



# TOPIC 2: JOBS CREATION IN RURAL AREAS (2014-2020)

## WORKING PACKAGE 1

THEMATIC WORKING GROUP NO 8

'EX POST EVALUATION OF RDPs 2014-2020: LEARNING FROM PRACTICE'

JUNE 2020

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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.

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## INTRODUCTION

This document is developed as a part of the Working Package 1 of the Thematic Working Group 8, 'Ex post evaluation of RDPs 2014-2020: Learning from practice', which analyses the emerging evaluation issues in relation to the assessment of RDP effects on achieving a balanced territorial development of rural economies and communities. This document highlights issues related to the use of the common result/target indicator 'Jobs created in supported projects' to measure the achievements under the Focus Areas (FA) 6A (Result Indicator R21 and Target Indicator T20) and 6B (Result Indicator R24 and Target Indicator T23) in the 2014-2020 programming period.

This is a **non-binding document**, which aims to support Member States to exchange and learn from current practices of assessing RDP impacts related to the CAP objective, 'balanced territorial development of rural economies and communities'. Additionally, this document should serve the purpose of supporting the needs of evaluation stakeholders in improving the quality of evaluations when preparing for the ex post evaluation of RDPs 2014-2020.

# JOB CREATION IN RURAL AREAS: PRACTICAL APPLICATION OF THE RESULT/TARGET INDICATORS R21/T20 AND R24/T23 IN THE CMES IN 2014-2020

## 1. Context

- I. 'Jobs created in supported projects' is used as a common result/target indicator to measure the achievements under the Focus Areas (FA) 6A (Result Indicator R21 and Target Indicator T20) and 6B (Result Indicator R24 and Target Indicator T23) in the 2014-2020 programming period.
- II. Relevant guidance to support Member States in the assessment of 2014-2020 RDPs results, achievements and impacts have been prepared by the European Commission and the European Evaluation Helpdesk.

Technical support document	Relevant parts, sections
<b>For monitoring:</b>	
<a href="#">Target indicator fiches for Pillar II (Priorities 1 – 6)</a>	Fiches for result/target indicators R21/T20 and R24/T23
<b>For evaluation:</b>	
<a href="#">Impact indicators fiches (CMES 2014-2020)</a>	Fiches for impact indicator I.14
<a href="#">Assessment of RDP Results: How to Prepare for Reporting on Evaluation in 2017</a>	Annex 11 Fiches for answering CEQs for RDPs 2014-2020: Chapter 2.16 'FA6A, Evaluation question 16' Chapter 2.17 'FA6B, Evaluation question 17'
<a href="#">Assessing of RDP achievements and impacts in 2019</a>	Part III – Fiches for answering CEQs 22-30: Chapter 3.1 'Common Evaluation Question 22' Chapter 3.8 'Common Evaluation Question 29'

## 2. Experts' conclusions

- I. The **existing CMES definition** of the common result/target indicators R21/T20 and, R24/T23 and the related clarifications provided by the European Commission and the Evaluation Helpdesk are, in technical terms, **sufficient** to allow for the consistent collection of those indicators in the operations database for monitoring.

The indicator fiches emphasise that data collection should be based on a **solid information source** (e.g. business plans) and should **distinguish between jobs created when the project is up and running, from jobs created during project implementation**. Furthermore, it should follow a **3-step approach** (1. estimate, 2. adjust and 3. validate). Data should be collected before the project starts, at the completion of the project and then validated after completion. This validation should be based on a sample of completed projects in order to capture the actual effects and not only planned or expected ones. The time period for the ex post validation (e.g. x years after the end of the project) is not defined in the fiches.

- II. Robust monitoring and evaluation of the indicators R21/T20 and R24/T23 evidently depends on the **policy context** and is more likely to occur where it can be meaningfully used to measure the success of the policy. In RDPs where job creation is a **strategic and operational objective** (e.g. jobs created are used as a selection criterion for projects) an increased effort for data collection in the monitoring and accompanying evaluation (with advanced methods) is often observed.
- III. The **quality of the data** collected for monitoring and used in evaluations is often compromised by administrative rather than by technical issues. For example, by only requesting data from beneficiaries in limited number of points in time (e.g. at the application phase only) or through

the involvement of intermediate actors (e.g. Local Action Groups (LAGs)) for data collection without providing sufficient methodological support.

- IV. The **validation of jobs created through a sample of completed projects** is carried out as part of the monitoring activities. However, some Member States in order to increase the plausibility of the values provided concerning jobs created apply a validation procedure to all projects. Despite the different needs and approaches in the individual RDPs concerning the tracking and assessment of jobs created, respecting a minimum set of requirements will guarantee the comparability and aggregation of data at the EU level and be able to respond to EU level information needs.
- V. RDP evaluations are encouraged to use advanced approaches in the assessment of RDP effects on job creation. The **role of the evaluation** in assessing job effects should be emphasised. Unbiased estimates of the RDP’s ‘true’ employment net effect can only be obtained through a counterfactual analysis.

### 3. Issues and possible solutions for the ex post evaluations of RDPs 2014-2020

A number of issues concerning data quality and data collection for the above mentioned indicators have been identified through the analysis of the evaluation sections of the Annual Implementation Reports submitted in 2019, the feedback from evaluation stakeholders in the Yearly Capacity Building Events and complementary interviews with evaluation stakeholders in the Member States.

The issues and proposed possible solutions for the ex post evaluation of RDPs 2014-2020 are summarised below.

Identified issues	Possible solutions
<b>Quality of collected data</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stakeholders (e.g. beneficiaries, LAGs) who estimate and report on jobs created in the Member States have different interpretations of how to operationalise the indicator fiches (e.g. not distinguishing between jobs created and maintained, including temporary jobs). This affects the plausibility of the monitoring data.</li> <li>• There is insufficient quality control of the data collected (e.g. no correction of incorrect data entries, checking the accuracy of estimated values).</li> </ul>	<p>The Member States should be encouraged to further enhance the quality of the data collected with a view to avoid incorrect and implausible values in the SFC system. The stakeholders (e.g. beneficiaries, LAGs) who estimate and report on jobs created in the Member States should be supported, in order to, achieve a common understanding of the definitions. Methodological support on data collection can also include, for example, providing checklists for project applicants and LAGs and error reports to avoid incorrect entries in online application forms.</p> <p>If recurrent data quality issues occur only in a subset of RDPs, these could be specifically monitored and supported before submitting the indicator values through the SFC. This could be achieved through a checklist on minimum requirements for collecting monitoring data (see example of quality criteria in Annex 1) or a data validation tool (developed for the Member States) to check the correctness and plausibility of monitoring data (e.g. double checking of the data entries, specifying the format of the data).</p>

### Data collection at points in time and validation of the collected data

- Although indicator fiches have established a 3-step approach (1. estimate, 2. adjust, and 3. validate) for collecting the indicator values, some Member States still use different points in time and frequency for collecting the indicator values (e.g. estimated values are collected only at the time of application and validated through quotients established on a previous experience). The third step, 'validation' is often not carried out as part of the monitoring, but only in the context of the evaluation.

Member States must ensure that the RDP monitoring system is consistent with the indicator fiches and that it can collect plausible values at the project application and completion. Furthermore, data collected should be validated after project completion as part of the monitoring activities.

The Paying Agency may carry out a cross-comparison with business or social security data in order to ensure the plausibility of data on actual new jobs created through an ex post validation procedure based on a sample of projects or all completed projects. The administrative burden of the validation procedure on all completed projects, if chosen, should be carefully considered. While this is already practiced in some Member States, in others it is hindered by data protection rules.

See Annex 2 for practical examples on the validation of data applied in selected Member States and in Annex 3 more information on tracking of jobs created along the investment cycle in practice.

## ANNEX 1: QUALITY CRITERIA FOR THE INDICATORS R21/T20 AND R24/T23

**Checklist of quality criteria:** based on the observations of the use of indicators in the Member States and the definitions established in the fiches, the following quality criteria for R21/T20 and R24/T23 are proposed. This checklist can support in achieving a common understanding with involved actors on how to collect robust data and improve their annual reporting.

**Table 1. Quality criteria for the indicators R21/T20 and R24/T23**

Quality criteria	Minimum requirements in the CMES	Additional requirements
<b>FOR MONITORING/REPORTING:</b>		
<b>Compliance with CMES Fiches<sup>1</sup></b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The indicator is used for all relevant measures which can contribute to jobs created (appropriate scope).</li> </ul>	X	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Only new jobs are counted; jobs maintained are not included<sup>2</sup>.</li> </ul>	X	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Only direct jobs resulting from supported projects are taken into account and not those which result indirectly from operations.</li> </ul>	X	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Only jobs created when the project is up and running are counted; temporary jobs created during the investment are not included.</li> </ul>	X	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Employees and self-employed are counted but not voluntary work.</li> </ul>	X	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Part time and seasonal job estimates are translated into full time equivalents (FTEs).</li> </ul>	X	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A breakdown of indicators by gender of job holders is made.</li> </ul>	X	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Additional information on jobs created and their quality are broken down by education/skills level and sector/branch.</li> </ul>		X
<b>Data source</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The data are based on information provided by the beneficiaries in the application forms, business plans, payment requests or monitoring tables.</li> </ul>	X	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Additional data is optionally collected from reliable data sources (e.g. employment records and/or social insurance information).</li> </ul>		X
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The beneficiaries are obliged to provide data in a timely manner in accordance with the funding contract within the period of project implementation and durability<sup>3</sup>.</li> </ul>	X	
<b>Timing of data collection</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The data for indicators is collected through the application forms (estimation of planned newly created jobs) and stored in the monitoring system/operations database.</li> </ul>	X	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of jobs created mentioned in the approved projects are also repeated in the funding contracts with beneficiaries.</li> </ul>		X
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The data on estimated jobs created is collected through payment requests in the monitoring system and further used in reporting (realised expenditures and ongoing checks of the achievements made towards the targets in the AIRs in tables of Chapter 1.b.1 for FA 6A and 6B).</li> </ul>	X	

<sup>1</sup> [Target indicator fiches for Pillar II \(Priorities 1 – 6\)](#). Working Document. 2015.

<sup>2</sup> In case the RDP has an additional programme specific result indicator on jobs maintained, the values of jobs maintained should be collected separately.

<sup>3</sup> Article 71(1) of Regulation (EU) 1303/2013.

Quality criteria	Minimum requirements in the CMES	Additional requirements
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The data on jobs created is validated through a sample of completed projects.</li> </ul>	X	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The data on actual jobs created is collected through monitoring reports within 1–2 years after the project closure through samples or if resources allow on the entire population.</li> </ul>		X
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Monitoring data are updated where necessary (if the ex post validation shows that the job created are different from what was anticipated).</li> </ul>	X	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Information from the monitoring reports on actual jobs created is used in reporting if the report includes projects which are older than 2 years<sup>4</sup>.</li> </ul>		X
<b>Data processing</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Incorrect data entries are corrected.</li> </ul>	X	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The consistent collection of data on jobs created through LEADER is ensured over different levels of actors (e.g. project, LAG, technical department, PA).</li> </ul>	X	
<b>Coordination and communication</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pro-active communication and effective coordination between administrative bodies and beneficiaries to ensure the timely delivery of reliable and correct data (e.g. sufficient information is provided to all key actors on data collection needs and adequate information/manuals are prepared. Other awareness raising and training actions are completed (e.g. workshops and events).</li> </ul>	X	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In LEADER the consistent collection of data on jobs created is ensured through smooth coordination and communication between various levels of actors (e.g. project, LAGs, technical department, PA).</li> </ul>	X	
<b>FOR EVALUATION:</b>		
<b>Methodology for calculation of gross and net jobs created</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Jobs observed through the monitoring system are used as actual gross jobs created directly by the RDP's supported projects/beneficiaries and cumulated at the RDP level. However, the target indicator values will not collect all jobs created by the RDP. In addition, there are the secondary contributions from projects in other Focus Areas, which should be counted.</li> </ul>	X	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Created jobs which can be attributed to the RDP interventions are obtained through a counterfactual assessment through the comparison of jobs created by RDP beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries (ideally using a quasi-experimental evaluation design<sup>5</sup>). Also, indirect positive and negative displacement effects affect the net figures.</li> </ul>		X

Source: European Evaluation Helpdesk for Rural Development

<sup>4</sup> If Member State decides to make this last data collection later than 2 years after the project is up and running, the stakeholders must be aware that the number of jobs reported at the time of last monitoring might be distorted due to external factors and not necessarily show direct jobs created, but also, indirect jobs created. In this case the advanced assessment methodologies should be applied to attribute the observations to the RDP's interventions. This is very relevant for the ex post evaluation.

<sup>5</sup> [Assessing of RDP achievements and impacts in 2019](#).

## ANNEX 2: PRACTICAL EXAMPLES ON THE VALIDATION OF DATA APPLIED IN SELECTED MEMBER STATES

The following annex describes various approaches applied by **administrative bodies in the Member States to collect and validate job data in the operations database primarily for monitoring purposes.**



**In the AIRs that report on the RDP's effects on job creation, various data validation approaches which are compliant with the minimum requirements in the CMES fiches have been applied in the Member States.**

In **Estonia**, the information on jobs is collected from the project application/business plan. Then, together with last payment request (end of project) the beneficiary has to provide information on how many jobs have been created. This information is collected by the Paying Agency via an online questionnaire for the Measures 4.2, 6.4, 16.4, 19.2 and 19.3. This information is then provided to the evaluator who creates a sample and checks it. Every year a study on job effects is prepared by the Estonian Agricultural Research Centre. It receives the data annually from the Paying Agency in order to analyse a sample of the number of FTEs created by projects. In this context, qualitative aspects of jobs are also collected (e.g. profession type).

In **Greece**, the number of jobs created is a selection criterion. The ex post check on the spot after project end, however, checks only a 1% sample of operations once in a time span of 5 years to keep the administrative burden low and avoid long delays. It is envisaged to get access to social security data in the future in an automated way to cover 100% of beneficiaries without additional burden for the beneficiaries and administration.



**Some programmes use detailed investigations in order to increase the validity of the values provided on jobs created.**

In **Ireland**, for Measure 19 (LEADER) the LAGs are responsible for inputting the anticipated jobs figures for applicable LEADER interventions at the application stage (for interventions where the applicant has stated that the intervention will result in jobs created). Upon project completion (when the final payment is paid to the beneficiary) the project officer (in the LAG entity) must enter the actual jobs created (and separately the jobs maintained) into the operations database. The data refers to quarter one of the year following the final payment to the beneficiary (i.e. meaning it is reported in the AIR for the year that the final payment was made).

Since Ireland collects both the anticipated jobs figure (at application stage) and actual jobs created (in quarter one of the year after the final payment to the beneficiary) they are able to ensure the accuracy of the data collected. This leads to the conclusion that there is a notable discrepancy between the anticipated jobs reported and actual jobs figure reported, with the actual jobs figure being a much better indicator because in many cases the anticipated jobs figure is lacking accuracy.

In **Bavaria**, jobs created and the additional economic indicators (turnover, profit and gross value added) are recorded before the investment and two years after completion of the project for investments supported through sub-measure 6.4<sup>6</sup> (investments in the creation and development of non-agricultural activities).<sup>7</sup>

In **Slovenia**, the business register is used to check if jobs created are maintained after the end of a project. Data is observed yearly over a 3 year period.

<sup>6</sup> Annex I, Part 5 to the Regulation (EU) No 808/2014.

<sup>7</sup> Forschungsgruppe Agrar- und Regionalentwicklung Triesdorf / ART (2019): [Bewertung des Entwicklungsprogramms für den ländlichen Raum in Bayern 2014 – 2020 \(EPLR Bayern 2020\), Maßnahmenspezifische Bewertung](#). Triesdorf. (p 111).

In **Latvia**, the number of jobs created is a selection criterion and the data for R21 and R24 (LEADER) are collected and validated through the following procedure.

- Data on jobs created is calculated by the beneficiaries based on the definition<sup>8</sup> provided by the national legislation.
- The estimated number of jobs created are provided by the beneficiaries in the application forms (submitted via IT platform). This information is included in the decision issued by the Paying Agency. The planned jobs have to be created at the latest by the 3<sup>rd</sup> year after the project has been completed. This applies to both LEADER measures and other measures.
- The beneficiaries have to provide annual monitoring/economic performance reports throughout the monitoring period (up to 5 years after the end of the project) which includes the number of jobs created.
- For data validation purposes the Paying Agency compares the information received by beneficiaries (in the monitoring reports) with the information available in the database of the State Revenue Service where legal entities and self-employed persons have to report on the number of employees, paid social taxes, etc. This does not add extra burden to beneficiaries.
- If the Paying Agency notices any inconsistencies between the data provided to the State Revenue Service and the Paying Agency, then the beneficiary will be contacted for clarifications. Reductions to the amount of support can be applied if results are not achieved.
- If the Paying Agency conducts an on the spot check, actual jobs created are also checked.

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<sup>8</sup> The definition of the job created: 'A job created requires that there is an employment contract with an employee, normal working hours (full time), or that self-employment is started. Multiple jobs in seasonal work are also possible to be counted, provided that the total number of hours worked in the calendar year corresponds to the normal working hours and that the State social insurance contributions are paid.' (Defined by the Regulation of the Cabinet of Ministers)

## ANNEX 3: BACKGROUND INFORMATION AND INDICATOR DEFINITIONS

The creation of new jobs in rural areas through RDP interventions is – besides other important policy objectives - a longer-term structural objective. Therefore, the recording of jobs created is important for policy makers. In some RDPs a high number of jobs created is expected by the end of 2023 (e.g. related to FA 6A: RO: 24,474, PL: 16,550, BG: 4,270). In total, 76,433 new jobs are expected to be created in EU rural development projects in the rural areas<sup>9</sup>. For some RDP measures the direct effects on job creation are an important selection criterion.

For the assessment of jobs created, it is important to take into account the time factor. Job creation is at the end of an ‘impact chain’ and is the result, for example, of increased competitiveness, capacity expansion and growing demand in a favouring macroeconomic context. All these pre-conditions must be met before a new job can be created on a permanent basis. Since job effects only occur with a time delay, depending on the type of project, it can be challenging for monitoring and evaluation especially in administrative and technical terms to track the indicator at various points of time.

Effects of individual operations on jobs created are monitored in a **bottom-up** way at the micro-level by the RDP monitoring and reporting system. However, experience shows that the bottom-up collection of comparable data for the indicators R21/T20 and R24/T23 can be compromised by different understandings of the definition of the indicators by stakeholders which may negatively affect the quality of the data in the monitoring system. This can consequently lead to a misinterpretation of policy effects.

The number of jobs created collected in the operations database represents ‘gross effects’ of employment numbers and are usually biased (by deadweight) but are nevertheless an important source of information for programme managers and particularly evaluators. It is equally important to note, that possible RDP effects (direct and indirect) on employment cannot be captured by simply counting these gross new jobs at the beneficiaries’ level only. This requires, where possible, a counterfactual assessment at the micro-level (beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries) and/or the assessment at the macro-level (regions) by using modelling techniques<sup>10</sup>. Hence, the estimation of net effects on employment is done as part of the **evaluation** where however the possibilities to carry out a counterfactual assessment are often limited by the lack of control observations. Nevertheless, the gross job effects recorded as part of monitoring are also used by the evaluator for the assessment of RDP effects on job creation. It should therefore meet the minimum standards of robustness.

### 1. Indicator definitions

The following table presents the main information on the result/target indicators R21/T20 and R24/T23 based on the CMES ‘[Target indicator fiches for Pillar II](#)’ (Priorities 1–6).

**Table 2. Overview of result/target indicators R21/T20 and R24/T23 for the period 2014-2020**

CMES indicator	Jobs created in supported projects	Jobs created in supported projects (LEADER)
Indicator code	R21/T20	R24/T23
Definition and unit of measurement	Total number of jobs created in full time equivalent (FTE) (not maintained) through supported projects expressed in FTE	Number of jobs created in full time equivalent (FTE) through support for the implementation of operations under the LDS funded through the RDP under LEADER
Breakdown of indicator (but not of the target)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>by gender (mandatory)</li> <li>voluntary breakdown by education/skills level or sector/branch</li> </ul>	

<sup>9</sup> ENRD Contact Point (2020): [RDPs 2014-2020: Monitoring data Rural Development Priority 6 \(P6\): Promote social inclusion, poverty reduction and economic development in rural areas](#). Situation at the end of 2018.

<sup>10</sup> Regarding the applicability and the limits of econometric evaluation methods please refer to the guidance provided at <https://enrd.ec.europa.eu/evaluation/>

CMES indicator	Jobs created in supported projects	Jobs created in supported projects (LEADER)
Measures contributing to the indicator (if programmed)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>M 04 (Article 17) Investments in physical assets</li> <li>M 06 (Article 19) Farm and business development</li> <li>M 08.6 (Article 21) Investments in forestry technologies and in processing, mobilising and marketing of forest products</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>M 19 Leader</li> </ul>
Point of data collection and data source in practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Data collected via the operations database which is updated regularly</li> <li>Recorded at selection of projects (business plans, application form)</li> <li>Reported at the completion of the project<sup>11</sup></li> <li>Validated through sample of completed projects (no time period defined)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Data collected via the operations database which is updated regularly</li> <li>Recorded at selection of projects (business plans, application form)</li> <li>Provided by LAGs to MAs at the completion of the projects</li> <li>Validated through sample of completed projects (no time period defined)</li> </ul>
Principles used for data collection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Data source is the business plan not a separate projection in order to avoid the risk of over estimation</li> <li>Only new jobs actually created are counted, which excludes jobs maintained (as too problematic to assess)</li> <li>It relates to employment when the project is up and running (i.e. if the project is the creation of a farm shop, it does not include employment created during the design/construction building phase (consultant, architect, builders) but the employment, which is created when the shop is running (manager, sales assistants, etc.)</li> <li>Voluntary work is not counted but self-employment is included</li> <li>Indicator is calculated in FTE, therefore, if an existing halftime job is transformed into a full time job, the value of the indicator is 0.5 (a half job is considered created)</li> <li>To count one job created the duration of the contract is one year or more (e.g. a six-month contract at 100% is 0.5)</li> </ul>	
<b>Additional information on the target dimension of the indicators (not included in the fiches)</b>		
Target values attached to the indicator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>At RDP level for the whole programming period</li> </ul>	
Consequences of deviations from the targets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>At RDP level: None</li> <li>At operation level: in general, none, but some Member States (e.g. the Czech Republic, Latvia, some RDPs in Italy) impose sanctions (reduction of funds) if the deviation is not fully justified by the beneficiary</li> </ul>	

Source: *Target indicator fiches for Pillar II (Priorities 1 – 6). Working Document*. April 2015, complemented by the European Evaluation Helpdesk for Rural Development

The definitions for R21/T20 and R24/T23 (LEADER jobs) are the same, with the only difference being that the collection of data for LEADER jobs considers more levels of actors (e.g. project, LAG, technical department, PA).

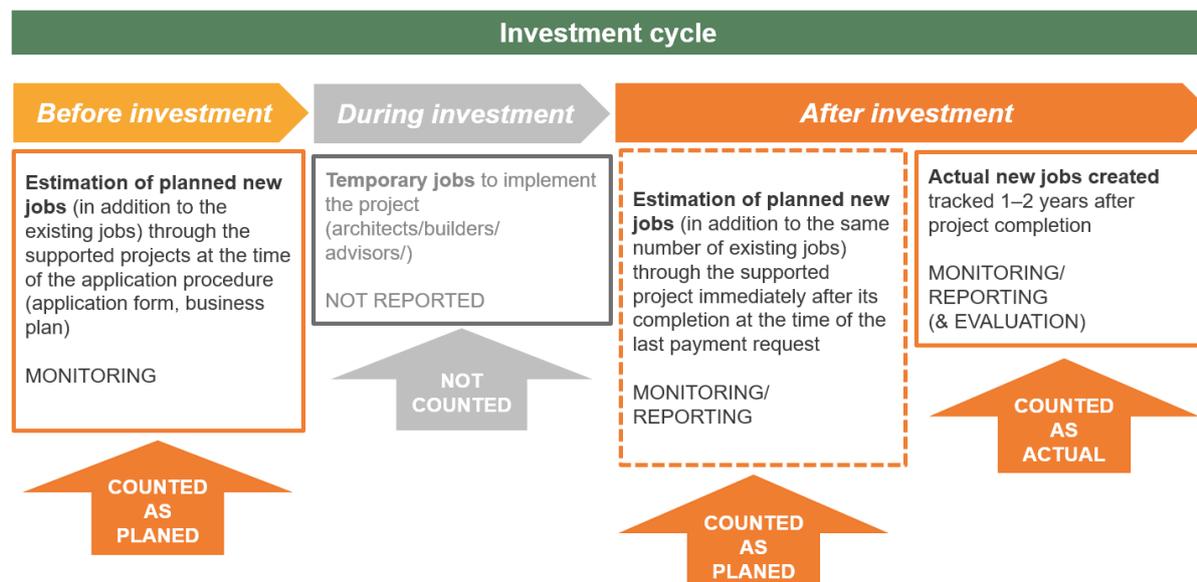
Feedback from stakeholders in the Member States shows, that the ‘ex post validation’ is often not understood as part of monitoring but as task of evaluation. However, since the target/result indicator fiches describe only monitoring requirements, the **step of the validation is also represented as part of monitoring**. Data (including the ex post validation) is collected by **administrative bodies** (and not by evaluators) via the operations database.

<sup>11</sup> The amendment to Article 5(3) of Regulation (EU) No 215/2014 introduced by the Regulation (EU) No 276/2018, allows reporting on non-completed projects, where relevant.

## 2. Tracking jobs created along the investment cycle in practice

The following part shows how the requirements of the CMES can be implemented in practice to monitor the job creation indicator. The various points in time for tracking the indicators in order to follow the policy results are illustrated in the Figure 1 below.

Figure 1. Tracking of the job indicator



Source: European Evaluation Helpdesk for Rural Development

First, it is important to distinguish between jobs which might be temporarily created during the project implementation phase (architects, construction workers, etc.) and jobs which are created after the project has been completed when the facility is running.

In the case of physical investments, the actual RDP effects on job creation show up only after the project investment is completed and the facility starts to operate. For non-physical investments (e.g. networks) effects may already be visible earlier or even longer if there is a long-term development of the network.

Second, the newly created jobs are always those which have been set up through the supported projects in addition to the already existing ones. This also applies when the existing half time job is transformed into a full time job, which counts as a new half time job created. Newly created jobs are not to be mixed up with jobs maintained. The latter have been maintained through supported projects and may have been lost if the project would not have been implemented.

**Only newly created jobs, as defined above (and neither existing jobs, nor jobs maintained) are monitored with the indicators R21/T20 and R24/T23** and are in line with relevant statistics (jobs classifications, how to compute part-time/seasonality, etc.) to make them comparable at the EU level.

Newly created jobs are first monitored in the project application phase (in some cases the number of created jobs is also used as a project selection criterion), when their number is recorded as **planned new jobs as set out in the business plans**. However, even jobs recorded at the closure of the project through the payment request (and reported in the AIRs) are still often only planned values.

The last check tracks the actual jobs created, directly set up through the supported projects. They are usually in place only after the investment has been completed and the facility starts to operate. This is done through samples of completed projects or on the entire population if decided by the Managing Authority. Information often is collected through separate monitoring tables which beneficiaries are filling during running of facility.

For some projects, the newly created jobs are established immediately after the project's completion, for others this may happen within several months or 1 year depending on the type of project. For example, if the project is a new Bed & Breakfast, the new jobs may be established very soon in order to run the facility. By contrast, if the project is the restructuring of a public building into a museum, the new jobs may be established only at a later stage, once the full museum collection is in place. However, jobs which are newly created more than two years after project completion might also be considered as indirect or gross jobs, since they may relate to the project indirectly or are caused by external factors.

Monitoring data is also used by the evaluator for the assessment of RDP effects on job creation. In this case the evaluator collects data from selected samples of RDP beneficiaries (gross jobs created). The evaluator may also survey the non-beneficiaries to find out the attribution of observed effects to the RDP's interventions to take into account secondary contributions from operations under other focus areas, displacement and indirect job creation, as well as direct job creation linked to the target.

Additionally, operations' durability checks, triggered by other national or EU legislations, can also be used for evaluation purposes, if the data is collected in due time and if it is compliant with the national data protection arrangements. For example, the durability of operations (Article 71(1) of Regulation (EU) 1303/2013) connected with the investment in infrastructure or productive investments. For this purpose, the Member State checks within a period of 3 to 5 years after the project completion whether the project has not been reallocated outside of the programme area. It also checks whether the project ownership has not been changed or whether there are any other substantive changes which would affect the project's nature, objective or implementation conditions. This also includes new jobs created for projects run by Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises (SMEs). This check is usually done on an ad hoc basis.

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