

EUROPEAN
EVALUATION
HELPDESK
FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT



REPORT

APPRAISING INTERVENTION STRATEGIES UNDER THE CAP: EXPERIENCES AND OUTLOOK

GOOD PRACTICE WORKSHOP
ROME, 15-16 OCTOBER 2019

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The Evaluation Helpdesk is responsible for the evaluation function within the European Network for Rural Development (ENRD) by providing guidance on the evaluation of RDPs and policies falling under the remit and guidance of DG AGRI's Unit C.4 'Monitoring and Evaluation' of the European Commission (EC). In order to improve the evaluation of EU rural development policy the Evaluation Helpdesk supports all evaluation stakeholders, in particular DG AGRI, national authorities, RDP managing authorities and evaluators, through the development and dissemination of appropriate methodologies and tools; the collection and exchange of good practices; capacity building, and communicating with network members on evaluation related topics.

Additional information about the activities of European Evaluation Helpdesk for Rural Development is available on the Internet through the Europa server (<http://enrd.ec.europa.eu>).

REPORT

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

CAP: Common Agricultural Policy

CMO: Common Market Organisation

DG AGRI: Directorate General Agriculture and Rural Development

ENRD: European Network for Rural Development

EU: European Union

FADN: Farm Accountancy Data Network

LAG: Local Action Group

LEADER: Liaison Entre Actions de Développement de l'Économie Rurale (original acronym)

M&E: Monitoring and Evaluation

MA: Managing Authority

PA: Paying Agency

RDP: Rural Development Programme

SEA: Strategic Environmental Assessment

SO: Specific Objective

SP: Strategic Plan

SWOT: Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats

ToR: Terms of Reference

VCS: Voluntary Coupled Support

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The 11th Good Practice Workshop 'Appraising intervention strategies under the CAP: experiences and outlook' Getting prepared for the ex ante evaluation of the CAP Strategic Plan' took place in Rome on 15 and 16 October 2019. It had the overarching objective to raise awareness for evidence-based policy making by identifying good practice in using evaluation in the programming stage (ex ante evaluation).

The workshop brought together 86 participants from 24 different EU Member States and focused specifically on the appraisal of the intervention strategy and target setting based on the experiences of the ex ante evaluation in 2014-2020 and those from the preparation of the CAP Strategic Plans 2021-2027.

The workshop benefited from the insights of the European Commission addressing some of the participants key concerns in relation to changes in the ex ante process between 2014 and 2021, challenges in the ex ante evaluation concerning the specific nature of Pillar I and Pillar II interventions and generally how to make the most out of the ex ante evaluation for the design of strategic interventions. It also offered insights into the appraisal of the intervention logic and target setting through case studies from two Member States from the current programming period (Spain and France) and two case studies related to ex ante approaches for the new programming period (Czech Republic and Austria). The case studies and discussions that followed identified a number of key messages for the evaluation stakeholders:

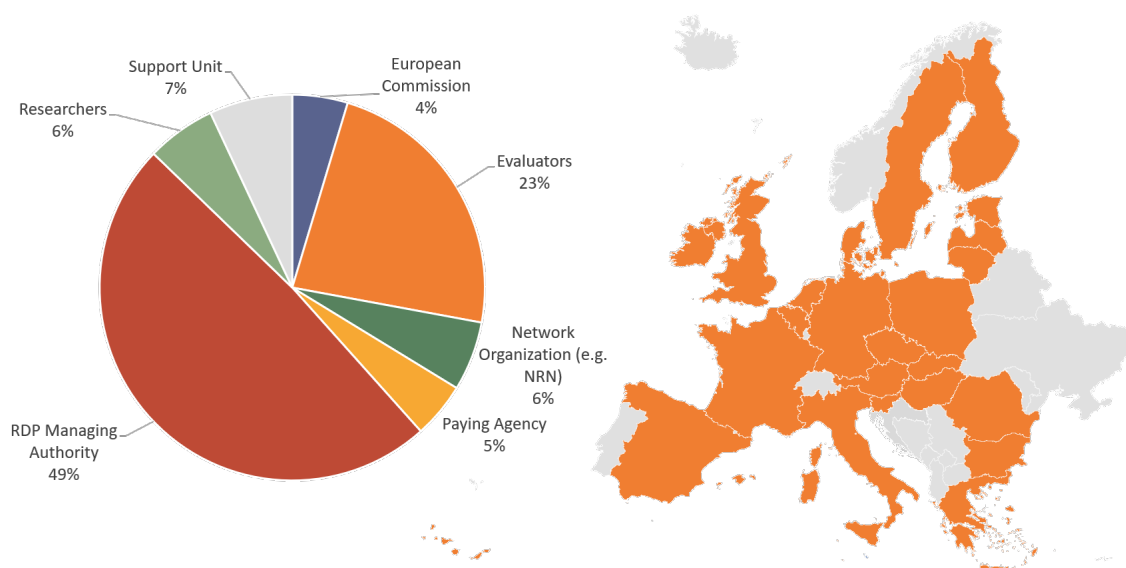
- **For the ex ante evaluation to be useful, the careful planning of both programming and the ex ante evaluation is recommended.** The ex ante work should start early in order to assess the plausibility of the strategic decisions, especially considering that some choices might be difficult to reconsider once announced. In addition, an early, long-term planning based on a system of alerts can be used to accommodate changes in the context, in the typology of projects or in the profile of beneficiaries. The use of methods such as the theory of change should be introduced from the beginning, as the starting point of the ex ante evaluation. Finally, the appraisal of targets can lead to reconsidering the strategy/budget allocation if inconsistencies between targets and needs or objectives are identified. This is why the exercise should not be carried out at the end.
- **Close cooperation and good relationship between the ex ante evaluators and the Managing Authority are crucial.** This means that the ex ante evaluation should be an intertwined and iterative process, including a high involvement of the Managing Authority in the process, including the involvement of relevant stakeholders from Pillar I and Pillar II, as well as regional stakeholders where relevant. In this context, the transfer of knowledge from the evaluator to the Managing Authority in the preparation of the new period is a key factor, given that some Managing Authorities, especially in regionalised countries, have new responsibilities. The interaction between the evaluators and the Managing Authorities improves the ability to justify the priorities during the implementation of the programme.
- **The experience and research capacity of the evaluator, together with a thorough knowledge of the programme and its context are success factors in the ex ante evaluation process.** New/innovative actions are welcome but challenging as there is no past experience, therefore the evaluator needs to understand the programme and the development context, while at the same time look for other references. Furthermore, the evaluator needs to complement experience with 'field work' and the collection of expert opinions to cover the knowledge gaps. Evaluators should have the capacity to use appropriate techniques and models (e.g. based on the theory or change approach) to best check the contribution of interventions to specific objectives in the context of the overall shift from a compliance-based to a performance-based CAP.

1 SETTING THE FRAME

Member States are currently in the process of preparing their CAP Strategic Plans. The elaboration of the CAP Strategic Plan requires the design of the intervention strategy for each CAP Specific Objective, following a sound intervention logic, supported by the ex ante evaluation, the SWOT analysis and the assessment of needs¹. Therefore, the ex ante evaluation is an integral part of this process but also plays an important role in improving the quality of the design of the CAP Strategic Plans². The intervention strategy is the combination of interventions, their expected outputs and results, the setting of targets and milestones for these results and the allocation of financial resources to interventions. This Good Practice Workshop aimed to learn lessons and share good practices on how the ex ante evaluation can appraise the evidence-base, rational and the link among all the elements of the intervention strategy.

86 participants from 24 different EU Member States attended the event, including RDP Managing Authorities, evaluators, EU level representatives (e.g. European Commission, ENRD Evaluation Helpdesk), Researchers, National Rural Networks, and other actors.

Figure 1. Participants of the Good Practice Workshop by role and Member State



Mr. Emilio Gatto (Ministry of Agricultural, Food and Forestry Policies - Director for Rural Development) welcomed participants and opened the workshop by emphasising the importance of these meetings to exchange good practices among the Member States and get prepared for the CAP Strategic Plans.

Representatives of the European Commission – DG AGRI attended the event to address some of the open questions raised by the participants before and during the workshop. Mr Eduardo Serrano-Padial (DG AGRI, Unit C.4 Monitoring and Evaluation) illustrated the main expectations from the Commission on the ex ante evaluation of the CAP Strategic Plans post-2020 compared to the RDPs 2014 – 2020. He highlighted the more ambitious role of conditionality in improving the joint economic and environmental performance of the CAP, as well as in addressing climate challenges. He reminded that conditionality is not strictly an intervention itself, but important requirements that any beneficiary of area-based payments has to comply with concerning good agricultural practices but also obligations stemming from EU and national legislations. As stressed by Mr Serrano-Padial, the legislative

¹ Section 2, Working Paper, WK 11284/2018 ADD 1

² Article 125 of the CAP proposal (https://ec.europa.eu/commission/sites/beta-political/files/budget-may2018-cap-strategic-plans_en.pdf)

procedures of the CAP reform post-2020 is moving forward with the works in the Council and the European Parliament; it is therefore difficult to define precise expectations about something that is evolving. Certainly, the Commission expects that the Member States make use of the best available evidence in the SWOT analysis for the design of a solid intervention strategy, including also taking stock of the experiences and lessons from the actors involved in both Pillar I and II. The ex ante evaluation is an important tool to ensure the consistency among these two pillars, especially with a view of the new delivery model.

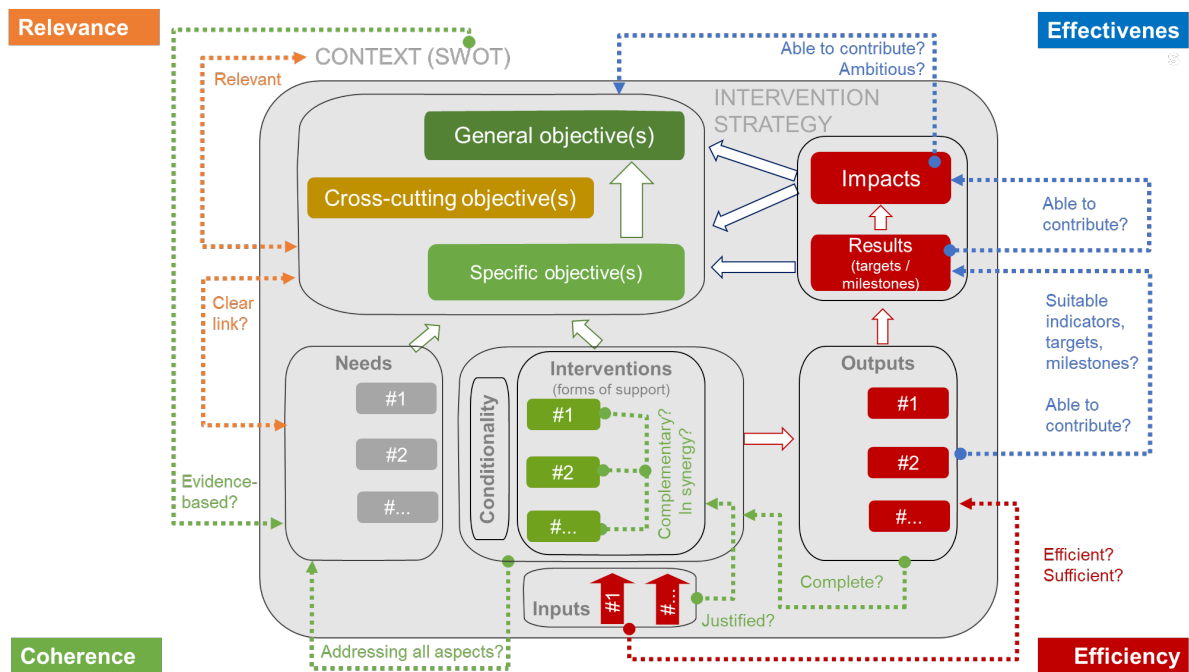
Mr Benjamin Fairbrother (DG AGRI, Unit F.1 Conception and consistency of rural development) explained that simplification is a key element of the proposal put forward by the Commission in June 2018. However, the inclusion of Pillar I and II under one single CAP Strategic Plan requires proactive actions at different level of governance to translate this change into a real simplification on the ground. As first step, Mr Fairbrother recommended identifying the responsible actors for both pillars and to start their interactions very soon in order to find the best arrangements for the new CAP delivery model. Furthermore, he called the attention on the important role of the ex ante evaluation in increasing the transparency along the preparation of the CAP Strategic Plans, specifically by appraising the link between evidences and conclusions. The ex ante evaluation should be easy to read for any stakeholders and possibly be structured according the points referred under Article 125 of the current Commission's proposal. Useful ex ante evaluations shall identify the gaps in the intervention strategy and potentially provide inputs that feed into the design of the CAP Strategic Plan. However, he called to mind that the synergy between the ex ante evaluation and the design of the CAP Strategic Plan can be achieved especially if the whole preparation process is well planned in advance.

Ms Zélie Peppiette (DG AGRI, Advisor) explained the rational behind the use of the ex ante evaluation in the new CAP Strategic Plan. The understanding of this exercise should go beyond the legal requirement and Member State shall use it to achieve the best results from the future policy. A useful ex ante evaluation starts from drafting a good Term of Reference, selecting a multi-disciplinary evaluation team, establishing good interactions between Managing Authorities and evaluators across all the phases. She encouraged the Member States to set up interactive workshops jointly with formal or written exchanges to clarify tricky aspects and consult multiple stakeholders. Being open about the challenges should not be seen as a sign of weaknesses, but as an opportunity to improve the programming. It is highly recommended to follow a logic and strategic approach in the preparation of the CAP Strategic Plan, starting with a territorial analysis, SWOT, assessment of needs, construction of the intervention logic, setting up of targets, distribution of funds. The ex ante evaluation can test the robustness and coherence of quantified targets, and advise programming authorities with evidence-based recommendations, e.g. by appraising the sensitiveness and readiness of farmers to take up eco-schemes. Furthermore, Ms Peppiette underlined the challenges raised by the integration of Pillar I and II in the new delivery model. The challenges have a lot to do with team building, achieving common understandings, and integrating people with different perspectives and background.

Mr Hannes Wimmer (ENRD Evaluation Helpdesk) introduced the conceptual framework for the ex-ante appraisal of the intervention logic and targets under the CAP Strategic Plan (Figure 2). The conceptual framework was developed as part of the Thematic Working Group: [Preparing the ex ante evaluation of the CAP Strategic Plan](#) and guides stakeholders in understanding and focusing the appraisal on the different elements of an intervention strategy.

This workshop report is structured as follows: Chapter 2 illustrates the case-studies presented and discussed with participants. Chapter 3 provides the main conclusions and recommendations derived from the workshop. Finally, the outcomes of the group works are summarised in the Annex to this report.

Figure 2. Conceptual framework for the ex ante appraisal of the intervention logic and targets under the CAP Strategic Plan



Source: European Evaluation Helpdesk for Rural Development (2019)

2 SHARING EXPERIENCES

2.1 Lessons learned from the ex ante appraisal of RDPs 2014-2020

Ms Marili Parissaki (ENRD Evaluation Helpdesk) moderated a question and answer session with the representatives of the National Managing Authorities from Spain and France, namely Ms Mariam Sánchez (Spain) and Mr Pierre Poussard (France). The questions concerned the state of play and challenges of the ex ante evaluation of one single CAP Strategic Plan in regionalised countries.

In France, Mr Poussard explained that an important challenge faced so far is about **building up a clear evaluation framework** covering both pillars, going from input to output, result and impact indicators. In Spain, Ms Sánchez explained that the main challenge encountered so far concern **addressing the needs from multiple regions** in one single CAP Strategic Plan. Similarly, Mr Poussard informed that the same difficulties emerged from the situational analysis being carried out at national level, aiming to reach around 200 pages report to be used as basis for the CAP Strategic Plan. However, Mr Poussard explained the difficulties in being consistent with all the regional needs and synthetic at the same time.

Both countries expressed the same challenge in relation to **constructing a solid and comprehensive monitoring system**, collecting data from different points. Mr Poussard explained that France is trying to integrate four different datasets (from different paying agencies) and identify all the data that needs to be collected in order to produce the performance report in a tight timeframe. The overall aim is to anticipate the IT system allowing the automatic collection of data from Pillar I and II.

Ms Sánchez explained that the **involvement of stakeholders from both pillars, as well as from regions** does not come without challenges. The new delivery model needs to consider also the **national legal frameworks** which, for instance in Spain, entail different policy competencies shared between the regional and national governments.

After the question and answer with representatives of the Managing Authorities, Ms Parissaki passed the floor to Ms Maria Coto (Senior Evaluator, Red2Red Consultores) and Mr Jacques Carrillo (General Director, Edater) who gave two presentations about their experience and lessons learned from the ex-ante appraisal of intervention logic and targets set up in several regional RDPs 2014-2020 from Spain and France.



'While the programming authority is moving from SWOT analysis, to assessment of needs, interventions and targets, the ex-ante evaluator goes into the opposite direction. The ex ante evaluation tries to appraise if the needs are reflected in the SWOT analysis, or whether the intervention address the needs.'

Maria Coto

Link to the PPT: [Target and milestones appraisal: lessons from the ex ante evaluation of RDPs in Spain](#) (Maria Coto)

Link to the PPT: [Experiences from the ex ante evaluation of regionalised RDPs 2014 – 2020 in France and lessons for the next period](#) (Jacques Carrillo)

After the presentation, participants posed the following questions to the presenters:



Who defines the unit cost for the setting up of the targets? The Managing Authority or evaluator?

Ms Coto explained that the division of responsibility depends very much on the agreed process. In some RDPs, evaluator and MA worked together and the evaluator provided support for the estimation of the targets. In other RDP, the evaluator gave directly an estimation of the unit costs to the MA.

The setting up of targets is based on several assumptions. Do you think it is useful to visualise these assumptions and discuss them in a participatory setting with multiple stakeholders?

Ms Coto agrees on the importance of involving stakeholders for testing if the estimation of targets will match with the reality and experience on the ground.

How do you estimate the budget for the evaluator to carry out the ex-ante evaluation?

Mr. Carrillo informed that the budget allocation changes according the size of the RDP, which in turn affects the robustness and quality of the ex-ante evaluation. There is not rule of thumbs.

When does the evaluator work end?

Ms Coto informed that in the current programming period, the evaluator agreed to end the contract until the approval of the RDP from the Commission. The workload, however, changed from more intense to less. Mr. Carrillo explained that the tender or term of reference can foresee the responsibility of evaluators in addressing comments from the Commission or Managing Authority and suggest revisions.

How does the ex ante evaluation consider the Strategic Environmental Assessment?

Mr. Carrillo stressed the importance of interlinking the ex ante evaluation and the SEA. He suggested that this two works shall proceed in parallel, in order to avoid the approval of the programme without the SEA. In some Member States, a single term of reference is published for both the ex ante evaluation and SEA.

After the question and answer session, participants worked in a world café format to share their experiences from current programming period with a view of taking lessons for preparing the ex ante evaluation of the CAP Strategic Plan. More specifically, participants discussed their difficulties and solutions in appraising the link between needs and interventions (Topic 1), the coherence of the intervention logic (Topic 2), and link between intervention and targets (Topic 3). The outcomes of the discussions were shared in plenary and are summarised in the annex.

2.2 Steps towards the appraisal of the CAP Strategic Plan 2021-2027

Mr Valdis Kudins moderated a question and answer session on the preparation of the CAP Strategic Plan 2021-2027 with representatives of Managing Authorities from Czech Republic, Greece, and Poland. Mr Grzegorz Wirtek (Poland) argued that the complexity of the ex ante evaluation of the CAP Strategic Plan can be overcome with:

- **An early selection of the evaluator**, which allow to have sufficient time to learn from each other, consult and discuss with stakeholders, and carry out robust assessments.
- **The establishment of good communication channels** between the Managing Authority and ex-ante Evaluators, as well as among the different departments of the same Managing Authority.
- **A clear set of ex ante evaluation questions** specified in the Term of Reference to guide the evaluator in this broad exercise. These questions can be based on the Commission proposal put forward in June 2018, as well as the revisions in the Council's Working Party. However, the Member States should also think about addressing their own needs in the ex ante evaluation, for instance, in relation to assessing innovation, digitisation, modernisation, and other priorities in the country.

Ms Anthi Katsirma (Greece) underlined the importance of the **governance mechanisms between programming and the ex-ante evaluation of the intervention strategy**. Regarding the Greek CAP Strategic Plan, two separate calls have been published: one for the SWOT and programming of the CAP Strategic Plan and one for the ex-ante evaluation and SEA. The coordination of these two calls has been ensured to be interactive and strong. These two calls have been broken down in different phases (e.g. SWOT analysis, designing of the intervention strategy, financial allocation, indicator plan) to ensure that the deliverables of each call can feed into each other's. The intervention strategy and targets should be assessed against **clear criteria**. In the future CAP Strategic Plan, there are interventions, e.g. risk management, eco-schemes, new agro-environmental interventions and sectorial programs, which are new for some Member States. New interventions can bring challenges for both the programming authorities and the ex ante evaluation. Ms Katsirma suggested the following **tools for the ex ante evaluation of new interventions**:

- bibliographic research (e.g. National, European or International);
- pilot projects (e.g. LIFE or RDP Measure 16 Cooperation projects, e.g. for eco-schemes and agro-environmental interventions);
- interviews with managing authorities from other countries and/or key stakeholders;
- focus groups with experts and other key stakeholders.

Ms Alena Kubu (Czech Republic) explained the state of play of the preparation of the CAP Strategic Plan in Czech Republic. The SWOT analysis was completed in August 2019 by the Institute of Agricultural economics and Information. Czech Republic selected also independent evaluator for the ex ante evaluation. Based on this experience, Ms Kubu underlined the importance of **defining the steps of the ex ante evaluation** in the term of references for selecting the independent evaluator. For instance, in Czech Republic, ten days after sending the written report on the appraisal of the SWOT analysis, the selected evaluator gave a presentation of the report, explaining the main messages and clarifying open questions in a face-to-face meeting with the Managing Authority. After the appraisal of the SWOT analysis, the ex ante evaluator will appraise also the intervention logic and its targets. However, the evaluator and programme authority are waiting for the approval of the multi-financial framework to complete this task.

After the question and answer session, Mr Kudins passed the floor to Mr Jaroslav Pražan (Evaluator, Institute of Agricultural Economics and Information) and Mr Andreas Resch (Evaluator, Metis) who gave two presentations on their approaches for appraising the intervention logic and targets, by the use of different methods, such as the theory of change.



'Theory of change is a method to check the plausibility of the pathways to achieve a goal, to discover flaws in the design of interventions and to prove the consistency between expected results and indicators. Visualization elements are key instruments for facilitating participatory working groups'.

Andreas Resch

Link to the PPT: [Lessons for the ex-ante evaluation of the CAP strategic plan in the Czech Republic](#) (Jaroslav Pražan)

Link to the PPT: [Using the theory of change approach for assessing the intervention logic – lessons learned from the impact evaluation of P6 of the Austrian RDP 2014-2020](#) (Andreas Resch)

Link to a Theory of Change practical example: [...insert link to the word document that Andi sent](#) (Andreas Resch)

After the presentation, participants posed the following questions to the presenters:



Theory of change can discover gaps in the evaluation framework and suggest the collection of additional data which is not always available in the monitoring system. How does the evaluator help the Managing Authority to collect data for the additional indicators?

Mr Resch agreed that the monitoring system is not always complete and comprehensive. On the other hand, the collection of additional data can be very challenging. To fill the identified data gaps, field research methods can be used (e.g. survey, interviews with key stakeholders)

Czech Republic is one of the Member States who made the biggest progress in the preparation of the CAP Strategic Plan post 2020. How will you deal with possible radical changes in the legislative procedure and in the agreement on the multi-financial framework?

Mr Pražan explained that the Managing Authority in Czech Republic decided to move the ex ante evaluation of their new agricultural policy forward, regardless of the EU legislation. By experience, in any programming of a policy reform, the programming actors have to deal with the shortage of time and have to follow the same steps. Therefore, it is highly recommended to start the process as early as possible. By following this approach, even if there might be possible changes in the basic acts, it would be easier to make revisions or remove some elements on a well-prepared drafted programme, rather than starting it from scratch.

How can one build clear links between result indicators, interventions, and each CAP

The creation of a logic pathway (link) between intervention, specific objectives and result indicators, needs to be based on a thorough

specific objective, without ending up with a complex framework?

understanding of the interventions and shall be backed up with collection of evidence.

After the question and answer session, participants worked together on the challenges and solutions to appraise the intervention strategy and targets of the CAP Strategic Plan. Participants were divided according the three CAP general objectives in order to address more specific issues, as well as horizontal aspects (e.g. new delivery model, innovation, modernisation, etc.). The outcomes of the group work were shared in plenary and are summarised in the annex to this document.



Photo: Participants of the Good Practice Workshop 11 'Appraising intervention strategies under the CAP'.
15-16 October 2019. Rome (Italy)

3 CONCLUDING REMARKS

The outcomes of the case studies, discussions and group work brought together the issues and challenges of Member States for appraising the intervention logic and target setting and culminated into a rich set of practical suggestions for addressing these issues, summarised below.

Building capacity to identify synergies between Pillar 1 and 2

- Set up a multi-disciplinary team involving experts from both Pillar 1 and Pillar 2 in the evaluation team to ensure knowledge about coherence.
- Organise EU level capacity building activities for evaluators.
- Ensure cooperation and regular meetings between administrative departments, ministries and/or institutions working in Pillar 1 and Pillar 2.
- Involve stakeholders in the assessment of internal coherence for interventions where conflicts may occur (e.g. young farmers are supported under both Pillars, while digitalisation/modernisation could lead to an outflow of young farmers).
- Provide a toolbox on the links between Pillar 1 and Pillar 2.

Ensure a good understanding of the content of specific objectives

- The ex ante evaluation should assess which interventions are more appropriate to the specific objective (e.g. which quality schemes under SO3).
- Look for synergies of interventions to enhance achievements under each specific objective.
- To understand the level of ambition of specific objectives related to the environment, consider the allocated budget, the administrative capacity and the extent to which the CAP addresses the identified needs (based on a comprehensive SWOT).
- Consider a more horizontal assessment of unclear or overlapping objectives (e.g. nutritious and sustainable food (SO9), employment (SO8)).
- Test the concepts of interventions, especially for new interventions, with stakeholders, for example through workshops.

The methodological approach for appraising the intervention strategies

- The starting point should be a good understanding of definitions of result indicators and of the expected achievements for the needs.
- Use evidence-based approaches such as analysis of past experiences and wider relevant experience through literature, statistics, studies and evaluations.
- Use robust methods, such as multi-criteria matrices for assessing coherence and consistency or impact models for assessing the links between specific interventions and objectives.
- Assess the inclusion of LEADER specificities in the design of interventions using the theory of change approaches.

Clarifying the link between interventions and results

- Carry out a sectoral and territorial analysis to assess potential links and variations in results.
- Consider the use of experimental models in specific contexts to analyse different scenarios.
- Use insights from past experiences documented in studies and literature.
- Map all potential links between each specific objective and result indicators, including the influence of external factors and potential risks (theory of change is highly pertinent here).

Addressing data availability issues

- Take stock from the experience in the current programming period for indicators like the complementary results indicators.

- Analyse the current system on Pillar 1 and Pillar 2, identify gaps/overlaps and develop a consolidated IT system, provided there is funding, skills and political commitment.
- Carry out a broader context analysis and if necessary, provide additional context indicators.
- Obtain historical data from FADN to help set target values.
- Access data from other sources to cover data gaps, including the use of other studies, evaluations and literature.
- Obtain relevant input from representative stakeholders (ask the right questions to the right people).
- Cooperation between the MA and the PA for the provision of the necessary data.

The workshop also identified a significant number of challenges, some of which are more specific and could not be addressed within the remit of the workshop but will be used when framing future tasks of the Evaluation Helpdesk. They include inter alia the following categories:

- **External factors**, e.g. how to take into account the volatility of prices, population trends, international trade, etc. in the context analysis (relevant for SO1) or the relevance of instruments related to market orientation which is dependent on external factors (relevant for SO2).
- **Budget allocation**, e.g. how to assess it when there are conflicting priorities, such as digitalisation leading to innovation versus more basic investments that the sector may be willing to undertake (relevant for SO2).
- **Data availability**, e.g. what data to use when the level of detail needed when describing the interventions is unclear.
- **Definitions/understanding**, e.g. how to address the lack of knowledge/understanding of product labelling and improving the farmers' position in the market (relevant for SO3) or how to deal with level of ambition of environmental indicators when the situation is different in each Member State (relevant for SO4, 5 and 6).
- **Dealing with different competences**, notably, how to obtain data from different institutional actors, e.g. when data or expertise on environment is under the Ministry of Environment but the programme is designed under the Ministry of Agriculture.
- **Contradictions and similarities in environmental interventions**, e.g. how to appraise the interventions related to climate adaptation which are very local and different between regions and countries, or how to appraise the economic versus environmental expected effects of some interventions or how to assess interventions under SO4 and SO5 which are very similar and inter-related.
- **Timing of effects**, e.g. how to appraise effects when their timing is uncertain (for environmental interventions) or how to track the contributions of multiple interventions whose effects take time to appear (e.g. farm advisory, training).
- **Target setting for very specific interventions**, e.g. how to appraise the target setting for animal welfare / antibiotic use when there is no baseline data.
- **Target setting for generalised types of interventions**, e.g. how to appraise the target setting (specific) for business development (generic).

ANNEX

Table 1. State of play with the ex ante evaluation of the CAP Strategic Plan as outlined by the participants

Member State	Ex-ante tendered?	ToR prepared on what basis of SPR ³ ?	Ex-ante tender includes SEA?	Price stated in the tender?	Ex-ante running in Oct. 2019?
AT	Yes	Council draft	No	Yes (max)	No
BE-Flanders	Yes (June 2019)	COM proposal	Yes	Yes	Yes (July 2019)
BE-Wal	No (ToR not ready)	No big differences	Yes, it will	No	No
BG	No (ToR ready)	COM proposal	Yes	Yes (max)	No
CY	Yes	COM proposal	Yes	Yes (max)	No (Nov. 2019)
CZ	Yes	COM proposal	No	Yes (max)	Yes
DE	No (ToR ready)	Council draft	Yes	No	No
DK	No	?	Yes	Yes	No (2020)
EE	No (ToR ready)	COM proposal	No	Yes (max)	No (2020)
EL	No (ToR ready)	COM proposal + reference to update	Yes	Yes	No (Jan. 2020)
ES	No (ToR ready)	COM Proposal	Yes (different lots)	Yes	No
FI	Yes	COM proposal	Yes	No	Yes (Oct. 2019)
FR	Yes (tender closed on 17/10)	COM proposal	Yes	Yes	No (Jan 2020)
HR	Yes (tender closed in August)	COM proposal	No	Yes	No (contract by end of October 2019)
HU	Yes (March 2019)	COM proposal + Council draft	Yes	No	About to start
IE	Yes (Feb. 2019)	COM Proposal	Yes	Yes	Yes
IT	No (tender in Jan. 2020)	?	Yes	?	No
LT	No (ToR ready)	COM Proposal	No	Yes	No (planned end of 2019)
LU	No	No	Yes	No	No
LV	Yes	COM proposal	Yes	No	No
MT	No (ToR ready)	COM proposal + reference to update	No (one tender for SEA for all programmes)	No (max)	No (Jan 2020)
NL	No (call open)	COM Proposal	No	Yes (max)	No
PL	No (ToR ready)	Council draft	No	Yes	No (2020)
PT	No (ToR ongoing)	COM Proposal	Yes	Yes (max)	No
RO	Yes	COM proposal	Yes	Yes	No (end 2019)
SE	No (ongoing)	?	Yes	Yes	No
SI	Yes (call open)	COM proposal	Yes	No	No
SK	Yes (closed in June 2019)	COM Proposal	Yes	Yes	Yes (June 2019)

³ SPR = CAP Strategic Plan Regulation: [COM Proposal](#) of June 2018; or current Council Draft

Table 2. Lessons learned from the ex-ante appraisal of the link between needs and intervention logic

Difficulties/open issues	Solutions	Check list: what needs to be done/checked?
What principles should be used to determine the prioritisation	Prioritisation of needs through online consultation with stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Are the needs clearly stated and specific? ✓ A definition of the most specific achievements for these needs should be established. ✓ Test the suitability of interventions to produce specific achievements. ✓ Practical design of intervention to find correct allocation of funds and target group. ✓ Ask the Managing Authority to show how each measure/intervention specifically address needs. ✓ Evidence-based appraisal of the ranking results (literature, stats) ✓ Appraising the ranking process (inclusiveness) ✓ Appraising the linkages of the most relevant need with the objectives of other policies ✓ Collect and analyse previous studies/evaluation and best practices ✓ Assessing the policy needs/politicians needs
How to balance technical/ political expectations	Use thematic groups first with individual stakeholders to gather individual group needs and then have larger mixed stakeholder consultations so that individual groups see that their needs are not the only ones that needs to be addressed.	
Sufficient data/ studies missing	Need databased and ways for collecting data + research and studies to base decisions on	
Budget limitations to address a multitude of needs	Ranking methods shall consider: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The specific RDP objectives • Stakeholders consultation • Time frame • Possibility to achieve them 	
Political decisions conflicting with the assessed needs	Carry out an assessment of the political context to consider the policy needs	

Table 3. Lessons learned from the ex-ante appraisal of the coherence of the intervention logic

Difficulties	Solutions	Check list: what needs to be done/checked?
Dealing with negative interactions or conflicting objectives between Pillar I and II	Use also quantitative methods to collect evidence on the interactions of the pillars	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Prepare multi-criteria matrixes to check the coherence among different funds at different level of governance (EU, National, regional) ✓ Define indicators which are able also to quantify the contributions of intervention to multiple objectives (e.g. secondary contributions)
Appraising the coherence among a large number of measures and sub-measures	Programming authorities shall try not to duplicate or select many measures. Simplify the design and make the programming document	

	shorter and more strategic (with less details)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Make clear eligibility criteria to avoid double funding and reduce inconsistencies among measures ✓ Involve experts from both Pillar I and II in the evaluation team to assess the possible interactions or side effects among them ✓ Come up with an easy to read and strategic CAP Strategic Plan, to avoid small details which make the assessment of the coherence among intervention very challenging. ✓ Use past experiences and evaluations to conclude on whether interventions are coherent among themselves
Appraising the coherence between EU and national funds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and use multi-criteria matrixes, which shows the link between funds • Set up an inter-managerial group across different unit 	
Get a common and operative understanding of what is 'coherence'	Create an EU-wide check-list, which can break down this concept in operative terms	

Table 4. Lessons learned from the ex ante appraisal of the link between interventions and targets

Difficulties	Solutions	Check list: what needs to be done/checked?
<p>Too complicated and unclear monitoring/reporting system, coupled with unclear definitions, e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unclear definition of data collected (IT systems) • Definition of the appropriate meaning of target indicators (e.g. jobs) 	<p>Clarify any doubts concerning the monitoring system at an early stage</p> <p>Introduce clear definitions (made by MA)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Allow for flexibility to change targets ✓ Clear definitions methodology and rules for monitoring and reporting ✓ Have a clear understanding of the meaning of result indicators and their quantification process ✓ Take account of previous commitments ✓ Integrate lessons learned from previous programming periods ✓ Clarify connections between interventions and result indicators (few links!) ✓ Cut double counting risks ✓ Develop the data management as early as possible, involving an evaluator ✓ For specific measures, estimate the time needed and undertake externalities and/or implementation risks analysis
Measures without common indicators	Use additional indicators	
<p>Data issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take account of previous commitments • Lack of historical data 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider re-planning • Consider alternative methods to cover data gaps 	
<p>Define targets for top-ups</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overlapping of programming periods makes it difficult to estimate demand 		
Take account of administrative timing – process	Ensure flexibility to change targets	

Connecting several measures output indicators with one or a few result indicators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Try to estimate time between approach and payment for different measures • Set a tool to check the time table 	
The evaluator is contracted too late to support the design of data collection	Collect yearly data on results generation (use better data from paying agency → making the agreement for collection results data from beneficiaries)	
External factors that are difficult to control: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation risks are not taken into account sufficiently • Changes in the context 	<p>Ex ante evaluation to start together with programming</p> <p>Improve the analysis of externalities linked to measures</p>	

Table 5. Outcome of group works on the ex-ante appraisal of CAP specific objectives related to fostering a smart, resilient and diversified agricultural sector ensuring food security;

Challenges	Solutions
<p>How to ensure a common interpretation and definition (and understanding) of specific objectives (e.g. farm income, food security)?</p> <p>How to ensure relevant indicators following a good understanding of the specific objective?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality schemes designed in relation to farm income should be supported by evaluations, and relevant stakeholders (e.g. cooperatives) have to be involved to ensure common understanding on which quality schemes are more appropriate • In order to better understand specific objectives and operationalise them (“translate into actions”), specific analysis could be carried out (as a part of ex post evaluation), related for e.g. to farm income opportunities • Searching for synergies of interventions across specific objectives to enhance achievements
<p>How to carry out data analysis for designing and setting the right targeting, taking into account both Pillar I and Pillar II?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carry out sectoral and territorial analysis. • Apply models that have been experimented in specific contexts (e.g. for the CAP Strategic Plan development in Croatia) • Cooperation at every stage between the MA and the PA to build the M&E system • Develop guidelines on methods/steps to address the issues highlighted by the specific objective • Use existing studies, literature
<p>How to find synergies between Pillar I and Pillar II?</p>	<p>Improve cooperation among administrators working with Pillar I and Pillar II</p>

How to ensure evaluators have the capacity to include instruments such as CMO or VCS?	Organise EU level capacity building activities for evaluators
How to deal with the lack of relevant context indicators (e.g. on modernisation)?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carry out a broader context analysis and include additional context indicators • Obtain an analysis from FADN to get historical data that can help set target values
How to deal with horizontal fragmentation of the value chain lack of trust and common approach)? How to deal with vertical fragmentation in the value chain (lack of knowledge of the market and planning on how to sell products - marketing)?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Show good practices in order to increase participation in the value chain • There should be an analysis of the size of cooperatives to see which are the most effective in terms of sector and region • Provide proper leaders/managers

Table 6. Outcomes of group works on the ex-ante appraisal of CAP specific objectives related to bolstering environmental care and climate action and to contribute to the environmental-and climate-related objectives of the Union

Challenges	Solutions
How to appraise the level of climate and environmental ambition of the CAP Strategic Plan in the ex ante evaluation?	<p>The appraisal can consider the following elements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amount of budget allocated to the relevant interventions • Administrative capacity and procedures set up to deliver climate and environment-related intervention • The extent to which the CAP Strategic Plan can address the assessed needs, which are based on an evidence-based SWOT • Behavioural factors showing the sensitiveness and willingness of farmers to take in intervention supporting the environment and climate
How to build a baseline data for the setting up of targets and monitoring of its milestone achievements?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The new CAP performance framework will make use of indicators already used in the current programming period. Take stock from the experience with the complementary result indicators related to the environment (energy efficiency, water efficiency, emissions from agriculture, etc.) • Screen data from different sources • Invest time, resource and skills, as well as get political commitment to build up a strong and functioning IT system useful for the entire programming period • When secondary data is missing, collect information from primary sources. Qualitative data tools can be effective and representative if the right questions are posed to the right people.
How to prepare the ex ante appraisal and evaluation of	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set up coordination and regular meetings with different ministries, data providers, and stakeholders

<p>the effects from both Pillar I and II?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Team building with experts from different disciplines (environmental social, economic), as well as from both Pillar I and II • Develop and use tools and guidance on how to integrate Pillar I and II.
<p>How to carry out the ex-ante appraisal of the environmental targets which are influenced by multiple interventions (e.g. farm advisory services, LEADER, investments, etc).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Theory of change can be a qualitative tool to map the pathways from needs, interventions, and targets, and show the positive and negative interactions among these elements • Theory of change, if complemented with quantitative evidence and stakeholder consultations, can help to estimate targets and test their robustness.

Table 7. Outcome of group works on the ex-ante appraisal of CAP specific objectives related to strengthening the socio-economic fabric of rural areas

Challenges	Solutions
<p>How to deal with the unclear definition of Specific Objective 9 (e.g. nutritious food) and its overlapping with other specific objectives? (difficult to appraise coherence)</p>	<p>Break down the specific objective or treat it as a cross-cutting objective</p>
<p>How to address the difficulty of appraising the intervention strategy because there is no clear link between interventions, results and impacts?</p>	<p>Clarify the link between the Specific Objectives and the result indicators (each need, related to a specific objective, is also linked to a corresponding result indicator)</p>
<p>How to verify there are adequate human resource in MA offices?</p>	<p>Think not only of quantity, but also of quality allocation of human resources</p>
<p>How to verify that LEADER specificities are included in the design of relevant interventions?</p>	<p>Use the theory of change to assess the extent to which local development strategies produce added value</p>
<p>How to address the needs of non- farming population targets?</p>	<p>Check the inclusion of social and labour market changes in the SWOT and needs analysis</p>
<p>How to assess the influence of other funds and national interventions (external coherence)</p>	<p>No need for the ex ante evaluator to assess all other instruments but only to check demarcation criteria described in the CAP Strategic Plan</p>
<p>How to assess the requirements for a proper timetable with milestones at the LAG level</p>	<p>Develop a step by step timetable</p>
<p>How to assess the access to finance for young farmers?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take into account past evaluations, studies, etc, on young farmers from the current period (access to finance, land, selection criteria, etc.) • Assess internal coherence of support to young farmers under Pillar I and Pillar II • Take into account that digitalisation /modernisation could lead to outflow of young farmers

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