



The 2014-2020 Interreg Programme Management Handbook is composed of fact sheets. Each theme is covered by one fact sheet so that the reader can easily and quickly choose the relevant fact sheet.

Facts Sheet; Programme Evaluation

1. What is it? What is the definition of the term / theme of this fact sheet?

Evaluation is an important part of the programme life-cycle. Its role is to improve the quality of the design and implementation of programmes, as well as to assess their effectiveness, efficiency and impact (Article 54 (1) CPR).

The Common Provision Regulation mentions three types of evaluation which have to be carried out during the 2014-2020 programming period:

- Ex -ante evaluation: The ex-ante evaluation ensures that the operational programme articulates its intervention logic, and that that it contributes to the Europe 2020 strategy (Article 55 CPR).
- Evaluation during the programming period: During the programming period evaluations have to be carried out to assess the effectiveness, efficiency and impact of the programme. At least one of these evaluations shall assess how support from ESI Funds has contributed to the objectives for each priority.(Article 56 CPR)
- Ex-post evaluation: The European Commission or the Member States have to assess the programme's effectiveness and efficiency after its implementation. (Article 57 CPR, Article 114 CPR)

2. Reference to the regulations and what is new in the 2014-2020 programming period compared with the 2007-2013 programming period

The regulation for the 2014-2020 European Structural and Investment funds (ESIF) sets out some change in the implementation of evaluations:

- **Strengthen result-focus of the policy (Article 56(3) CPR)**: the main reason to evaluate is to assess the effectiveness and impact of the programmes, which means a **shift of policy from actions and financial means to results and change**. This result-oriented approach is rooted in the intervention logic of the programmes, which needs to be described in the Cooperation Programme. **The intervention logic** describes the internal coherence of the programme, which is the logical link between development needs, thematic objectives and investment priorities, specific objective, result indicators, types of action to be supported and output indicators.
- The consistency of the intervention logic of the programme must be assessed **by the ex-ante evaluation** (Article 55 CPR).
- **Evaluation Plan (Article 114 CPR)**: In the new programming period it is compulsory to draft an evaluation plan. The purpose of an evaluation plan is to improve the quality of evaluations carried out during the programming period. An evaluation plan shall be drawn up by the Managing Authority and submitted for approval to the Monitoring Committee no later than one year after the adoption of the programme.
- **Impact evaluations**: In the previous period, evaluation used to focus more on implementation issues rather than showing impact. For 2014-2020 it is the key to assessing the effectiveness, efficiency and impact, and to evaluating how support from the ESI Funds has contributed to the objectives for each priority (Article 56(3)). In these impact evaluations the contribution of the projects to the results needs to be assessed.



3. Challenges and frequently-asked questions

- What is a result-oriented approach? Theory of change?
- What is an evaluation plan?
- How to carry out impact evaluations?

Legislative framework:

- ETC Regulation (EU) No 1299/2013 articles 8, 11, 12, 23
- CPR Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013 articles 54(1), 55, 56(3), 57, 114

4. How does it work in practise?

- **Setting up a result-oriented intervention logic** is an essential first step for the programmes to put an emphasis on clearer articulation of the policy objectives. In previous programming periods, evaluations focused more on implementation issues rather than on capturing impacts. For the 2014-2020 period, the programmes are required to carry out evaluations which assess the effects of the ESIF. The result orientation and the thematic concentration is a new approach which allows programmes to focus their resources on a few objectives in to order to maximise their impacts. A result-oriented intervention logic is the basis for carrying out impact evaluations.
- The **evaluation plan** is a strategic document which will accompany the programme throughout its life and support its result orientation. The purpose of an evaluation plan is to improve the quality of evaluations carried out during the programming period and to provide a framework for planning impact evaluation. In addition, it ensures that evaluations provide inputs for annual implementation and progress reports.
- The ground for the **impact evaluations** is the clearly-defined intervention logic, with a limited number of objectives specifying the intended change. The task of **impact evaluations** is to disentangle the effects of the intervention from the contribution of other factors, and to understand the impact of the programme. The different approaches and methods for carrying out impact evaluations are specified in the Evalsed Sourcebook: Method and Techniques of the European Commission.

5. Good practice examples

- It is considered a good practice example to include the ex-ante evaluator in the whole programming process (e.g.: the ex-ante evaluator could support the programme in defining and collecting data for the evaluations).
- The evaluation plan is to be considered as a strategic document which will accompany the programme throughout its implementation, and support its result realisation.
- The impact evaluations should deal with the question: Did things work out as expected to produce the desired change? Did the projects contribute to the results?
- Learning is an overarching objective of all evaluations.

6. Reference to other, more-detailed papers

- European Commission: Guidance Document on Monitoring and Evaluation - European Regional Development Fund and Cohesion Fund - Concepts and Recommendations. March 2014
- European Commission: Monitoring and Evaluation of European Cohesion Policy, European Regional Development Fund European Social Fund Cohesion Fund: Guidance Document on Evaluation Plans. Terms of Reference for Impact Evaluations. Guidance on Quality Management of External Evaluations, April 2014



-
- European Commission: Monitoring and Evaluation of European Cohesion Policy, European Regional Development Fund European Social Fund Cohesion Fund: Guidance Document on ex-ante evaluation, January 2013
 - European Commission: EVALSED Sourcebook: Methods and Techniques
 - European Commission: EVALSED: The resource for the evaluation of Socio-Economic Development, September 2013
 - INTERACT Ex-ante Evaluation: a template and detailed guidance¹
 - INTERACT Draft Q&A Evaluation Plan²
 - INTERACT Draft Q&A Impact Evaluation³

¹ http://admin.interact-eu.net/downloads/5927/INTERACT_HARMONISED_IMPLEMENTATION_TOOLS_Template_for_Terms_of_Reference_for_ex_ante_evaluation_draft_.pdf

² http://admin.interact-eu.net/downloads/9028/Evaluation_Plan_Questions_and_Answers_December_2014.pdf

³ http://www.interact-eu.net/documents_for_programme_evaluation/templates_for_programme_evaluation/593/17414