

## EVALUATION OF TERRITORIAL STRATEGIC PLANS

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The evaluation of strategic territorial plans can be framed into the evaluation of public policies, considering, however, that their special characteristics like, for example, its mixed nature public-private, its multidisciplinary condition or the fact that they are mainly indicative and non-obligatory plans, make them uneasy to evaluate with the usual tools and methodologies used with public policies.

The information to make a follow-up and proper evaluation of this plans is often limited since the majority of measures considered are to be executed by different administrations, firms and institutions, every one acting in their own sphere, and the responsible for the above mentioned follow-ups just want to see the beginning and the correct ending of the process, with the result of only a part of the initial projects being properly monitorized.

In addition, most of strategic territorial plans lack of a suitable capability of being evaluated, mainly because this was not foreseen when the plans were originally designed and there are no appropriate indicators for the follow-up and evaluation.

In most cases, the evaluation system will focus on three fundamental aspects: possible changes in the environment, completion degree of the strategic projects and the evolution of the territory.

When considering the evaluation of the environment, this should be made taking into account the fields analyzed during the phase of diagnosis. In doing so, we will study the evolution experienced by the region or community to which the territory belongs, what has happened at the same time in the Spanish and European spheres, etc.

To measure the completion degree of the strategic projects will be, obviously, the most informative part of the evaluation of the plan. However, we must realize that the achievement of the different goals and measures is not related completely with the attainment of the established desirable future. There is no mechanical link between the completion degree and the achievement of the strategic plan's main goal.

Even not existing this direct relationship, it is still essential to know the completion degree of each measure, since its own start-up conditions the attainment of the previously formulated goals. In order to measure this, we can use the so-called "evaluation cards" to collect the following data: identification of the responsible or responsible of the start-up, the acceptance of the steps taken, the right progression of the process, the budget assignment and, finally, to what extent the measure has been implemented.

Not all projects have the same importance in the execution of the strategy, and this is the reason why, when it comes to assess the achievement of the main goal, the steps taken are re-examined in some plans. It is much more important to terminate key projects that others secondary, in order to achieve the goals established.

Last, the analysis of the changes occurred in the territory affected by the strategic plan has to be based on a system provided with indicators that allow a proper follow-up, bringing together a sum of socio-economic indexes reflecting the evolution of each critical issue and variable analyzed in the diagnostic phase.

The deviation on the goals initially planned will be detected once the execution of the strategic plan is completely finished.

If the results are not coincident, the executive staff will have to study the reason for this and suggest, according to the seriousness and the reason of this failures, new correcting measures. Perhaps will be necessary to examine the previous strategies and even to reformulate the plan, if necessary.

This last stage links, again, with the "diagnostic phase" of the process, closing in so the whole circle of the strategic planification or, what is the same, serving as a starting point to initiate anew cycle of strategic planification.