WG members (list of members annexed to the report). On behalf of the MA very good cooperation has been established at the level of the head of MA and twinning adviser. Wider partnership, due to the specific nature of this programme has not been considered appropriate by evaluator. TA OP WG members channelled their opinion through MA that also has been considered as appropriate for this program.