

The involvement of the Local and Regional Authorities in the European Semester – Analysis of the 2018 National Reform Programmes

Findings of the study

Metis GmbH

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Overview of the study

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The scale of LRA involvement in the EU 27

Dimension

▶ **Territorial dimension**

- Disparities, challenges and needs
- Impact/Coverage
- Specific policies

▶ **Involvement of LRAs in the NRP**

- Preparation
- Implementation
- Evaluation
- Europe 2020
- European Pillar of Social Rights

▶ **Obstacles to Investments**

- Territorial perspective
- Role of LRAs
- Related policies

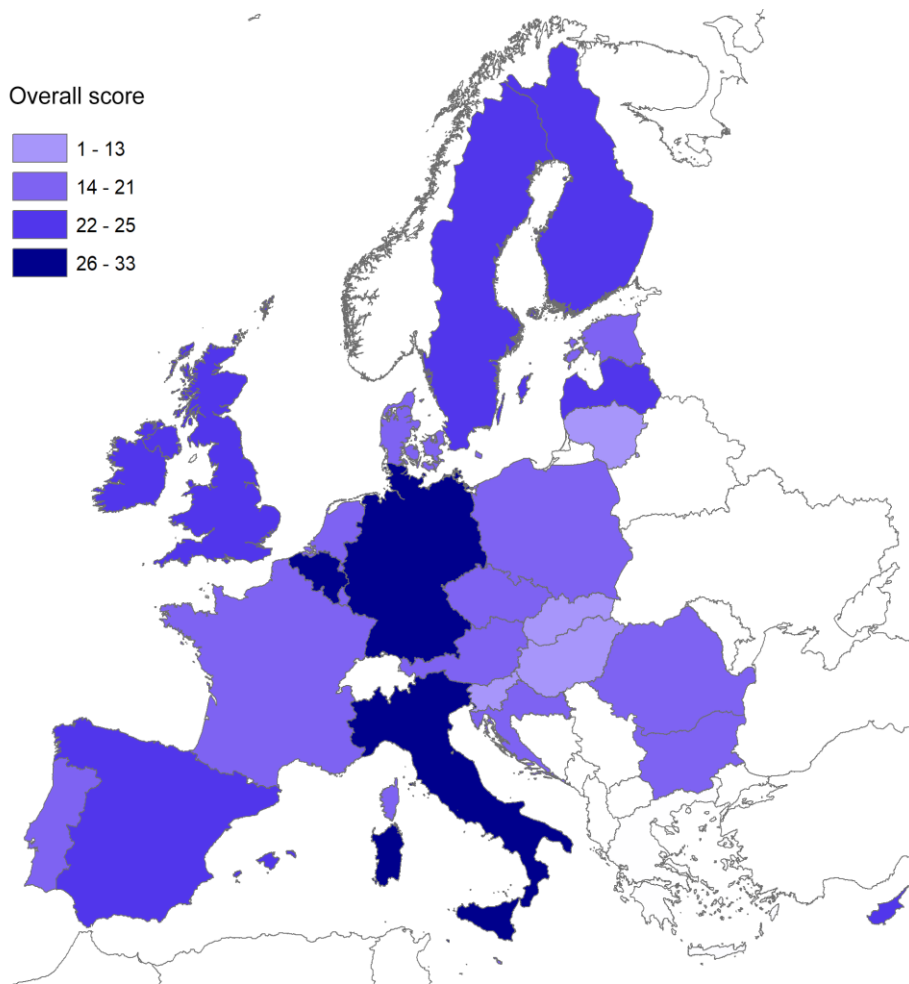
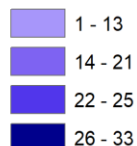
▶ **Administrative capacity**

- Administrative capacity of LRAs related to the implementation of the NRP and the EU 2020 pathway
- Administrative capacity related to investment policies
- Institutional capacity-building

▶ **Partnership and MLG**

- Coordination among the tiers of administration
- Cooperation models
- Wider partnership (multi-actorship)

Overall score

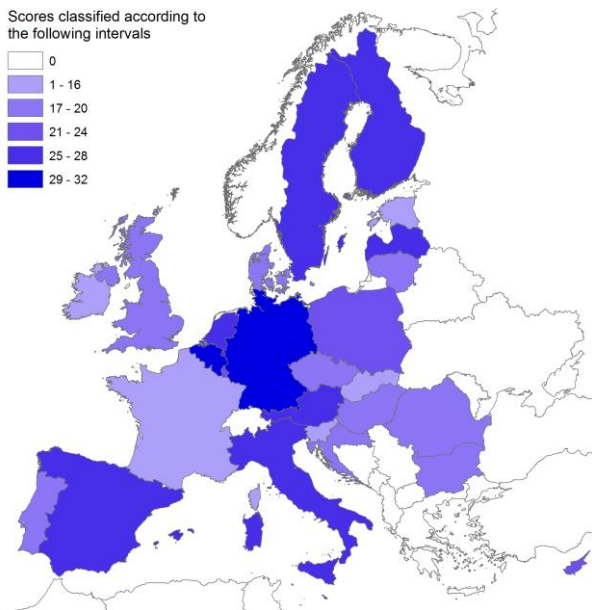
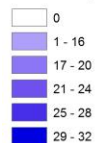


Methodology

- ▶ In order to rank the quality of information provided in the NRP, a simple and straightforward scoring system was used.
- ▶ The scores range from 0 up to 2 points per dimension, in which 0 means that no reference to LRAs is included, 1 stands for an explicit but general reference to LRAs and a score of 2 shows a specific reference to LRAs.
- ▶ The Study evaluated the NRPs according to 17 dimensions, allowing for a maximum overall score of 34 points.

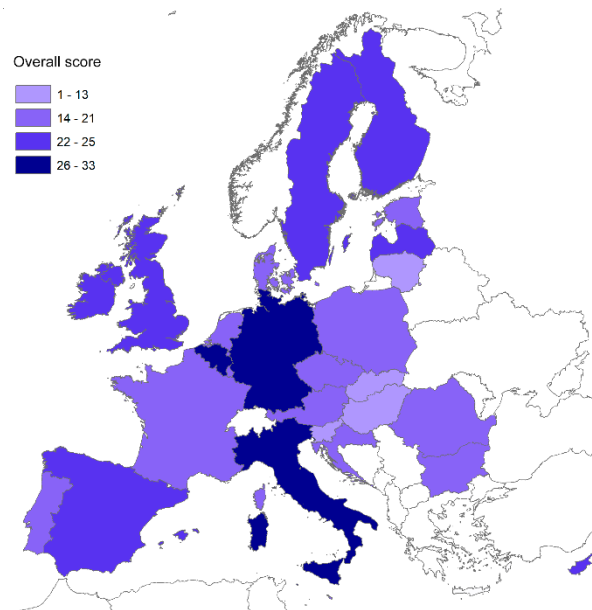
Comparative Analysis (2016 – 2017)

Scores classified according to the following intervals



2017

Overall score



2018

Change over the last year:

AT	BE	BG	CY	CZ	DE	DK	EE	EL	ES	FI	FR	HR	HU
--			-	-			++					-	--
IE	IT	LT	LU	LV	MT	NL	PL	PT	RO	SE	SI	SK	UK
++		--	-		-	--		-		-	--	-	

Observed patterns

- ▶ **Territorial dimension:** significantly higher scores for Western European EU-14 than for the Eastern European countries (mainly CEEC); may reflect a higher awareness of the territorial dimension of challenges and policies.
- ▶ Only a small number of EU-13 countries (five), but the clear majority of EU-14 countries (12) include a reference to the role of LRAs in the **preparation** of the NRPs.
- ▶ **Obstacles to investment:** Strong involvement of LRAs is found on the one hand side for Northwest European countries with a long tradition of LRA involvement, on the other hand side for post-communist CEEC and Mediterranean countries with presumable investment backlog.
- ▶ The role of **administrative capacities** is mainly addressed in the NRPs of countries carrying out a public sector reform.
- ▶ **Partnership and MLG:** High scores for the three federations among the MS, i.e. AT, BE, DE as well as for other Northern European countries with a long-standing tradition in local self-government. The other fact reflected in high scorings is ongoing public-sector reform.

Policy fields

- ▶ The prevalent recurrent topic of LRA involvement in the NRPs is **social inclusion**. The topic has a clear territorial dimension since it concerns primarily regions with high unemployment.
- ▶ Further policy areas mentioned frequently:
 - Employment initiatives
 - Education programmes
 - Improvements to the business environment
- ▶ The general picture broadly fits to the findings in the Territorial Analysis of the Country Reports (CRs) done by CoR.

Conclusions

- ▶ The overall picture remains **similar to 2017**. Highest scores can be found in Central and Northwest European EU-15 countries with a long tradition of regional self-governance.
- ▶ Countries with ongoing or recently implemented **administrative reforms** show a tendency for a more intense coverage of LRA involvement than comparable countries without such reform programmes.
- ▶ The prevalent recurrent topic of the NRPs is **social protection**. The aftermath of the **economic crisis** leaves its mark on the issues where LRA responsibilities are explicitly involved (public budgets or measures to ease unemployment).
- ▶ Almost all MS involve LRAs in the implementation of policies in line with the **European Pillar of Social Rights**, however mostly without referring to it directly.