Good practice mapping Methodology guide

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1. Introduction and aim of the good practices guide

This deliverable contains a guiding structure for the selection, analysis and publication of good practises (GP) in the field of social enterprise policies. In the context of RaiSE, GPs are policy instruments aiming at supporting social enterprises' (SE) competitiveness with a transferability potential. For qualifying as a GP in the context of RaiSE, these policy instruments can be either implemented by one of the project partners, or by one of their regional stakeholders. The aim of collecting and sharing the GPs is to facilitate the learning and the discussion about such instruments and about their implementation and effects in order to integrate GP experiences in regional business support policies for SE competitiveness.

According to the application form, RaiSE has to collect at least 12 GPs of business policy instruments and/or support infrastructures for SE. These GPs will be published in an upcoming deliverable. Additionally, these GPs have to be uploaded as a good practice "fact sheet" to the Interreg Policy Learning Platform[1]. The project RaiSE falls under a specific sub-section of the policy learning platform, namely "SME competitiveness". The Joint Secretariat provides a template which can be found in the annex of this document. However, the RaiSE Good Practice Guide (GPG) will go beyond this "minimum standard" provided and develops it further.

In our context a good practice is a policy instrument or support infrastructure for a social enterprise that has proven working well and being able to generate good results. It is a successful intervention that has been tested and validated in a broad sense. Given its positive impact on a single social enterprise or the social enterprise sector as such, other European regions with a similar SE environment could consider adopting an approach alike or similar to it. In order to allow other regions assessing the usefulness of intervention in their context, a variety of aspects should be covered by the GP. This includes a clear definition of the problem the intervention is tackling, a description of the intervention logic and the impact it created, and last but not least the potential for transferability, which is crucial in this context.

The present document is structured as follows: First, we give an overview of the products RaiSE will deliver, namely the Interreg "fact sheet" for the Interreg Policy Learning Platform and the good practice guide. Secondly, we present the key criteria for selecting the GPs and finally we define the methodology, contents and key questions the GP should cover.

2. The idea behind the products

We need to develop two different products. The first product is a good practice "fact sheet" for Interreg's Policy Learning Platform, which is based on a standardised template (see annex). Its structure and contents are predetermined by the Joint Secretary. RaiSE is attached to a specific sub-platform of the overall platform, which is called "SME competitiveness". The second product is our Good Practice Guide, of which the structure and content are not clearly defined in the contract. The content describing the good practices builds on the information covered in the "fact sheet" but also goes beyond, in particular regarding aspects that support individual policy learning. These learning processes predominantly target our stakeholder groups in the policy sphere and only to some small extend the informed public. Therefore, the good practices should be informative, yet not too academic at the same time. The specific content, target groups and purpose of the good practises (the latter which is to facilitate intra-regional exchange of experiences

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[1] https://www.interregeurope.eu/policylearning/

and policy learning), call for a specific structure and a set of relevant details for the GPs. These aspects are only partially covered in the before mentioned "fact sheet" and therefore will be further developed in the RaiSE GPs.

The "fact sheet" is a product that will be published at the Interreg Europe website. The idea behind is to have a selection of transferable good practises in different policy fields in a collected form and open to the public on the programme website. In this regard, the website will work as policy intelligence repository for interested stakeholders and the general public. Due to the requirement to upload the GPs and to structure them according to the template, a minimum of information for both products was predetermined by the Joint Secretary. This minimum information comprises basic facts about the intervention and other aspects that are highly relevant for selecting the GPs. Besides technical details, the GPs must cover the details of the intervention focusing on aspects like the underlying problem, how the practise reaches its objective, and the main stakeholders and beneficiaries of the practise. Aspects relevant for selecting the GPs are transferability and their evidence of success, as for each the factual evidence demonstrating its success or failure must be provided. The implications these requirements have on selecting a GP are discussed in section 3. The submitted GPs will be assessed by policy experts at the Platform and only afterwards published.

Building on these requirements we will produce the RaiSE good practise guide. The basic idea for the GPG is to have a graphically appealing brochure that contains the mapped policies. The GPG should be easy to read (not academically), yet informative. We propose a A5 layout whereby each GP is comprised by three pages describing the GP and an additional page with a "success story" featuring a beneficiary and how the policy supported this enterprise, with an additional fact-box, providing the most important information at a glance. The text should have a "red thread" guiding the reading process; starting with a short introduction of the instrument, followed by a description of the problem tackled, the specific objective of the instrument and its intervention logic, ending with the impact created and an answer to the question why this is a good practice. A detailed description of the questions to be covered can be found in the fourth chapter. This text could be accompanied by anecdotal success stories – e.g. information about a funded initiative, interview with a beneficiary or the like. Providing some graphical material (an extra file in a printable format – a vector file would be most suitable, keep size and resolution in mind) would complement to a nice product.

3. Selecting good practices – Criteria

As mentioned above, there are a set of criteria determining if a policy intervention is a good practise or not. Taking the "fact-sheet" into consideration, a good practice should have a measureable effect on the targeted sector or actors. This already imposes limitations, as finding appropriate data sources for both too old (questionable relevance for today's context) and just newly implemented policies (no evidence of positive outcomes) might be problematic. Policies qualifying for a good practice must have been implemented right in time and, ideally, have been assessed positively as well. The second criterion is the transferability of the intervention. The transferability of policy interventions can be broken down into two different dimensions – the technical and thematic dimension. Whereas the technical dimension assesses whether the implementation logic fits the governance structure of the target region, the thematic one asks whether the instrument tackles a problem, which is also prevalent in the target region? Only, if both criteria are met positively, a transferability potential is evident. Therefore, it is important to keep in mind that

policy transfer normally refers to copying an idea and not an instrument as such. Based on the above said, the following key aspects are suggested for the selection of good practices:

1. **Thematic transferability**: The intervention is targeted at a challenge many regions are facing to some degree and finds a creative solution for it. Instruments aiming at very specific, regional issues might be of limited interest for other stakeholders.
2. **Technical transferability**: The selected policy instrument should be applicable also in other European regions given its managing structure for execution of the policy
3. **Outcome**: The selected policy intervention has generated a measurable (positive) outcome on beneficiaries that goes beyond anecdotal evidence.
4. **Evaluation**: Therefore, the policy instrument has ideally already been evaluated. If a potential intervention has net been evaluated, the evaluation criteria[2] of relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact, and sustainability should be assessed before selecting a GP.
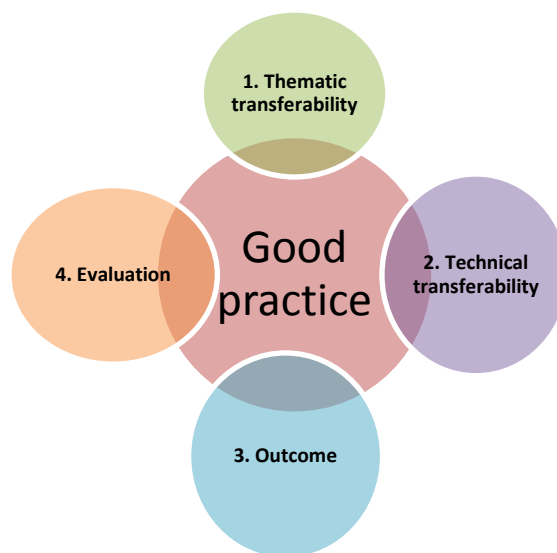

Figure 1 Four key aspects to identify a good practice

All four criteria are equally important and should guide the selection of GPs. However, it is clear that not every policy, which can be considered as a GP, fulfils all these criteria to full extent. In order to allow people, who are responsible to design and implement policy interventions in other regions, for thoroughly assessing the GP, all these criteria must be explicitly described in the text.

4. Contents and key questions

The aim of collecting and sharing the GPs is to facilitate learning and inspiring regions which attempt to update their support structures for SE. The content of the GP should allow readers, amongst it mainly policy makers and the informed public, to understand the purpose, functionality and outcome of a policy intervention, in order to assess its usefulness for their own context. To inform them, target group-specific content is needed. The content thereby reflects the selection criteria but also goes beyond that. The text should be based on the selection criteria and additional key questions. Answering these questions will

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[2] Definitions of evaluation criteria: http://www.oecd.org/development/peer-reviews/2754804.pdf

facilitate the development of the text for the guide. The following content specification is broken down into the main policy description and the success story.

Policy description – the good practise

The thematic alignment and therefore the thematic transferability reflects the intervention logic of the policy instrument. By illustrating the problem, the way the intervention is targeting the problem, the (set of) instrument(s) applied, the outputs, and expected outcomes, results or even impact, the rationale behind the GP becomes comprehensible for readers. Similarly, assessing the technical transferability allows to layout the governance system behind an intervention. In this context, the managing authority responsible for the implementation of the policy, source(s) of funding and possible principal-agent relationships, as well as additionally involved stakeholder groups on the policy level are of interest. Furthermore, the relevant complementarities with other policies could be discussed.

The outcome, – and if information is available – results and impact the intervention has created, ideally demonstrate that the policy indeed is a GP. Providing this information could be interlinked with the intervention logic, if a set of indicators is deployable to demonstrate both the reason behind the intervention and the success of it. However, in a case where only qualitative data is available, dividing the sections might increase the readability. Any potentially available evaluation report for the policy instrument would constitute an important source regarding the outcomes, results and for the possible impact created. If the intervention has not been evaluated, finding answers to the evaluation criteria will go a long way in describing its effect. The intervention logic and monitoring data will be useful tools in finding these answers. A specification on how the success of the intervention has been measured, again increases the credibility of the results.

Additionally, lessons learned about the GP would be of interest. Thereby, a differentiation between learning about the policy design and implementation, the stakeholder setting and coordination, and difficulties in reaching the target group etc. could prove to be useful.

The following key-questions should support drafting the GP:

- *What was/is the problem the policy intervention addresses? How specific is the problem for the region?*
- *How does/do the instrument(s) address this problem?*
- *What was/is the nature of the instrument(s) (e.g. direct financial support, indirect financial support, non-financial support like training, regulation, standards, consultation, etc.)*
- *Who were/are the beneficiaries (thematic programme, SE specific programme, differences in life cycle, etc.), how have they been reached (have there been issues regarding the target group e.g. management skills), how many SE have been supported under this instrument and was/is there a geographical focus (regional, national or international policy)?*
- *Why was/is it essential/important to support these/this actor(s) with these/this problem(s)?*
- *What was/is the intervention logic?*
- *Who were/are the stakeholders of the intervention and did/do governance issues arise from this setting?*
- *What was/is the timeframe of the intervention? (How long did/does the programme run; how long did/does it support beneficiaries?)*

- *What are the financial aspects of the programme? (How much did/will it cost in total; how much did/do the beneficiaries receive as a maximum; where did/do the funds come from?)*
- *How were/are the outcomes of the intervention measured?*
- *Which outcome (impact) did/does the intervention create?*
- *Is the intervention transferable? What are crucial aspects that should be taken into account when planning to transfer?*
- *What were/are the lessons learned? (Design and implementation, stakeholder coordination, reaching the target group etc.)*

The GP should be written in a clear and easily understandable language with a red thread guiding the reader trough the text. Therefore, an abstract-like introduction to the problem, the nature of the instrument and why this intervention is considered a GP should be provided as a short overview. The first part of the core text should specify the problem, the target group and the rationale behind the policy. The second part contains a description of the intervention logic and stakeholder setting including technical aspects about the instruments themselves. This is followed by a discussion of the outcomes, their assessment and transferability. Before, the lessons learned are elaborated. The GP should end with discussing why this intervention can be considered a good practise.

Additionally, the fact-box will contain the following information – name of the intervention, objective, nature of intervention (financial, training, network tec.), time of implementation, costs, outcome, and the transferability (on a categorical scale high-medium-low). There will be a limitation in regards to the maximum number of letters used, which depends on the layout.

Success story – illustrating the effects

In order to make the good practise guide more interesting and to provide a better understanding of the potential impact, we agreed that the policy description should be accompanied by a success story to illustrate the kind of effects the intervention creates on the level of the beneficiaries. Therefore, one success story per GP should be conducted. As mentioned above, this story should be brief, yet informative and colourful. We do not specify the content or format of the success stories – various formats are possible from interviews to company profiles etc. The only requirement for qualifying as a success story is that its development to a "success story" is directly related to the support provided by the same policy that is a GP.