



Designing good evaluation plans for the new CAP

Good Practice Workshop

Prague (Czechia), 30-31 March 2023



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Additional information about the activities of the European Evaluation Helpdesk for the CAP is available on the Internet through the Europa server (https://eu-cap-network.ec.europa.eu/support/evaluation_en).

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List of acronyms

APR	Annual Performance Report
AIR	Annual Implementation Report
CAP	Common Agricultural Policy
GSP	CAP Strategic Plan
DG AGRI	Directorate-General Agriculture and Rural Development
DME	Data for Monitoring and Evaluation
EAFRD	European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development
EAGF	European Agricultural Guarantee Fund
EC	European Commission
EP	Evaluation Plan
FADN	Farm Accountancy Data Network
M&E	Monitoring & Evaluation
MA	Managing Authority
NN	National Networks
MC	Monitoring Committee
PA	Paying Agency
PMEF	Performance Monitoring and Evaluation Framework
POSEI	Programme of options specifically relating to remoteness and insularity
RDP	Rural Development Programme
SO	Specific Objective

Executive summary

The third Good Practice Workshop (GPW) of the European Evaluation Helpdesk for the CAP took place on 30-31 March 2023 in Prague and was dedicated to the following topic: 'Designing good evaluation plans for the new CAP'. The workshop was targeted at the Managing Authorities (MA) of CAP Strategic Plans. The objective was for them to reflect and learn from each other in relation to the design of the evaluation plans for the new CAP, with a view to enabling EU Member States to better plan and implement evaluations. The workshop was attended by 70 participants from 23 different EU Member States. The workshop aimed to:

Exchange practical experiences about the design of evaluations plans, in terms of how to meet the legal requirements and enrich the plans with content that fulfils the evaluation needs of EU Member States.

Identify difficulties in the design of the different evaluation plan sections and approaches to overcome them, by drawing on current and past knowledge.

Provide an opportunity for networking between and identification of lessons from EU Member States in the process of evaluation planning.

The first day of the workshop offered an overview of the legal requirements for evaluation planning and a brief presentation of key messages from the [Guidelines for the design of evaluation plans](#). Next, eight EU Member States (i.e. Denmark, Estonia, Ireland, France, Hungary, Portugal, Sweden, Finland) shared their experiences about the design of specific sections of the evaluation plan. The second day of the workshop focused on networking and discussions where

participants exchanged information and views on the key issues in designing the different sections of their evaluation plans and on potential solutions. Key messages stemming from the workshop include:

An evaluation framework is the backbone of effective assessments and developing an indicative one for an evaluation plan can help structure and decide on the main evaluation activities and initiate the process for identifying data gaps. Evaluation criteria, questions, factors of success and data sources are an integral part of the evaluation framework. Whether a formal part of the evaluation plan or a supporting annex, it also contributes to justifying the choices made in the timeline.

EU Member States' experiences suggest the involvement of stakeholders is not only a section to be described in the evaluation plan, but a more substantial part of the evaluation planning process. Stakeholders are consulted during the design phase of the evaluation plan for several reasons, e.g. for identifying needs, for obtaining information on experience that can feed into the evaluation plan, for deciding which evaluation criteria to assess when, for advice on the key indicators to assess at different points in time, for deciding on the topics and for types of evaluations that should be planned.

The availability of relevant data, at the right time and of the appropriate quality, is only possible if data needs are considered when identifying evaluation needs in the evaluation plan. This would enable the identification of data gaps and the development of methods and approaches for addressing them, including the use of existing data that is not sufficiently explored and the collection of additional data through collaboration with relevant data providers.



1. Setting the scene

1.1 Introduction

The third Good Practice Workshop (GPW) of the European Evaluation Helpdesk for the CAP was dedicated to the following topic: 'Designing good evaluation plans for the new CAP'. The workshop was targeted at the MAs of CAP Strategic Plans (CSP) and had the objective of reflecting and learning from each other's experiences and ideas in relation to the overall design of the evaluation plans for the new CAP, with a view to enabling EU Member States to better plan and implement evaluations of their CSP.

In the 2023-2027 programming period, EU Member States are required to evaluate their CSP during implementation and after implementation (ex post evaluation). According to the legal requirements set out in Article 140 of Regulation (EU) 2021/2115¹, the evaluations serve the purpose of assessing the contribution of CSPs in achieving the CAP objectives and to improve the quality of the design and implementation of the plans.

EU Member States shall develop an evaluation plan (EP) ensuring at least the minimum requirements listed in Annex II of Regulation (EU) 2022/1475². According to Annex II, it shall contain seven sections that offer information on the planned evaluations during the 2023-2027 programming cycle: (1) objectives and needs; (2) governance and coordination; (3) stakeholder mapping; (4) timeline; (5) data and information; (6) communication and follow-up; and (7) resources, technical support and capacity building.

In addition to meeting the above legal requirements, evaluation planning brings benefits to EU Member States by ensuring that all appropriate evaluation activities will take place, with sufficient resources and with the required data available in a timely manner and in an appropriate format. A well-designed EP adds value to evaluations, so they contribute to better and more efficient policy design, planning and delivery. The EP shall be submitted to the Monitoring Committee (MC) no later than one year after the approval of the national CSP³.

During 2023, EU Member States are in the process of developing their EP, with some front-runners expected to finalise theirs by the first half of the year. Against this background, the GPW aimed to support EU Member States to discuss the issues that they are facing, both in terms of process and content, resolving doubts and taking decisions on how to develop the different sections of their evaluation plans.

The specific objectives of the third GPW were to:

- Exchange practical experiences on the design of evaluations plans, in terms of how to meet the legal requirements and enrich the plans with content that fulfils the evaluation needs of EU Member States.
- Identify difficulties in the design of the different evaluation plan sections and approaches to overcome them by drawing on current and past knowledge.
- Provide an opportunity for networking between and identification of lessons from EU Member States in the process of evaluation planning.

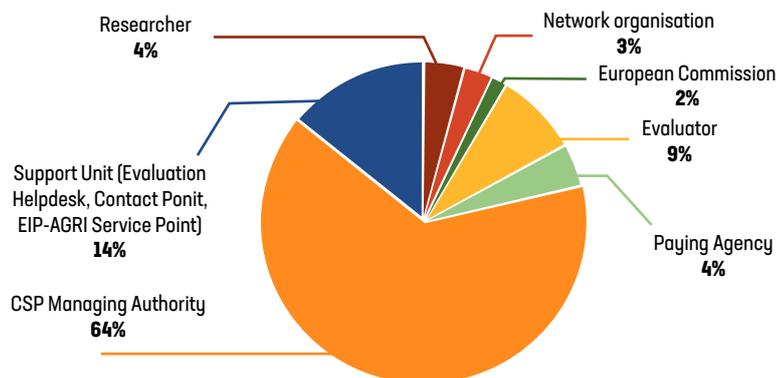
Seventy participants from 23 different EU Member States attended the event across the two days, including mostly MAs, evaluators, European Commission representatives, Paying Agencies, researchers and network organisations such as National Networks (NN).

1.2 The Legal framework and evaluation plan guidelines

Overview of the legal framework for evaluation plans

Mr Eduardo Serrano-Padial (Unit A3 'Policy Performance', DG AGRI) gave a presentation on the different mechanisms foreseen by the European Commission (EC) that are related to EPs and need to be developed by EU Member States, highlighting the changes with respect to the previous programming period as well as the steps to follow, the content requirements and the workflow between the EC, the Evaluation Helpdesk and EU Member States in the process of designing the plans.

Figure 1 - Participants of the Good Practice Workshop per role and EU Member State



Source: European Evaluation Helpdesk for the CAP (2023).

¹ Article 140 of Regulation (EU) 2021/2115

² Article 4(1) of Regulation (EU) 2022/1475

³ Article 140 of Regulation (EU) 2021/2115

One change to the previous programming period is that MAs no longer having to do an interim evaluation and instead conduct evaluations during the implementation period to cover all Specific Objectives (SO), but not necessarily in one comprehensive interim evaluation of the CSP. The EC will have to carry out two new evaluations (interim and ex post), which are no longer synthesis evaluations. Furthermore, NNs should play a role in evaluations by supporting those stakeholders involved.

Mr Serrano-Padial explained the steps to be followed for evaluation planning: (i) submission of the EP to the MC and EC one year after CSP adoption, (ii) a content analysis, and (iii) the MC to give an opinion on the EP. The content analysis will focus on the completeness of the EP⁴ so that all seven sections of the EP are fulfilled, all SOs of the CAP are covered or provide sound justification if they are not covered, and that there is a timeline including short descriptions of all evaluation activities. The content analysis will also look at the consistency of the EP⁴ to determine the coherence between EP sections and the CSP.

Regarding the EP workflow (see figure below), Mr Serrano-Padial stated that the MA responsible for drafting the EP is to send it to the MC and the EC while the Evaluation Helpdesk will give guidance and other support as needed. The role of the EC is to receive and give advice (within the MC) on the completeness and coherence of the EP. Mr Serrano-Padial clarified that optional informal bilateral voluntary feedback on compliance between the MA and the EC on the EP is possible before the official submission to the MC. Lastly, in case an MA proposed to not evaluate a specific SO, the EC is to analyse the justification provided.

In the years to come, the MA will provide the EC with information on the implementation of the EP⁴ As per Article 5 of Regulation⁶ after which the Evaluation Helpdesk will assess the implementation of the EP (similar to the synthesis of the Annual Implementation Reports of the previous programming period) and the main findings will be discussed in the Annual Review Meetings.

Mr Serrano-Padial highlighted that the EP is a cornerstone of the evaluation of the CSP and that the EP is a living document, such that it can be amended when necessary. The final goal of the EP is to learn about the implementation of the CSP and to improve the overall CAP.

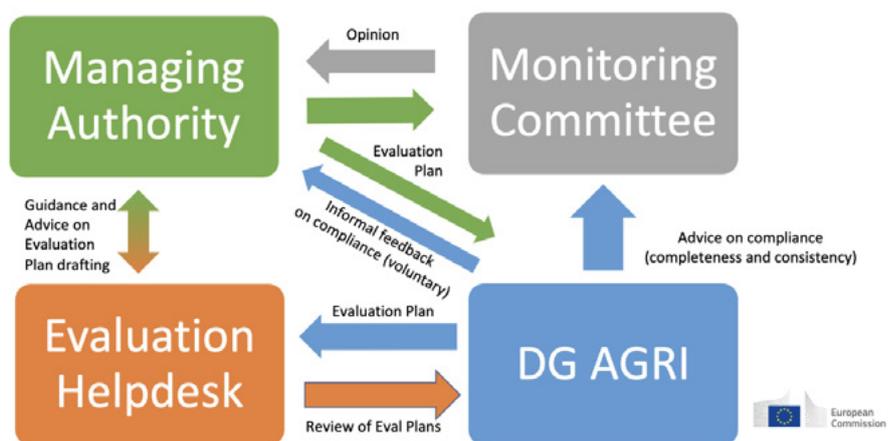
The evaluation plan guidelines

Ms Marili Parissaki, the Good Practice Manager of the Evaluation Helpdesk, shared multiple key messages that may help MAs in developing their EP:

- > Data needs should already be captured in section 1 of the EP 'objectives and needs'.
- > Governance arrangements should include a process or approach for sharing information on evaluation activities and findings with the Monitoring Committee members.
- > EU Member States should identify who are relevant stakeholders, as well as their needs.
- > EU Member States should provide reasoning for the choice of evaluation activities in the timeline.
- > Ensure data availability on time and describe data gaps clearly to support the identification of additional information needed.
- > Follow-up mechanisms and processes to be described as well as the role of relevant stakeholders in follow-up activities.
- > The role of the NN should be considered in the implementation of the EP.

Furthermore, Ms Parissaki underlined the difference between the minimum content that an EP should include in accordance with Regulation (EU) 2022/1475 and additional content that is recommended for each EP section in the '[Guidelines for the design of evaluation plans](#)'.

Figure 2 - Evaluation Plan Workflow



Source: European Commission (2023)

⁴ As per Annex II of Regulation (EU) 2022/1475

⁵ As per Article 2 and Article 6 of Regulation (EU) 2022/1475

⁶ As per Article 5 of Regulation (EU) 2022/1475



After the presentations, participants asked the presenters the following questions

<p>What legal grounds does the EC have in case an EU Member State submits an EP of bad quality? What if it is already approved by the Monitoring Committee?</p>	<p>Mr Serrano-Padial emphasised that there was no approval of the EP by the EC and so there would be no penalty; the developed procedure is based on trust and focuses on establishing a dialogue between the EU Member State and the EC to build an evaluation culture instead of an audit culture.</p>
<p>Via which channels can EU Member States send the developed EP to the EC?</p>	<p>Mr Serrano-Padial answered that there was no specific IT system for the submission of the EP. When an EU Member State sends the EP to the MC, the Geographic Unit should have access to it, therefore the EP will be within the EC system. Nevertheless, Mr Serrano-Padial indicated that the EP could be shared via the functional email and that he would check further on this.</p>
<p>How will the Evaluation Helpdesk assess the implementation of EP?</p>	<p>Mr Serrano-Padial explained that the current approach is more in the form of a synthesis and not an assessment, and that the Evaluation Helpdesk would use an approach similar to the one used for the synthesis of previous Annual Implementation Reports. It will focus on identifying the main findings, follow-up actions, etc. in order to find common ground. It was underlined that it was not an assessment for the EC to judge EU Member States but for the EC to know how and what Member States are doing.</p>
<p>For most of the SOs, the intervention logic considers other regulatory issues, so the Spanish CAP Strategic Plan does not necessarily include specific interventions to address all needs identified. How are we to deal with the evaluation in such cases?</p>	<p>Mr Serrano-Padial clarified that the intention is to use the evaluation criteria coherence to address all external interventions of the CAP, most of which have been identified in the CSP.</p>
<p>Who should conduct evaluations? The MA is responsible for the EP, but the PA could conduct the evaluations together with the external contractors.</p>	<p>Mr Serrano-Padial stated that EU Member States do not need to give the evaluation to external bodies. However, the independence of the experts carrying out the evaluation must be guaranteed and be separate from anybody involved in the implementation of the EP.</p>
<p>How will the EC give advice to the Monitoring Committee on EPs?</p>	<p>Mr Serrano-Padial replied that the EC will need to reflect on this. Due to the variety of MC members (e.g. regional bodies), there is no single way to proceed and it depends on the process put in place by the MA. It will generally be like the current exchanges between the EC and MA on the implementation of the Rural Development Programme (RDP).</p>
<p>Could the EC further clarify what is meant by 'compliance'?</p>	<p>Mr Serrano-Padial explained that compliance is about the minimum content of the EP as described in Regulation (EU) 2022/1475. The EC, with support from the Evaluation Helpdesk, is developing a checklist to assess the completeness and consistency of the EP, and the links between the sections.</p>



<p>Germany has one EP but the coordination with the federal states is the issue. The mandatory elements are clear, but a mandatory compliance check is too much and is not in Regulation (EU) 2022/1475. The current position is that the Monitoring Committee can see what happens in the future with respect to evaluations, and amends information if needed. It is not necessary to add the EC and the Evaluation Helpdesk to the process.</p>	<p>Mr Serrano-Padial explained that if the EU Member State thinks that everything should be done through the MC, then this is more than fine as there is indeed no formal process. However, if an EU Member State wants further bilateral exchanges with the EC with respect to the EP, this is possible, and some have already indicated they want such an exchange.</p>
<p>How will the EC assess the EP submitted by EU Member States, and how long will it take?</p>	<p>Mr Serrano-Padial stated there is no formal assessment process but the EC, with support from the Evaluation Helpdesk, will review and summarise EPs.</p>
<p>If the EC provides advice to improve the EP, can an EU Member State resubmit the EP?</p>	<p>Mr Serrano-Padial made clear that this depends on the process that each Member State has with the MC; the EC is aiming at a dialogue for good evaluations.</p> <p>Furthermore, the Evaluation Helpdesk indicated that it has received some requests to provide feedback on compliance of the first draft of the EP.</p>
<p>The Monitoring Committee is giving an opinion, so there is no formal approval. Who is approving the EP?</p>	<p>Mr Serrano-Padial stressed again that there is no formal approval of the EP. The process is based on trust, not on compliance.</p>
<p>Since the EC foresees an ongoing evaluation process, would the EC also foresee less bilateral and a more multi-lateral periodical assessment of the reporting on how the EC is judging the progress of EU Member State evaluation activities? What kind of dialogue will be there and how should it be initiated in the future?</p>	<p>Mr Serrano-Padial indicated that a dialogue could be established during annual review meetings based on the synthesis of EPs, but also via other fora like the Expert Group on the Implementation of the CSP. Furthermore, it was suggested that the EC could occasionally participate in EvalPLATFORM meetings as the EC would like to open up dialogue with EU Member States in as many ways as possible.</p>

2. Sharing experiences

2.1 Sharing practical experiences about the current design of evaluation plans from several EU Member States

Needs and objectives section: experiences from Estonia, Ireland and Portugal

> Estonia

Focus of the presentation: mapping needs and objectives based on an evaluation framework, links to the data and timeline sections and Pillar 1 focus.

Ms Paula Kurvits from the Estonian Ministry of Rural Affairs explained that, in the preparation of the Estonian EP, there were preliminary discussions to agree on the evaluation framework, including elements such as evaluation objectives, timeline, evaluation criteria, intervention logic, evaluation questions, factors of success, and databases and needs. This overarching information is reflected in section 1

'objectives and needs', as well as in the annex with a detailed table with all planned evaluations. The timeline for the evaluations shows that different evaluations are dispersed throughout the implementation period and was developed by answering two questions: 'for what and when do we want to use evaluation results?' and 'when will the interventions be implemented and when do we have results we can evaluate?'. Data availability and main data sources are ensured as in the previous period; for Pillar 1 data, the economic analyses of the agricultural sector based on FADN data will be used, as well as regular data from the Paying Agency about Pillar 1 beneficiaries and RDP evaluations and studies.

> Ireland

Focus of the presentation: thematic evaluations for green architecture, links to the involvement of stakeholders

Ms Niamh Hamilton Jones from the Irish Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine presented the Irish approach to evaluating green architecture, which covers SO4-SO6. Initially, they intended to have one external evaluator for the evaluation of green architecture and developed a set of evaluation questions for the SOs, as well as the necessary outputs for the evaluation.



To check what data was already being collected and to see if the proposed approach was appropriate, an 'Inter-Departmental Committee' workshop was organised in November 2022. The six key takeaways from this workshop were that synergies with existing projects are essential; development of new questions/indicators is necessary; isolating impacts of CAP measures specifically is necessary; tendering to one consultant is ill-advised; further data collection is necessary; and thematic evaluations are required. This meant that they had to change their approach and so they switched to a thematic approach with four evaluations of the four sub-themes under green architecture (GHG and ammonia, water quality, soil quality, and habitats and biodiversity). This ensured that data gaps were identified and appropriate methodologies were established that will allow for long-term environmental monitoring.

> Portugal

Focus of the presentation: evaluation needs in regionalised EU Member States

Ms Maria Alexandra Lopes from the Planning, Policy and General Administration Office of Portugal's Ministry of Agriculture and Food showed the considerations that need to be taken into account for regionalised countries. There are three regions in Portugal: a continental region and two outermost regions, which have specificities in CSP regulations. For the European Agricultural Guarantee Fund (EAGF), the direct payments do not apply to the outermost regions as the programme specifically relating to remoteness and insularity (POSEI) is not included in the CSP, and for the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) the rural development support is implemented at the regional level. Therefore, the CSP programming reflects this reality; the complexity of detail and organisation by SO of the intervention logic, observed at the beginning of the preparation of the Portuguese CSP, facilitates the evaluation by SO, which is decisive for the definition of the Portuguese evaluation needs. The evaluations will be implemented at national level, while addressing the specific needs of the outermost regions.

After the presentation, participants asked presenters the following questions

<p>Ireland has decided to follow the thematic approach, but, to align with Regulation (EU) 2022/1475, an EU Member State must evaluate by SO. How would Ireland solve this integration problem to follow the mandatory requirements?</p>	<p>Ms Hamilton Jones explained that the thematic approach still feeds into the content of the SOs and so the thematic evaluations will be the basis for the analysis of the SOs. The four thematic evaluations are based on the SOs as well as the intervention strategy and needs assessment of Ireland's CSP.</p>
<p>Portugal stated that it will carry out a survey for stakeholder mapping with the Monitoring Committee. Could Portugal share any material/ideas on this?</p>	<p>Ms Lopes answered that they indeed launched a survey for the MC, and that the questions used in the survey were based on the questions as suggested by the Evaluation Helpdesk in the guidelines for the design of evaluation plans. She would be happy to share the slightly adapted questions.</p>
<p>How is Portugal planning to manage the nine SO and the Cross-cutting Objective (CCO) evaluations: at the national level or also at the regional level?</p>	<p>Ms Lopes indicated that Portugal is indeed regionalised, but with a particular regional situation as it is mainland Portugal plus Azores and Madeira, which are outermost regions. The evaluations will be done per SO on a national level but the specificities of the outermost regions will be highlighted. Furthermore, the thematic evaluations will be targeting very specifically the needs of the whole country, including those of the outermost regions.</p>

Governance, stakeholder mapping and timeline sections: experiences from France, Sweden and Finland

> France

Focus of the presentation: content of the governance section of the evaluation plan and links to other sections

Ms Florence Picot from the Managing Authority of France's Ministry of Agriculture and Food Sovereignty presented the three parts of

the governance and coordination section of their draft evaluation plan. Firstly, the Steering Committee includes the national and the regional MAs, as well as the Association of Regions in France, the Paying Agency, the Ministry of Environment and a national research institute. It validates and monitors the EP, develops an annual plan of evaluation, amongst other functions. Thematic working groups involving these stakeholders will work in parallel on the content of the evaluations and on the monitoring of evaluation by topic.



Secondly, the administrative organisation depends on the coordination of evaluations and the follow-up of the contractors by the MA in the Ministry of Agriculture, with support from the regional Mas in evaluation topics related to regionalised interventions. A third part of the governance stresses the necessary linkages between the MC and the EP Steering Committee in terms of the content of the EP and the evaluation results. The governance chapter of the EP has links with the objectives and needs section, through the validation work to be done by the Steering Committee with respect to the evaluation topics, which in turn influences the timeline and the data and information sections. Also, the technical support and capacity building section of the EP is linked to governance since it is defined by the administrative organisation body.

> Sweden

Focus of the presentation: steering and implementation of the evaluation plan, with the involvement of stakeholders

Mr Carl Strömberg from the Managing Authority of the Swedish Board of Agriculture presented the steering process of the Swedish CSP and the role of evaluation and its stakeholders within it. The steering process is implemented in cycles, every four months. The steering process is based on different kinds of decision support information, such as analyses and forecasts. If relevant evaluation findings are available, they are included in the decision making process. The whole process entails a high level of involvement of all stakeholders, including other administrative authorities and a sound communica-

tion strategy for each evaluation. Evaluation findings can ensure a high practical relevance when delivered in a timely manner to make an impact on CSP implementation, as well as inform future evaluation cycles of the CAP in subsequent programming periods. The timeline for the current CSP evaluations implies process evaluations at the beginning of the period, followed by mid-term evaluations, and parallel ongoing thematic and performance evaluations, being wrapped up with the ex post. The ex post evaluation of the RDP is also linked to the current evaluation process in terms of the insights it provides regarding data and information processes, challenges and lessons learnt. Finland

Focus of the presentation: evaluation framework to assess effectiveness and coherence and timeline of evaluations

Mr Eero Pehkonen from the Managing Authority of Finland's Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry presented the CSP evaluation framework in Finland, starting from the evaluation criteria effectiveness and coherence. For this, impact targets are defined in order to be able to develop evaluation questions and the whole evaluation system, based on the SOs and the needs identified. A table is used to define the evaluation topics for the evaluation plan. As an example of the impact targets defined in the Finnish CSP: for SO4, the impact target is that "Greenhouse gas emissions from agriculture will be 0.8 million CO2 equivalent less in 2027 than in 2019 as a result of CAP interventions".

After the presentation, participants asked the presenters the following questions

<p>What, in detail, is the role of the regions in France? What kind of support do the regions give to the ministry? Is this support mandatory?</p>	<p>Ms Picot clarified that the ministry in the previous period was not doing a lot on evaluations, only coordination and evaluation on the national programmes (risk management/rural network). In this new period, the situation is very different. The MA needs to coordinate the evaluation work more closely and intends to continue to work with the regions and use their evaluation-related skills. Regional authorities in France have only some interventions (e.g. investments), hence when the evaluation will deal with investments, the ministry will need the support of the regional authorities.</p>
<p>Does Finland link each evaluation question to an evaluation criterion? How is it ensured that they are met?</p>	<p>Mr Pehkonen explained that the choice was made to include only one evaluation criterion, which is effectiveness, and to some extent coherence, specifically on SO9. Most questions are cost-effectiveness questions.</p> <p>Mr Serrano-Padial followed up to explain that, from Regulation (EU) 2022/1475, it is clear that EU Member States need to address all evaluation criteria. Coherence also covers synergies that EU Member States have described in their CSP. The EC has developed more aspects on key elements on effectiveness, but it is clear that efficiency should be there, as well as the rest of the evaluation criteria.</p>



<p>What are the precautions that Sweden will take to reduce the administrative burden that the iterative process described will cause?</p>	<p>Mr Strömberg explained that the presented process is the result of a reorganisation to effectively steer the CAP. The new process is anticipated to reduce the administrative burden for the MA.</p> <p>The new process allows for evaluation results to be fed into the steering of the programme. The results of evaluations would not necessarily be on impact, but they could be also on performance reviews, details of what is happening, etc.</p>
<p>Is Sweden going to include the topics of small evaluations (considered to be the core of evaluation) in the EP or are you focusing on the SO level?</p>	<p>Mr Strömberg replied that the evaluation plan is specified at an SO level. The MA will try to keep the EP as strategic as possible, combined with an operational plan on how to use the evaluations and where they fit best.</p>
<p>With regard to setting the system boundaries: to what extent do we have to take into account that EU funding is complementary to national initiatives, as a CAP evaluator is not allowed to evaluate national funding schemes?</p>	<p>Mr Pehkonen stated that, when the CSP was being developed, the needs were already defined as well as how they were covered by the CAP and by national policies.</p>

Data and information section: experiences from Denmark and Hungary

> Denmark

Focus of the presentation: the evaluation framework as a basis for data gap analysis

Ms Maja Felcia Eskebaek and Ms Ganderup Friedrichsen from Denmark's Agricultural Agency (MA) presented their EP and evaluation framework. The Danish EP was prepared as a strategic document and so it is expected to change over time (i.e. revised, specified further, etc.). Annual action plans will be developed to accompany the EP. It will include a selection of evaluation themes based on the highest ranked needs. The evaluation themes that Denmark developed based on the CSP intervention logic are (i) economic resilience, market orientation and food security covering SO1-SO3, (ii) green architecture covering SO4-SO6 and SO9, and (iii) generational renewal and rural development, including circular bioeconomy, covering SO7-SO8. These themes are also expected to be revised over time. Denmark is currently in the preparatory phase focusing on data preparation (identifying data gaps and addressing this) and is planning to conduct evaluations in the middle or at the end of the implementation period.

> Hungary

Focus of the presentation: addressing needs for regular data flows (example from the environmental monitoring tool)

Dr Balázs Mezosi and Mr Tamás Cserneczky from Hungary's Ministry of Agriculture presented their approach to 'garden' data for evaluations in relation to the development of their EP. In the past, Hungary had issues with evaluations of environmental topics as they did not have the necessary data for these evaluations (i.e. primary data, actual and historic data and reliable data). Therefore, there was a need to develop tools in order to establish various data gathering practices. In the previous programming period (2014-2020), they started 'gardening' data and planting seeds for future data that could be used in the next programming period. Currently, they are in the harvesting and sharing phase of the data: most of the necessary data for evaluation topics is now available due to cooperation with data providers and they are actively using the gathered data. Furthermore, they have been fine-tuning and developing multiple iterations of the tools used to gather the data in order to ensure the tools work as well as possible. For the future, Hungary is focusing on further improving the tools and adapting them in order to address new data gathering needs.

After the presentation, participants asked the presenters the following questions

<p>Does Denmark have an example of how they address the other evaluation criteria, when their focus is on effectiveness?</p>	<p>Ms Eskebaek and Ms Friedrichsen explained that the evaluation questions for the evaluation criterion effectiveness were adapted to the SOs, while, for all other evaluation criteria, the evaluation questions were more generic.</p>
<p>In relation to gender equality, how would Denmark predict the interactions with other funds regarding evaluations?</p>	<p>Ms Eskebaek and Ms Friedrichsen replied that Denmark had not looked at gender equality and therefore not in relation to other funds either; there is no focus on gender equality in the Danish CSP as it is already covered by many other Danish initiatives and so there is no need to have CAP funding focused on this.</p>

Denmark put four milestones on tenders, so is Denmark considering having many different evaluators?	Ms Eskebaek and Ms Friedrichsen stated that no decision has yet been taken on this matter, but they were interested to see the Irish presentation where it was seen as better to not to have one big evaluation. The Danish Managing Authority is running into difficulties as they lack advanced methodological knowledge, so tenders will be necessary.
In what way is Hungarian acquiring all the necessary capacity building and in what areas and why has the evaluation of environmental aspects been outsourced?	Dr Mezosi and Mr Cserneczy indicated that this was done through a multi-annual framework contract, but that the intention is for some government body to take over once the programme is more settled in order to spread knowledge. They found that there were a lot of synergies between the evaluation tasks while it was also good to have the same evaluators in assessments and monitoring.

Communication and follow-up section: suggestions from the European Evaluation Helpdesk for the CAP

> European Evaluation Helpdesk for the CAP

Focus of the presentation: the importance to follow up evaluation findings

Ms Parissaki presented some suggestions on how to follow up various evaluation findings. For instance, if a specific target group was not sufficiently addressed, the MA could have consultations with target groups in order to meet their needs. Furthermore, the MA could redesign interventions to include additional activities for more effectiveness or to organise training on indicators for improving the measurement of efficiency. Likewise, the improvement of environmental data collection systems could contribute to better environmental impact monitoring, while the trends of organic production could be analysed by focusing and expanding targeting for better results. Also, if there is a need to improve knowledge on specific topics, more exchange of information on specific topics could be organised. Lastly, if the evaluation showed that awareness should be raised on the role of cooperation, in-depth analysis, case studies or communication campaigns could be organised. Additionally, Ms Parissaki encouraged MAs to be more specific in their EPs by indicating who may potentially be responsible for the follow-up of evaluation results.

2.2 Networking sessions on specific sections of the evaluation plan

After the presentations, during day 1, and throughout day 2, participants exchanged experiences and ideas around key challenges and solutions regarding the development of their EPs. Facilitators developed a set of golden rules based on these discussions that may

enhance the quality of the different sections of the EP. A summary of the results of these exchanges is provided below. A full list of the outcomes of the discussions is provided in Annex 1.

Needs, objectives and timeline

The main issues identified relate to the role of the CSP intervention logic in designing the EP, the level of detail that the EP should include, the types of thematic evaluations, their use and the involvement of different stakeholders in them, the links between evaluation questions and evaluation criteria as well as the level of depth in assessing the different evaluation criteria, and finally, the start and end dates of the timeline and the level of detail that it should include. Suggested solutions to address these issues include the possibility to group interventions that address several SOs in line with the intervention logic and to have an overarching timetable followed by operational ones, starting as soon as possible. One option, if sufficient data is not available when starting early, is to assess the 'potential' effectiveness and then validate and revise the findings when data becomes available. Several options exist for the assessment of the evaluation criteria, for instance, one option is to design evaluation questions and factors of success per SO for all evaluation criteria.

Another one is to design evaluation questions and factors of success for effectiveness per SO, and evaluation questions and factors of success for the other evaluation criteria, but common to all SOs. Several options were identified also in relation to the typology of evaluations, for instance, start with small, focused evaluations and then expand to use support studies as input to thematic evaluations. Additionally, EU Member States can carry out evaluations focused on certain evaluation criteria, leaving EU value added for the end of the programming period and carry out long-term, multi-plan evaluations on certain common topics (e.g. organic farming).



Governance and stakeholder mapping

The main issues identified relate to identifying the needs of all stakeholders with the allocated resources and within the time available, how to activate and engage MC members and other stakeholders, including the National Network, and how to decide who and how to reach, both during the EP design and implementation. These issues become more complex for regionalised EU Member States that need to decide which regions and specific actors are relevant and how they can be engaged in different evaluation themes.

Suggested solutions to address these issues focus on the possibility to decide who to involve with the help of groups of actors (e.g. working groups, steering groups, MC sub-groups) organised for a certain period of time or brought together in a conference or workshop.

For engaging stakeholders, different communication and dissemination approaches may be needed for different typologies of stakeholders, while in regionalised EU Member States, regional authorities can be invited to collaborate with national ones. Alternatively, multi-level steering groups can incorporate regional and national level stakeholders.

Data and information

The main issues identified stressed that data collection is not enough. There is a need for quality checks and capacity to deal with large and complex datasets, especially if they come from different sources and points in time. Another issue is that data is often collected with different methods, which may limit its comparability and usefulness across areas or years. Furthermore, new data needs in the context of CSP indicators may not be met with existing sources.

Suggested solutions include, first and foremost, identifying the data needed and its urgency, then building on lessons from the past and optimising the use of existing data.

Data gap analysis is the next step based on an analysis of indicators, establishing an inventory of data sources and taking stock of data that was missing in the previous period.

To address data gaps, suggestions include the use of surveys, modelling using coefficients, additional data collection (potentially by expanding databases like the FADN) and expanding arrangements with data providers (e.g. statistical offices) to include more questions/variables. A parallel suggested action is to use tools for improving data quality and improve skills in using innovative/new methods for data collection (e.g. using sentinel).

Communication, follow-up and resources, technical support, capacity building

The main issues identified relate to planning, communication and dissemination activities, as well as which actors to involve and address.

The follow-up of evaluation results raises several issues focusing on the difficulties to ensure evaluation recommendations are taken up in the policy cycle without political interference or bottlenecks, such as changing the mindset from an audit to an evaluation culture. The availability of resources (human, financial, administrative and technical) as well as the lack of relevant expertise/experience are issues that may affect EP implementation. Further issues include the need for technical support and capacity building of stakeholders and administration, as well as how to identify the evaluation needs of LAGs to provide them with adequate support.

Suggested approaches to disseminate evaluation results include greater involvement of the NN and MC members as well as making use of all available channels (e.g. meetings, social media, user friendly reports). Suggestions for follow-up of evaluation results include embedding it in a communication plan targeted at key stakeholders/policymakers, as well as developing tools (e.g. fiches with evaluation results and action points) to check if relevant recommendations have been implemented. Suggestions for resources focus on prioritising needs to allow for optimal allocation of available resources. Finally, capacity building support to LAGs needs to count on the involvement of NNS.

2.3 Wrap-up

Mr Hannes Wimmer, team leader of the Evaluation Helpdesk, shared some key takeaway points from the GPW:

- › The EP is **one of the tools** to ensure that EU Member States are planning and carrying out the appropriate evaluation activities (e.g. addressing all evaluation criteria, etc.).
- › **Evaluation frameworks among EU Member States look very different** and may be a source for exchange and mutual inspiration.
- › **Support for tendering evaluations** (e.g. examples of terms of reference) are a key tool for EU Member States to achieve high quality of evaluations.
- › **The question as to whether appropriate evaluation activities are planned is fundamental.** EU Member States may wish an exchange before official submission of the EP, but also throughout the implementation of the EP.
- › The relationship between outsourcing evaluations vs. building internal evaluation capacity in EU Member States is fundamental.
- › The size and typology of tenders (i.e. comprehensive contracts or thematic evaluations) is crucial, depending also on the ability of the national evaluation market to respond adequately to the tenders.
- › The evaluation criterion 'effectiveness' is related to all SOs, whereas the other criteria are handled at a horizontal level. The 'coherence' criterion sets specific challenges in setting the boundaries



on what to evaluate with CAP funding. Methodological challenges remain as to how to evaluate this particular evaluation criterion.

➤ **The interlinkage of the planned evaluation activities with programme steering is crucial.**

Mr Serrano-Padial closed the workshop by stating that the discussions over the two days showed the thoughts and needs of EU Member States regarding the development of their EP. He underlined that the EP is something new and that this programming period is focused on building trust. EU Member States have the chance to make the most of the possibilities and flexibility provided to them, and improve as well as adapt the workings of the CAP. He wrapped up the meeting by indicating that he would come back to those EU Member States that wanted a bilateral dialogue with the EC on their EP.

3. Concluding remarks

The outcomes of the presentations and group discussions on the design of the different sections of the EP provided useful lessons that can help EU Member States produce comprehensive and good quality plans. An overarching lesson is that evaluation planning is a dynamic exercise and the EP is a dynamic document. This implies that, while an EP has to be concrete and complete, it also has to be flexible over time. Yearly action or operational plans are already envisaged by several EU Member States to provide more detail and specificity to the different sections of their EP.

The objectives and needs section sets the scene for the rest of the sections of the evaluation plan. It is the basis for establishing a clear evaluation framework, preferably as soon as possible. Such a framework would include evaluation criteria, evaluation questions and factors of success. It can be different for each EU Member State in terms of depth and content, but it is good to develop it from the beginning, even if it is an indicative one. The timeline should be comprehensive, considering that no matter when one assesses the various evaluation criteria, eventually all of them need to be taken into account. EU Member States can analyse and decide which are the relevant evaluation activities at different points in time and then plan their resources and other support accordingly. It is possible to start evaluating as early as possible, such as the delivery mechanism, income-related interventions and generally process-related evaluations. It is also possible to start with smaller/targeted evaluations and then broaden the scope as time passes, enabling overarching evaluations on certain topics, groups of SOs or the entire CSP.

Stakeholder mapping is a new element in evaluation planning and therefore raises several issues and concerns. Stakeholders play important roles in the implementation of the evaluation plan, for instance as members of the governance and coordination arrangements, as data providers or as recipients of information and multipliers of evaluation culture.

Stakeholders can be mapped as widely as possible and to the largest possible extent. EU Member States might consider having a big conference where they invite as many stakeholders as possible and ask them to indicate their interest and at which stage of the evaluations they would like to be engaged. A first step can be to form a map of stakeholders, and then to contact those stakeholders by thinking about which channels can be used, outside the most traditional ones.

EU Member States can try to engage their stakeholders as much as possible to understand them better. For instance, they may try to focus the attention of a targeted group by forming specific structures dedicated to evaluation planning and implementation, for instance by creating sub-groups within the NN or under the MC.

For regionalised EU Member States, evaluation planning is done at the national level with the input of the regions in the planning phase. Evaluations are carried out at the national level, in most cases by using input (e.g. data and context) from the regions. Regions can be invited to undertake their own evaluations, if appropriate, and evaluators at the national level could take into account the findings of those evaluations as much as possible.

The data and information section is critical for the identification of data gaps. The golden rule to identify data gaps is to start from the experience of the past within administrations and in a systematic way. Following identification, overcoming these gaps will be a key challenge. Main lessons include optimising the use of existing data and focusing on additional data collection. On the use of existing data, there is a need to raise awareness of its existence. On collecting additional data, it is important to plan at the beginning what additional data EU Member States need to collect. During the identification of data gaps, EU Member States may realise that some data are more urgent than others. To improve data sharing and to access the required data more easily, it is essential to expand arrangements with statistical offices and establish data sharing agreements. EU Member States cannot anticipate all data gaps that evaluators may find when conducting evaluations. One way to solve this is to collect additional data and cross check data needs with the timeline of evaluations. Finally, the issue of data quality should be addressed using concrete tools (e.g. a manual or glossary to check) and including capacity building on data in the EP.

The communication and follow-up section needs to distinguish clearly between communication and follow-up. Communication helps change the mindset of evaluation as an audit to evaluation as a source of inspiration to do things better. This requires two-way communication, i.e. not only communicating but also receiving feedback. The level of communication also matters; it is important to communicate not only to local stakeholders, but also upwards to hierarchies in ministries, so that they can take evidence-based decisions.



Follow-up ensures that evaluation results are eventually used to inform future policy making and improve current policy implementation. For this, it is essential to ensure that findings come at the right time of the policy cycle so that there is enough of a window to agree and discuss on follow-up actions. Several stakeholders are critical for follow-up, including MC members or the NN. Evaluators can act as catalysts by providing synthesis summaries to make evaluations more accessible.

The follow-up process may entail a slow learning curve for better outcomes, but simpler, more focused evaluations at the beginning

can allow stakeholders to understand evaluations better and may also feed into the policy making process sooner. Resources can be a major challenge when evaluations are understaffed and under resourced. Within the MA, there is clear recognition of the importance of evaluation, since high quality evaluation input can improve the policy. However, in order to optimise resources, the evaluation culture outside the MA needs to be promoted, while evaluation resources may also be prioritised in line with the evaluation needs. Capacity building for LAGs can be supported with the NN through regular meetings with LAGs that can help assess their needs and plan the necessary support.

After the presentation, participants asked the presenters the following questions

<p>Does Denmark have an example of how they address the other evaluation criteria, when their focus is on effectiveness?</p>	<p>Ms Eskebaek and Ms Friedrichsen explained that the evaluation questions for the evaluation criterion effectiveness were adapted to the SOs, while, for all other evaluation criteria, the evaluation questions were more generic.</p>
<p>In relation to gender equality, how would Denmark predict the interactions with other funds regarding evaluations?</p>	<p>Ms Eskebaek and Ms Friedrichsen replied that Denmark had not looked at gender equality and therefore not in relation to other funds either; there is no focus on gender equality in the Danish CSP as it is already covered by many other Danish initiatives and so there is no need to have CAP funding focused on this.</p>
<p>Denmark put four milestones on tenders, so is Denmark considering having many different evaluators?</p>	<p>Ms Eskebaek and Ms Friedrichsen stated that no decision has yet been taken on this matter, but they were interested to see the Irish presentation where it was seen as better to not to have one big evaluation. The Danish Managing Authority is running into difficulties as they lack advanced methodological knowledge, so tenders will be necessary.</p>
<p>In what way is Hungarian acquiring all the necessary capacity building and in what areas and why has the evaluation of environmental aspects been outsourced?</p>	<p>Dr Mezosi and Mr Cserneczky indicated that this was done through a multi-annual framework contract, but that the intention is for some government body to take over once the programme is more settled in order to spread knowledge. They found that there were a lot of synergies between the evaluation tasks while it was also good to have the same evaluators in assessments and monitoring.</p>



ANNEX 1 – Key issues identified and suggested solutions

Below is an overview of the input from the GPW participants from both day 1 and 2, identifying key issues and suggested solutions regarding the development of the different sections of the EP. Where possible, EU Member State shared their experience or proposed a solution.

Discussions on needs, objectives and timeline

Questions and concerns

EP intervention logic

- › What is the role of the intervention logic in the EP?
- › How does one decide which interventions contribute to a specific topic?

Content depth

- › How often should the evaluation cycle be repeated?
- › It may be too late for informing the next programming period.
- › There is a need for the EP to be flexible. How about amendment to the EP in 2026?
- › How detailed should the assessment of each evaluation criterion be?
- › How does one set the boundaries of the evaluation?

Thematic evaluations

- › Can an NN perform its self-evaluation?
- › Introduction of the NN in thematic evaluations (AKIS and LEADER).
- › Lack of guidelines to do thematic assessments.
- › What should be the focus of thematic evaluations, e.g. of 'green architecture'? Should the assessment of the 'green architecture be related with coherence or impact?
- › When should the evaluation of LEADER and SOs linked to it start/finish?
- › How can one use support studies? Do we need them for input for the evaluation of certain topics?
- › How does one disentangle effects from the previous RDP and current CSP, especially for some environmental and social effects of the CAP (e.g. impacts on soil quality, on poverty rates) where there is a delay in observing effects. Is there scope for multi-plan evaluation strategies, i.e. covering two programming periods? And if so, how does one isolate Pillar 1 and Pillar 2 in a multi-plan evaluation?

Evaluation questions and evaluation criteria

- › Should each evaluation question be linked to an evaluation criterion?
- › Efficiency: when does one evaluate the efficiency of green architecture?
- › Coherence: how in-depth should an evaluation of coherence go when most of the funding comes from resources outside the CAP?
- › Impact: how does one evaluate the proper impact of the CAP interventions compared to other national interventions?
- › How can we find out what has changed and the true meaning of CAP in impacting, for example, farmers' income when the world has changed because of crises?



Data on time

- › Need for data availability and evaluation results on time for proper communication.
- › What about interventions that finish in 2029?

Timeline

- › How does one fit the assessment of each evaluation criterion in the timeline? How does one ensure consistency of the EP?
- › For the evaluations during implementation, what should be the timeline for EU Member States: until the end of 2027, 2029 or even longer?
- › Impacts to be assessed in 2029 or in the ex post?
- › Need to confirm that the estimated start date for assessments will be the second half of 2026, considering that the first APR will be in February 2025.
- › What if we blend process/mid-term/thematic/ex post evaluation activities to a long-term ongoing evaluation?
- › Most topics will be evaluated at the end of the programming period as there may be no data to do so earlier.

Proposed solutions

EP intervention logic

- › Group interventions according to the intervention logic, e.g. in Finland they group interventions linked to SO1, SO2 and SO7 (connected to the target/follow CSP intervention logic).

Content depth

- › Germany, Spain and Sweden suggest an overarching evaluation plan, with its timetable and an annual operational plan (internal).
- › The EP is a dynamic document and can be revised regularly.

Thematic evaluations

- › France proposes smaller focused evaluations initially, followed later by a broader evaluation.
- › Spain suggests assessing coherence/conditionality of the environment architecture in 2024.
- › Estonia and Spain suggest using support studies as input to SO4-SO6 and economic SOs.
- › France stressed that, for netting out environmental effects in the RDP, you must consider Pillar 1, therefore Pillar 1 evaluations are not new for EU Member States.
- › Greece suggests that the evaluator can make comparisons between different evaluations.
- › Develop a chart listing needs and interventions for each SO to help decide which evaluations to do when.
- › Long-term multi-plan evaluations could be done for interventions like organic farming.



Evaluation questions and evaluation criteria

- › Design evaluation questions and factors of success for all evaluation criteria. More than one evaluation question per SO is possible.
- › Italy proposes to start evaluating as soon as possible what is possible, for instance selection criteria, delivery system, governance.
- › Several options suggested for evaluation criteria: a) for each evaluation criterion, design evaluation questions and factors of success per SO; b) some evaluation questions can refer to several evaluation criteria; c) BE-Wallonia uses generic evaluation questions and then links the factors of success to evaluation criteria.
- › Greece proposes to evaluate effectiveness and efficiency for all SOs during implementation and leave the rest of the criteria for the ex post.
- › Finland stresses, in relation to effectiveness, that evaluation checks progress towards targets.
- › Italy proposes to start assessing efficiency soon, involving stakeholders through a continuous evaluation process and then intensify progressively. Efficiency is perceived as cost per output, cost per result and impacts.
- › Poland suggests that relevance can only focus on part of an SO.
- › Sweden specifies the EP at SO level and lists evaluation criteria, factors of success, interventions and data needs. EU value added is better evaluated at the end.
- › The Commission stressed the use of evaluation criteria that are relevant at each point in time.

Timeline

- › There are different options for the duration of the EP timeline: a) Finland starts in 2023 with process evaluation and finishes in 2031; b) Portugal to start in 2026 with two cycles of data linked to the APR; c) Estonia proposes a duration between 2025 and 2029.
- › Spain proposes that the timing should consider data availability.
- › Poland suggests that the delivery mechanism can be assessed at the beginning and maybe for Pillar 1, but SO4-SO6 evaluations need to be conducted at a later stage.
- › Hungary proposes to use data from project applications to assess the potential and in subsequent years validate/revise the results.
- › Finland considers that interventions contributing to income can be evaluated every year.
- › Coherence is critical for Finland and should be evaluated during implementation.

Discussions on governance and stakeholder mapping.

Questions and concerns

General

- › How does one define the functional independence of the evaluator?
- › How does one address the needs of all stakeholders within the allocated resources and time?
- › How are the stakeholders counted?



Engagement/involvement of stakeholders

- › The degree that stakeholders should be involved in the preparation and implementation phases of the EP. How does one define a process to involve them?
- › How does one activate the MC, involve the NN and all other stakeholders?
- › How does one decide which stakeholders should be engaged during implementation of the EP? To which thematic evaluations?
- › To what extent and how does one reach and engage stakeholders outside the steering group (outside 'the normal' network)?
- › How does one use evaluation findings to engage stakeholders?
- › Some EU Member States (Finland, France) are already in dialogue with some stakeholders. How did the dialogue go? Was it difficult to find a consensus?

Regionalised EU Member States

- › How does one engage regional stakeholders? How does one allocate evaluation activities to them?
- › What contribution is expected from the regions? Should it be mandatory?
- › The size of regions might affect significantly. How does one tackle different scales in a common CSP and in the common EP?
- › If rural development support is fully implemented at the regional level, how is rural development then evaluated? By regional administrators?
- › Are there options for multilevel evaluation i.e. evaluations at national and regional levels?

Proposed solutions

Involvement of stakeholders

- › Focus on the main stakeholders now and identify additional stakeholders down the road. The EP is a live document that can prioritise ongoing discussion with stakeholders.
- › There are various options proposed for the involvement of stakeholders: a) creation of a working group with a limited number of actors that will work to identify main needs; b) organise a wide stakeholder conference to extract information about when/where/how the stakeholders would like to be involved/engaged; c) set up multiple steering groups on specific topics with a variety of members.
- › There are various options proposed for involving the MC: a) mapping of MC members based on their expertise and interest; b) set up a specific MC on evaluation (and performance); c) establish sub-groups within the MC based on specific evaluations/implementation aspects to create more ownership; d) assign specific tasks to members of the MC based on interest to create ownership.
- › Create a voluntary steering group within the NN so as not to overload the MC.

Engagement of stakeholders

- › Reach stakeholders with attractive dissemination outside the ministry website (e.g. with infographics).
- › Consider different levels of engagement and adapt communication/dissemination to the different levels and interest.
- › Have public consultations.



Regionalised EU Member States

- › Invite regional authorities to cooperate with national authorities; however evaluation responsibilities cannot be delegated to regional authorities.
- › Develop multi-level steering groups (with the NN, experts, MAs, regional authorities, etc.) but with additional structures.

Discussions on data and information

Questions and concerns

- › Data collection is not enough. Quality checks and analysis are necessary for evaluation (particular for Pillar 2).
- › How does one ensure the necessary skills to manage and manipulate complex data?
- › How does one isolate the impact of previous programming periods?
- › Data might be collected according to different methodologies (same indicator, different methodologies).
- › Application systems are already running, so it is difficult to ask for more data.
- › The evaluation needs are not clear yet, therefore it is difficult to plan the data.
- › The use of additional data for M&E may be a problem in regionalised EU Member States. How should data be combined from different regional authorities/agencies?

Proposed solutions

Start from lessons learnt, establish urgency of data needed

- › Ireland and Germany propose to focus on the analysis of data gaps (check what data is available, what is missing). Germany suggests looking at high urgent needs (in application system) and identifying additional data needed in the application system.
- › Germany proposes to carry out interviews for data gap analysis on what kind of data was missing in the last programming period (e.g. not implementation data but surrounding data); checking also past evaluations, AIRs, etc.
- › Portugal and Czechia suggest sorting of indicators (e.g. by hectare) and linking to surveys and other sources (research, biomonitoring).
- › Portugal proposes to establish an inventory of data sources.
- › Germany suggests using evaluation concepts as a basis for defining methods and data needs.
- › Use thematic evaluations to collect data for impact indicators (e.g. environment).

Optimise the use of existing data

- › Finland suggests using a research institute to collect data (e.g. on soil)
- › Sweden proposes the use of farm surveys both 2025 and 2028 with a large sample overlap for some key environmental data collection.
- › Combination of different data sources.



Explore methods to overcome data gaps

- › Poland suggests to cross impacts between programming periods, using field samples at the same location (e.g. for soil).
- › Ireland proposes modelling of impacts on GHG and ammonia emissions using coefficients based on actions and intervention and the profile of beneficiaries.

Carry out additional data collection

- › Poland suggests using Pillar 1 data to analyse Pillar 2
- › Sweden and Hungary propose to add questions to the FADN survey or enlarge the sample.
- › Luxembourg suggests addressing data gaps by collecting only what is accessible and then doing additional data collection.
- › Another suggestion is to link all databases (FADN, statistical office). However, this needs the same code for beneficiaries.
- › Do not forget to also check legal requirements to be able to use data for evaluation.

Expand arrangements with statistical offices to include additional questions/variables

- › Latvia proposes to ask the ministry of environment how they want to measure the environmental impact.
- › Sweden proposes to increase the collaboration with national statistical agencies for data sharing, data gathering and some evaluation analyses.

Use tools to improve data quality

- › Use data that has already been quality controlled, such as DME, FADN, data from official sources. Then, quality control can focus on additional data.
- › Greece suggests that guidelines for certain topics (e.g. LEADER, Pillar 1) can help provide tools for data quality control.
- › Germany and Italy suggest using a common glossary or monitoring manual to ensure data quality.
- › Poland and Hungary propose improving skills and competences for data analysis to make use of certain types of data (e.g. sentinel).
- › Have the meta data (where the data comes from, etc.).

Discussions on communication, follow-up and resources, technical support and capacity building

Questions and concerns

- › How does one reach relevant stakeholders? For example, how does one inform and persuade high level ministers? How does one reach other people in the MA who are not dealing with the EP and raise their awareness about the importance of evaluation?
- › It takes time to develop cooperation relationships.
- › How does one ensure that not only the 'convenient' evaluations are taken up in policy making?
- › How does one move from an 'audit' to an 'evaluation' culture?
- › Small EU Member States have a limited amount of expertise.
- › Independence of evaluations needs to be considered in communications.
- › Capacity building is needed to harmonise evaluation of local development strategies/self-assessment of LAGs (particularly important for regionalised EU Member States).



Approaches to disseminate evaluation results

- › Portugal proposes to have a communication plan already in the EP.
- › Italy, Greece and Finland agree that the EP should specify activities and channels of communication (e.g. meetings, social media).
- › There are various options in relation to the role of the Monitoring Committee: a) informing the MC members, which is already a standard practice in EU Member States; b) Czechia proposes to create working groups on evaluation within the MC as a good practice; c) the Netherlands proposes to create separate workshops/meetings with MC members, dealing only with evaluation, before an MC meeting.
- › There are various options in relation to the role of National Networks: a) Portugal proposes to directly involve the NN, who already have valuable experience; b) France considers as first priority to improve the communication with the MC, and then ask the NN to disseminate results; c) Italy considers that there can be a repository of evaluation products on the network's website (include comparison of methods and solutions to evaluation problems).
- › There are various options in relation to the role of the MA: a) in Bulgaria the director of MA reports to ministers the main findings in informal meetings; b) Latvia considers the MA can promote good cooperation with farmers, NGOs, ministries, etc., as dissemination channels; c) Finland and Sweden consider the MA may include a specific person working to communicate CAP evaluation results; d) in Czechia, evaluation findings are made publicly available online.
- › In order to make evaluation reports more accessible and understandable for everyone, options include: 1) evaluators develop a presentation with recommendations and make it available (proposed by Latvia); 2) design a blog (proposed by Luxembourg); 3) Greece and Sweden propose a citizens' summary and/or a PPT (including in English), specified in the tender for evaluators; 4) Czechia suggests a colour code for presentations of evaluation findings where red/orange/yellow indicate the extent of the problem regarding a particular issue (prepared by evaluators); 5) workshops to disseminate evaluation findings to the right target group (proposed by Malta and Hungary); 6) Estonia proposes to present thematic evaluation findings in other events related to the topic of the thematic evaluation.
- › Sweden proposes to include the Digital Object Identifier (DOI) number in evaluation reports, as well as an indication on how to refer to the report, to make evaluations easier to find online.

Ensuring follow-up of evaluations

- › Follow-up mechanisms are currently centralised, for instance, in Greece and Spain. In Finland, evaluations stimulate regional level bodies.
- › In the Netherlands, it is mandatory to make evaluations public, including a short summary, which is sent to the parliament, and this triggers conversations.
- › In Sweden, for every evaluation a communication plan is developed, which considers when the result should feed into other processes.
- › Portugal suggests embedding preliminary evaluation findings in policy development by engaging implementation and evaluation teams together, as a means to ensure that knowledge exists within the system.
- › France proposes to have simple evaluations at the beginning of the period on one intervention, which are understandable and ready to be followed up (e.g. eco-schemes).
- › The Commission suggests follow-up fiches for each evaluation that may check the relevance of findings and if they were taken on board.



Optimising resources

- › In order to prioritise available resources, Portugal highlights the need to ensure sufficient administrative prioritisation, while Spain proposes to use the prioritisation already done for the needs assessment.
- › In order to save on resources, Malta proposes to develop a harmonisation for evaluations from different funds.
- › In France, the budget for resources depends on needs (technical assistance is merged with regional authorities to finance evaluations).
- › In Greece, the budget includes the calculation of evaluation studies (communication and salary costs are not included).

Support for LAGs in evaluation

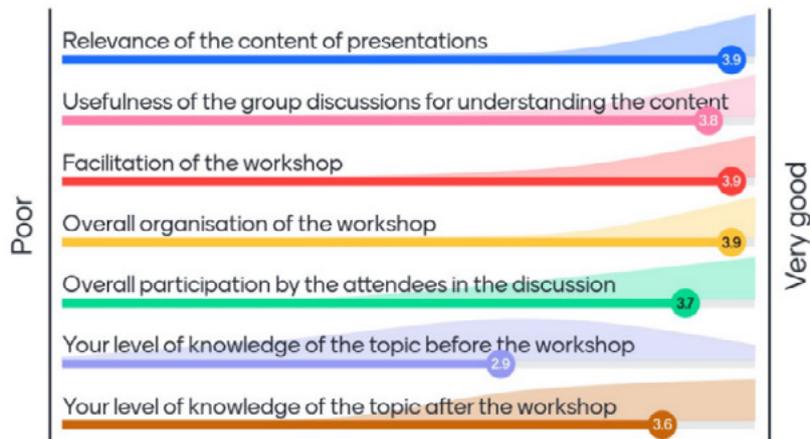
- › Croatia offers capacity building activities to LAGs four times a year, with monitoring and evaluation being one component of the capacity building. It has assessed the LAGs' capacity to conduct self-evaluations and, based on this, developed training focusing on indicators.
- › Intensive collaboration with the NN is proposed for the evaluation capacity building of LAGs.



ANNEX 2 - Results of the feedback poll

Please find below the outcome of the Mentimeter feedback poll on the Good Practice Workshop. The poll was launched in order to determine the satisfaction of participants with the workshop, as well as to obtain feedback on how future events can be improved.

Feedback on the Good Practice Workshop



Strenght, Weaknesses, Suggestions, Comments...?

.	Good	Thank You very useful WSI!
.	It would be useful to allocate more time on membership good practice presentations	Very inspiring two days. Good the share experiences and get mental support.
.	More time for presenters 😊	Eastern theme was nice 😊
could you please send everyone the presenters and also the participants names and email addresses. Thank you very much in advance!	Very good presentation by MS and broad discussion on them	Very well organised and very useful, a lot of suggestions to think over in the coming weeks!
Partecipation was a point of strenght	Wonderful ealk trow cassle. There were time to get to know people and different way to make evaluation.	Keep doing these events



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