

QUALITY ASSESSMENT FORM

Title of the evaluation:

**EVALUATION OF INVESTMENT SUPPORT UNDER
RURAL DEVELOPMENT POLICY**

DG/Unit: DG AGRI, Unit E.4

- Officials managing the evaluation: Annette Hurrelmann, Fernando Fonseca

Evaluator/contractor: Metis GmbH in co-operation with WIFO (Austrian Institute of Economic Research) and AEIDL

Assessment carried out by:

- The steering group involved the participation of colleagues from DG AGRI units E.1, E.3, E.4, F.1, G.1, G.2, H.1, H.4 and SG, DG REGIO, DG RTD, DG ENTR, DG EMPL, JRC and DG COMP.

Date of the Quality Assessment: December 2014

(1) RELEVANCE

Does the evaluation respond to information needs, in particular as expressed in the terms of references?

	Poor	Satisfactory	Good	Very Good	Excellent
SCORING				X	

Arguments for scoring:

The evaluation adequately responds to the information needs and fully meets the requirements of the terms of reference. The report deals with and responds to all the evaluation questions. The geographical and time scopes for the evaluation have been fully respected.

(2) APPROPRIATE DESIGN

Is the design of the evaluation adequate for obtaining the results needed to answer the evaluation questions?

	Poor	Satisfactory	Good	Very Good	Excellent
SCORING				X	

Arguments for scoring:

The methodology design is clearly described and carefully reasoned and appropriate for addressing the evaluation objectives. Information sources and analysis tools are adequate for answering the evaluation questions. Judgement criteria to help answer these questions were pre-defined.

The following approaches were applied to answer the three evaluation questions:

1) EQ1 (appropriateness and suitability of methods): strengths and weaknesses of each method; data requirements of each measure; the approach how the counterfactual situation is established, the scale of indicators and the method for measuring efficiency, effectiveness and impact is presented. The appropriateness of each measure is judged using the criteria *rigour*, *robustness* and *validity* and *practicability* based on views of experts in the project team and literature.

2) EQ2 (application of different methods in selected territories): identification of data requirements for each method; assessment of data-availability; fieldwork whereby a variety of investment measures in the study regions was analysed by different methods.

3) EQ3 (effectiveness of different approaches to targeting investment support in meeting objectives of rural development policies): three approaches were identified (eligibility criteria, aid-intensity differentiation and ranking criteria) and used to analyse the effectiveness of targeting to achieve the objectives of the RDP and also to divert funds to the targeted groups.

(3) RELIABLE DATA

Are data collected adequate for their intended use and have their reliability been ascertained?

SCORING	Poor	Satisfactory	Good	Very Good	Excellent
			X		

Arguments for scoring:

Available information and sources are well identified in the report. The evaluation used a mix of quantitative and qualitative data. The evaluation relied largely on available data and collected own data only to a limited extent. Hence, the limitations or quality problems of some external data could not be influenced by the consultant. Any problems or difficulties with data reliability that was encountered in the course of the evaluation is clearly pointed out in the report.

(4) SOUND ANALYSIS

Are data systematically analysed to answer evaluation questions and cover other information needs in a valid manner?

SCORING	Poor	Satisfactory	Good	Very Good	Excellent
				X	

Arguments for scoring:

The analysis was carried out in a rigorous way and is well developed. The different analytical tools used were appropriate, assessing the quantitative and qualitative data in a valid manner. The limitations of each of the analytical approaches and tools are clearly presented and fully taken into account in the interpretation of the results.

(5) CREDIBLE FINDINGS

Do findings follow logically from and are justified by, the data/information analysis and interpretations based on pre-established criteria and rational?

SCORING	Poor	Satisfactory	Good	Very Good	Excellent
			X		

Arguments for scoring:

The findings are based on evidence provided through the analysis and are well justified. The judgements are transparent, the reasoning is well explained and limitations on validity identified. As the main focus of the evaluation was on testing methodologies and the application of methodologies was done on the basis of selected case studies, the findings with respect to the impact of measures should not be understood to be representative for the whole of the EU. However, this limitation is due to the design and concept of the evaluation.

(6) VALID CONCLUSIONS

Are conclusions non-biased and fully based on findings?

SCORING	Poor	Satisfactory	Good	Very Good	Excellent
				X	

Arguments for scoring:

The conclusions are formulated in a clearly understandable manner. They are addressed to the evaluation questions and other information needs and logically substantiated by evaluation findings. They are unbiased, balanced and prudent.

(7) HELPFUL RECOMMENDATIONS

Are areas needing improvements identified in coherence with the conclusions? Are the suggested options realistic and impartial?

SCORING	Poor	Satisfactory	Good	Very Good	Excellent
				X	

Arguments for scoring:

The recommendations stem logically from the evaluation results and conclusions. They are realistic, impartial and useful. The recommendations and conclusions contain valuable information as well as readily applicable tools that will also be of service to other evaluators who are interested in applying the tested methods.

(8) CLARITY

Is the report well structured, balanced and written in an understandable manner?

SCORING	Poor	Satisfactory	Good	Very Good	Excellent
				X	

Arguments for scoring:

The report is logically structured following the elements required by the terms of reference. It is written in a clear language and easily understandable. Unnecessary repetitions have been avoided and the written style and presentation are clear and adapted to different readers. Tables, graphs and other presentational tools underpin the analysis in a useful way.

OVERALL ASSESSMENT OF THE FINAL EVALUATION REPORT

Overall, the quality of the report is assessed to be **very good**.

Is the overall quality of the report adequate, in particular:

- **Does the evaluation fulfil contractual conditions?**

Clearly and fully.

- **Are the findings and conclusions of the report reliable, and are there any specific limitations to their validity and completeness?**

The findings and conclusions of the report are reliable and clear.

- **Is the information in the report potentially useful for designing intervention, setting priorities, allocating resources or improving interventions?**

The findings, conclusions and recommendations of the evaluation are very useful and relevant.