Implementing RIA in policymaking in Romania … Still under construction!

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Abstract

Recognition is growing that policy makers can design substantially better policies by using rigorous evidence for informing their decisions, selecting funds and operating public programs more strategically. Based on that, in the last decades, countries have been engaged into a process of reforming policymaking, including evidence-based instruments, although the idea of using evidence to inform policy is not new, but is far back, Aristotel stated that different kinds of knowledge should inform rulemaking.

In this paper, I set to analyse the application of regulatory impact assessment into policymaking, taking into account that even before accession to the European Union, Romania has introduced the RIA as an evidence-based instruments, although the EU has no specific competences in the administrative sphere. However, an indirect impact of EU through the administrative standard set in the aquis, the transfer of the best practice and the promotion of its own management practices can be noticed on the administrative practice of Member States. The aim is to present several factors that emerged from the transfer process of policymaking into practice at a national level. Presenting and analysing these factors is seen as a way of understanding why the culture of using RIA in Romania is a path still under construction.

The methodological part takes the form of a qualitative analysis, consisting in the presentation of the steps made by Romanian government, for understanding why the use and the quality of RIA is highly uneven, and many RIAs are superficial.

Key words: policy capacity, regulatory impact assessment, evidence-based policy