2 Approach and Methodology

2.1 Description of the assignment (objectives and evaluation questions)

The objective of this evaluation done within ex-ante evaluation of the Partnership Agreement (PA) as defined in the Terms of Reference (ToR) was to answer to the evaluation specific questions regarding the assessment of the electronic systems ensuring the information exchange between the Romanian authorities and the beneficiaries (Question III.1) during the programming period 2014-2020:

> III.1 Are there enough regulations and procedures in force for the data exchange required by the new regulations? To what extent are electronic systems comprehensive enough? To what extent do electronic systems meet the elements in the checklist to be drafted by evaluators (ease of use, reduced administrative burden, data aggregation, data quality, research options, data availability in due time, data security etc.)?

According to the ToR, the requirements have to be identified and included in the checklist tool for the electronic systems evaluation fundamental question above (Q.III.1).

2.2 Methodology

The evaluation of electronic systems for data exchange covered the last evaluation question of the current assignment – Q.III.1 – but following the same logic of evaluation as foreseen for major Question II.1, it has started with the launch of this project.

The methodology adopted combined documentary analysis with the most appropriate qualitative and quantitative methods, consultations and plausibility checks with all stakeholders and sector experts.

We started this part of evaluation with documentary analysis based on the new regulations issued by the European Commission, the procedures and regulations that are in force and the documentation on the electronic systems for data exchange. We added to results of the documentary analysis the information collected from interviews with administrators or coordinators of the analysed electronic systems.

We have gathered information on several information systems in place within different Managing Authorities and Intermediate Bodies. These systems are listed in the "Findings" section of this evaluation report. Therefore results of our evaluation contain information and analysis concerning the gathered data on those systems.

We have prepared an efficient checklist covering the full range of factors that are relevant to the Question related to electronic systems. The list covers: ease of use, reduced administrative burden, data aggregation, data quality, search options, data availability in due time, data security, etc. The completed checklists prepared by the experts for existing electronic systems are attached in the Annexes.