



# **FEAD Mid-Term Evaluation Interim Report**

VC/2016/0664

Written by Metis GmbH in cooperation with Fondazione Giacomo Brodolini and Panteia  
*March – 2018*

**EUROPEAN COMMISSION**

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Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union, 2018

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ISBN: 978-92-79-81025-1  
doi: 10.2767/803976

**Please quote this report as: Metis (2018) FEAD Mid-Term Evaluation, Interim Report**

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## List of abbreviations

AIR	Annual Implementation Report
AMIF	Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund
AROPE	At Risk of Poverty or Social Exclusion (refers to the situation of people either at risk of poverty, or severely materially deprived or living in a household with a very low work intensity)
BMA	Basic material assistance
DG EMPL	Directorate General for Employment, Social Affairs & Inclusion
EES	European Employment Strategy
ESF	European Social Fund
ESIF	European Structural and Investment Funds
EQ	Evaluation question
FEAD	Fund for European Aid to the most Deprived
MA	Managing Authority
MDP	Food Distribution Programme for the Most Deprived Persons
MS	Member State
MTE	Mid-term evaluation
OP	Operational Programme
OPC	Open Public Consultation
PO	Partner organisation
SPSI	Social protection, social inclusion and the reduction and prevention of poverty
SFC	Electronic data exchange system used by Member States and the Commission for official exchanges of information concerning the FEAD
SPC	Social Protection Committee
TBE	Theory-based evaluation
ToR	Terms of Reference

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## Executive summary

Poverty reduction is one of the headline targets of the Europe 2020 strategy. The concrete target is "at least 20 million fewer people in or at risk of poverty and social exclusion by 2020". Although a very small Fund by EU standards (almost €3.8 billion for 2014-2020), the Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived (FEAD) has been set up to contribute to achieving this target. Its specific objective is to alleviate the worst forms of poverty in the EU and to promote the social inclusion of the most deprived persons. The Fund provides material support and social inclusion measures to the target group.

The Fund supports two types of operational programme that complement national poverty eradication and social inclusion policies which remain the prerogative of Member States:

- OP I: 'food and/or basic material assistance operational programme' means an operational programme supporting the distribution of food and/or basic material assistance to the most deprived persons, combined where applicable with accompanying measures, aimed at alleviating the social exclusion of most deprived persons;
- OP II: 'social inclusion of the most deprived persons operational programme' means an operational programme supporting the activities outside active labour market measures, consisting in non-financial, non-material assistance, aimed at the social inclusion of the most deprived persons.

The mid-term evaluation of the FEAD is required by Article 17(1) of the FEAD Regulation. This report is the Interim Report of the mid-term evaluation. It is structured according to the evaluation questions in the terms of reference and mainly follows a theory-based approach covering effectiveness, coherence, efficiency, European added value and relevance.

The mid-term evaluation uses desk research, interviews with Managing Authorities (MAs) and- Partner Organisations (POs), focus groups at EU and national level and the Open Public Consultation (OPC) as sources of information.

With regard to overall achievements, nearly one million tons of food were distributed in 20 MS from 2014 to 2016 to around 37 million end recipients, whereby care should be taken with these figures as these are a) estimations and b) may include repeated participations. The number of end recipients increased over the years, from 8 million in 2014, to 14 million in 2015 and 15 million in 2016. On average, 0.3 million tons of food were distributed each year.

The food distributed includes both food packages<sup>1</sup> and meals<sup>2</sup>, whereby the distribution of food packages is three times as high as the distribution of meals. With regard to the target groups, according to the common indicators, which are based on estimations of the partner organisations, the end recipients in the 2014-2016 period were as follows<sup>3</sup>:

- 18.5 million women (i.e. approximately half the total number of participations)
- 11 million children
- 4.3 million migrants (including participants with a foreign background and minorities)
- 1.8 million people with disabilities and

---

<sup>1</sup> 380,486,907 food packages distributed from 2014-2016.

<sup>2</sup> 121,911,498 meals distributed from 2014-2016.

<sup>3</sup> These numbers have to be interpreted carefully, as there are overlaps in the target groups. The total sum of the target groups is higher than the total number of end recipients, which means that a e.g. female migrant appears twice, in the number of migrants, and the number of women. The figures are also estimations on the part of the POs.

- 1.4 million homeless people.

Basic material assistance was provided in six Member States (Austria, the Czech Republic, Luxembourg, Latvia, Greece and Slovakia). With the exception of Austria, this was provided in combination with food aid, during the reporting period. Overall, about 700,000 people, of which 410,000 were supported in Greece in 2016, received material goods. Nearly 300,000 children received layettes, school bags, stationary etc., sports equipment and clothes. Nearly 9,000 homeless received goods such as sleeping bags and blankets, kitchen equipment, clothes, household linen and hygiene articles.

Accompanying measures are an obligatory part of OP I. They include advice and information on available social services or other types of public and private assistance, basic counselling activities and workshops, e.g. on managing a household budget, nutrition and sport, cooking classes, etc. While some countries, e.g. Belgium, Cyprus, Estonia, France, Hungary and Romania did not draw on the EU budget for accompanying measures but financed them themselves, others found the amount too small, especially in Member States with a large number of distribution centres or with small FEAD budgets. This meant that many Partner Organisations at the local level had to rely on their own resources to provide the accompanying measures. Nevertheless, accompanying measures were found to be very relevant as food or material aid does not address the underlying causes of poverty. Participants in the Open Public Consultation on the FEAD Mid-Term Evaluation and in the focus groups called for them to be strengthened as support is needed beyond foodstuffs and material assistance. Conversely, respondents also stressed that accompanying measures can only work if initial needs regarding food and material deprivation have been addressed.

The Social Inclusion (OPII) programmes successfully managed to fill gaps in national coverage of the most deprived in terms of target groups, e.g. newly arrived EU citizens in Germany, the homeless in Denmark and Germany, older people with low incomes and debt in the Netherlands and EU/EEA citizens living temporarily and without the right to social assistance in Sweden. In Germany, for example, a totally new form of advising and accompanying newly arrived EU citizens was developed and in Sweden, new types of advice were offered, e.g. to migrant women. The social inclusion programmes are considered important as there is a consensus that food and material aid is not enough to effectively combat poverty in the long-term and social inclusion action is an essential factor, also in the OP I programmes. This is already touched on in OP I through the accompanying measures.

With regard to spending, from 2014 to 2016, EUR 912 million of eligible public expenditure was incurred by beneficiaries and paid in implementing operations in the 28 MS out of which 99.5% were spent in OP I programmes. Three out of four of the OP II programmes started in 2015, one only in 2016, and they represent only 3% of the FEAD budget.

In a number of Member States, implementation was delayed due to the late adoption of the FEAD Regulation and consequently late approval of the OPs. Although 22 OPs were adopted within four months of submission, six (Germany, France, Poland, Portugal, Sweden and the United Kingdom) were adopted more than four months after submission. According to the data reported by MS in the AIRs, food was distributed already in 2014 in 8 OPs (Belgium, Spain, France, Lithuania, Poland, Portugal, Romania and Slovenia). Some OPs, particularly Hungary, Croatia, Slovakia as well as the Netherlands needed an extended start-up phase to set up the necessary infrastructure to comply with legal requirements.

With regard to the evaluation criteria, the following conclusions can be drawn based on the available evidence.

## Effectiveness

The evaluation concludes that FEAD is an effective fund overall. Despite its limited scale, it is a key tool for both end recipients and organisations working in the field. It is particularly effective in reaching out to the most deprived, including those who are not reached by existing forms of social assistance or who need immediate, basic support. FEAD represents a significant proportion of food aid in the EU and contributes towards the continuing existence of many partner organisations which would otherwise risk disappearing; it improves partnerships and knowledge sharing at the local level both among institutions, partner organisations and social services, as well as across different partner organisations. Both the OPC and the focus groups emphasised the importance of the FEAD as a broad scope/ low threshold programme, which ensures a good coverage of end recipients.

According to monitoring data for OPI, overall, food support has reached a satisfactory number of deprived people in the Member States and has reached different target groups of most deprived people; within this broader group, specific target groups such as children at risk of poverty been targeted most often .

There was a broad agreement among respondents to the OPC concerning FEAD's ability to alleviate food deprivation and to contribute to social inclusion. The overall positive judgement was further detailed through open answers, where respondents expressed their overall satisfaction with the results of FEAD and particularly underlined how food and material deprivation alleviation are key to human dignity. Results of the OPC demonstrate that almost all respondents (93%) agree (48%) or partially agree (45%) with the statement that FEAD makes a difference or a partial difference to the most deprived.

The delivery of material support (e.g. school material or hygiene articles) is lagging behind compared to food support, especially due to delays in implementation in Italy and Greece, which alone account for four fifths of the overall allocation of material support.

FEAD OPs have proved relatively flexible with regard to types of food and items distributed. In several instances, the composition of food packages was changed in response to feedback from end recipients. Overall, nine MS implemented OP changes while 13 MS changed the design of interventions without needing to change the OP.

Regarding the effectiveness of the four type II OPs, on average Germany over-reached its targets for the specific result indicators. In Denmark, the two projects funded by FEAD so far have reached 33.9% of the targeted 1,400 vulnerable homeless people in 2016. This gap can be attributed to the fact that the two community organisations only received the funding in mid-2016, not giving them much time to implement. In the Netherlands, reaching the most vulnerable group of senior individuals has proven to be a challenge, with just over 5% of the numbers foreseen having received support at the end of 2016. This is also due to the late start of the interventions (mid-2016), which nevertheless show good take up rates. The FEAD in Sweden is directed towards inactive people having resided in the country for less than three months. It is estimated that depending on the time of year, there are approximately 3,000–4,000 people in the country that can be included in this target group. During 2015–2016, 582 individuals received support from projects funded by the FEAD in Sweden.

The FEAD Network launched in September 2016 plays an important role in supporting mutual learning at European Union level, through networking and dissemination of good practices in the area of non-financial assistance to the most deprived persons. These mutual learning effects are corroborated by the OPC where mutual learning is seen as one of the main fields of added value. The FEAD Network itself is not being evaluated as part of this evaluation.

## Coherence

Overall, FEAD is coherent with national schemes and other EU support programmes, notably the ESF and the Asylum Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF). With reference to national schemes it plays both a complementary and supporting role, most notably by complementing “social assistance gaps”, e.g. in those Member States that do not have national non-financial assistance programmes or where these do not cover the full spectre of most deprived (e.g. EU migrants not targeted by AMIF, homeless and other individuals not covered by social assistance schemes, infants covered by childcare services, school-age children from most deprived families). It supports existing aid programmes at national or local level (sometimes becoming a key food provider), including by fostering dialogue and coordination among third sector organisations and between them and public social assistance actors, and in strengthening the capacities of these organisations. It also promotes registration in state support schemes of the most deprived individuals.

For the reasons above, FEAD shows important complementarities with other EU funds or with national measures. There is no evidence of FEAD displacing MS funding and there are concrete examples of complementarity between FEAD and the ESF and AMIF.

The fact that a common Managing Authority to the ESF and FEAD programmes has been established in the majority of MS positively facilitates coordination between ESF and FEAD and prevents situations of double funding, although in MS with different MAs a certain level of coordination is nonetheless ensured through joint working and consultative groups.

## Efficiency

FEAD is a useful fund for contributing to the alleviation of poverty and social exclusion but it is administratively burdensome, mostly due to self-imposed burden stemming from national regulations and requirements (gold plating), such as inter alia recording more data/information on operations and end recipients for monitoring purposes than what is required by the EU Regulation, lengthy documentation with procedures and instructions and excessive procedures for the certification of end recipients (i.e. for checking whether they meet the criteria for receiving assistance).

There is a variation of unit costs in both OP I and OP II programmes, e.g. cost per person in OP I countries ranging from €12 to €61 and cost per person in OP II countries ranging from €167 to €2,048, which is explained by the different type, content and frequency of support. In order to assess the extent to which costs are justified for the outputs and results produced there should be a mechanism to follow up end recipients and identify if/how the support they received has improved their situation of poverty and social exclusion. Counting only the number of persons receiving support and the amount or value of support received is not sufficient to inform us on the cost-effectiveness of the support.

In OP I programmes, certain forms of food support are more effective and efficient for certain target groups, such as food packages for families with children, warm meals in social canteens for the homeless and people in extreme poverty and home delivery of food for the elderly. In OP II, where each country addresses a different target group, the main success factors for reaching target groups efficiently are local cooperation and the capacity to address social inclusion needs.

Eligibility criteria in OP I are often based on the level of income. This is an objective criterion to facilitate access to assistance as it is based on registered data and/or on assessments of social services. However, some target groups who cannot prove their poverty situation may remain outside the system (e.g. homeless, Roma). Outreach activities are the main channel for identifying end recipients in OP II. In both OP I and OP II, what has worked best to facilitate access of end recipients to FEAD support has been the assessment of end recipients’ needs as well as the use of different types of

delivery organisations specialised in specific target groups and organisations with local networks which have good knowledge of end recipients.

The efficiency of FEAD can improve through proposed simplifications related to EU requirements, notably increasing flat rates for logistics and for accompanying measures in OP I. Also proposed simplifications related to reducing excessive national requirements, notably reducing the amount of paperwork, reducing the governance layers to make delivery leaner, simplifying the procurement processes, simplifying the certification requirements.

There is scope to further improve efficiency through inter alia mutual feedback between the different types and levels of control, capacity building for programme authorities and especially delivery organisations, more involvement of local NGOs/social services in selection and certification processes and the simplification of delivery through a voucher system or similar.

Finally, there are strong arguments for keeping the FEAD delivery mechanism of shared management, mainly because of its simplicity, the accumulated experience and the national and regional knowledge of poverty and social exclusion challenges and needs.

### **European added value**

There are clear volume effects in a number of MS where the FEAD fills a gap in national coverage. In Finland, Italy, Lithuania and Slovakia, FEAD is the only source of food aid. Even in MS with established channels for food aid, FEAD is an additional source of funding and can bring additional products to the end recipients. In Germany and Sweden, the FEAD helps cope with the steady influx of migrants from Eastern Europe and provides essential funding for advisory services.

With regard to scope effects, according to the OPC, the majority of respondents (90% of OP I and 80% of OP II) agreed that FEAD support is needed to expand types and volumes of assistance. 83% of OPC respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the statement that the FEAD contributes to expanding assistance to groups that would otherwise not receive it and 69% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the statement that the FEAD contributes to testing new activities.

There is less evidence of a role effect, as it is not yet known whether FEAD will be mainstreamed into the national systems. There is evidence of process effects in improved partnerships between NGOs and central administrations in the delivery of food and material aid. The additional volume of food to be distributed also means that partner organisations have expanded their capacity and increased their range of skills to include accompanying measures.

Indeed, mutual learning is one of the major process effects to be observed with new partnerships and networks forming at horizontal level (e.g. between different ministries, or between local NGOs) and at vertical level (between ministries and partner organisations, between local NGOs and e.g. supermarkets or other donors). There is also the added effect of the transnational FEAD Network where Managing Authorities and partner organisations have the opportunity to network.

In the case of OP II, entirely new procedures have been set up to deal with, e.g. newly arrived EU-migrants. This also generates scope and process effects.

73% of OPC respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the statement that the FEAD contributes to raising awareness and 78% that the FEAD contributes to mutual learning. 74% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the statement that the FEAD contributes to the creation of partnerships, 71% that the FEAD contributes to engaging new organisations.

## **Relevance**

In almost all MS, the relevance of FEAD was considered high due to the fund's contribution to tackling poverty across the EU. The OPC results concurred with the findings of the interviews and desk research with nearly 94% of respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing that food is the most important type of assistance to alleviate the worst forms of poverty. However, food and material support cannot alleviate poverty in the long-term and therefore accompanying measures are considered useful, even if they are quite restricted and are limited to 5% of the overall programme costs. The OPC responses state that covering basic needs is essential to human dignity and over 90% agreed or strongly agreed that the direction to competent services is essential to alleviate the worst forms of poverty. Psychological support and therapeutic measures were also considered important (86% agreed or strongly agreed), as was advice on managing a household budget (84%).

A further finding of the OPC was that the limited resources within FEAD restrict the quality and scope of accompanying measures. Some partner organisations struggle to provide accompanying measures, for example to rent the necessary premises or find qualified human resources as volunteers are not always qualified to provide counselling and advice on available measures.

Social inclusion initiatives under OP II were considered highly relevant as they catered for target groups that would otherwise not receive support.



## Introduction

This Interim Report is for the FEAD Mid-Term Evaluation (contract no. VC/2016/0664) in the framework of the Multiple Framework Contracts for the provision of services related to evaluation, evaluative studies, analysis and research work, including support for impact assessment activities Lot N°1, Identification N° 41 (VT/2016/013). The contractor is Metis GmbH, in cooperation with Fondazione G. Brodolini and Panteia.

The purpose of the contract is to “carry out an evaluation study which will assess the achievements of FEAD programmes to alleviate the worst forms of poverty”<sup>4</sup> as requested by Article 17 of Regulation 223/2014. The study will serve as input for a Staff Working Document and will ultimately feed into a Communication of the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council.

The report is structured according to the evaluation questions set in the Terms of Reference (ToR) and elaborated on in the Inception Report. Following this introduction and a chapter on the context and background of the FEAD intervention, the evaluation questions and methodology are briefly presented. The main section of the report is the answering of the evaluation questions in Chapter 3. The conclusions by evaluation criterion are presented in Chapter 4.

The main sources of information for the Interim Report are the Operational Programmes (OPs), ex-ante evaluations and other programme documents, SFC2014/Annual Implementation Reports for the year 2016 (submitted in June 2017), the Open Public Consultation (OPC), interviews with Managing Authorities (MAs) and Partner Organisations (POs) and focus groups in the Member States and at EU level. A full list of interviews for all Member States is included in Chapter 6. The information has been collected at Member State level in the form of Country Fiches. These will be put at the disposal of the Commission along with the Final Report.

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<sup>4</sup> Contract no. VC/2016/0664

## 1 Context, general policy background of FEAD intervention

The purpose of this section is to provide information on the rationale and general policy background of the FEAD intervention. We present the figures at the beginning of the programming period as these are relevant to the launch of the fund as a continuation of the 'Food Distribution Programme for the Most Deprived Persons' (MDP) which was created in 1987 to make meaningful use of agricultural surpluses.

### 1.1 People at risk of poverty or social exclusion in the EU

Since the late 1980's, anti-poverty measures and later social inclusion have been core objectives of EU social policy and co-financed by the Structural Funds, particularly the ESF. Over the years, the emphasis has shifted from the concept of poverty to social exclusion and from a static (people being poor) to a dynamic analysis focused on the processes which are behind social exclusion. Poverty has returned explicitly to the agenda in the Europe 2020 targets and, as of 2017, in the European Pillar of Social Rights. The EU should become a smart, sustainable and inclusive economy and social inclusion is one of the five key objectives. Inclusive growth is understood as raising Europe's employment rate; creating more and better jobs, especially for women, young people and older workers; helping people of all ages anticipate and manage change through investment in skills and training; modernising labour markets and welfare systems and ensuring the benefits of growth reach all parts of the EU. The concrete target in the field of social inclusion is at least 20 million fewer people in or at risk of poverty and social exclusion.

Millions of Europeans are still marginalised, both from the labour market and from full social participation. Their numbers have decreased between 2014 and 2015 by 0.6 percentage points (pp), as witnessed by the Eurostat statistics from 2015:<sup>5</sup>

- 23.8% of all the EU-28 population (over 122 million people), are at risk of poverty (AROP) or social exclusion<sup>6</sup> compared to 24.4% in 2014 – this includes 27.1% of all children in Europe, 24.7% of those of working age (18-64) and 17.4% of those over 65.
- Children were at greater risk of poverty or social exclusion in 2015 than the rest of the population in 21 of the 28 EU Member States.
- More than a third of the population was at risk of poverty or social exclusion in three EU Member States in 2015: Romania (37 %), Bulgaria (41 %) and Greece (36 %). At the other end of the scale, the lowest shares of persons being at risk of poverty or social exclusion were recorded in the Czech Republic (14 %), the Netherlands (16%) and Finland (17 %).
- 8.1 % of the population in the EU-28 were severely materially deprived in 2015.<sup>7</sup>
- 18.6 % of Europeans live on less than 60% of their country's average household income.

<sup>5</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/People\\_at\\_risk\\_of\\_poverty\\_or\\_social\\_exclusion](http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/People_at_risk_of_poverty_or_social_exclusion)

<sup>6</sup> I.e.: at-risk-of-poverty after social transfers (income poverty); severely materially deprived or living in households with very low work intensity (Eurostat definition)

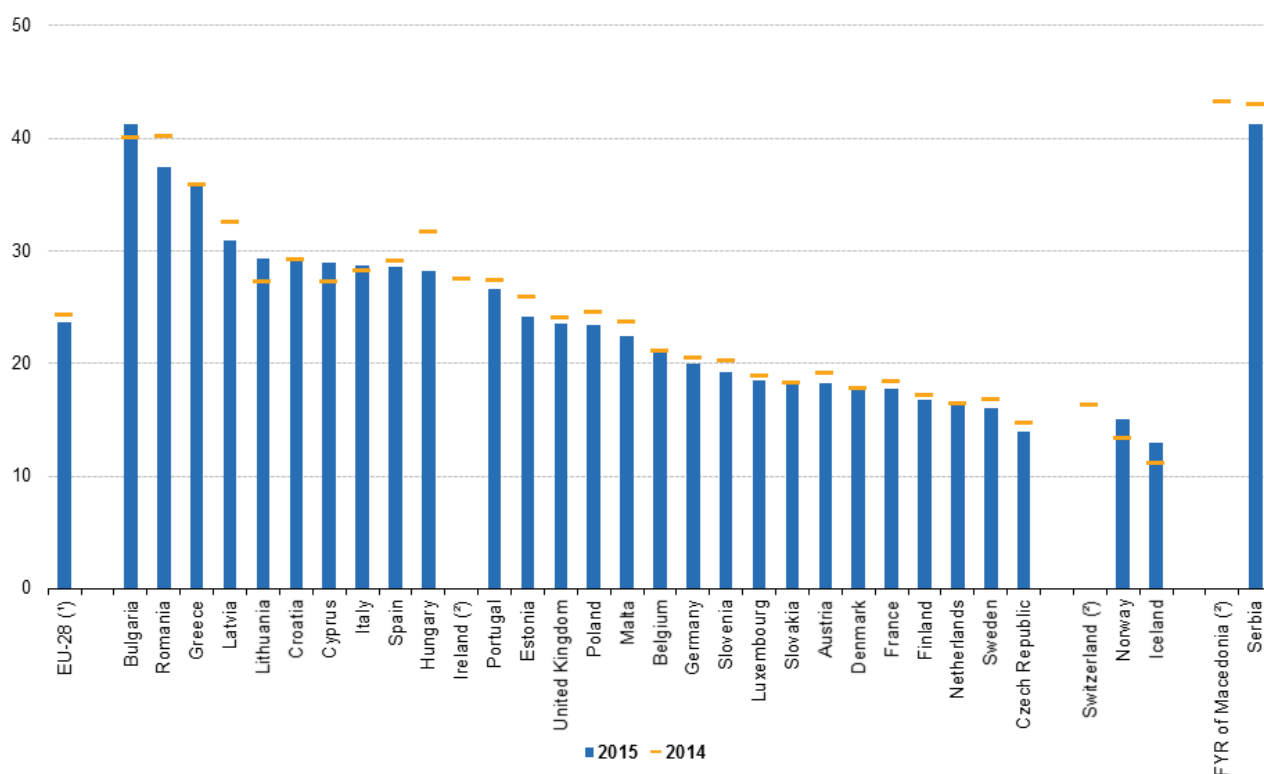
<sup>7</sup> The severe material deprivation rate represents the proportion of people who cannot afford at least four of the nine following items:

- having arrears on mortgage or rent payments, utility bills, hire purchase instalments or other loan payments;
- being able to afford one week's annual holiday away from home;
- being able to afford a meal with meat, chicken, fish (or vegetarian equivalent) every second day;
- being able to face unexpected financial expenses;
- being able to buy a telephone (including mobile phone);
- being able to buy a colour television;
- being able to buy a washing machine;
- being able to buy a car;
- being able to afford heating to keep the house warm.

- 10.7 % of the population in the EU-28 living in households with very low work intensity.<sup>8</sup>
- 37.5 % of the population in the EU-28 could not afford unexpected financial expenses. This is a decrease of 1.4 % compared to 2014.
- There is a wide gap in performance between the welfare systems in different EU countries - the best reduced the risk of poverty by 60%, the least effective by less than 15% (EU average 35%).<sup>9</sup>
- 8 million more women than men are living in poverty in the EU.

Specific populations such as the Roma are especially at risk of poverty: two-thirds are unemployed, one in two children attends kindergarten and only 15 % complete secondary school.<sup>10</sup>

Figure 1. At-risk-of poverty or social exclusion rate, 2014 and 2015



(\*) 2015: estimate.  
 (\*) 2015: not available

Source: Eurostat (ilc\_peps01)

### Material deprivation

The AROPE rate is an income-related measure of poverty. A further measure of poverty, which is particularly relevant in the case of the FEAD, is the rate of severe material deprivation. The material deprivation rate provides a more absolute analysis than that of income poverty. The definition of material deprivation is based on the inability to afford a selection of items that are considered to be necessary or desirable (see footnote 7).

<sup>8</sup> I.e. people of all ages (from 0–59 years) living in households where the adults (those aged 18–59, but excluding student aged 18–24) worked less than 20 % of their total potential during the previous 12 months.

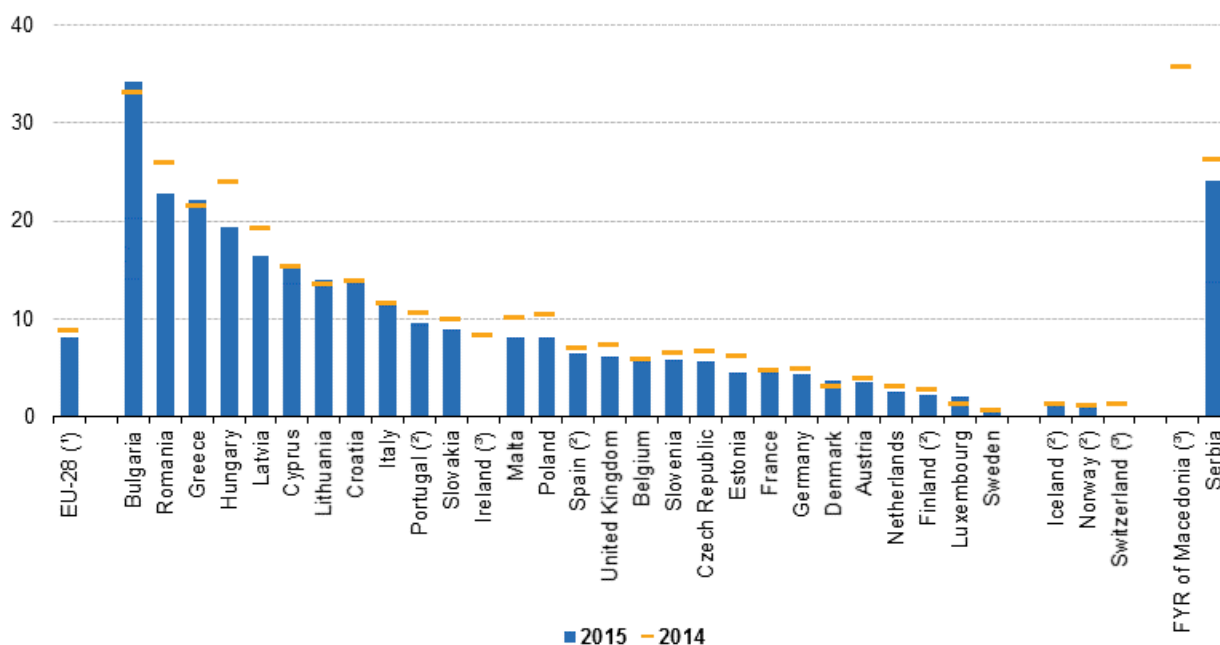
<sup>9</sup> <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=751>

<sup>10</sup> Ibid

The material deprivation rate is defined as the proportion of people who cannot afford to pay for at least three out of the nine items specified, while those who are unable to afford four or more items are considered to be severely materially deprived.

Around one out of six (17%) members of the EU-28 population was materially deprived in 2015, with close to half of these (8.1% of the total population) being considered as experiencing severe material deprivation.

Figure 2. Severe material deprivation rate, 2014–15 (%)



(\*) 2015: estimates.  
 (?) 2015: provisional.  
 (?) 2015: not available.

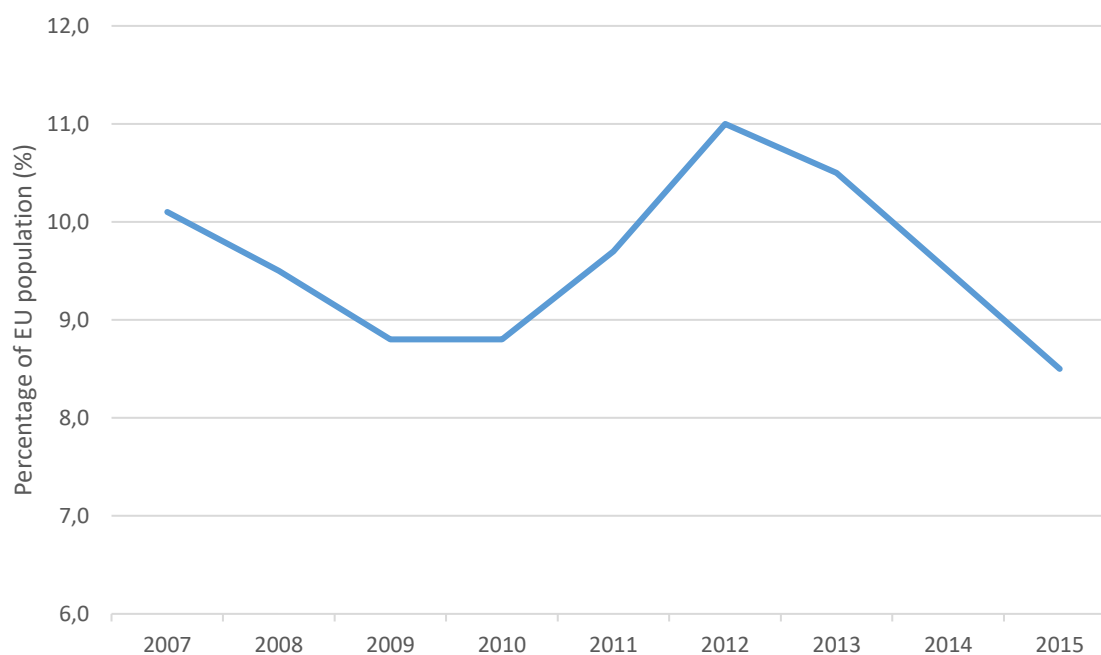
Source: Eurostat (ilc\_mddd11)

Food insecurity is directly addressed by the FEAD. Food insecurity affects a significant proportion of the population of the EU Member States. Figures show that between 2007 and 2010, the proportion of people reporting an inability to afford meat or equivalent every second day (an amount generally recommended in various national dietary guidelines) decreased by about 0.5% points each year (see Figure 3 below).

In 2010, however, as an effect of the economic crisis, this trend reversed, rising from 8.8% in 2009, to 11% in 2012. Since 2010, the prevalence of food insecurity was about 2.71% points greater than would have been expected on the basis of previous trends and corresponds to an excess of about 13.5 million people living with food insecurity in the EU. The rise in people experiencing food insecurity rose even in the richer Member States, e.g. in Belgium and Finland and France.

However, the trend has reversed again since 2013, with a quick decrease of around 1% per year, allowing the overall prevalence of food insecurity in the EU to reach its lowest point since 2007 in 2015 with 8.5% of the overall EU population.

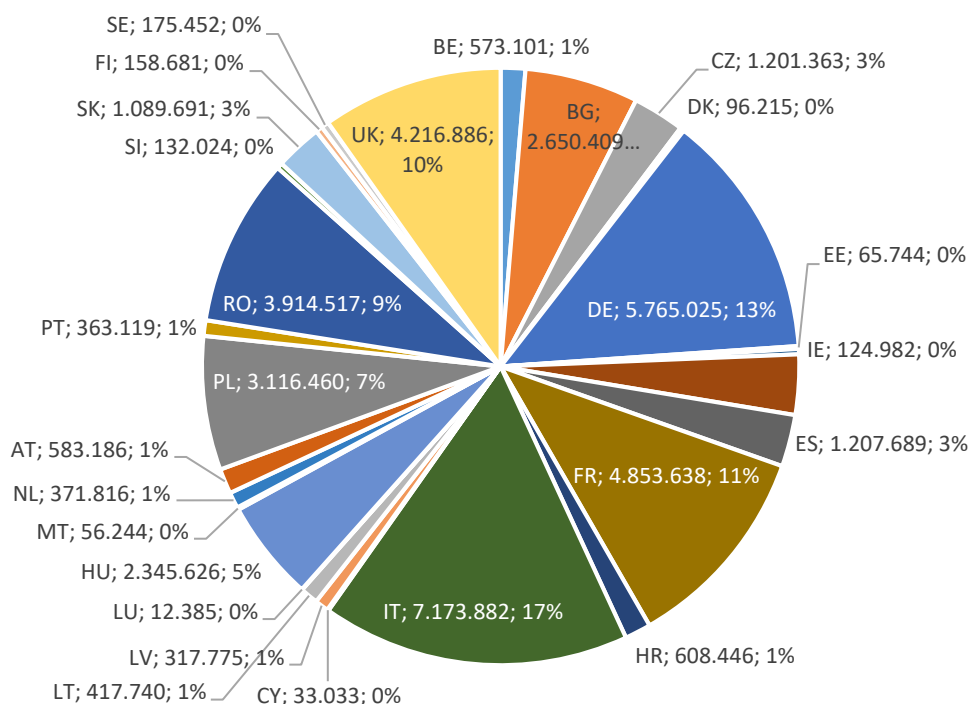
Figure 3. Food insecurity in Europe



Source: SILC. EU-27 until 2009, then EU-28.

In 2015, around 43 million people were living in food insecurity in the EU. Half of the population in food insecurity was concentrated in the four biggest Member States, with Italy alone having 17% of the total European population in food insecurity, followed by Germany (13%), France (11%) and the United Kingdom (10%). The figure below shows the distribution of food insecurity in the EU by Member State. A number of Member States represent below 1% (Sweden, Denmark, Ireland, Luxembourg, Malta and Cyprus).

Figure 4. Food insecure people in the EU in 2015



Source: EU-SILC<sup>11</sup>

## 1.2 Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived (FEAD)

FEAD was set up in the 2014 to 2020 programming period, targeting the most deprived people in the EU-28. FEAD follows up on the 'Food Distribution Programme for the Most Deprived Persons' (MDP) which was created in 1987 to make meaningful use of agricultural surpluses<sup>12</sup> by making them available to the Member States as food aid for the most deprived. Nineteen Member States took part in the fund and a total of €500 million was distributed in 2012 and 2013, the last years of the fund. Over 18 million people per year were thought to have benefited.<sup>13</sup> Successive reforms of the CAP led to rather balanced food markets and MDP lost the rationale of using surpluses. However, the further need for a fund supporting the provision of food aid was identified and it was decided to continue the support but with an added social inclusion element and also with the provision of material goods. As a result, the fund was transferred to DG EMPL and designed to alleviate the worst forms of poverty in the EU by providing non-financial aid (Article 3) and to thus contribute to the achievement of the poverty reduction target of the Europe 2020 strategy. The table below describes the main characteristics of and differences between the two funds.

<sup>11</sup> The European Union Statistics on Income and Living Conditions (EU-SILC) is an instrument aiming at collecting timely and comparable cross-sectional and The EU-SILC instrument provides two types of data:

- 1) Cross-sectional data pertaining to a given time or a certain time period with variables on income, poverty, social exclusion and other living conditions and
- 2) Longitudinal data pertaining to individual-level changes over time, observed periodically over a four-year period.

Social exclusion and housing condition information is collected mainly at household level while labour, education and health information is obtained for persons aged 16 and over. The core of the instrument, income at very detailed component level, is mainly collected at personal level. Longitudinal multidimensional microdata on income, poverty, social exclusion and living conditions.

(<http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/microdata/european-union-statistics-on-income-and-living-conditions>)

<sup>12</sup> EC (2012), Impact assessment. Accompanying the document "Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the Fund for the European Aid to the Most Deprived". COM (2012) 617 final, SWD (2012)351 Final.

<sup>13</sup> [http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release\\_IP-12-1093\\_en.htm?locale=en](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-12-1093_en.htm?locale=en)

Table 1. Main differences between 'Food Distribution Programme for the Most Deprived Persons' (MDP) and the 'Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived' (FEAD)

Characteristics	MDP	FEAD
Duration	1987-2013	2014-2020
Source of funding	CAP	MFF Heading 1b
Volume of funding	€500 million per year from 2012 onwards (previously around €100 million)	€543 million on average per year from 2014-2020
Aims	To release public intervention stocks of agricultural products to Member States wishing to use them as food aid for the most deprived persons of the Community "until the stocks have been run down to a normal level".	Alleviating worst forms of poverty by providing non-financial assistance to the most deprived persons
Type of assistance	Food aid	Food aid, basic goods (e.g. clothing) and social inclusion
Countries benefiting	All MS with the exception of Austria, Cyprus, Germany, Denmark, Croatia (not yet EU MS), the Netherlands, Sweden, Slovakia and the United Kingdom	All MS
Persons receiving food support under OP I	18 million in 2010	15.2 million in 2016
Persons receiving material aid under OP I	N.A.	636,000 in 2016
Persons receiving social inclusion support under OP II	N.A.	Nearly 23,000 in 2016

Source: [https://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/most-deprived-persons/archive\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/most-deprived-persons/archive_en) and own calculations

The FEAD Regulation<sup>14</sup> sets out the rules and mechanisms for setting up FEAD operational programmes (OPs). With almost €3.8 billion (in current prices) available for 2014-2020, the FEAD complements the ESIF and supports the implementation of operational programmes in accordance with the objectives of the Fund set out in Article 3 of the Regulation. These include the promotion of social cohesion and the enhancement of social inclusion in order to contribute to the Europe 2020 target of reducing the number of people at risk of poverty and social exclusion by at least 20 million.

The delivery of the Fund is carried out in shared management between the European Commission and the Managing Authorities in the Member States (Articles 5 and 29 of FEAD Regulation). This means that the Member States and the Commission are responsible for management and control tasks in accordance with their respective responsibilities laid down in the FEAD Regulation. The Member States designate a Managing Authority, Certifying Authority and Audit Authority whereby the Managing Authority is responsible for the management of the operational programme.

It supports two types of operational programmes that will complement national poverty eradication and social inclusion policies which are the responsibility of Member States:

- OP I: 'food and/or basic material assistance operational programme' means an operational programme supporting the distribution of food and/or basic material

<sup>14</sup> Regulation (EU) No 223/2014 of the European Parliament and the Council of 11 March 2014 on the Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived

assistance<sup>15</sup> to the most deprived persons, combined where applicable with accompanying measures<sup>16</sup>, aimed at alleviating the social exclusion of most deprived persons;

- OP II: 'social inclusion of the most deprived persons operational programme' means an operational programme supporting the activities outside active labour market measures, consisting in non-financial, non-material assistance, aimed at the social inclusion of the most deprived persons.

Table 144 in Annex I provides a short overview of the operational programmes, the allocations of European and national funds and the types of measures (source: website of DG EMPL). The operational programmes are implemented through 'partner organisations' (POs), namely public bodies and/or non-profit organisations that deliver food and/or material assistance to the most deprived combined, where applicable, with accompanying measures (OP I) or that carry out activities aiming at the social inclusion of the most deprived persons (OP II) (Article 2 of the Regulation 223/2014 on the FEAD). These partner organisations are selected according to criteria set out in the operational programme (point 3.3).

The content of operational programmes is outlined in Article 7 of the FEAD Regulation. Type I OPs include the justification of the type(s) of material deprivation being addressed, the national scheme(s) envisaged for support, eligibility criteria for the most deprived people, selection criteria for operations as well as selection criteria for partner organisations. Type II OPs include a strategy for contributing to the Europe 2020 target of poverty reduction, the identification of national needs and related programme specific objectives, the identification of the most deprived persons to be targeted, a range of relevant indicators (financial, output and result indicators) and a description of the types and examples of actions to be supported, including guiding principles for the selection of operations and types of end recipients. When implementing their programmes, Member States are required to submit annual implementation reports (AIRs) including common indicators and for the social inclusion operational programmes (OP type II) the programme specific indicators. The AIRs also include comments and explanations of the data.

It is on this data, the comments and explanations in the AIRs, the ex-ante evaluations and other documentary sources as well as on interviews with Managing Authorities and Partner Organisations that the current Interim Report is based. The results of the open public consultation (OPC) carried out in the framework of the same contract and

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<sup>15</sup> Examples of material assistance that may be provided:

- Food packages
- Meals
- Layette (baby essentials)
- School bags
- Stationery, exercise books, pens, painting equipment and other equipment required in school (non-clothes)
- Sports equipment (sport shoes, leotard, swimsuit, etc.)
- Clothes (winter coat, footwear, school uniform, etc.)
- Sleeping bags/blankets
- Kitchen equipment (pots, pans, cutlery, etc.)
- Household linen (towels, bedclothes)
- Hygiene articles (first aid kit, soap, toothbrush, disposable razor, etc.)
- Other categories of goods

<sup>16</sup> Examples of accompanying measures:

- Advice on food preparation and storage, cooking workshops, educational activities to promote healthy nutrition, or advice on how to reduce food waste
- Personal cleanliness advice
- Redirection to competent services (e.g. social/administrative)
- Individual coaching and workshops
- Psychological and therapeutic support
- Advice on managing a household budget
- Other



focus groups in the Member States and at EU level have also been included to substantiate the findings.

## 2 The evaluation context

This chapter describes the evaluation requirements for the FEAD Mid-term evaluation, the elaboration of the intervention logic, the analysis of the evaluation questions and sub-questions, the indicators, the data collection methods and the limitations and approach to address them. Chapter 3 then addresses the evaluation questions under the five evaluation criteria.

### 2.1 Evaluation requirements under Regulation (EU) No 223/2014 and contractual deliverables

Article 17 of the FEAD Regulation states that the Commission shall present a Mid-term evaluation of the Fund to the European Parliament and to the Council by 31<sup>st</sup> December 2018. This contract was awarded to Metis GmbH in cooperation with Fondazione Giacomo Brodolini and Panteia on 13<sup>th</sup> October 2016. The end date of this contract is 16<sup>th</sup> May 2018.

The contract includes an Inception Report, an Interim Report and a Final Report as well as a report on the Open Public Consultation. The Interim Report was submitted in August 2017, later than in the ToR on the request of the Commission, in order to include the 2016 data from the Annual Implementation Reports submitted in June 2017.

The evaluation draws on the Annual Implementation Reports (AIR), the Operational Programmes (OPs), ex-ante evaluations and other programme documents, interviews with Managing Authorities (MAs) and Partner Organisations (POs), seven national surveys and six evaluations. The information has been synthesised at Member State level in the form of Country Fiches. It also draws on the results of Open Public Consultation and, at the request of the Commission, the results of the focus groups carried out between August 2017 and December 2017.

For the final report, the following additional documents should be available:

- Results of the second EU-level focus group (focus group report)
- Structured surveys of OP I end recipients carried out by the end of 2017
- Additional national evaluations: possibly some of the evaluations MS are required to publish for OP II prior to 2022: For OP I it is at the discretion of Member States whether to carry out evaluations and a handful are already available
- Final country fiches

The table below shows the sources used for the three reporting phases.

Table 2. Sources of information for the Mid-term evaluation deliverables

Sources	Inception report	Interim report	Final report
Operational Programme			
Ex-ante evaluation			
SFC data			
AIR			
Country fiche			
OPC			
Evaluations			
Focus group reports			
Structured Survey			

### 2.2 The intervention logic of the FEAD

The FEAD Regulation provided general and specific objectives and common input, output and result indicators. The first step in the evaluation involved elaborating the intervention logic of the FEAD, i.e. the linkages between the FEAD interventions and the objective of reducing poverty. According to the Better Regulation Guidelines, key

considerations when examining the intervention logic include a thorough understanding and a detailed description of the different types of effects, namely: outputs, results and impacts.<sup>17</sup> In the case of FEAD OP I, the outputs in terms of food and material assistance can be considered also as the results given the objectives of the fund as stated by the Regulation. For OP II the expected results for the specific objectives and the corresponding programme specific output and result indicators with a base line and target values are provided in the OP and the programme specific results in the AIRs.

Through the provision of food, material support and accompanying measures, type I OPs help people start on the pathway to social inclusion. The pathways approach has been shown to be an effective one for people furthest from the labour market to reach integration through a step-by-step approach.<sup>18</sup> While type I OPs provide fundamental support in the form of basic food aid and material assistance and some accompanying measures, type II OPs provide social inclusion measures designed to promote social cohesion and poverty reduction in accordance with the Europe 2020 strategy. In this manner, both types of OP are designed to help people make their first and decisive steps out of poverty and social exclusion so that other available measures (e.g. national or ESF interventions to bring people out of social exclusion and into work) can be accessed more easily.

Mutual learning at Union level is assured by the FEAD network through networking and dissemination of good practices in the area of non-financial assistance to the most deprived persons. At national level, mutual learning is also assured through national events.

The impacts of the aid will be difficult to measure as they are linked to overall poverty reduction indicators. FEAD is too small a fund to realistically expect a decisive contribution to reducing poverty by itself and – even if this were the case – it is difficult to distinguish the effects of FEAD compared to other, mainly national, social protection benefits and the overall development of the economy. However, through alleviating the worst forms of poverty and promoting social inclusion, FEAD is expected to make a contribution to the Europe 2020 target of reducing the number of EU citizens living in poverty by 20 million.

The figure below describes the overall intervention logic of the FEAD. The input, output and result indicators are defined in the Regulation 1255/2014. These are listed in Annex 2.

We also produced an OP intervention logic for each Member State to better understand the interventions there. These have been compiled in Annex 4.

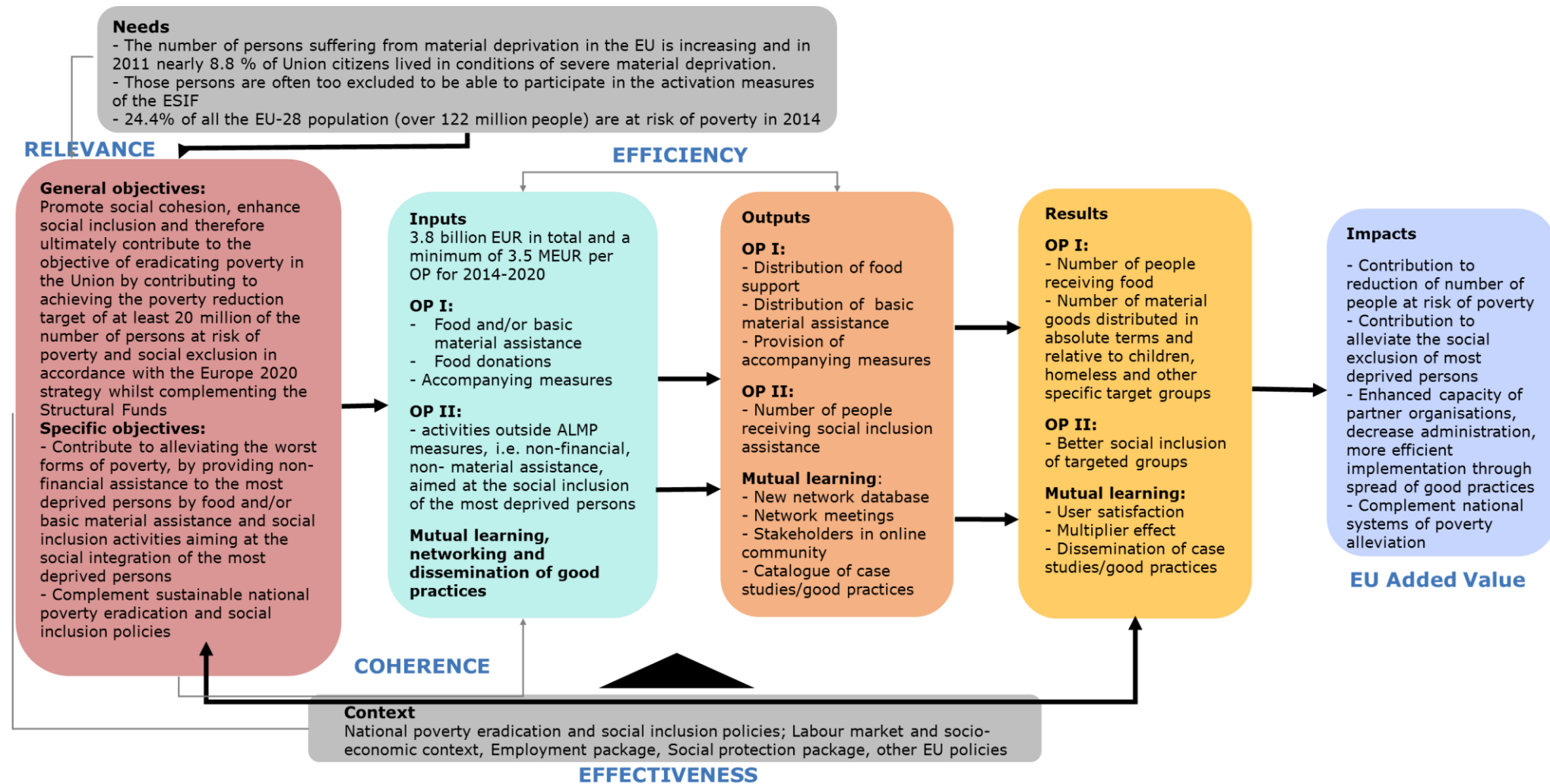
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<sup>17</sup> We use the following definitions of inputs, outputs, results and impacts:

- An input is the financial and material basis for the intervention; in the case of FEAD, it is the food or material assistance and accompanying measures, or the social support provided by the fund.
- An output is considered as what is directly produced/supplied through the implementation of an intervention and can be measured in physical or monetary units, for example number of end recipients, number of entities supported, among others.
- A result is an immediate direct effect of the intervention or policy and is observed at the level of the end recipients of the intervention. In the context of FEAD, this may also be identical to the output.
- An impact is a medium- to long-term effect at economic or societal level beyond the direct effect on the end recipients (impacts are not in the core of this evaluation, but are tackled in some of the sub-questions).

<sup>18</sup> ESF Expert Evaluation Network Report on Social Inclusion

Figure 5. FEAD Intervention logic



## 2.3 The evaluation questions and sub-questions

The evaluation questions provided by the Terms of Reference (ToR) constitute the backbone of this evaluation. They are structured according to five evaluation criteria: effectiveness, coherence, efficiency, European added value and relevance. Table 3 provides definitions of these criteria.

Table 3. Definition of evaluation criteria

Evaluation criteria	The evaluation of the effectiveness shall assess...
Effectiveness	The extent to which FEAD has progressed towards its general objectives
Coherence	The extent to which the Fund's activities have been coherent with other interventions with similar objectives
Efficiency	The extent to which the intended outputs and outcomes of FEAD have been achieved efficiently, and to what extent flexibility, adjustment and follow-up conditions are being set
European added value	The additional value resulting from the fund compared to what could be achieved by Member States at national, regional and local levels
Relevance	The relationship between the needs in society and the objectives of FEAD

The main evaluation questions provided by the ToR are further broken down into sub-questions for greater precision. We have coded the evaluation questions according to the main evaluation criterion they address in Table 15 in Annex 4.

## 2.4 Evaluation methodology and indicators

As explained in the Inception Report, we apply a theory-based evaluation approach. This allows us to identify the logical connections between inputs, outputs, results and impacts. It also allows us to identify the reasons for these results, and the factors that contribute to the success or failure (or limited success) of certain approaches in different situations. This evidence should allow us to draw conclusions on what works and what does not work – or has not worked to date - for different types of operation and target group on quantitative and qualitative dimensions.

Given FEAD's nature as enabling fund, the support to the most deprived under OP I is expected to improve their situation but will, in most cases, not directly lift them out of poverty; rather, it is expected to provide basic needs support to enable end recipients to escape the poverty trap or move towards social inclusion. This has an impact on the way effectiveness is understood and subsequently assessed for the purposes of the present study. For OP I, in particular, which aims at providing immediate relief to situations of material deprivation, effectiveness will be measured in the first place by measuring support that has been provided, i.e. number of individuals reached by the interventions and the goods distributed – this will be done by relying mainly on monitoring data and triangulating them with evidence collected through the country analyses. Effects on other dimensions, such as delivery modes, compliance with horizontal principles and recipients' satisfaction, will be assessed mainly by relying on qualitative findings of the country analyses to be supported, when relevant, by evidence from monitoring data.

### 2.4.1 Common output and result indicators

A comprehensive selection of output and result indicators have been provided in the Regulation<sup>19</sup> for the food support distributed and for the basic material assistance provided in OP I and output indicators for the social inclusion assistance in OP II. These indicators can be linked to the nine specific objectives and to the long-term objectives of the Fund. Overall there are three Common Input indicators for OPI/II,

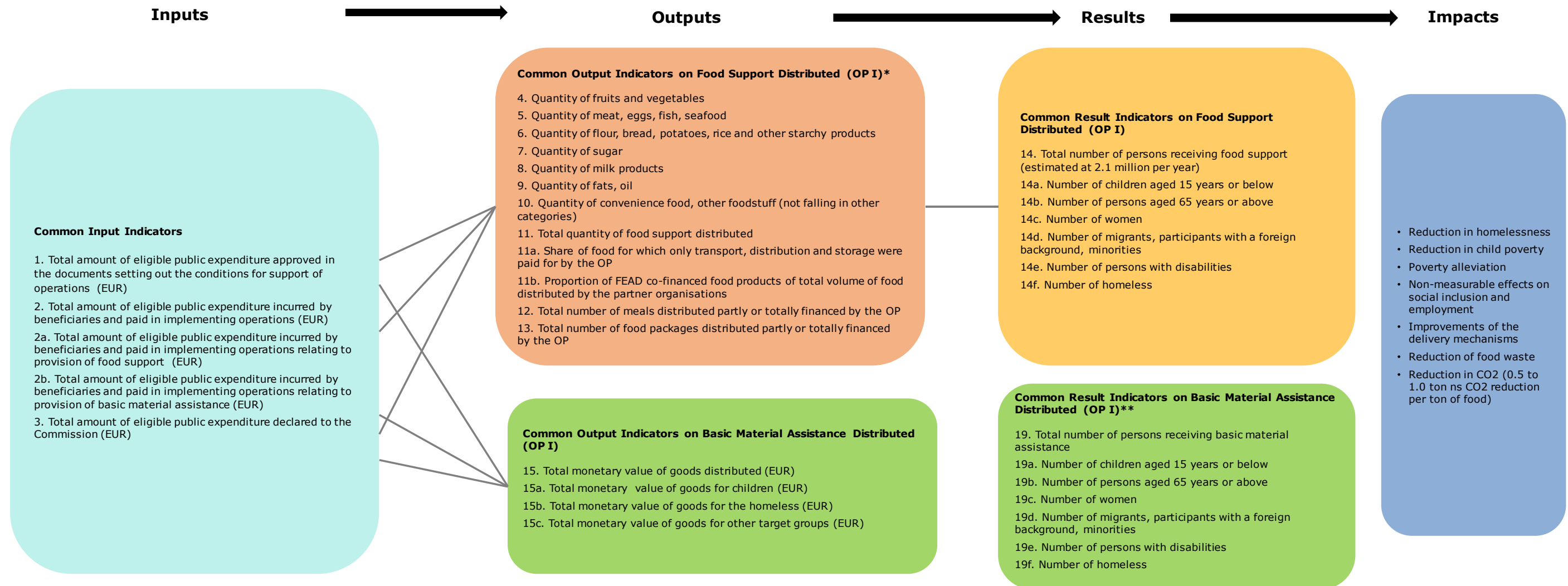
<sup>19</sup> Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) No 1255/2014

ten Output indicators for food support distributed associated with one result indicator differentiated by target groups, four output indicators and result indicators for basic material assistance and finally one output indicator for OP II again broken down into target groups.

These indicators are collected by the Member States and fed into SFC2014 in the form of Annual Implementation Reports. The current Interim Report of the Interim Evaluation of the FEAD uses the data from 2016 uploaded by the Member States at the end of June 2017.

Figure 6 and Figure 7 show how the common input, output and result indicators for the two types of OPs relate to the intervention logic of the FEAD.

Figure 6. Inputs, outputs and results of FEAD OP I



\* (1) The indicators (4) to (11) include any form of these products, e.g. fresh, canned and frozen foodstuff and should be expressed in tons.

(2) Values for this indicator shall be established by an informed estimation of the partner organisations.

(3) The definition of what is to be understood as a meal can be provided at the level of the partner organisation/operation/managing authority. Values for this indicator shall be established by an assessment by the partner organisations.

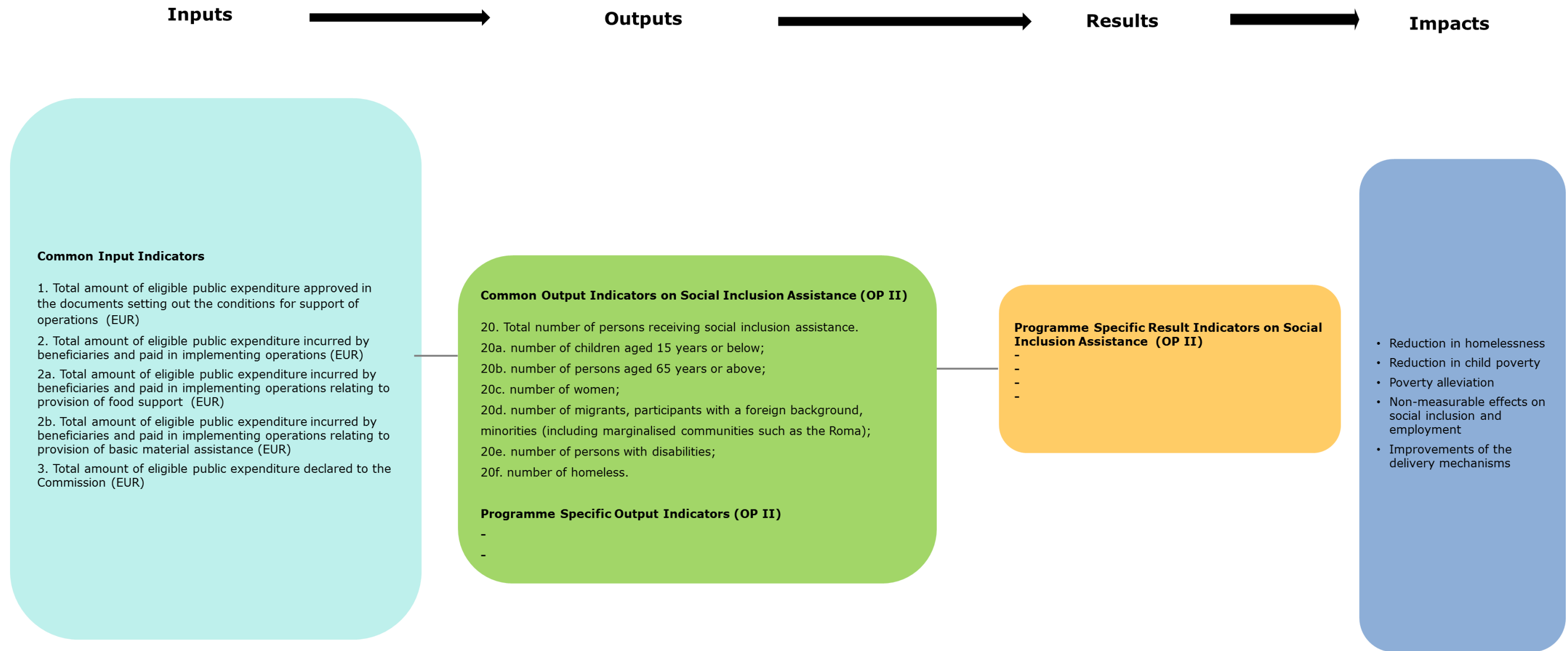
(4) The definition of what is to be understood as a food package can be provided at the level of the partner organisation/operation/managing authority. Packages do not need to be standardised in size or content. Values for this indicator shall be established by an assessment by the partner organisations.

\*\* (5) Values for these indicators shall be determined based on the informed estimation of the partner organisations. It is neither expected nor required that they are based on information provided by end-recipients.

(6) The list shall include all relevant categories covering at least 75 % of the goods distributed.

Source: Metis 2016

Figure 7. Inputs, outputs and results of FEAD OP II



Source: Metis 2016



## **2.4.2 Programme specific indicators (OP II)**

MS opting for an OP II are requested to propose programme specific indicators, which need to have baseline and target values. MS have to explain the contribution of their outputs to the achievement of expected results.

## **2.5 Data and information collection methods**

### **2.5.1 Programme and monitoring data (secondary data)**

The first source of information for the answering of the evaluation questions are the monitoring data. This means an analysis of SFC2014 and the AIRs from 2014 to 2016. A careful check of the monitoring data was carried out and discrepancies between data tables in SFC and the AIRs followed up. It was agreed with the Commission to wait until the publication of the 2016 AIRs in order to use the 2016 data before submitting the Interim Report. By the date of submission of the report, most, but not all, the AIRs were admissible.

Both OP I and OP II 2016 and 2021 AIRs and the Final implementation report (FIR) in 2022 include an informative section on the contribution of the OP to achieving the specific and global objectives of the FEAD.

The evaluators also screened the ex-ante evaluations of the OPs and other national evaluations and surveys that were available at the time of writing. The publications of the FEAD Network, e.g. the Thematic Dossier 1 on FEAD's contribution to sustainable social inclusion were also screened.

National evaluations on the progress and achievements of the OP are a further source of evidence but so far rather scarce. The following national evaluations have been communicated to us by the EC:

- France - étude comparée des choix de produits FEAD achetés par Etat-membre
- France Modalités de distribution de l'aide alimentaire et l'accompagnement réalisé dans ce cadre en région Ile de France
- Italy Pilot survey on the FEAD first implementation year (2015)
- Czech Republic study on school lunches support schemes in the Czech Republic
- Austria - presentation shared (evaluation not public and not made available to the evaluators by the MA)
- Greece: Unavailable at the time of writing interim report

Lithuania: Unavailable at the time of writing interim report

An evaluation is underway in Germany and first results may be available in autumn 2017.

The availability of other evaluations by January 2018 is rather uncertain, as:

- OP I: evaluations are only voluntary
- OP II: at least one evaluation shall be carried out by 2022

An inventory of national evaluations is being compiled. This will be made available with the final report.

### **2.5.2 Primary data and information collection**

In addition to the monitoring data and the ex-ante and national evaluations, a number of primary data collection methods were/will be used. These are:

- Open public consultation (OPC)
- Interviews with Managing Authorities and Partner Organisations in the Member States
- Participation in the FEAD Network Meetings
- EU-level focus group with Managing Authorities

- Focus groups in six Member States (France, Germany, Greece, Poland, Romania Spain)
- Structured Survey of end recipients carried out in 2017 and 2022 in the OP I Member States.

The results of the interviews and desk research have been collated in country fiches in each Member State. In the six countries where focus groups are conducted, the results will also feed into the country fiches. The country fiches will be submitted with the final report.

The OPC, interviews and insights gained during the focus groups and FEAD Network meetings have been used in this Interim Report. The results of the structured surveys and the second EU-level focus group will be used in the Final Report.

The structured surveys on end recipients, which will be carried out for end-recipients of OP I in 2017 and 2022, in accordance with the template adopted by the Commission on 18 April 2016 (Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2016/594), is expected to provide information on the effectiveness, efficiency and impact of FEAD by providing some insights on the socio-economic background, current and past situation and the views on FEAD assistance of the client population. The surveys will allow Managing Authorities to draw lessons on the implementation of FEAD assistance. They will also allow aggregating results at EU level, which will be very useful in the context of the FEAD mid-term evaluation. The sample should cover various types of partner organisations and types of assistance being delivered. The respondents are both the partner organisations at the level of the distribution point and the FEAD end recipients. The latter will normally be interviewed face-to-face. The questions cover the scope of assistance provided to end recipients by the partner organisation, the socio-economic background of the end recipients including age, gender, family and employment situation, type and frequency of assistance received. The MAs submit the survey results to the Commission and the latter aggregates the responses. The available responses will be provided to the mid-term evaluation team to be integrated into the final report. There is a risk that the structured survey results will not be available in time for the final report.

## **2.6 Limitations and approach to address them**

FEAD is a relatively simple fund with good monitoring data on amounts of food and material assistance distributed (OP I) and social inclusion measures delivered (OP II). A number of limitations arise related to the loose monitoring requirements, e.g. regarding numbers of participations (which the Regulations only require to be based on estimations) and the lack of indicators covering the accompanying measures under OP I. Type I OPs do not have to provide details on expected results, and only estimations of the number of individuals addressed by their interventions. There is also some double counting in these estimations as organisations incur costs every time they provide support.

The gaps in data are met through interviews and focus groups in which these issues are discussed. Where more precise values cannot be provided (because they were not requested), we mention the caveat.

With regard to OP I, neither baseline nor target values were requested from and set by MAs, which makes it harder for the evaluators to gauge the level of progress towards the achievement of the OP objectives and more generally the implementation of the programmes. The most robust evidence of progress is therefore the implementation rate and, in those countries that provide baselines, the expected numbers of participations. In Austria, for example, the school start packages go to the registered recipients of the minimum income. Therefore, very exact estimations of the baseline can be made. A very high percentage of those eligible register for a school start package and a high percentage of those registering come and pick it up.

In the absence of a pre-defined benchmark to examine progress of indicators, formulating a judgment on FEAD performance becomes quite challenging. Hence the present study estimates benchmarks against which to compare progress of output and results indicators. One measure that has been used to this end is that of FEAD **coverage** of the reference population and the **intensity of support** (in terms of food packages and/or meals distributed per end recipient).

The accompanying measures not covered by the common indicators in OP I are an important component of the FEAD and have been assessed mainly on the basis of interviews with stakeholders, the focus groups and the AIRs.

With regard to the coverage rate by target group, three caveats are important with regard to the analysis of:

- For the coverage rate, the indicator used to estimate the reference population (i.e. individuals in a situation of food deprivation) is that of food poverty as measured by Eurostat<sup>20</sup>; however, this indicator is not disaggregated by FEAD target groups (children, elderly, women) hence the relevant subgroup of the population is calculated using the share of that same group within the broader population of individuals in material deprivation. In other words, material deprivation rates by target group have been used as a proxy for food poverty. Additional sources had to be identified for the homeless population, for whom robust comparable figures are not available at the EU level.<sup>21</sup>
- A second caveat concerns the number of end-recipients: in principle the number of recipients of food support should equal the total number of individuals receiving the support, irrespective how many meals the same person has received<sup>22</sup>; however, as we will better explain below, this assumption may not always hold up against a number of plausibility checks.
- In order to reduce the bias in the calculation of participants receiving aid from FEAD the observation was limited to a single year of FEAD implementation. This allows, to some extent, to limit the issue of double counting. We took 2016 as the reference year, based on the assumption that the first two years have been affected by the start-up of the programmes; in addition, this holds true for all MS but Portugal because 2016 was in Portugal a transition year and the values obtained during this year are not quite representative of the capacity of fund to reach the most deprived.
- Output indicators for **OP II** reflect the different intervention logic of OP II as they consider the number of persons addressed only as an output of the programme rather than the result itself, as opposed to OP I. Another important feature of OP II output indicators is that in addition to common indicators, also specific indicators are selected. Common indicators do not foresee a target value whereas programme-specific output indicators do.

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<sup>20</sup> Food poverty is referred to in this text as the inability to afford a meal with meat, chicken, fish (or vegetarian equivalent) every second day, as per EU-SILC survey [ilc\_mdcs03]

<sup>21</sup> OECD data, Estimated number of homeless people, 2015 or latest year available.  
<http://www.oecd.org/els/family/HC3-1-Homeless-population.pdf>

<sup>22</sup> EUROPEAN COMMISSION, DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion Guidance Fiche 'Monitoring under FEAD' 12/05/2015, Brussels, EMPL A3/SLG/JM (2015): the note indicates that each individual should be counted only once irrespectively of how many meals he/she has received. The guidance also clarifies "The direct result of food distribution is that people actually receive support. It is therefore important to estimate how many persons do benefit from the programme and what socio-economic characteristics they have. In turn, this result can be compared to the input to estimate the average intensity of the support provided."

### **3 Analysing the role and impact of FEAD support**

#### **3.1 Summary FEAD OPs resources and types of support**

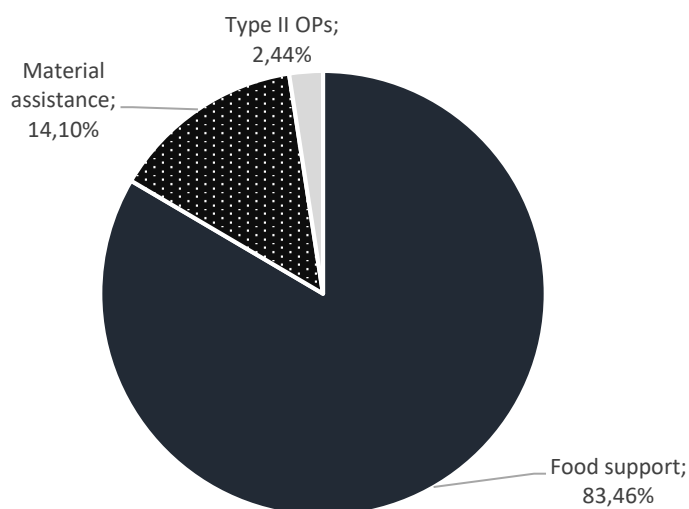
##### Key findings

- Overall, the available budget for FEAD interventions over the 2014-2020 period (including national co-financing and excluding technical assistance) equals 4.49 billion euros. Of these, 97.56% is allocated to OP I and the remaining 2.44% to OP II, adopted by 24 and 4 MS respectively.
- Food support accounts for the larger share of FEAD allocations, with all OP I MS but Austria declaring they intend to provide food support to the most deprived under FEAD and with 10 OPI countries allocating their entire FEAD budget to food support (Belgium, Bulgaria, Estonia, Spain, Finland, France, Poland, Slovenia, Malta and the United Kingdom). The MS with the larger allocation of funds are Italy, Spain, France, Poland and Romania and the most relevant target group of the interventions is children.
- With regard to material assistance, 14 MS declare they will provide this type of support, the most relevant in terms of budget being Greece and Italy. Assistance is in this case with priority directed towards children and the homeless.
- Accompanying measures are foreseen in most MS with FEAD allocations for type I OPs, and may be reimbursed at a level of 5% of the relevant food support/material assistance allocation even when no dedicated budget is programmed. In other cases, despite no dedicated budget, support measures - such as re-orientation towards social services and guidance for a healthier diet - are nevertheless provided to end-beneficiaries by Partner Organisations based on own resources.
- With regard to type II OPs, Germany accounts for the larger share by far of relevant FEAD funding, with Denmark and the Netherlands having chosen the minimum allocation set out in the FEAD regulation.

This section aims at providing a broad overview of FEAD allocations across countries and type of OP as well as types of support, in order to better interpret the monitoring data and evaluation findings discussed in the next section. Estimations of allocations across target groups are also provided.

Overall, the available budget for FEAD interventions over the 2014-2020 period equals 4.49 billion euros (including €674 million national co-financing and excluding €154 million of technical assistance). Of these, 97.56% is allocated to OP I and the remaining 2.44% to OP II. It is distributed across funds as per the figure below.

Figure 8. Share of allocated budget by type of assistance and OP



As anticipated, the first broad distinction is between type I and type II OPs, adopted by 24 and 4 MS, respectively. A more in-depth assessment of type I OPs across the EU-24 is provided, including a differentiation by material deprivation type(s) addressed. For OP II this distinction does not apply, as they are aimed at providing social inclusion measures which are not further classified into pre-defined categories.

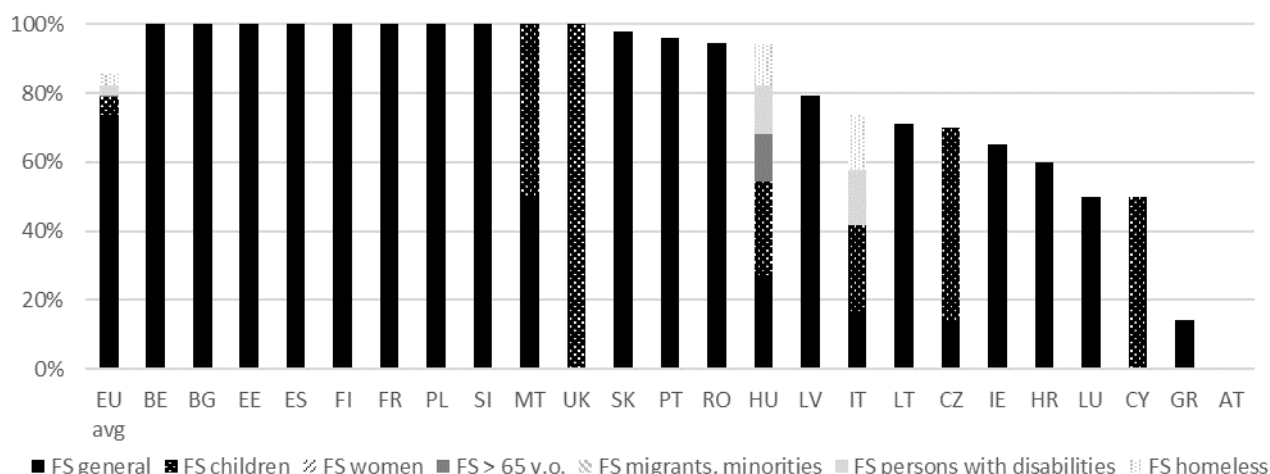
### 3.1.1 Allocations to type I OPs

On the basis of information provided in OPs, for type I OPs, we distinguish between **food support** and **material assistance measures** and provide the relative allocation. Next, an additional estimated reclassification of funding per measure has been carried out, according to priority target groups identified in the OPs. The allocation by categories of target groups reflect with some adaptation<sup>23</sup> those identified by FEAD’s monitoring system.

Figure 9 and Figure 10 below illustrate how MS compare in this respect, between forms of support aimed at alleviating food deprivation (Figure 9) and material deprivation (Figure 10), as well as by the relevant target groups addressed.

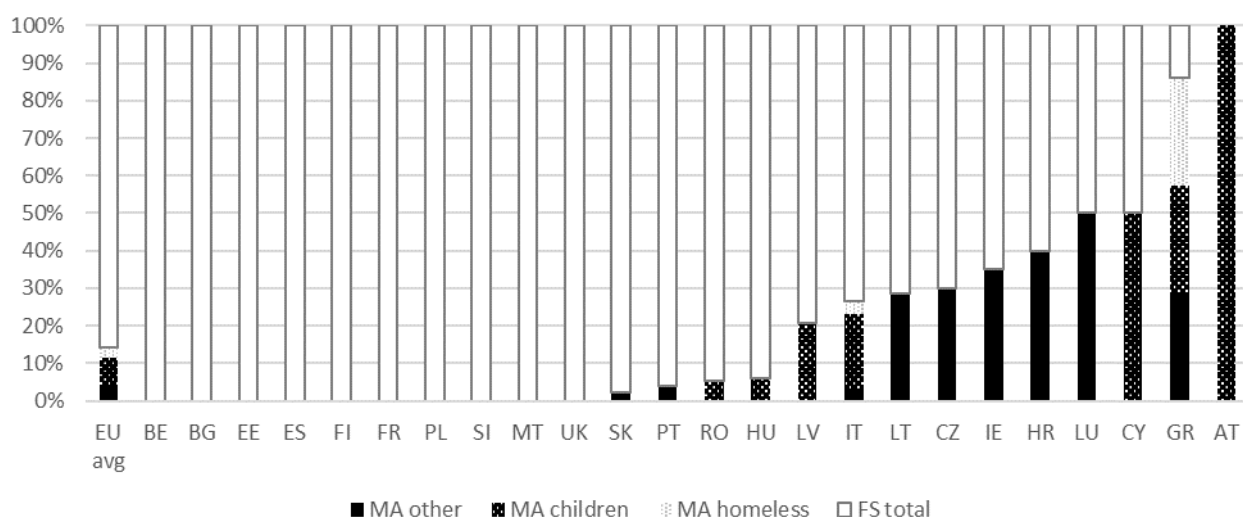
<sup>23</sup> Funding has been classified according to the description of the types of support given by each MAs in the OP. Where relevant, also target groups’ identification criteria have provided input to draw such a distinction. When several target groups are addressed by the OP, the funding has been considered as allocated evenly across them. Data include the national co-financing but exclude Technical assistance

Figure 9. Share of FEAD funding for food support (FS) by OP I MS and target group



Source: own elaborations based on FEAD OPs

Figure 10. Share of FEAD funding for material assistance (MA) by OP I MS and target group<sup>24</sup>



Source: own elaborations based on FEAD OPs

Figure 9 and Figure 10 show that 10 OP I countries (Belgium, Bulgaria, Estonia, Spain, Finland, France, Poland, Slovenia, Malta and the United Kingdom) devote 100% of their FEAD allocation to food support. The remaining countries also devote funds to material support, except for Austria that allocates resources only to material support. Food support measures cover the largest share of overall FEAD funding at the EU level, reaching nearly 85% of the total OP I allocation (and 83.4% of total FEAD allocation).

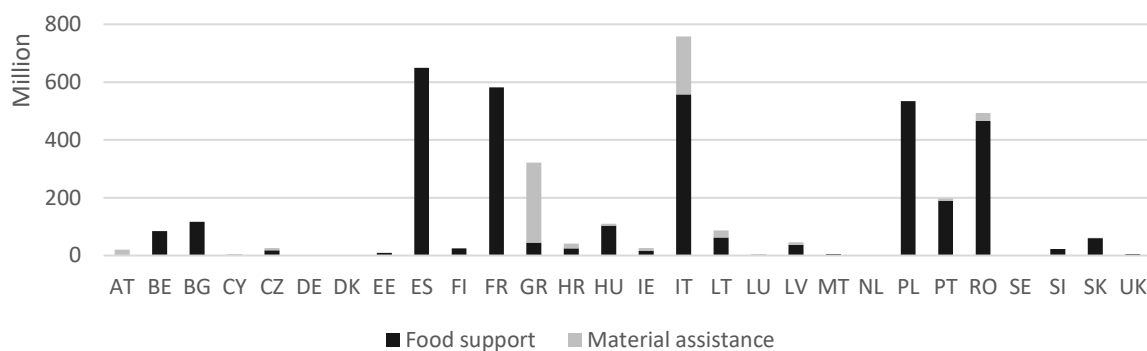
Breaking this down by target groups, the first finding is that many OPs, while identifying target groups, address the different categories identified in the monitoring system (children, women, elderly etc.) without a specific focus on some of these. . Because of this, financial values could not be attributed with a clear-cut demarcation. As a result, Figure 9 above shows a vast prevalence of measures covering all target groups. Interestingly, smaller but still significant shares are prioritised to children, the

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

elderly, migrants and minorities and people with disabilities. As per Figure 10, material support measures account for the remaining 15% of the total allocation and play a significant role especially in Austria, Greece, Cyprus and Luxembourg. Children – and households with dependent children – are the target group attracting the largest share of funding for material assistance.

It is interesting also to look at this allocation in absolute values, to better interpret, e.g., progress of output indicators (see Figure 11).

Figure 11. FEAD absolute allocation by types of support (euros)



Five countries have distinctly higher allocations of FEAD funding, namely Italy, Spain, France, Poland and Romania. These are followed by Greece and Portugal, at over 200 million euros, while the remainder is at around or, more often, below 100 million euros. It is important to underline that FEAD allocation was decided by each MS and deducted from the Member State Structural Funds allocation. It was not defined at the EU level as for example for the structural funds (only the minimum and maximum allocation was defined at the EU level).

Type I OPs have to foresee accompanying measures, except in cases where “[..] the food and/or basic material assistance is provided solely to most deprived children in childcare or comparable facilities”<sup>25</sup>. These may consist of, for example, guidance on a balanced diet, budget management advice or re-orientation towards social inclusion services.

<sup>25</sup> FEAD regulation, art 7(4)

Figure 12. OPs' allocation of accompanying measures as part of food support, by MS

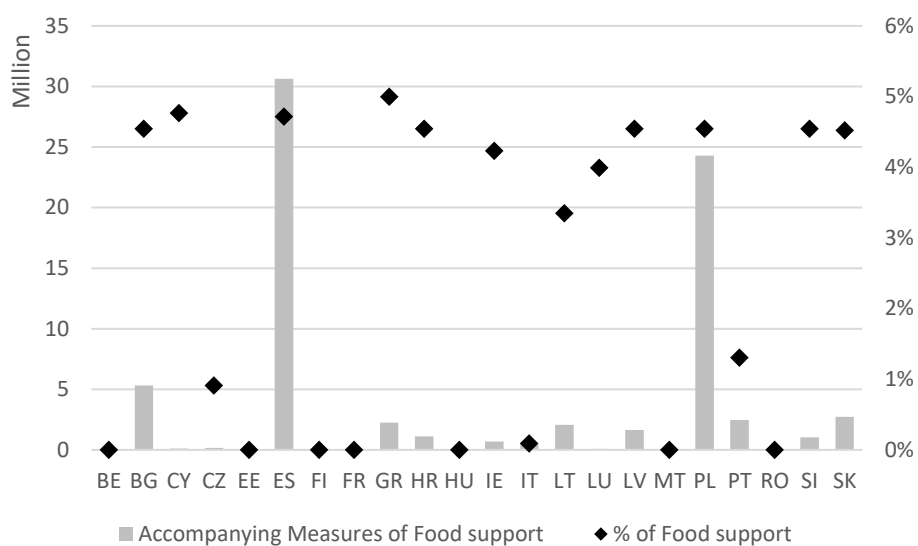


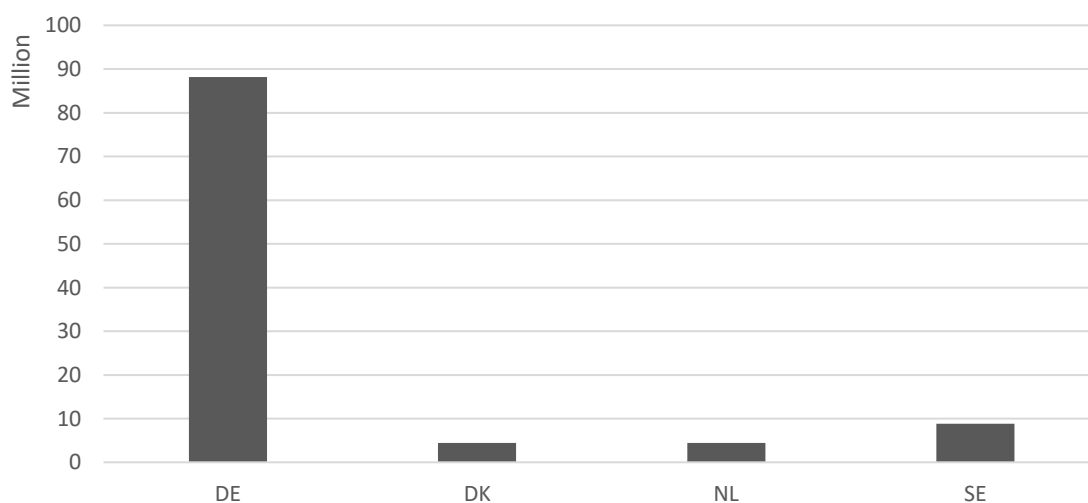
Figure 12 shows that a budget for accompanying measures is foreseen in most OPs aimed at providing food support.

Importantly, despite accompanying measures not being present in the allocation of all Member States, these, like Belgium, have nonetheless placed an obligation upon POs to direct beneficiaries towards further social integration services. Likewise, in Estonia, despite no dedicated budget, beneficiaries are provided with information on, e.g., healthy recipes that could be prepared with the food packages provided as well as brochures on further social integration services. These are ways to reduce the costs of FEAD delivery and concentrate more resources for the purchase and distribution of material assistance. Furthermore, being registered for support from the local government is a pre-requisite for obtaining food, which means that individuals reached by FEAD are already involved into mechanisms for further social inclusion.

### 3.1.2 Allocations to type II OPs

Type II OPs account for a very modest share of the overall FEAD allocation, reaching slightly over 2% in aggregated terms. Figure 13 shows their absolute allocation, by MS.

Figure 13. FEAD allocation for type II OPs





## 3.2 Effectiveness

### Key findings

- FEAD can be considered an effective fund overall. This is confirmed by the results of monitoring data, fieldwork (focus groups and interviews), as well as the OPC data.
- In particular, there was a broad agreement among respondents to the OPC with regard to FEAD’s ability to alleviate food deprivation and to contribute to social inclusion. The reasons behind the positive judgement were given in the open answers, where respondents expressed their overall satisfaction with the results of FEAD and particularly underlined how food and material deprivation alleviation are key to human dignity. Results of the OPC demonstrate that almost all respondents (93%) agree (48%) or partially agree (45%) with the statement that FEAD makes a difference, or a partial difference, to the most deprived.
- The monitoring data and information in the implementation reports, show the following:
  - In general, food support measures seem to benefit from well-established implementation mechanisms. Difficulties tend to occur in the setting up of new measures introduced by FEAD, such as material assistance measures.
  - Overall, **nearly one million tonnes of food** were distributed in 20 MS from 2014 to 2016. In 2016, **food support was distributed to around 15 million people in 20 countries**, most of it in France, Romania, Italy, Spain and Poland. Austria and OP II MS do not foresee the distribution of food. Due to late implementation, no aid was distributed in Cyprus, Croatia, Hungary and the United Kingdom. High variations in the estimate of average quantity of food distributed per participant is probably due to inconsistencies in the estimation of end beneficiaries (double counting). **Basic material assistance** has been provided in 6 MS to an estimated 660,000 individuals.
  - Six of the 14 MS that chose **OP I material support** in their OPs have registered progress on the relevant output indicators. In three MS (Cyprus, Croatia, Hungary) delays in implementation mean that no indicator yet registers progress. Austria and Greece together cover approximately 80% of material support provided through FEAD.
  - Overall (2014-2016) **OPII** reached approximately **23,000 individuals**, the majority of them (21,660) in Germany in 2016.
  - In terms of achievement rates, three out of six programme-specific indicators (two in Germany and one in Denmark) show values so far.
  - **Available result indicators for OPII show on average very good achievements** with most indicators having almost reached or even surpassed targets. The indicators in the Netherlands show no progress which is due to the early stage of the programme implementation and the fact that results will be gathered through exit-interviews after a one-year participation. Interviews with officers in charge of the implementation have confirmed a positive early feedback from participants. Mutual learning at Union level is assured by the FEAD network set up by the European Commission in September 2016, through networking and dissemination of good practices in the area of non-financial assistance to the most deprived persons. At national level, mutual learning is also assured through national events. These mutual learning effects are corroborated by the OPC where mutual learning is seen as one of the main fields of added value.
  - **Financial progress.** By the end of 2016 almost €348m were declared to the Commission and €911m were incurred by beneficiaries of which 97% was for food assistance. The pace of financial progress has systematically increased

over time. In comparison to the total allocation, expenditure declared to the EC at the end of 2016 is on average slightly below 10%. This rises to 20% for expenditure incurred by beneficiaries and to nearly 30% for approved expenditure. Countries with comparatively small programmes such as the Netherlands and Malta have already approved the entirety of their funding and, on average, OPII funds show a much higher average approved expenditure than OPI (55% vs 31%).

- FEAD effectiveness is confirmed by the **focus groups**, which highlighted in particular that the FEAD is a key tool to intercept poverty and reach the most deprived, including those that may remain hidden to other forms of social assistance or that need a different approach. FEAD represents a cornerstone of food aid and allows the continuing existence of many Partner Organisations which would otherwise risk disappearing. It improves partnerships and knowledge sharing at the local level both among institutions, partner organisations and social services, as well as across different partner organisations.
- Both the OPC and the focus groups emphasised the importance of the FEAD being a **broad scope/ low threshold programme**, which ensures a good coverage. At the same time, criticism has been expressed with regard to the low budgets currently allocated to accompanying measures (which are seen as a key link to further integration), the rigidity of some aspects of the FEAD regulation and some difficulties in interpreting the relevant EU or national regulation.
- Some evidence has been collected about **achievement of impacts and unintended results**. These include indirect support provided to the most deprived by freeing up financial resources that would otherwise have been spent on basic needs and can now be spent on other goods and services. In addition, working with POs, NGOs and charities, FEAD supports their capacity building and professionalization. The limited evidence gathered so far on achievement of unintended results goes in the direction of increasing awareness and empowerment of the most deprived.
- These achievements were also possible because of **FEAD’s capacity to adjust to changing needs**, especially concerning adaptations in the targeting of end recipients.

The assessment of FEAD’s effectiveness is articulated, in this study, in two main questions, which, in turn, are broken down different sub-questions. The main questions are:

1. To what extent does the FEAD contribute to national and EU objectives of achieving poverty reduction and social inclusion?
2. How are the various types of assistance delivered?

The evaluation enquires if FEAD has progressed towards its general objectives of, under OP I, providing food and material assistance to the most deprived and, under OP II, of providing social inclusion services. It also seeks to ascertain whether the types of support are fit for purpose, and if good practices have emerged.

The following chapter provides a detailed analysis of the evidence, broken down by specific evaluation questions.

### **3.2.1 To what extent does the FEAD contribute to national and EU objectives of achieving poverty reduction and social inclusion?**

The first broad question of effectiveness refers to FEAD’s current contributions to its objectives, while the results of the detailed survey on FEAD’s end-recipients, foreseen for the second part of the study, are still pending. Therefore, the estimation of FEAD’s effects at the time of writing (December 2017) entails an attentive exercise of

triangulation among desk review information, FEAD monitoring data and the findings of the fieldwork at MS level.

**3.2.1.1 To what extent are the FEAD objectives on track to be achieved and has assistance reached the most vulnerable groups and does it help them move further towards inclusion?**

The first sub question on effectiveness is arguably the broadest, and is concerned with the overall progress of FEAD towards its objectives.

The first judgment criterion adopted to assess such progress is **spending**. It is drawn from FEAD’s input indicators and further complemented with descriptive and normative judgments of relevant stakeholders, which help interpret reasons for over or underperformance (e.g. delays in the commencement of activities, procedural complexities, changes etc.).<sup>26</sup> OPC results are included further down through the analysis (especially for results).

**Input indicators – financial progress**

The analysis starts by observing the level of financial progress of FEAD across the EU, taking into account the 3+1 main dimensions as can be derived from the AIRs and OPs respectively:

- a) Total FEAD allocation (according to OP);
- b) Total amount of eligible public **expenditure approved** in the documents setting out the conditions for support of operations (commitments) – input indicator 1;
- c) Total amount of eligible public **expenditure incurred by beneficiaries** (spent) and paid in implementing operations – input indicator 2;
- d) Total amount of eligible public **expenditure declared** to the Commission – input indicator 3.

Table 4 shows the financial progress at the EU level through 2014-2016.

*Table 4. Implementation of the FEAD from 2014 to 2016 (million euros)*

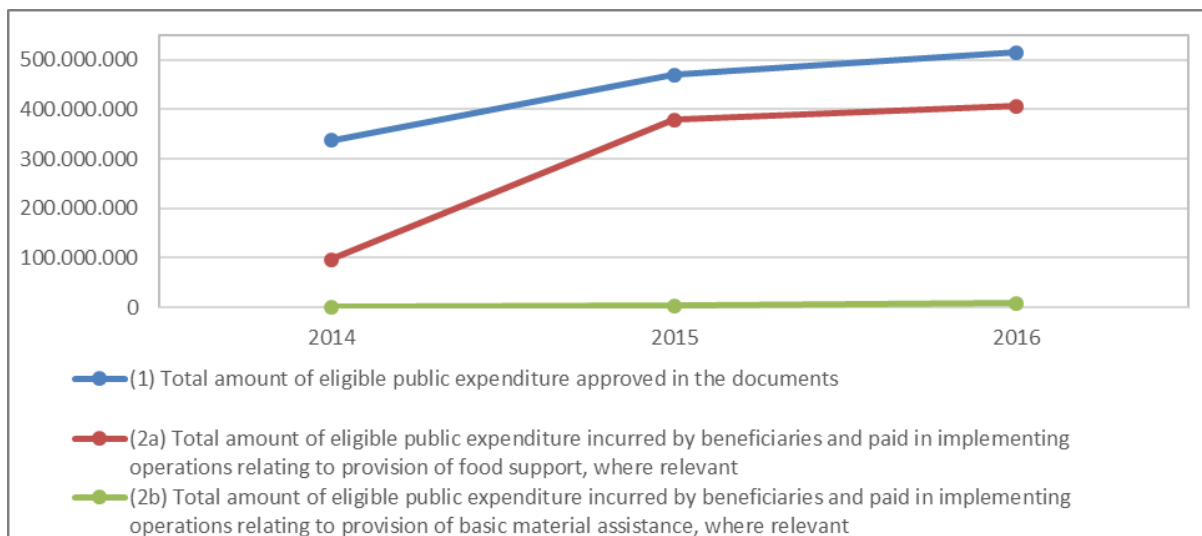
Type of indicator		Indicator	2014	2015	2016	2014-2016
Input	1	Total amount of eligible public expenditure approved in the documents setting out the conditions for support of operations.	337.37	470.03	514.55	1,321.96
Input	2	Total amount of eligible public expenditure incurred by beneficiaries and paid in implementing operations.	96.34	385.94	429.57	911.86
Input	2a	Of it relating to provision of food support, where relevant	95.89	378.62	407.12	881.64
Input	2b	Of it relating to provision of basic material assistance.	0	2.5	7.5	10
Input	3	Total amount of eligible public expenditure declared to the Commission	0	201.69	146.67	348.37

Source: SFC2014

As it can be seen, the pace of financial progress has systematically increased over time.

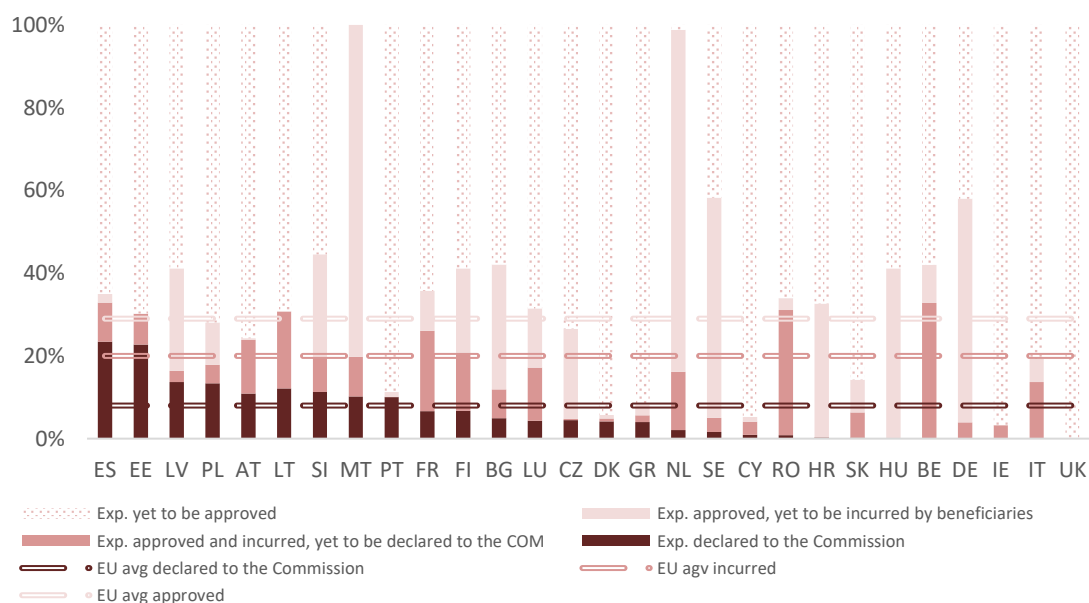
<sup>26</sup> For a better presentation of findings relating to sub-questions 1.1.1 and 1.1.2, these are presented jointly, as sub-question 1.1.2 asks about the extent to which assistance has reached the most vulnerable groups [...] and it is, thus, mainly a breakdown of the achievement of FEAD objectives by target group.

Figure 14. FEAD financial progress by type of intervention for OP I



In order to understand whether this is in line with expectations or whether performance is lagging behind initial plans, Figure 15 looks at cumulative values and compares these with the overall allocation as set out in the OPs.

Figure 15. FEAD financial progress, by MS as at 31/12/2016



Source: own elaborations based on AIR2016

Against the total FEAD allocation, expenditure declared to the EC at the end of 2016 at the EU-28 level is slightly below 10%. This level rises to 20% for expenditure incurred by beneficiaries and paid in implementing operations and to nearly 30% for approved expenditure.

The first point to be made is that approved expenditure tends to lag behind the financial plans in the OPs, with an expectation<sup>27</sup> for over 40% of the total expenditure to be approved by 2016 and actual values below 30%. This however should not affect

<sup>27</sup> The “expectation for 2016” is computed as three sevenths of the overall FEAD allocation by MS, as per FEAD financial plan, including by indexing values for a yearly inflation rate set at 2% by the FEAD regulation. Exact values are drawn from FEAD OPs.

the implementation as an annual commitment may be spent up to 3 years after the year when it was committed. Furthermore, this value varies between MS and may be due to the relatively early stage of implementation of the operations.

In terms of cross-MS variations, countries with comparatively small programmes such as the Netherlands and Malta have already approved the entirety of their funding and, on average, OPII funds show a much higher average approved expenditure than OPI (55% vs 31%). Yet, type II OPs performance in terms of expenditure declared to the commission is still low.

It should be noted that in a number of Member States, implementation was delayed. This is due to several reasons, with one important reason due to late approval of the programme and therefore late implementation (e.g. in Sweden), programming issues (Denmark), or an extended start-up phase (e.g. in the Netherlands, Hungary, Croatia, Slovakia), due to the fact that the infrastructure, such as the registration system, was not yet in place. In the case of Denmark, the delays reflect the architecture of the programme that planned the launch of projects in 2016 and again in 2019. In some of the programmes having experienced a slow start up phase (e.g. in Sweden, the Netherlands, Slovakia) the implementation gap has been decreasing throughout the years.

In Belgium, the actual expenditure was higher than the planned expenditure in 2014 and 2015, while it is slightly below the target in 2016. In 2014, actual expenditure was 3% above the target and in 2015 it was 5% above target. This is due to a higher national contribution than projected in the operational programme and the result of a rise in number of the end recipients in Belgium in recent years.

Performance of food distribution reflects the relatively slow performance in terms of expenditure: in 2014 food was distributed only in 8 MS, namely Belgium, Spain, France, Lithuania, Poland, Portugal, Romania and Slovenia. These countries managed a smoother transition between the old (within the EU CAP policy) and new programme, sometimes through ad-hoc measures, such as in Spain with a dedicated budgetary line funded by the MS to ensure continuity of food support, but more generally by relying on the already existing framework for food support. This has meant in some instances that the innovations brought about by FEAD were gradually embedded through successive refinements of the OPs. In the case of Portugal, for example, a full recast of the programme to better serve the purposes of FEAD has taken place only in 2016, which was a transition year with no implementation. This also explains why more innovative interventions aimed at providing basic material assistance have experienced a slower start.

In Sweden, an OPII MS, implementation was delayed due to difficulties with participants' registration, including participants reluctant to provide their personal data, and project organisation difficulties -- as many of the partner organisations lack the experience for implementing large-scale EU-funded projects; these problems have been highlighted by the evaluation carried out in 2017 and procedures are now being revised.

Another point to be highlighted in this respect concerns how the mix of support types envisaged in each OP can affect the pace of approval of expenditure, and, notably, the possible correlation between the share of general food support and progress of expenditure. This is relevant for type I OPs.

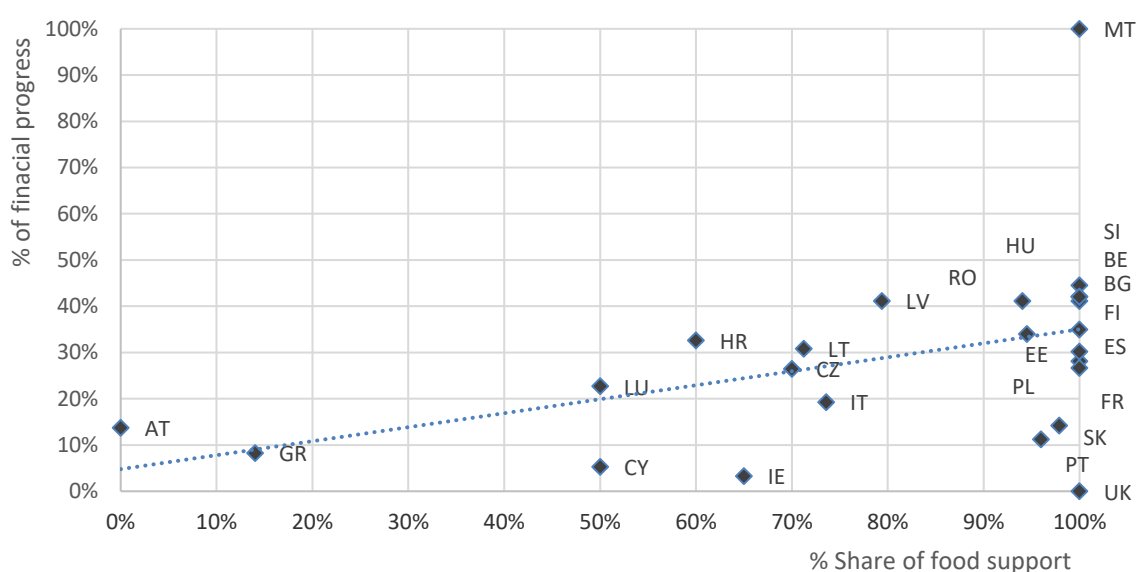
A simple regression model<sup>28</sup> allows testing the hypothesis of a positive correlation among the two: the higher the share of food support the higher the share of expenditure approved on total FEAD allocation, highlighting how general food support

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<sup>28</sup> OLS with error robust for heteroscedasticity; coeff. 0,302 (i.e. 0,302 p.p. of additional progress per each additional p.p. in the share of food support), p-value 0,0094 (statistically significant at the 95% level) 4, R<sup>2</sup> 0,175 (modest explicative power)

measures seem to benefit from well-established implementation mechanisms, whereas difficulties may lie in the setting up of new measures introduced with FEAD, such as material assistance measures. This is the case of, e.g., Italy, where more traditional interventions for immediate relief through food support show significant progress while those relating to provision of material support (school projects and initiatives targeted at the homeless) are still in the starting phase. This is partly due to compliance problems with FEAD regulations for these more “innovative” measures (e.g., the provision of a pre-paid card to accommodate individual specific needs). On the other hand, this relates to the complex institutional set-up that is involved in more articulated measures aimed at medium to long term social integration of the most deprived (involving for examples collaboration of difference governance levels and services).

Figure 16. Correlation between the share of food support in each OP and financial progress (expenditure approved/total allocation)



The second dimension that can be observed relates to the share of payments incurred over approved expenditure (b/c ratio). This is a measure of how well the implementation unfolds once the expenditure is approved by the authorities.

Overall, in the first three years of implementation (2014 to 2016), EUR 912 million were spent in the 28 MS until the end of 2016, out of which 95% were spent in OP I programmes. As shown in the table below this results in an overall share of payments incurred over the approved expenditure of 69% from 2014 to 2016. This rate varies significantly across Member States, but also within a single Member State from year to year, as shown by Table 5 below.

Table 5. Implementation of the FEAD from 2014 to 2016 (%)

Member States	2014	2015	2016	2014-2016
AT		79.1%	116.8%	98.2%
BE	77.2%	46.5%	116.9%	78.1%
BG		10.6%	36.7%	28.3%
CY			79.1%	78.4%
CZ		.	27.8%	18.1%
DE		0.2%	7.4%	6.7%
DK			85.3%	85.3%
EE		99.6%	100.0%	99.8%
ES	93.2%	93.2%	94.7%	93.9%
FI	.	24.9%	90.1%	50.4%
FR	49.7%	84.9%	82.5%	72.8%
EL		.	117.1%	85.7%
HR			0.9%	0.9%
HU	.	.	0.01%	0.0%
IE			98.3%	98.3%
IT	.	72.8%	137.6%	70.9%
LT	29.3%	79.9%		99.6%
LU	2.6%	43.6%	106.2%	54.5%
LV	1.2%	46.6%	70.3%	39.8%
MT			19.8%	19.8%
NL	100.0%	3.0%	782.7%	16.3%
PL	.	75.2%	60.5%	63.5%
PT			89.6%	89.6%
RO	5.8%	189.1%		91.5%
SE		1.1%	636.2%	8.6%
SI	0.1%	29.5%	75.8%	43.7%
SK		.	46.1%	44.7%
<b>EU27 (UK excl.)</b>	<b>28.6%</b>	<b>82.1%</b>	<b>83.5%</b>	<b>69.0%</b>
<i>empty cells: (1) is zero</i>				
<b>Average share of payments incurred over approved expenditure</b>	<b>25.7%</b>	<b>44.5%</b>	<b>123.7%</b>	<b>56.9%</b>

Source: SFC2014

The highest share of payments incurred over approved expenditure was reported for Spain with more than 90% in every year and Estonia, reaching 100% in 2015 and 2016 respectively. Hungary is the only MS in which this share is below 1% until the end of 2016 (apart from the United Kingdom, which has not yet started the programme). The reasons are various including repeated institutional reorganizations affecting the MA, the compatibility problem between the newly installed Hungarian and the EU IT interface (EUPR vs. SFC) as well as the rigid public procurement procedures for selecting the partner organisation in charge of providing food support.<sup>29</sup>

Overall the level of payments incurred can be considered satisfactory, with the approved expenditure being lower – but close to – the yearly financial plans included in the OPs and given that the share of payments is increasing (from 25.7% in 2014 to 123.7% in 2016 at the EU level and higher in 2016 than the 2014-2016 average in all but three MS)<sup>30</sup>. At present, there are no clear indications that the financial progress is insufficient, although the situation should be monitored especially as regards material assistance and with respect to Hungary and Croatia.

<sup>29</sup> Interview with MA ; AIR2016

<sup>30</sup> Lithuania, Poland, Romania

Furthermore, two issues raised rather transversally by the stakeholders should be taken into account:

- Often, national procurement procedures that are applicable to the purchase of goods and services may not be fully suitable for the procurement of food products within the FEAD design, given the nature of the support, which is aimed at providing immediate relief to situation of extreme poverty. This may also slow down the pace of implementation.
- An earlier approval of the regulation at the EU level, is seen as a pre-condition for a quicker start-up phase of the programme, as it takes time for MS to make all the necessary steps to comply with the FEAD regulation.

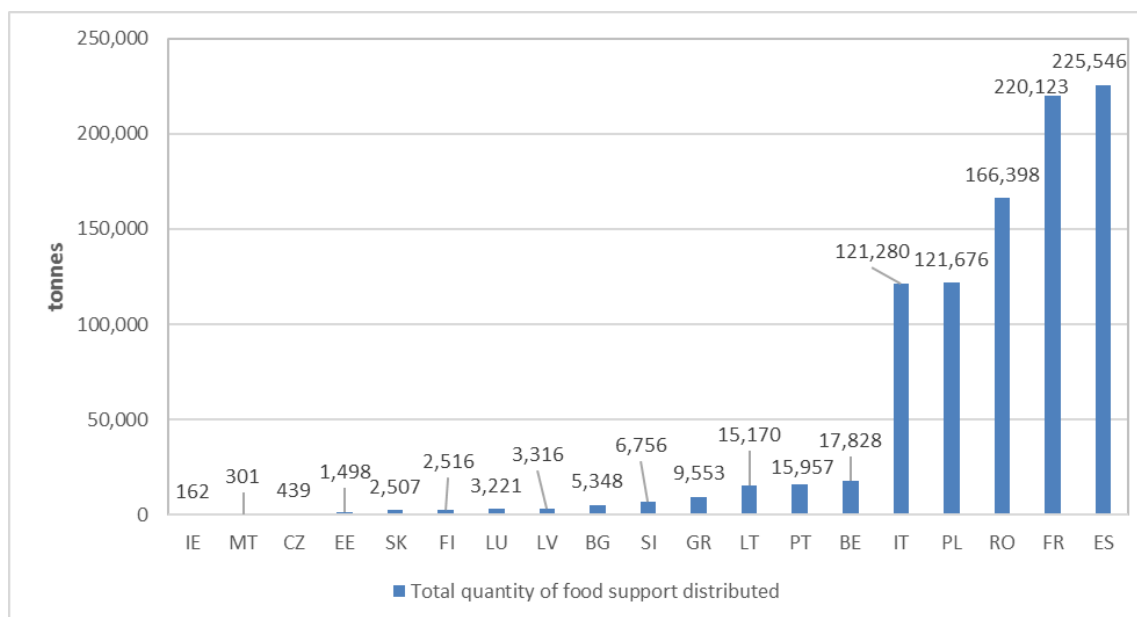
This analysis also suggests that further efforts should be made in order to speed up the implementation of material assistance measures.

## Output indicators

### Type I OPs - Food support

The analysis of common output indicators for OP I reveals that, overall, nearly one million tonnes of food were distributed in 20 MS<sup>31</sup> from 2014 to 2016.

Figure 17. Total quantity of food distributed (2014-2016), by MS



Source: SFC2014

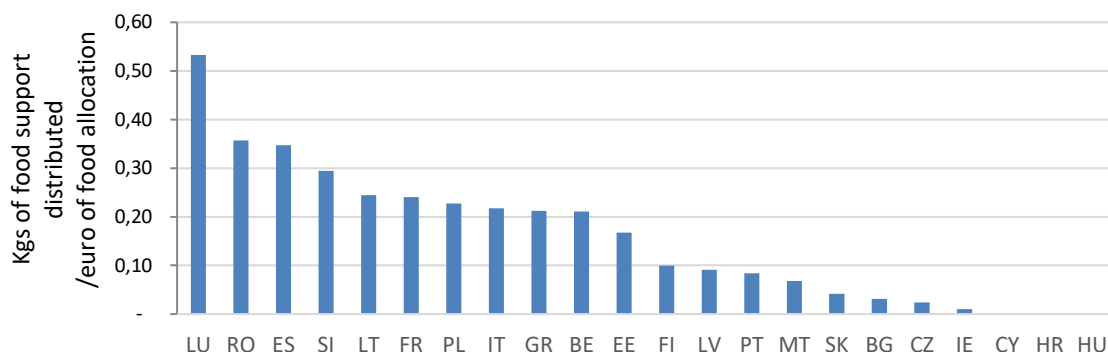
As shown in the figure above, Spain, Romania, France, Poland and Italy are the countries with the highest quantity of food distributed (90% of the total amount), ranging from around one hundred thousand to over two hundred thousand tonnes of food. These are also the countries with higher allocations of funds for this form of support, thus the progress of output indicators tends to match the expectations.

Figure 18 shows the progress of each OP relative to its overall financial allocation dedicated to food support measures (dividing the tonnes of food distributed by the overall financial allocation). This is to give an indication of how much food has been distributed over the respective financial allocation. Low levels may be due to low efficiency but, importantly, also due to delays in the distribution of food support.

<sup>31</sup> AT and OP II MS (DK, NL, SE and DE) do not distribute food. Due to late implementation, no food was distributed in CY, HR, HU and UK.



Figure 18. Overall quantity of food distributed relative to overall allocation (2014-2016), by MS



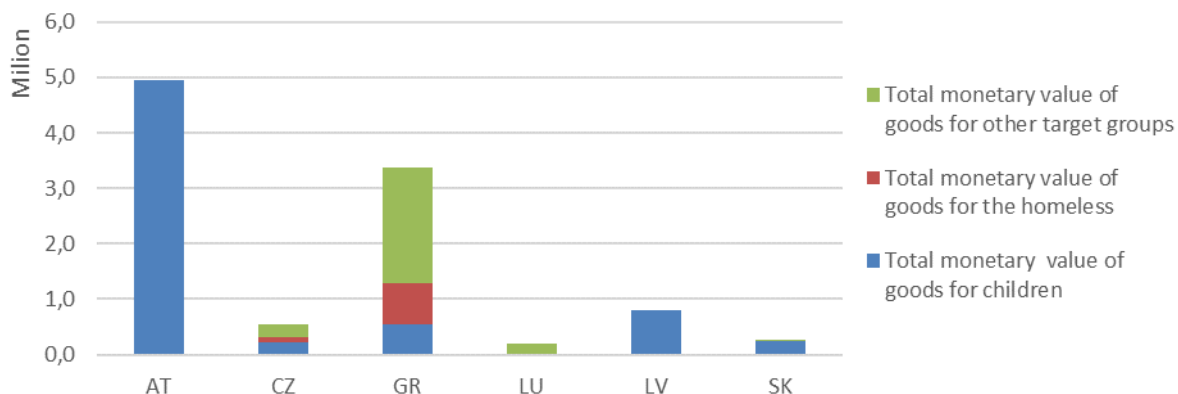
Source: SFC2014

From this perspective, it appears that France, Romania, Spain, Italy and Poland perform well in terms of financial and physical progress, along with countries with lower overall allocation such as Slovenia, Lithuania and Belgium. Conversely, Portugal and Bulgaria seem to be lagging somewhat behind (they appear in the right-hand side of the graph), also in view of their relatively large allocation of funds. The high percentage scored by Luxembourg is probably due to the leveraging effect from food donations. The low performance of Portugal can be explained by the fact that 2016 was a transition year, fully devoted to setting the strategy for the years to come with no implementation. For Bulgaria, the low performance is explained by delays in the start-up phase, with the implementation phase having started only through 2015 due to delays in carrying out procurement procedures. Malta, Czech Republic, Slovakia and the other countries on the right-hand side of the graph have shown somewhat modest performance both in absolute and relative terms (Figure 19 and Figure 20). In all cases this is due to the delayed start of the programmes, which have started to register progress only in 2016.

### Type I OPs – basic material assistance

As to OP I material support, six out of the 14 MS that choose this form of support in their OPs have registered progress of the relevant output indicators. In three MS (Cyprus, Croatia, Hungary) delays in implementation mean that no indicator yet registers progress yet. In other countries, e.g., Italy, actions dedicated to material support tend to remain behind schedule, as anticipated also in the analysis of expenditure.

Figure 19. Overall value of goods distributed (2014-2016), by MS



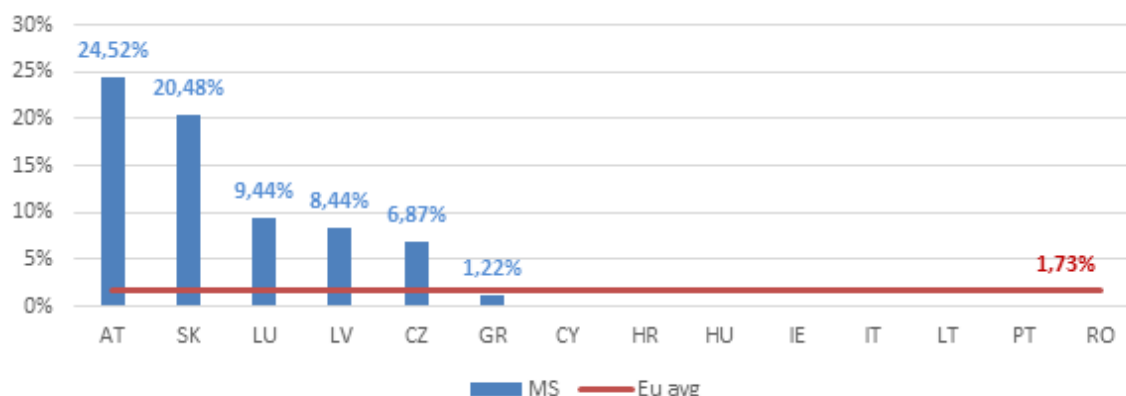
Source: SFC2014

In absolute terms, Austria accounts for half of the overall material support provided in type I OPs, and together with Greece, accounts for the majority of FEAD EU

expenditures on material support, reaching together to over 8.3 of the 10.1 million euros of goods distributed.

Again, this data should be interpreted in relative terms to better appraise progress. This is particularly suitable here as both values, i.e. value of goods distributed and the financial allocation are expressed in monetary terms. The share of goods distributed over the allocation for food support measures is shown in Figure 20.

Figure 20. Value of goods distributed over the MS total allocation for material support, by MS



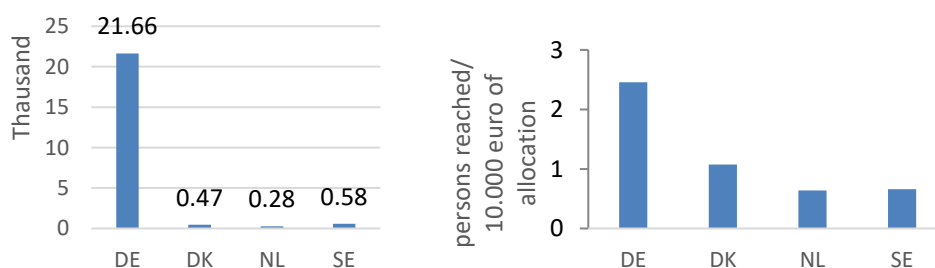
Source: SFC2014

In this perspective, the performance of Austria is remarkable, while particularly Greece remains at a rather low level of output given the dedicated resources. No progress in distribution of goods is registered in Cyprus, Croatia, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Lithuania, Portugal and Romania. One striking indication that emerges is that the EU average of goods distributed equals to only 1.73% of the overall dedicated allocation. This result is explained by a number of factors: first of all the delays experienced by Italy (for material assistance only) and Greece (also on food support) which account alone for nearly 78% of total allocated funding, but also by the fact that in Croatia and Hungary the implementation has not yet started and problems have been experienced by Romania (procurement procedures) and Portugal (whose programme for 2014 and 2015 carried over the framework of the previous programming period and only in 2016 set up a newly devised FEAD strategy).

## OPII

Figure 21 shows the progress of common output indicators for Germany, Denmark, the Netherlands and Sweden in absolute and relative terms (left-hand side and right-hand side of the graph respectively).

Figure 21. Progress of common output indicators for type II FEAD OPs, by MS (absolute values and %)



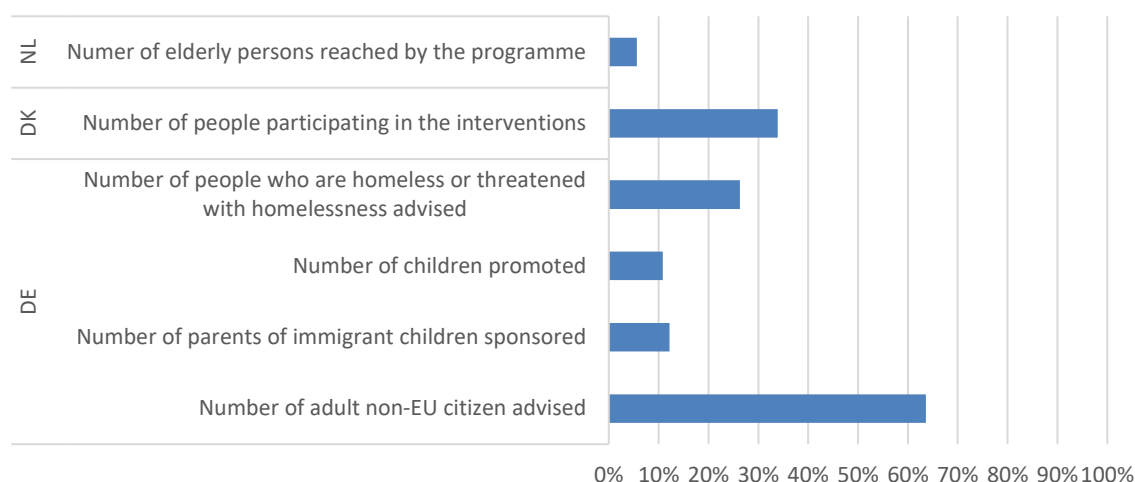
Source: SFC2014

Note: the right hand graph shows the number of recipients as a share of the overall allocation, for each country in order to compare OP's outreach capacity

Germany shows the most considerable progress both in absolute and relative terms. Given their nature, the programme-specific indicators cannot be aggregated. Furthermore, Sweden has not selected a programme-specific indicator for output, but only for result.

Germany has selected four specific indicators, while a single indicator is selected by Denmark and the Netherlands. These indicators relate to specific target groups covered by the programmes.

Figure 22. Progress of programme-specific output indicators for type II OPs, by MS



Source: SFC2014

From this perspective, three out of six programme-specific indicators (two in Germany and one in Denmark) seem on track to achieve their targets. For Germany result indicators far exceeded the expectations (see next section). As for the Netherlands, the low result is attributed to difficulties in identifying participants; mutual learning activities among cities participating in the programme are foreseen to take place in 2017 and an overall increase of the efforts in outreach activities is set to take place.

### Results (indicators and stakeholders' views)

The results of FEAD can be only partially captured through the progress of the indicators, as these have no targets set. The fieldwork (focus groups and interviews) as well as OPC results can thus provide an important backdrop against which to interpret monitoring data.

In terms of the OPC results, overall, 48.18% of the respondents believe that FEAD support makes a difference to the most deprived in their country. Additionally, 44.46% report that FEAD partially makes a difference to the most deprived in their country and only 3.28% stated that they do not think FEAD made a difference to this group of people.

When asked about the main reasons for this, a large group of respondents express a positive general assessment of FEAD's capacity to effectively support the most deprived in their country – mostly in Belgium, Italy and Spain. Positive elements that were mentioned include good cooperation with other actors, and a good coverage of the target groups. FEAD's food aid is considered a stable support for partner organisations, which directly translates into concrete support to families and individuals in need. Although FEAD is deemed as a valuable first step in supporting the most deprived, additional support is needed beyond foodstuffs, material assistance and accompanying measures. The underlying sentiment of respondents is that FEAD

makes a difference to the most deprived by supporting their immediate need for food which frees up resources to cater for other basic needs.

The positive appraisal on FEAD results is confirmed also in the focus groups, which also help better frame how effectiveness should be interpreted within the FEAD. It is, in fact, widely acknowledged that the FEAD is a small fund providing mostly basic needs support and that cannot by itself lift people out of poverty. However, a number of intermediate results have been highlighted, notably:

- it provides immediate relief to basic needs thus allowing to reduce expenses on food and basic goods, freeing resources for further activities;
- it is a gateway for personalised support and a tool to intercept extreme poverty even beyond what social services can do (e.g. the delivery of food packages can be the opportunity to get in contact with situations of extreme poverty previously passed unnoticed);
- it helps build confidence in end-beneficiaries through interactions with associations and favourable relationships to solve issues; and
- it is a broad audience/ low threshold programme, which reaches to target groups that did not receive support, including newly arrived migrants, homeless and other groups not eligible for other forms of support.

Positive outcomes are not only registered for end-beneficiaries, but include more “systemic” improvements such as:

- better networking, partnerships and knowledge sharing at the local level both among institutions, partner organisations and social services, as well as across different partner organisations;
- better monitoring of extreme poverty and information about the needs of the most deprived;
- awareness raising within the society; and
- representing a stable support for PO that would otherwise face difficulties in operating and contributing to building their capacity,.

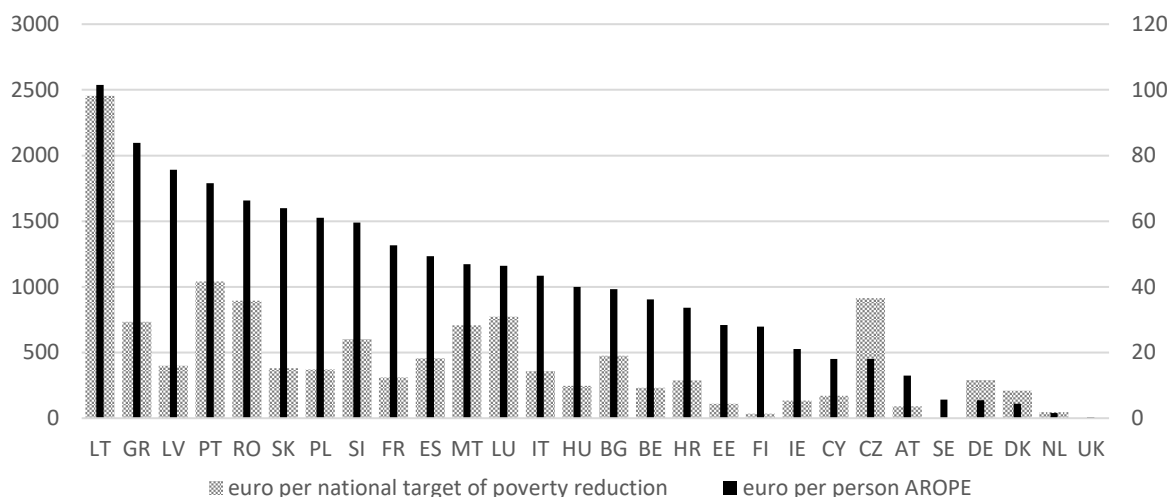
A number of factors have been however identified that hamper the achievement of better results, amongst others:

- insufficient funding for accompanying measures, which play a pivotal role with a view to further social inclusion but are resource-intensive activities;
- limited PO’s capacity to provide the extensive support and counselling, FEAD being delivered in many countries mostly thanks to the work of volunteers, which may lack the specific skills that are needed;
- limited use of FEAD to cover only the costs of collection, storage and distribution of food donations, which would increase the leverage effect, improve the respect of the horizontal principle on food waste and increase the POs’ capacity; and
- bureaucracy and a certain rigidity of the programme in some areas (e.g. the prohibition to use vouchers) and other national level factors (e.g. procurement procedures) have slowed down the implementation, eventually leading to lower results.

Against this backdrop, attention is now turned to monitoring data, to see how they match with the views of the stakeholders as well as to analyse in detail how MS compare. As per the monitoring data, as we already explained, in the absence of targets for result indicators we will refer to the analysis of the coverage rate of FEAD support (i.e., number of people benefitting from FEAD support over total number of potential beneficiaries) together with that of its intensity (i.e., quantity of food or food packages and/or meals distributed) to provide a preliminary measure of FEAD’s effectiveness.

Having already shown how MS have allocated funding across different forms of support, Figure 23 provides an overview of how funding is distributed in terms of FEAD per-capita allocation measured both against the national 2020 target for poverty reduction as set out in the National Reform Programmes of 2015<sup>32</sup> and against total population in each MS. This provides an indication of the expected role of FEAD in each country’s framework for alleviating poverty and better appraise the picture described further below by FEAD’s result indicators.

Figure 23. FEAD allocation relative to people AROPE and to the national target for poverty reduction (2016)



Source: SFC2014, EUROSTAT (2016), NRP

Significant variations are registered among MS. Countries such as Lithuania, Portugal and Romania appear to invest relatively more resources in relation to both their population at risk of poverty and social exclusion and their poverty reduction target, thus highlighting the relatively important role FEAD plays in their strategies to fight absolute poverty/material deprivation. At the opposite end of the graph, the per-capita allocation of countries such as Austria, the Netherlands, Finland, Slovakia and the United Kingdom indicates the relatively smaller role that FEAD is expected to play in these countries. Importantly, all OP II countries lie in the right-hand side of the chart, far below 10 euros allocation per person at risk of poverty and 500 euros per person to be lifted out of poverty as defined in the relevant national poverty reduction targets.

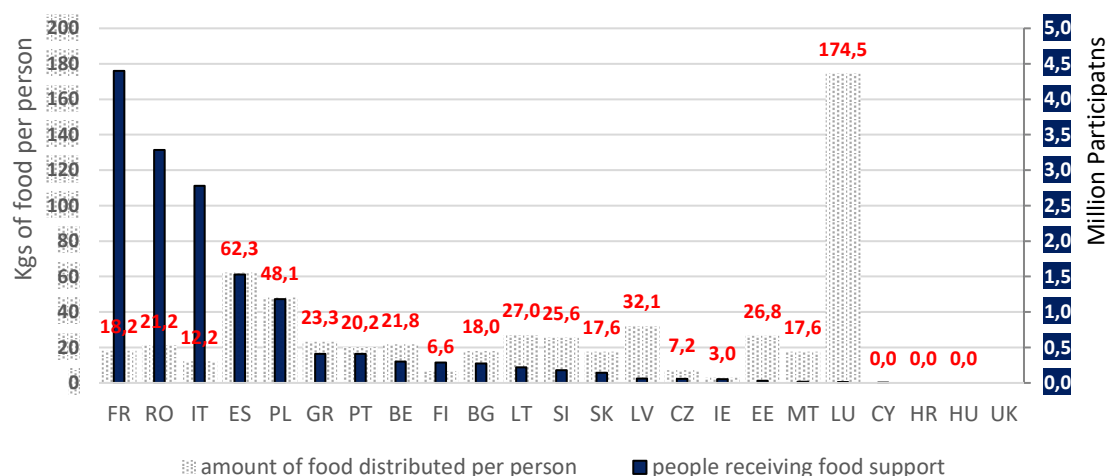
As a matter of fact, this is not to gauge how much a country is investing in poverty prevention/alleviation, but rather to interpret FEAD results across countries that may have a very different mix of relevant policies and may be reliant on FEAD interventions to differing degrees. These data should in fact be offset against spending on social inclusion and poverty alleviation out of national budgets.

**Type I OPs – food support**

We will now turn to examine FEAD’s coverage rate, by FEAD target group, and its intensity of support.

<sup>32</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/pdf/annexii\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/pdf/annexii_en.pdf)

Figure 24. People receiving food support and amount of food distributed per person, by MS (2016)

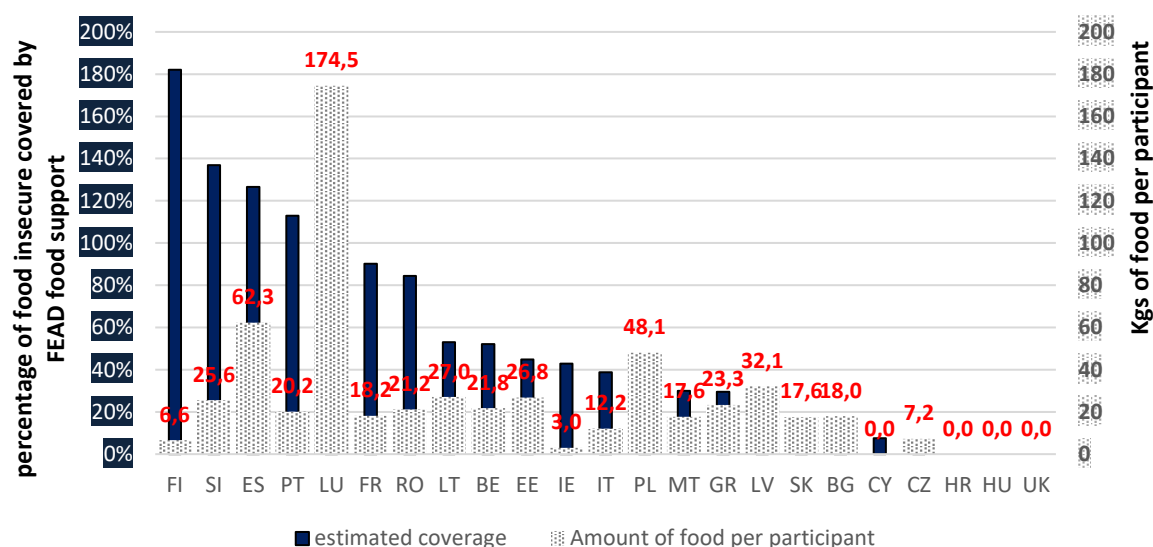


Source: SFC 2014

In 2016, food support was distributed to around 15 million people in 20 countries, mostly in France, Romania, Italy, Spain and Poland, which is in line with the analysis of the output indicators. However, there is a great variation in terms of intensity of food support. The issue of double counting among participants is already known and Figure 24 likely captures this issue by showing a very high variation of quantity of food distributed per participant (from 174 Kgs/pp in Luxembourg to 3 Kgs/pp in Ireland). Other than highlighting the need for double-checking the data, this chart provides interesting insights. In Spain, for example, the number of participants reached is much lower than in France. However, Spain provides each participant with a much higher quantity of food per year. This is consistent with the Spanish MA’s estimates of providing around 2 meals per day for around 150 days per year to its participants, and may be favoured by the very widespread network of small organisations (over 6,000) that distribute food aid through FEAD.

Finally, and most importantly, the following chart provides an estimation of the coverage rate, counted as people addressed by the interventions/people in need of food support (food deprivation). This is accompanied by the intensity of support, expressed as amount of food support per participant, to better appraise the extent to which such need is actually being addressed on a daily basis.

Figure 25. FEAD’s food support coverage and intensity, by MS (2016)



Source: Eurostat EU-SILC and SFC 2014

In interpreting coverage rates, clearly the intensity of support plays an important role. A country like Finland, with the highest registered coverage of people that are food insecure, provide them with less than 7 kg of food aid per year. If we assume that a full meal weights no less than 200 grams, this makes for 35 meals per year, that is, less than 20 days of food provision that are covered by FEAD. A similar reasoning applies to Ireland and Italy, to a smaller extent. This, again, may raise the question on whether the requirement set out in the EC FEAD monitoring guidance ‘each person receiving support under FEAD should be counted only once’ has actually been applied. In some instances, however, it may be the case that food support was not provided on a continuous basis. In Finland, for example, there is a large prevalence of food distributed through food packages. These are assumingly collected by families in need on a more intermittent basis.

In any event, data is quite promising, especially for countries such as Spain, with over 120% of those in need of food support addressed and an average intensity of 62 kgs per year, Slovenia, Luxembourg, France, Portugal and Romania. The coverage rate of these countries is above 80%, with intensity of support at around 20kgs per participant per year (with the exception of Luxembourg). Poland also shows good results, with a lower coverage but a strong intensity of support (48kgs per participant per year). Countries on the right-hand side of the graph (Croatia, Hungary, the United Kingdom, Bulgaria, Slovakia) see their performance affected by the aforementioned delays in the implementation of the programmes.

It is interesting to notice how, according to the OPC results, FEAD is seen as a means to make a difference for the most deprived also in countries such as Ireland (despite the low intensity of food support), Latvia (despite rather low coverage), Bulgaria (with low coverage and medium intensity) and especially Croatia, where the implementation had not yet produced any outputs nor results as of 2016. According to the OPC, 86% of respondents agree or strongly agree that FEAD support alleviates food deprivation.

We now turn to results broken down by target group.

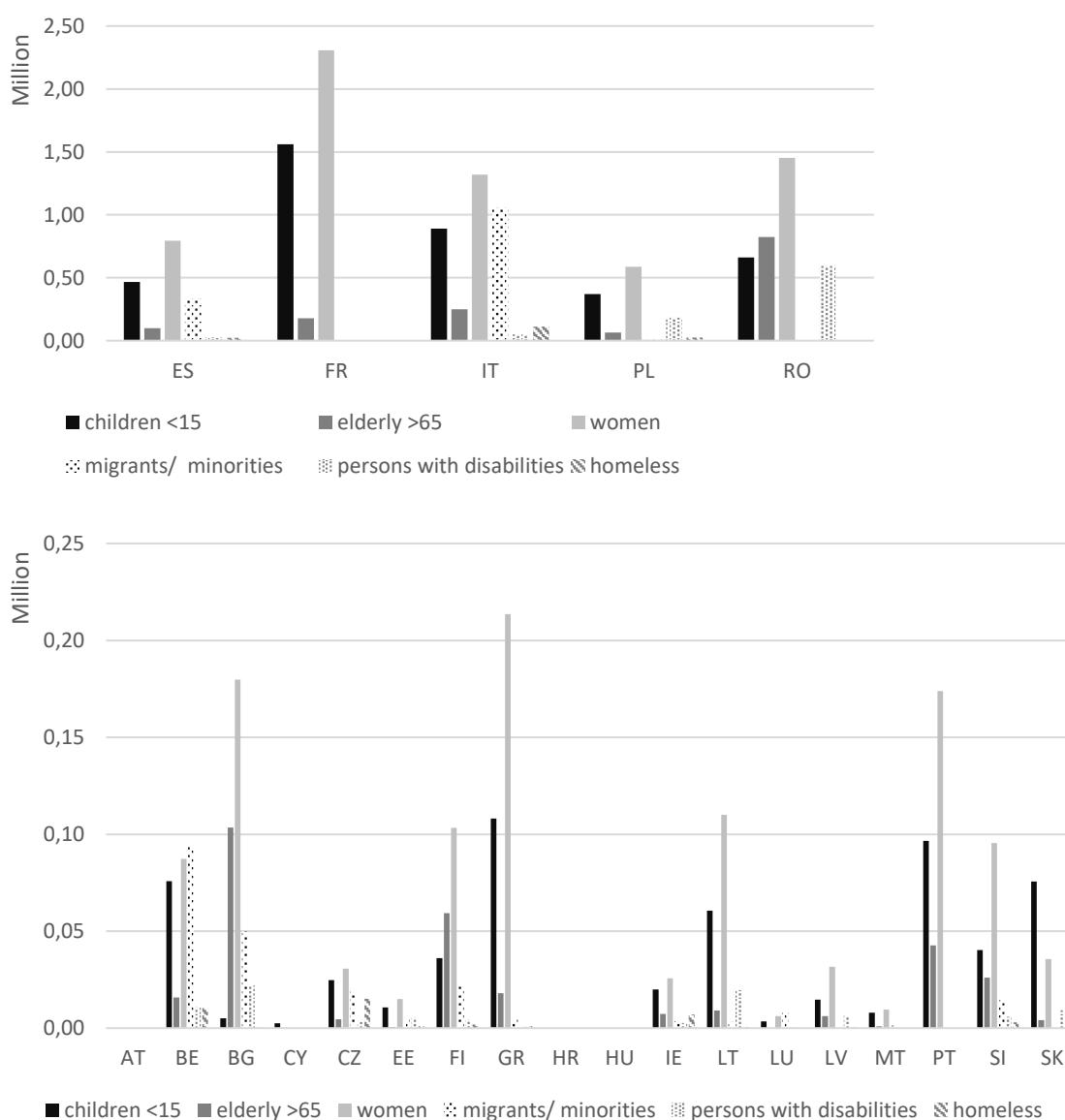
According to the OPC, agreement or strong agreement to the question “has the FEAD made a difference to the following target groups” is highest regarding FEAD’s support to children affected by or at risk of poverty (78.64%), to workless households or households with low working intensity (76.74%), as well as regarding support to single parents (74.21%). Respondents disagree or strongly disagree comparably more with FEAD’s support to persons suffering from addictions (15.30%), to ex-offenders

(13.27%), to marginalised communities such as Roma (13.27%), to migrants (12.52%), as well as to persons with disabilities (11.89%).

As per monitoring data, women make about half of the total number of people receiving food support (47% at over 7 million), followed by children (nearly 30%), people aged 65 years or over, migrants and other minorities, homeless and, finally, disabled. This is consistent with the opinions expressed in the OPC.

Figure 26 shows the distribution of FEAD end-beneficiaries per target groups. Care should be taken when comparing between countries as the figure shows absolute numbers. For example, there is a very large number of women in France but this does not mean that women are not also an important group in Greece for instance. In addition, comparison is based on estimates provided by MS, which are not always complete, e.g. reporting on migrants, etc. The graph is divided into two groups of countries for readability purposes and given the difference in magnitude of FEAD across countries.

Figure 26. Persons receiving food support by target group and MS (2016)



Source: SFC2014



Given the significant variations among MS, we will now look at coverage rates of each target group. The overview table below breaks down coverage rates by target group, while keeping in the background the intensity of food support provided.

A considerable share of homeless and migrants, for instance are addressed in Italy and the same applies to migrants in Spain and Belgium to some extent, as well as to persons with disabilities in Poland and Romania.

As anticipated at the beginning of the analysis, the target population considered is the number of those that are food insecure, using the Eurostat Data on individuals who cannot afford a full meal every second day, where available, or a proxy of this rate based on the rate of material deprivation by target group. Data for the homeless are drawn from OECD.

Figure 27. Coverage of food support by target group (2016)

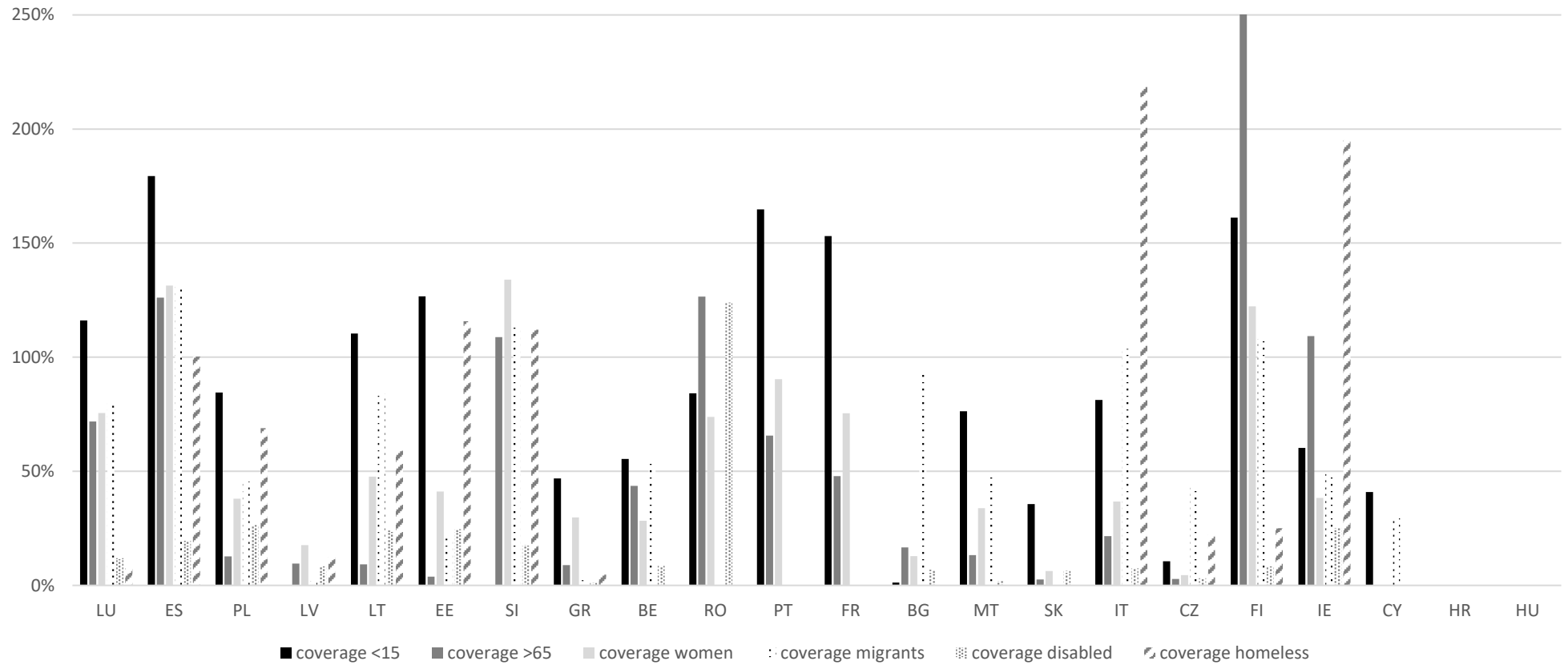


Figure 27 above shows important variations in estimated coverage rates for food support, within and across countries, although it should be noted that according to FEAD regulation MS choose the food and basic material assistance on the basis of objective criteria, taking into account the real need of the most deprived and the current situation in each MS, as well as the target groups eligible for receiving aid under FEAD.

MS are sorted by intensity of support provided, so high values of coverage on the left-hand side of the graph should be viewed as much more significant than those at the far right. Those at the far right may be due to:

- double counting of participants;
- low intensity of support due to the features of the programme;

Bearing these limitations in mind, it is nevertheless clear that coverage rates for most countries are rather high. That said, two key issues appear:

- some countries are lagging behind; among these some have somewhat lower performances both in terms of coverage rates and intensity of support;
- there is high variation in the coverage rates by target groups. Some target groups in some countries remain largely uncovered by FEAD support;

As per the first point, countries with lower coverage rates are Latvia, Greece, Belgium, Bulgaria, Slovakia, Czech Republic, Cyprus and especially Croatia and Hungary (no progress for the latter two). While for Latvia, Greece and Belgium to some extent, lower coverage rates are accompanied with high to medium intensity of support, the situation of Bulgaria, Slovakia, Czech Republic and Cyprus appears as more worrisome. For Bulgaria, Czech Republic and Cyprus this may be explained, amongst other, by the low share of FEAD funding relative to their AROPE levels. This is not quite the case for Slovakia, which may be expected to have a better performance in the light of his allocation/ARPE ratio.

As per the analysis by target groups, countries such as Italy, Spain, Ireland, Slovenia, Poland and Lithuania seem also to be addressing in a satisfactorily way the homeless. Less so for the countries with low coverage rates mentioned above but also, e.g., for Luxemburg, Romania, France, Portugal and Malta.

The picture appears even more mixed when it comes to people with disabilities.

Interestingly, while values for children are on average rather high, their value is particularly low in Slovenia, Bulgaria and the Czech Republic. In Bulgaria, measures are indeed targeted mainly at the elderly living alone, as they are considered those in stronger need of support. The case of the Czech Republic, conversely, seems due to some structural deficiencies in the FEAD provision, such as low interest of regions and generally high administrative burden for all actors involved, linkage of the FEAD aid with the social subsidy which may cause omission of a certain category of population, complicated delivery mechanism and competition of similar support modes financed by state and private funds, which include also a more attentive definition of eligibility criteria.

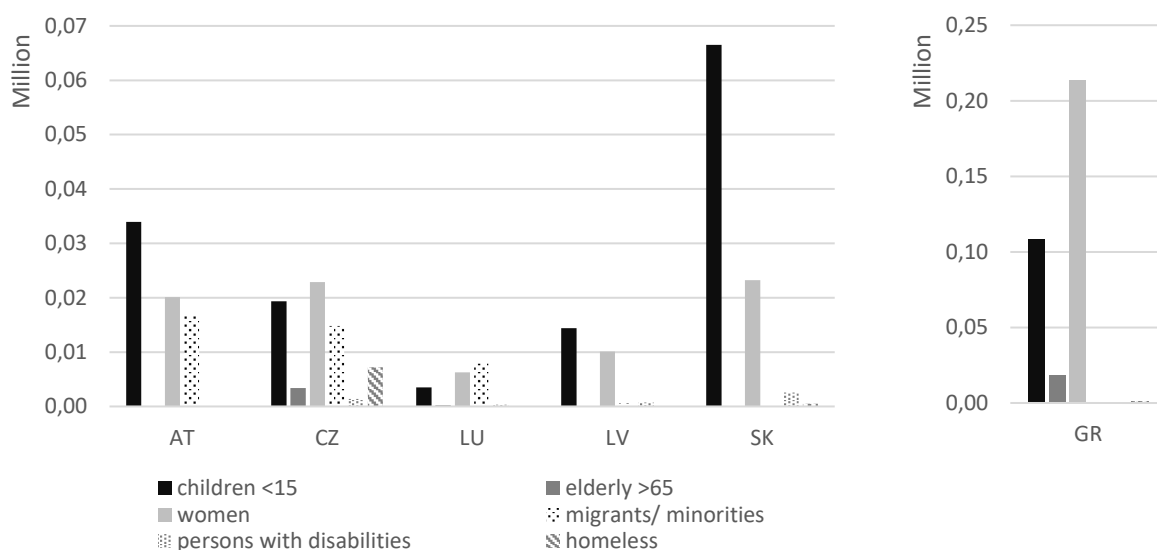
A similar reasoning applies for migrants and minorities in France, Latvia, Romania, Portugal and Greece.

It should be reiterated that such differences in performance may be due to deliberate choices made by MS in identifying those that are most in need based on the real needs of the most deprived. Yet, the benchmarking with Eurostat and OECD data provides important insights also for MS as they define their objectives and target groups.

**Type I OPs – Basic material assistance**

Basic material assistance has been provided in 6 MS, as per the analysis of output indicators.

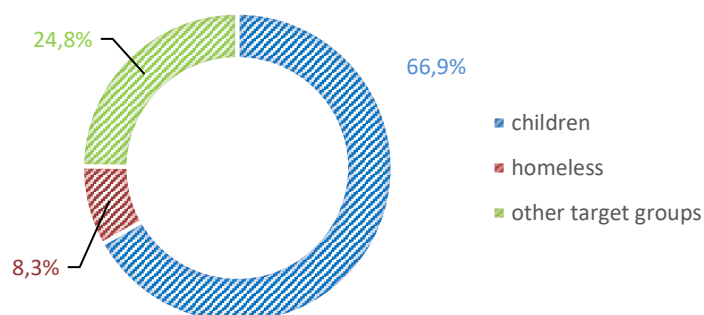
Figure 28. Coverage of basic material assistance by target group



Greece is the MS with the higher number of end recipients, despite the limited progress of its programme. This is because the scale of the programme is much larger than other MS and because basic material assistance is distributed in the form of hygiene products which are less expensive than other forms of support. Greece is followed by Slovakia (hygiene products), and Austria (school bags).

In terms of target groups for the distribution for basic material assistance, women and children are currently the main recipients of goods distributed, at over 300,000 each. Migrants follow at over 40,000, with halved figures for the elderly and halved again for the homeless. Persons with disabilities is the category of most deprived that shows the lowest figures, at nearly over 7,000. In terms of the value of goods distributed, it is interesting to notice that children account for the largest share of goods distributed, followed by the homeless and then other target groups.

Figure 29. Value of goods distributed by target group



Source: SFC2014

This is explained also by the performance of Austria which shows the highest level of progress and provides schoolbags and stationery, exercise books and other equipment required in schools, which is relatively more expensive than other basic material assistance goods. Luxembourg is the only OP I MS in which migrants, participants with foreign background, and minorities (including marginalised communities such as Roma) are the largest target group (68%) and they are provided with emergency goods. This target group is however also addressed in Austria (37% of the end recipients) and the Czech Republic (34%), through school bags and hygiene products

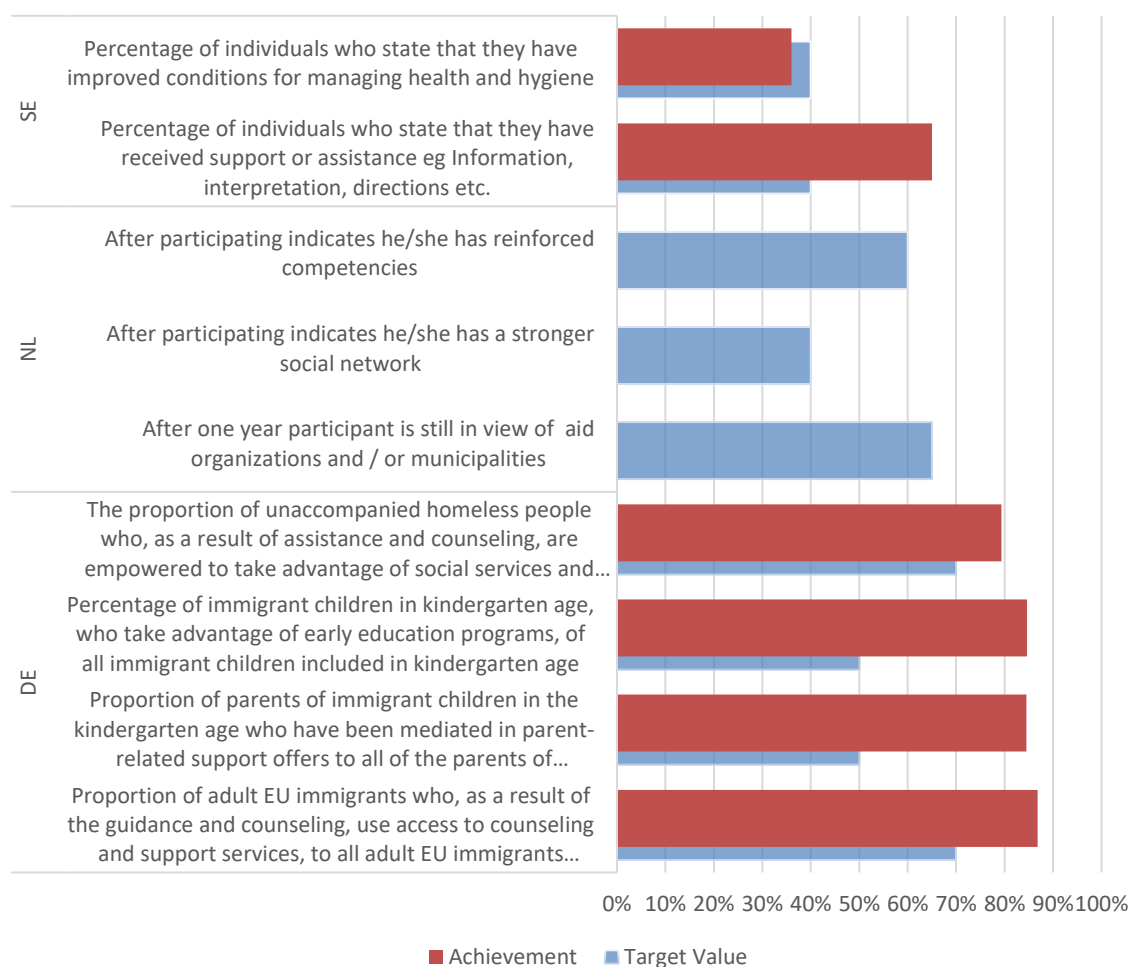
respectively. Homeless, on the other hand, are mainly targeted by the Slovak and Czech FEAD programmes, and receive hygiene products. Hygiene products, which are by far the category of basic goods more commonly selected by MS, are provided also to the elderly in the Czech Republic and Greece.

Interestingly, no MS currently provides other categories of goods foreseen by the FEAD monitoring system such as sleeping bags, clothes, sport equipment, household linen or layettes.

**OP II**

The issue of needs coverage for OP II allows for a much more straightforward assessment of the progress towards the targets set.

Figure 30. Progress of programme-specific result indicators in Type II OPs, by MS



Source: SFC2014

As shown in Figure 30 in Sweden and Germany the progress is currently beyond expectations. For the Netherlands, conversely, there is no progress registered, given the early stage of the programme and the fact that results will be gathered through exit-interviews after a one-year participation to the programme’s activities. Interviews with agents in charge of the implementation have confirmed a positive early feedback from participants. As for Denmark, the indicator measures the number of people directed towards other social assistance services after having been supported through FEAD. The current rate of achievement is close to the 30% of the 2023 target, thus suggesting that the target is on track to be achieved.

### 3.2.1.2 Are adjustments possible/made when needs change or new needs emerge?

Adaptability and responsiveness of FEAD to newly emerged needs in terms of changes to the OP or to the design of the operations is one additional dimension of effectiveness. The assessment of this dimension takes into account specific changes that have been undertaken. Judgement criteria include whether the design of the intervention allows for in-itinere changes and revisions of the interventions and whether adjustments have been made in order to adapt to new needs. These were analysed on the basis of information collected through desk and field research at MS level. Table 6 below categorizes the information collected at MS level (mainly interviews with MAs and POs and analysis of documentation) concerning changes in OPs and in the design of interventions as reported by MAs during fieldwork. Some MS reported more than one change, which resulted in multiple entries for the different changes. The categorization was based on the distinction between changes in the OP and changes in the design of interventions.

Table 6. Are adjustments possible/made when needs change or new needs emerge? By MS (as of November 2017).

MS	Change in OP or in the design of an intervention?	Classification
AT	Design changed	Temporary measures financed from the national sources to tackle delayed delivery of school packages
BE	Design changed	Update food products every year
BE	Design changed	Targeting of end recipients: more inclusive definitions, better statistics and better scope
BE	OP change	Centralization of delivery points, more inclusive definition of eligibility
BG	OP change	Targeting of end recipients: better scope
CY	OP change	Targeting of end recipients: families with new-borns
CZ	OP Change	Slight simplification to reduce administrative burden
DE	OP change	Targeting of end recipients: new ones can be added
DK	OP change	Change of actors: MA from Ministry of Social Affairs to Nat. Board of Social Sciences
EE	Design changed	Targeting of end recipients: annually updated
EL	Design changed	Update accompanying measures to emerging needs
ES	Design changed	Update accompanying measures to be more personal
FI	No change	Changes are possible but were not yet needed
FR	Design changed	Administrative, transport & storage costs revised
HR	No change	
HU	OP change	Definition of roles of the partner organisations and eligibility criteria
IE	Design changed	Update food products
IT	No change	Rigid regulation hinders adjustments e.g. of targeting
LT	OP change	Targeting of end recipients, increased frequency of aid
LU	Design changed	Update food products
LV	Design changed	Update food products
	Design changed	School packages, delayed delivery: pickup extended
	Design changed	Eligibility: food packages & hot meals for end recipients
MT	Minor changes	Method: PO adapts food packages after home visits
NL	No change	
PL	Design changed	Targeting of end recipients: elderly newly included
PT	Design changed	Update food products: much more comprehensive
	No change	Changes are possible but were not yet needed
RO	OP change	Update food products: switch to food packages
	OP change	Update food products: hot meals added
	OP change	Targeting of end recipients: add target groups

MS	Change in OP or in the design of an intervention?	Classification
	OP change	Change of actors: switch to local targeting
SE	Design changed	Method: revision M&E plan, participant registration etc.
SI	No change	Changes are possible but were not yet needed
SK	Design changed	Method: intermediary bodies and POs suggest changes to MA e.g. on targeting
UK	No change	

Source: Draft Country fiches

As shown above, changes related to new and emerging needs are possible. The most frequently reported change relates to adaptations in the targeting of end recipients. The composition of food packages was frequently changed, as well. Overall, nine MS amended their OP while almost half of MS changed some elements in the design of interventions without amending the OPs. A couple of MS developed processes that allowed to change and adapt programmes where necessary but are still working on the implementation of these changes. Some other did not yet encounter new and emerging needs.

Austria faced the challenge of late delivery of ordered school support packages so temporary alternative vouchers were offered from national sources. This response to an emerging situation underlines the importance to react to changing circumstances. In the specific case, however, vouchers were often not used as people realised that their value was lower than what they would have received with the standard school bags. This however helped smooth out the effects of the delay. Latvia found another solution to the same challenge with school bags and prolonged the period where packages could be received in order to accommodate the delay. Belgium, Ireland, Luxembourg, Latvia, Portugal and Romania reported that for OP I changing needs could be accommodated with changes in the type of food products and in how they were offered (e.g. in Romania in 2014 vouchers were sent to eligible people, which enabled them to collect the food package. This way proved not to be effective and the delivery mechanism was adapted.). Respondents from Denmark, Greece and Romania describe how the management of FEAD and responsibility for the implementation changed for example from Ministries to other actors (in Denmark to the National Board of Social Science and in Romania to the local level). Another activity that emerged concerns changes to accompanying measures such as in Spain (shifting from the distribution of informative material towards more customised accompanying measures) or Greece.

Other changes relate to improvements in the implementation of the fund. In Latvia eligibility criteria were changed so as to enable the same end-recipient to receive hot meals and food packages. In Belgium, delivery points have been centralised along with a better definition of eligibility criteria. Also in HU an OP change was made in order to better define the role of the partners as well as eligibility criteria. Some MS introduced new implementation processes: stakeholder workshops to assess effectiveness of the interventions (Germany), home visits to fine tune food packages (Malta), revisions of the monitoring and evaluation plan (Sweden). Regarding changes in target groups, eight MS implemented changes to respond to emerging needs and to fine tune FEAD (Belgium, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Germany, Estonia, Lithuania, Poland and Romania). Similarly, Finland, Portugal and Slovenia stress that changes are possible but have not yet been introduced.

Overall, OP changes took place in Belgium, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Germany, Denmark, Hungary, Lithuania and Romania, also in order to face some of the issues described above, especially the updating of eligibility criteria and targeting, as well as of food products.



In summary, the evidence available so far shows that adjustments are possible and MS have undertaken actions to adapt to changing needs by introducing changes to the delivery, the targeting and the selection criteria.

### 3.2.1.3 Are horizontal principles such as reducing food waste complied with (Article 5 of FEAD regulation)?

The FEAD regulation identifies horizontal principles in Article 5(13)<sup>33</sup>. We address the level of consistency of actions promoted within FEAD OPs with the EU's principles in the field of reducing food waste, promoting public health, equality between men and women, and anti-discrimination.<sup>34</sup> The judgment criteria refer to what extent the requirements set out in Article 5 are complied with and have been answered based on desk and field analysis.

- The analysis of how **reduction of food waste** was promoted has been carried out drawing a distinction between FEAD's coverage of cost for transport, storage and delivery of food donated as set out by FEAD regulation and other principles employed in the implementation of the fund (e.g., the purchase of food products with a long shelf life, a careful planning of number and needs of beneficiaries etc.). The measures that were mostly implemented by MS are as follows:
  - purchasing food products with a long shelf-life, such as flour and rice or tinned food products
  - Transporting, storing and delivering the food appropriately. Through these actions, food waste can be prevented from the onset.
  - Another approach to prevent food waste already at the planning phase and regards the careful anticipation of end recipients and their needs to tailor the orders accordingly.
  - Some MS introduced additional measures such as Malta that developed a national education waste management plan and Greece that adopted a "Good Practice Guide on Food Handling" to prevent food waste.
  - Finally, activities related to the use of food donations by funding its costs of transport, storage and delivery, even though this was financed, as of 2016, only by Luxembourg. Slovakia has plans to implement this in the near future (discussed more extensively in section 3.2.2.1).

In the OPC, the food waste reduction principle is only viewed as being properly implemented by 70.79% of respondents and by 66.15% in case of the contribution to a balanced diet. A large share of respondents of OP I MS, Belgium, Greece, Latvia and Spain expressed their disagreement or strong disagreement with regard to the proper implementation of food waste reduction. Furthermore, respondents stated that very large quantities create unnecessary waste and that direct links between supermarkets and food banks could contribute to food waste reduction.

- Little evidence was gathered on how the **gender equality** principle was implemented, although this is a principle to which MAs generally referred to throughout interviews. Several of them highlighted the importance of gender mainstreaming and the integration of equal opportunities in their OPs. About 86% of the respondents of the OPC believe that this principle was respected.

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<sup>33</sup> Regulation (EU) No 223/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived, L72/1, 11 March 2014, <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32014R0223&from=EN>.

<sup>34</sup> Regulation (EU) No 223/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived, L72/1, 11 March 2014, <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32014R0223&from=EN>.

- According to the OPC, 87% of the respondents agree that the principle of **non-discrimination** is complied with. It is supported in FEAD implementation through, e.g., setting non-discriminatory of eligibility criteria (Bulgaria).
- The **partnership** principle refers to the creation of synergies between stakeholders and organisations involved in the implementation of the Fund; this has taken place for example through regular meetings and exchanges that took place in the majority of MS (see e.g. Italy) and across several MS good cooperation and collaboration between actors managing and implementing FEAD is reported. At the same time, partner organizations in several MS expressed their wish for more balanced partnerships and decision-making between governmental (e.g. MAs) and non-governmental actors. 82.99% of respondents of the OPC agree or strongly agree that the partnership principle is being properly implemented.
- The principle of **respect for the dignity** of end-recipients refers primarily to efforts in preventing their stigmatisation: this seems to be an overarching guiding principle of FEAD delivery, especially at the level of the PO working in direct contact with them. Practical examples refer to the planning of adequate delivery modes; or the provision of high quality goods (as in case of Austrian school starter packages that included long lasting brand items as well, for example, to food tastings in France to ensure the quality of food packages).

#### **3.2.1.4 Are there unintended results? Is there any evidence of impacts yet?**

According to FEAD's character as enabling fund, as described above, expected impacts are understood as improvements in the living conditions of the end recipients but also in terms of higher participation in social inclusion support programmes, ESF measures, and other formal and non-formal training activities. Possible indicators for impacts would be for example beneficiaries registering in social services programmes upon participation in FEAD interventions, beneficiaries entering ESF measures upon participation in FEAD interventions, or in terms of beneficiaries taking part in formal/non formal training, acquiring basic skills, searching for/getting a job upon participation in FEAD interventions.

The early stage of FEAD's implementation mostly allows for preliminary answers to the question of impacts and unintended results and only little and scattered evidence was collected during fieldwork, namely:

- In most cases it was acknowledged that food and material aid plays a role not only as an emergency support operation but also to the extent to which it frees financial resources of the end recipients that can be spent on other goods/services
- FEAD supports the capacity and professionalization of PO as well as of the organisations involved in the distribution of assistance: this was particularly the case for Member States like France where FEAD was found to contribute to the professionalization and capacity building of POs; likewise in Italy FEAD plays an important role in keeping the Italian network of food assistance operative, especially in Southern Italy where it relies most on FEAD support to continue its activities and, together with food support, provides important social inclusion and support services to the most deprived. The positive experience of the FEAD Network, although not unintended, is clearly a positive impact engendered by the FEAD especially for mutual learning.
- In the Czech Republic, 85% of schools providing support through FEAD report significantly better attendance, performance and concentration in teaching, as well as improvement of learning results of children

The opinions collected through the OPC point at a general positive feedback from respondents on the capacity of FEAD to make a difference to the most deprived, particularly in Belgium, Italy and Spain. This is especially the case since it provides a stable support for Partner Organisations, which translates into solid support to families

and those in need of aid. Disagreement was mentioned only in a few cases, with respect to pricy food products, the need of more tailor-made solutions and the limited financial resources that are not sufficient to make a difference.

Concerning unintended effects:

- in Sweden the FEAD OP, which focused on women as a target group, contributed to raising awareness on gender equality and issues affecting the most deprived women, and created knowledge on the target group of most deprived migrants through researcher's meetings
- in Slovenia two end-beneficiaries who received support through food aid and accompanying measures were inspired to set up a library and a cooking workshop for fellow FEAD recipients, thereby showcasing that accompanying measures strengthen the empowerment of individuals from vulnerable groups and can also activate and trigger further supporting activities.
- in Germany interviewed stakeholders noted how migrants might develop a certain dependence on their counsellor, while greater independence would be desirable, especially since the number of counselling sessions is limited.

In conclusion, although it is too early to observe impacts, there is evidence that the FEAD provides emergency support but also frees financial resources that can be spent on other goods/services. FEAD supports the capacity and professionalisation of PO as well as of the organisations involved in the distribution of assistance. There is also some evidence of FEAD support helping to empower individuals.

### **3.2.2 How are the various types of assistance delivered?**

#### **3.2.2.1 What are the types of assistance delivered, including those related to food donations and awareness raising activities?**

As it has already been shown the vast majority of OP I MS provide some kind of food support: only Austria provides material assistance only (although in Cyprus the distribution has not yet started, and OP has just been amended to include food support). Food support accounts for 85% of the overall FEAD allocation for type I OPs, with the remaining 15% being accounted for by 14 MS which provide basic material assistance (Chapter 4 provides more detailed insights into MS allocations)

Food support comes in the form of both food packages and/ or (hot) meals, including school lunches. In most countries both forms of food support are provided (with the exception of Estonia and Romania where only food packages are delivered). The composition and distribution of packages varies widely across countries and in some instances it is tailored to the needs of the recipients who can select the type of food they require most, such as for example in the case of Ireland where charitable organisations in charge of their delivery have the possibility to pre-select the type of food to receive (in this way also saving on storage costs and at the same time strengthening the relationship with the beneficiaries). Food packages are distributed in predefined locations, mostly within the premises of the organisations organising their delivery; in the case of elderly people or disabled a drop-off system can be organised. In Slovenia collection of food at social stores is organised in a way to respect the dignity of the beneficiaries by limiting the number of people that can come and pick up food in the same day.

FEAD OPs shall also promote food donations by funding the collection, storage and distribution of food donations and surplus. According to monitoring data only Luxembourg used OP resources to this end, with 44% and 51% (in 2016 2015 respectively) of food distributed for which FEAD only covered the collection, storage and distribution. This also explains the very high values of food distributed per euro of allocation that Luxembourg shows. Slovakia has plans to implement such activity, but it has not yet started. Overall, it would seem that more efforts are needed to spur this specific usage of FEAD.

This issue was discussed during the focus groups, as well as in the context of the 7<sup>th</sup> FEAD Network meeting. A certain need for better arrangements in order to train volunteers also for the transport and storage of the food, as well as to build a better infrastructure that serves this purpose (transport vehicles, warehouses and fridges) was highlighted. In some countries (e.g. Italy) where other initiatives exist that cater for funds aimed at collecting and distributing food donations, an important step would be to find better synergies among tools. A certain reluctance has been encountered when discussing the possibility to further exploit funds for the collection, storage and distribution of food donations as these are seen to potentially draw resources from the purchase of foodstuffs, eventually putting at risk the work of partner organisations. A better communication in this sense may help emphasise the benefits of this form of FEAD support, which, rather than reducing the quantity of food distributed, can substantially increase the leverage of FEAD funding, as it is the case with Luxemburg.

Nevertheless, despite being part of different schemes, the issue of food donation as a means to reduce food waste, is at the centre of the attention also in other MS. In France food donations are incentivised by tax exemptions, while in Ireland for example surplus food is collected through FoodCloud Hubs (food.cloud), the primary partner organisation working with food businesses nationwide who have volumes of surplus food, for example from farms, manufacturers and distributors to manage ad-hoc and regular supplies of surplus that is then made available to other partner organisations (beneficiaries/charities) at three Hubs (in Dublin, Cork and Galway) for distribution to the end recipients. In Estonia, the national food bank is the Partner Organisation that has been selected for the distribution of food aid and in Italy the national food bank association is one of the leading Partner Organisations. All of these are concerned with collecting and distributing food that is donated.

Criteria for eligibility of the most deprived persons vary from country to country and include for example individuals who are recipients of social welfare support, or registered with social services. The homeless are also frequently targeted by FEAD food support – that in some instances is delivered directly to shelters. Children or families with children are other important target groups. In the Czech Republic, Italy and the United Kingdom food aid is delivered through school lunches or at schools (in the case of Italy and the United Kingdom this type of support has not yet been implemented).

Material support is also an important type of assistance provided through FEAD by at least 14 type I OPs, plus Belgium where this is funded entirely by the national co-financing. The most commonly provided material relates to school items (Austria, Croatia, Latvia, Romania), baby and infant products (Belgium, Cyprus, Greece) and personal care/hygiene (Slovakia, Lithuania, Belgium). For more information on how and to whom this assistance has been delivered, please refer to section 5.1.1.1.

Raising awareness activities are carried out extensively in type II OPs and as a form of accompanying measures in type I OPs. A full description of these is provided below.

### **3.2.2.2 What are the types of accompanying measures (OP I) and social inclusion activities (OP II) delivered?**

#### **3.2.2.3 OP I – accompanying measures**

The judgement criteria include an assessment of whether accompanying measures are fit for purpose and whether advice and guidance offered are useful to end recipients.

MS providing food and material support also provide some sort of accompanying measures, as clarified in Chapter 4. For most of them, the allocation is formally envisaged in their OPs.

This comes in the form of information and communication material providing contact details for example of social services and other types of public and private assistance for those most in need or advice for a healthy diet. In some instances, meetings and consultations are offered as well as basic counselling activities; cooking classes and

trainings have also been implemented. This took place mainly at the point of delivery of food packages or warm meals, as well as upon order or pickup of material assistance.

The provision of information was in most cases verbal and took place through volunteers offering the assistance. Some MS reported to provide information, for example on social services but also on other relevant content like cooking recipes. In brochures and leaflets, recipients could take the information home and refer to it when needed. While the implementation of the distribution of leaflets is comparably easy and can be done with limited budget, its impact remains as difficult to assess as in the prior case.

Several MS also reported to offer awareness raising initiatives such as workshops or seminars as accompanying measures. These vary widely and cover topics like nutrition and cooking, health and sport, household budget management, child rearing, counselling, cultural activities, services against the abuse of alcohol and its consequences, and many more. Some MS such as Estonia also report to integrate ESF activities into the accompanying measures.

In terms of effectively offering accompanying measures, Finland reported that the ability to deliver accompanying measures is one selection criterion for partner organisations. Since FEAD funding for these activities is limited, the selection already ensures that measures can be financed through POs instead.

Some interviewees have raised another point about the general purpose and effectiveness of accompanying measures. In those MS that adopt eligibility rules following some forms of means-testing applied for example to access social security schemes, most recipients are already "in the system". They might not be aware of all assistance available to them but the redirection to relevant social services appears to be even more relevant for target groups such as homeless people who are usually not yet integrated in the regular social security system.

Field research has highlighted that organisations distributing food support provide some sort of support/accompanying measure as part of their own activities/funds in addition to FEAD's provision which is otherwise extremely limited (up to 5% of cost of support distributed). This is the case, for instance, of Belgium that have placed an obligation upon POs to direct beneficiaries towards further social integration services. Likewise, in Estonia, despite no dedicated budget, beneficiaries are provided with information on, e.g., healthy recipes that could be prepared with the food packages provided as well as brochures further social integration services.

The first FEAD Network Meeting in September 2016 found that challenges to providing accompanying measures are "a lack of trained volunteers" because they usually distribute food or material assistance rather than offering for example cooking classes or skills development.<sup>35</sup> Other points refers to "the size and heterogeneity of the target group" which means it is difficult to offer measures that are suitable for the entire target group of a specific FEAD project.<sup>36</sup> Another challenge is that these measures are only loosely defined and that it is important not to stigmatise end recipients.<sup>37</sup> Solutions to improve the provision of accompanying measures include mapping available social services and creating a network between their providers, training FEAD volunteers and improving the links to ESF initiatives.<sup>38</sup>

In conclusion, other than for MS where the implementation has not yet started (e.g. Croatia, Hungary), or Cyprus, where implementation is in the process of starting, and

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<sup>35</sup> EC, Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived: FEAD's contribution to sustainable social inclusion, Thematic Dossier 1, September 2017.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid.

Portugal, with applications for new actions are currently under review, all MS concerned with type I OP implementation have provided accompanying measures - irrespective of whether or not this was set out in their budget. Yet the situation of Ireland should be further investigated, as the implementation started properly in 2016 but no accompanying measures appear to have been carried out so far.

#### **3.2.2.4 OP II – social inclusion**

As per OP II, the main activities funded by the programmes are aimed at the funding staff costs such as counsellors in existing or new counselling centres to support the integration of disadvantaged EU migrants and homeless people. This is seen as a way to bring end recipients closer to national assistance services. Specific activities carried out include streetwork, and various forms of outreach, to sensitise, e.g., parents on the importance of education and schooling and provide counselling to migrants. In addition, Germany offers networking one-day anti-discrimination and awareness raising workshops for administrations to fight prejudice and support staff in providing needed support, especially to newly arrived EU migrants. These workshops were considered to be very useful. Additionally, the use of local co-trainers added regional relevance and sustainability to the workshops.

In Sweden, the focus is mainly on preventive measures, such as reproductive and dental health, along with basic social information regarding the Swedish society. The intervention logic is based on an assumption that increased knowledge and improved health at the individual level will lead to increased conditions for social participation and empowerment among the participants.

In Denmark, awareness raising activities are included in the project as street-based social workers, social workers in the basement apartment of the project Locker room and the shelter and social service Kompasset promotes a clarification of the life situation of vulnerable homeless and therefore promotes next steps to improve on life conditions.

### 3.3 Coherence

#### Key Findings

- Overall FEAD is coherent and complementary with poverty alleviation efforts in Member States: the Fund plays an important role in alleviating food and material deprivation especially by complementing policy “gaps”. It reaches out to target groups that would not otherwise be covered by national or local measures and provides assistance that would not otherwise be provided.
- FEAD support is complementary to support provided through other European Union instruments, in particular the ESF and AMIF. This complementarity is both at the level of the actions funded as well as of the target groups reached. FEAD provides basic needs and social inclusion support to the most deprived, while the ESF focuses on groups who are closer to the labour market and provides more targeted support towards active socio-economic inclusion. AMIF supports a narrowly defined target group of refugees, asylum seekers and third country migrants and is tailored to their needs.
- In several MS, ESF and FEAD implementation falls under the same MA or within the same Ministry/Department. This facilitates coordination, avoidance of double funding and ensures the exchange of experiences and cross-fertilisation. Strengthening the coherence between European Funds contributes directly to achieving the overall targets of combating poverty and social inclusion.

The evaluation question refers to the extent to which FEAD interventions are coherent with other EU, national and regional interventions that have similar objectives. The judgement criteria follow Article 5(2) of the FEAD Regulation, which state that the EC and MS shall ensure that the **Fund is consistent with the relevant policies and priorities of the Union and is complementary to other instruments of the Union**.<sup>39</sup> These are, at EU level, in particular the ESF and the AMIF and, at MS and regional level, a variety of national and regional poverty alleviation and social inclusion interventions. Complementarity is intended, in this study, as the capability of two or more interventions to produce joint outcomes that exceed their individual sum. This also entails the adoption of a holistic approach that is centred on end-recipients’ needs, including by leveraging on initiatives funded through multiple support schemes. Thus, synergies at the design, organisational and operational level are needed, and will be assessed accordingly.

#### 3.3.1 What role does FEAD play in the national system of poverty alleviation?

This question aims to assess whether FEAD works in synergy with MS policies (at national or local level) aimed at alleviating poverty and if OP initiatives are appropriately linked to national policies (as set out in Article 7(5) of the FEAD regulation).

In the first place it should be mentioned that a large majority of MS participated in the previous EU food aid programme. Altogether, 19 Member States took part in the previous food aid programme. These were largely those that adopted an OP I, except for Austria, Cyprus, Croatia (which was not yet a member of the EU), Slovakia and the United Kingdom. The current OP II countries, Germany, Denmark, the Netherlands and Sweden did not participate in the previous programme. As such in the former countries food support related activities funded through EU resources have been integrated into the national context for several years.

<sup>39</sup> Regulation (EU) No 223/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived, L72/1, 11 March 2014, <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32014R0223&from=EN>.

Secondly, Member States have different poverty alleviation strategies in place but these do not cover well-structured food and material support programmes. Furthermore, in most countries this support is provided at subnational level through local authorities or third sector organisations (NGOs, charities, faith based organisations) which may lack a comprehensive and coordinated approach.

Thirdly, food and material aid support programs, even when they *are* in place, do not ensure full coverage of the most deprived individuals and can leave out important segments of the population.

FEADs coherence and role in MS poverty alleviation systems can be better assessed in light of the three considerations above.

In **Austria**, FEAD provides school starter packages that are not included in the national support to the most deprived. In **Bulgaria**, the provision of warm meals complements a nationally funded measure by covering the summer season (the national programme only covers the winter). In the **Czech Republic**, FEAD complements similar measures that are primarily carried out by the third sector and acts as important support for these organisations. In **Romania**, the FEAD provides a much-needed complement to both state and third sector operated interventions. In **Hungary**, the largest share of the FEAD budget goes to families with children aged between 0-3 who are not covered by state childcare.

In **Ireland**, where there is no dedicated national scheme for the distribution of food or basic material assistance to deprived persons, food poverty is tackled through the social protection system and a statutory programme for the provision of emergency provision (Supplementary Welfare Acts). This includes meals-on-wheels and school meal services. Here, FEAD is integrated into the National Action Plan for Social Inclusion with a particular focus on strengthening end recipients and charities who support vulnerable groups. In **Greece**, FEAD plays a central role as it represents the main nation-wide measure for food supply. Although Greece can count on an extensive network of locally based organisations (mainly charities) providing similar support (Cyprus is a similar case), these activities are not coordinated at the national level and FEAD supports the adoption of a more systematic approach. Additionally, it creates synergies between actors by promoting the networking of FEAD partnerships. A similar assessment can be made for Italy.

In **Finland**, FEAD support in the form of food packages complements the support provided through the national social security system, especially for people affected by material deprivation. Here, church-based organisations play an important role in collecting and distributing food aid. In **Lithuania** and **Latvia**, where the national social assistance system focuses on the provision of small financial, FEAD is the main food support programme. In Lithuania, together with national services, it provides the first level of material assistance, with accompanying measures as an important addition. In **Estonia**, FEAD expands the geographic coverage of the national system of food support. In **France**, the FEAD supports an extensive and diversified food aid strategy based on peoples' needs, freedom of choice and nutritional balance.

Likewise, OP II MS **Denmark** uses the FEAD to support non-Danish residents, mostly EU migrants who would risk otherwise being left at the margin of national social assistance measures. In the **Netherlands**, the FEAD caters to the needs of the elderly with low incomes and socially excluded people. It represents a complementary measure to locally funded actions (no national programme being specifically foreseen for this specific target group). In **Sweden**, it covers people not entitled to support under the Social Services Act and it focuses on a limited number of municipalities where the highest number of potential recipients is expected (temporary residents).

As can be seen from the above examples, the FEAD complements extreme poverty alleviation strategies in Member States by reaching out to segments of the population that would otherwise be left out of public assistance and through increasing the number of persons that are reached (coverage effect). It also supports existing



measures by expanding the “basket” of goods and services provided and making it more varied and appropriate to the needs of end beneficiaries. Finally, it contributes to improving “social infrastructure” by promoting coordination among different actors and strengthening the capacities of third sector organisations involved in providing support to the most deprived. In many countries where it has been implemented for several years, FEAD plays a key role in food poverty alleviation measures: here it can count on a tested and working mechanism for provision of food support relying on networks of partner organisations ensuring a capillary distribution of aid and good knowledge of final beneficiaries’ needs

Thus, the main way in which FEAD is complementary with national or local level measures is by filling gaps in the assistance to the most deprived and strengthening the measures that are already in place.

Overall, based on the analysis presented above FEAD is found to be coherent and complementary to schemes in MS where it plays an important role to alleviate food and material deprivation and to contribute to social inclusion.

The findings of the desk research and interviews are corroborated by the responses to the open public consultation. Over 70% of all respondents to the OPC agreed that FEAD was complementary to national and regional poverty alleviation schemes. 73% also found that the FEAD was complementary to activities carried out by non-profit organisations (nearly 87% of OP II respondents and 76% of OP I respondents).

*Box 1. Examples of FEAD relevant measures and legislation implemented by MS*

Some countries have introduced measures that are complementary to FEAD-related activities, such as:

- Portugal, which funds a public network of social canteens providing prepared meals.
- Italy launched a National Fund for foodstuffs for the most deprived (Fondo nazionale per la derrate alimentari agli Indigenti)<sup>40</sup> in 2012. Resources are allocated on a yearly basis, normally around 10 million Euros. In 2016/17 EUR 5 million was earmarked for milk purchases, complemented by EUR 9 million, and EUR 3.2 million for fruit juices. The Fund played an important role in the gap year between the MDP and FEAD.
- France set up a public programme for food aid in the fight against poverty in 2010. In 2012 food aid distributed around 700 million meals to approximately 3.6 million people. Currently national food aid is being increasingly linked to social inclusion and health protection.
- The Czech Republic has a nationwide programme for the provision of state funded meals at schools.
- In Cyprus there are two national programmes, one for families with new born children and one for poor students.
- Poland introduced a State Aid Programme for Food 2014-2020, aimed at reducing children’s and youth’s malnutrition targeting low-income or disadvantaged families, with special attention to pupils from rural areas/ with high unemployment levels, the elderly and people with disabilities. The forms of assistance offered are: meals and cash payments for the purchase of food. State budget allocations for the implementation of the programme amount to €135 million annually. Due to the fact that homeless people are one of the groups most at risk of extreme poverty, various measures are being taken to help this group, such as the "Homeless Relief Programme for the Community", which

<sup>40</sup> Decree of 17 December 2012. Available at: <http://www.gazzettaufficiale.it/eli/id/2013/02/22/13A01488/sq>

allocates €1.25 million per year to homeless people.

- A nationally funded food aid scheme was launched in March 2017 in Malta. The scheme is available for vulnerable households who do not benefit from the FEAD programme. The beneficiaries of the nationally funded scheme are families receiving non-contributory benefits and having children under the age of 16, single people who receive an old age pension, families receiving energy benefits and having one child under 16, and people on a disability pension who are unemployed.
- In Estonia, food aid is integrated into the Welfare Development Plan 2016-2023 (Ministry of Social Affairs). The FEAD food aid is also integrated into the development plan as one supporting measure for achieving the sub-objective of the development plan.
- Luxembourg and Croatia support social supermarkets.

Some countries have introduced relevant legislation:

- In Slovenia, where the implementation of new legislative acts brought about important changes in the field of social and family benefits and subsidies. The Exercise of Rights to Public Funds Act<sup>41</sup> provides financial support, subsidies and payments easing the material situation of individuals and families including free school lunches and snacks.
- In Romania, Law 34/1998 allows the state budget to cover part of the salaries of social service staff, food for social canteens or food for final beneficiaries in residential centres, fuel for transportation for day care centres, home care units and social canteens.
- The Social Assistance Act of 12 March 2004 in Poland supports poor individuals and families. Benefits are provided by social assistance institutions, in cash or non-monetary form.

### **3.3.2 To what extent is FEAD support complementary to support provided by other European Union instruments, in particular the ESF and AMIF?**

This section focuses on the level of complementarity of support from FEAD and from other EU instruments such as ESF and AMIF, in terms of design, operational coordination and human resources management.

The section includes an analysis, based on desk research and interviews, of whether FEAD, ESF and AMIF support contribute to the achievement of similar objectives. It also looks at the level of appreciation among stakeholders of the interplay between FEAD, ESF and AMIF as well as the level of concentration of the resources from different funds onto the same objectives, target groups and individuals. Additionally, the organisational arrangements of human resources at MS and EU level for the managing of FEAD, ESF and AMIF interventions have been analysed.

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<sup>41</sup>Zakon o uveljavljenju praviciz javnih sredstev (ZUPJS)

Table 7. Overview to what extent FEAD support is complementary to support provided by other European Union instruments, in particular the ESF and AMIF, by MS.

MS	Different target groups & different measures	Shared MA and institutional cooperation	Shared objectives e.g. ESF TO 9	Recipients can receive support from more than one Fund	Funds were drafted to be complementary	First recipients participate in FEAD and then in	Funds have limited complementarity
AT	●		●				
BE	●	●					●
BG				●			
CY			●		●		
CZ		●		●			
DE					●	●	
DK	●						
EE	●						
EL		●			●		
ES	●	●	●				
FI		●		●		●	
FR			●	●		●	
HR	●					●	
HU	●	●		●			
IE							
IT	●	●	●	●	●		●
LT	●	●	●	●			
LU	●						
LV	●		●		●		
MT	●	●	●	●			
NL	●	●					
PL	●	●	●			●	
PT	●	●	●		●		
RO	●	●	●	●			
SE	●	●			●		
SI	●		●		●	●	
SK			●			●	

Source: Desk research and interviews on MS level

FEAD appears to be complementary to support provided by other European Union instruments, in particular the ESF and AMIF with regard to the target groups supported and the support measures provided. In most MS, the ESF and AMIF share similar objectives (social inclusion and cohesion) while addressing different target groups or needs.

In most of the MS, the FEAD and ESF are mainly focused on different target groups, illustrating the complementarity of the funds. FEAD support is focused on the most deprived, while the ESF focuses on people whose basic needs are met and who are closer to the labour market. When overlaps between these two target groups exists, the programmes mostly offer different types of support. FEAD provides material and food aid (OP I) or “basic” social inclusion measures (OP II), while the ESF focuses on socio-economic integration services aimed at the activation of individuals and encouraging their participation in the labour market. With regards to AMIF, there is likely to be some level of overlapping in terms of the target groups covered (third country migrants, refugees and asylum seekers). However, the type of support provided differs with FEAD being focused on basic need support in OP I countries. In OP II countries, in particular Germany, FEAD offers social inclusion measures for EU migrants that would be otherwise left out of AMIF support.

The results of the OPC show that 70% of both OP I and OP II respondents agree that FEAD complements the ESF while 48% agree that it complements the AMIF..

A second theme analysed is the cooperation between key stakeholders and the creation of common MAs. In several MS, the FEAD MA is shared or directly connected (e.g. within the same Ministry or even Department) with the ESF MA so it is able to leverage shared experiences and ensure complementarity in the programmes offered and financial resources used.

A common MA is present in Spain, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Portugal, Hungary and Romania. While most MS ensure the close cooperation among them through, for example, regular meetings (eg Belgium, Greece, Finland, Malta, Sweden, Poland). This contributes to ensuring complementarity, exchanging good practices, methods and strategies and planning joint interventions (Italy). The coordination between funds is important to prevent double funding or the duplication of activities. Strengthening the coherence among European Funds contributes directly to achieving the overall targets to combat poverty and social inclusion.

*Box 2. ESF and FEAD complementarity in Greece*

*According to Focus Group participants, in Greece there is a clear complementarity between the two Funds as they inform each other's end recipients, e.g. FEAD end recipients receive information on further support they can get from ESF, while ESF informs its beneficiaries about the food support that is available through FEAD.*

Good practice examples of how this is done include:

- A Helpdesk in the Region of Central Macedonia that directs end recipients to other types of support, including ESF.
- The group of professionals involved in the delivery of accompanying measures in the Kavala PO (psychologist, physical trainer, social workers, etc.) have referred end recipients to ESF.

The overall perception is that ESF is the main Fund for social inclusion, with FEAD having a complementary function that covers basic food and material needs along with particular emergency situations.

Another area where complementarity between FEAD and other European Funds was reported concerns the strategic direction of the different funding instruments. Article 9 of the Common Provisions Regulation states that one of Thematic objectives of the ESI Funds is that of "promoting social inclusion, combating poverty and any discrimination".<sup>42</sup> The ESF Regulation lists fund specific investment priorities (IP) of this thematic objective 9 in Article 3 describing the scope of ESF actions as follows: (i) active inclusion, including with a view to promoting equal opportunities and active participation, and improving employability; (ii) socio-economic integration of marginalised communities such as the Roma; (iii) Combating all forms of discrimination and promoting equal opportunities; (iv) Enhancing access to affordable, sustainable and high- quality services, including health care and social services of general interest; (v) Promoting social entrepreneurship and vocational integration in social enterprises and the social and solidarity economy in order to facilitate access to employment; (vi) Community-led local development strategies.<sup>43</sup> Clearly these IP are very relevant for FEAD and several MS explicitly refer to the ESF IP 9i and several others in order to outline their engagement to fight against poverty and social exclusion. Spain for example integrated TO9 in its ESF, FEAD and EAFRD programmes, thereby contributing to their complementarity.

Details on complementarity were also found with regard to the eligibility of recipients for funding from multiple Funds. Bulgaria for example reports that FEAD could be

<sup>42</sup> Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 December 2013 laying down common provisions on the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund, the Cohesion Fund, the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development and the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund and laying down general provisions on the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund, the Cohesion Fund and the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund and repealing Council Regulation (EC) No 1083/2006, <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32013R1303&from=EN>.

<sup>43</sup> Regulation (EU) No 1304/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 December 2013 on the European Social Fund and repealing Council Regulation (EC) No 1081/2006, <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32013R1304&from=EN>.

perceived as complementary to ESF and AMIF since end recipients included in measures under the ESF might, as well as migrants supported by AMIF, be part of the FEAD target group. Lithuania mentioned that with regard to FEAD and AMIF the food support of both programmes is coordinated in order to prevent duplications.

Another way to improve the complementarity of Funds is to ensure complementarity in the drafting of the programmes. In Germany, existing ESF measures were taken into account when drafting the FEAD OP. Similarly, Sweden planned FEAD to complement national efforts as well as ESF measures in this area and Greece did the same, while integrating complementarity in the monitoring of both Funds. In Latvia, FEAD is complementary to AMIF since it was developed building on FEAD experiences.

Complementarity can also take the form of integrated support provided by the different funds. FEAD social inclusion and accompanying measures act as a stepping stone for accessing social services, including those provided through the ESF. In Germany, FEAD support is seen as “preliminary step to ESF support” for example by helping recipients access language courses offered through FEAD. In Finland, the partner organisations are encouraged to disseminate information on ESF-financed social inclusion projects as an accompanying measure. In France, associations benefiting from the FEAD carry out integration projects, some of which are co-financed by the ESF. In Italy, a joint ESF/FEAD action is foreseen, supporting a Housing first initiative for the homeless. Also, Hungary foresees an important integration between ESF and FEAD. In Belgium, accompanying measures consist in referring end recipients to Public centres for Social Welfare (PCSW). This step can be seen as a guarantee to integration with national schemes and as an enabler to access ESF interventions.

### **3.3.3 Has the FEAD contributed to supplement or to displace national (public or private) interventions and financial resources used with similar or complementary objectives?**

This sub-question addresses the additionality of FEAD and whether FEAD displaced public or private interventions and if the FEAD has triggered or supported initiatives which attracted additional national funds (both public and private).

In the previous paragraphs we have seen how for the majority of MS FEAD contributed to supplement national public and private interventions and financial resources that were used with similar or complementary objectives.

In Spain, FEAD complements the national efforts to provide food assistance as it merged with previous efforts and created synergies between key actors like national Ministries. In Bulgaria, the FEAD complements the provision of warm meals in soup kitchens that are currently offered by a national programme. FEAD support expanded the programme that was initially limited to the cold season to cover the full year and extended its geographical scope to additional municipalities. Another example comes from Denmark, where FEAD support allowed the expansion of assistance to non-Danish homeless residents and thereby supplements national interventions.

For a few MS, it was found that FEAD enabled the development of new interventions. This is the case in Austria, where two Federal States provided financial support to the most deprived at the beginning of the school year but FEAD now offers material assistance with a broader geographical scope. FEAD added a food programme to the Estonian support for the most deprived, since no similar support was available before the implementation of FEAD. Malta also reported additional interventions that were enabled through FEAD support. In this case, an additional food distribution scheme that is entirely funded through national resources was introduced to address households which are not eligible under the FEAD Programme (reaches out to about 20,000 households). The Swedish experience is similar to Austria in that the MS set up FEAD support under OP II that supplements national interventions because it did not exist prior to FEAD.

In Portugal, national funding supplemented FEAD before the order defining the OP could be published. Once EU-level funding arrived the contribution from the State budget was replaced. In Denmark FEAD projects might have been able to generate private funding too as the project holders to the two projects receiving funds from FEAD could possibly have applied for funds in a national private foundation.

In conclusion, FEAD support has overall supplemented national and local interventions, funded through public as well as private (third sector) resources. Through the supporting and strengthening of third sector organisations involved in distribution of aid FEAD also plays an important leveraging role by supporting the collection of additional (private) resources. It is possible that a displacement effect of national funding might have taken place in a few instances, although clear evidence of this cannot be gauged and would need further inspection and analysis.

### 3.4 Efficiency

#### Key findings

##### Gold plating

- There is some evidence of excessive requirements for monitoring, management and control, in particular related to capturing data/information on operations and end-recipients for monitoring purposes, lengthy documentation with procedures and instructions, excessive procedures for the certification of end recipients and difficult financial procedures.
- The certification, financial and implementation procedures of the programme are heavy and bureaucratic in many countries.

##### Extent to which costs are justified

- in OP I countries, there are large variations in the unit cost per person and per kg. Spain appears to have a high cost per person in relation to the results achieved compared to France, Romania and Poland. The three Baltic countries have similar costs per person and per kilo.
- There are large variations also in the cost per person of basic assistance, with some high costs possibly due to the content of support.
- Accompanying measures have a low allocation (5%) but the potential for generating further results.
- In many OP I countries, administrative costs for the distribution and delivery of food support are considered high by Managing Authorities, especially in relation to the budget available through FEAD and for the number of end recipients attended.
- In OP II countries there are large variations in costs possibly due to the different target groups and types of social inclusion measures these countries offer.

##### Effectiveness and efficiency of operations for target groups

- In OP I food support is the most common type of assistance and has been effective in alleviating food deprivation, especially for women and children, and has also been effective in addressing the homeless. Food packages are more effective for the needs of families with children, warm meals in social canteens for the homeless and people in extreme poverty and home delivery of food for the elderly.
- In relation to basic material assistance, targeted individual school material for school children and personal hygiene items for babies are more effective.
- There are indications that accompanying measures can be effective in helping target groups towards their social inclusion, especially if they keep their 'accompanying' character, i.e. offered together with food support.
- In OP II social inclusion activities are cost-effective especially in Germany, due to the low cost per person, while in all OP II countries, the activities are expected to be effective in contributing to social inclusion.
- The capacity to address target group needs, local delivery and cooperation are key factors for the effectiveness of operations in both OP I and OP II.

##### Identification of end recipients

- OP I programmes use mainly income eligibility criteria and end recipients are either registered already in minimum income support database or they have to accredit their situation of poverty through income statements and/or interviews with social services or similar organisations. Some countries undertake proactive outreach approaches to reach end recipients who are at risk of remaining outside the system (e.g. homeless, Roma).

- In OP II, outreach activities are the main channel used to identify the end recipients.
- In both OP I and OP II, local coordination and local networks play an important role in helping end recipients access FEAD support.

#### Flat rates in OP I

- Although flat rates under OP I simplify the activities of partner organisations, there are indications that the actual administrative costs do not justify a rate of only 5%.
- The flat rate for accompanying measures is also considered low by most countries although the potential of these measures for social inclusion is high.

#### Scope for simplification

- There are proposed simplifications encompassing all stages of the programme, from the set-up of management and control systems, the choice of selection criteria through to implementation, reporting and audit/evaluation.
- Some of the simplifications are related to the EU requirements, notably, increasing flat rates for logistics and for accompanying measures, reducing and simplifying reporting requirements.
- Other simplifications are related to reducing gold plating on the side of Member States, for instance, reducing the amount of paperwork, reducing the governance layers to make delivery leaner, simplifying the procurement processes, simplifying the certification requirements.
- There are also a number of simplifications, not necessarily linked to easing the regulatory requirements or to reducing gold plating, that aim to improve the programme efficiency. For instance: to increase mutual feedback between the different types and levels of control; greater use of information systems for better control of who the end recipients are, what they receive and when; to offer capacity building to programme authorities and especially to delivery organisations; to increase the involvement of local NGOs/social services in selection and certification processes; and to simplify delivery through the a voucher system or similar.
- With regard to management modes, the current system of shared management appears to be working well. Factors contributing to this are: know-how and capacity gained during previous food aid programmes; good cooperation between the central/national and the local delivery level; the extensive network to reach those in need all over the country; the involvement of volunteers given that resources are not always sufficient to cover the human resources needs, especially at the delivery stage; and adaptation to the needs of the end recipients.
- There are strong arguments for keeping the FEAD delivery mechanism of shared management, primarily because of its simplicity. The accumulated experience and the national and regional knowledge of poverty, social exclusion challenges and needs is also extremely valuable. This view is shared by interviewees, focus group participants as well as participants in the FEAD Network meeting in November 2017.
- Should a new umbrella fund be introduced, shared management can still be maintained while ensuring a closer link and cooperation between the different Funds, proximity to the needs of end recipients and safeguarding the low threshold nature of FEAD.

According to the recently published summary of AIRs in July 2016, "FEAD has always been envisaged as an instrument with simple management, which is able to address social emergencies". Rules governing the implementation of the FEAD have been



simplified in comparison with those of the ESI funds, and Member States have been encouraged not to introduce an unnecessary administrative burden.

The analysis of administrative burden in FEAD implementation and the related Management and Control system requirements, as well as the potential for further simplification constitutes a principal focus of our analysis. In order to assess efficiency, we have analysed operational efficiency and also carried out a simple cost-effectiveness analysis. For the purposes of this evaluation the following definitions are used<sup>44</sup>:

- Operational efficiency relates the inputs of FEAD (financial resources) to the outputs produced.

Cost-effectiveness relates the inputs of FEAD (financial resources) to the results achieved<sup>45</sup>.

The choice of these approaches takes into account the limitations encountered in the process of evaluation, most notably the lack of suitable comparable data for comparing FEAD with similar EU and national initiatives. In addition, it has not been possible to assess the efficiency of accompanying measures in quantitative terms as there are no common indicators to allow for a comparative analysis. Furthermore, the quantification of administrative burdens is difficult as it is not an exercise that Member States have previously undertaken and therefore comparative quantitative evidence is scarce.

Therefore, the analysis of efficiency is centred on:

- The operational efficiency of food support under OP I by relating inputs to the quantity of food produced across Member States. For this we have used SFC data on expenditure and output indicators.
- Cost-effectiveness of FEAD OP I by comparing its two principal interventions, namely food support and basic material assistance. For this we have used SFC data on expenditure and result indicators.
- The operational efficiency of social inclusion assistance under OP II by relating inputs to the number of persons receiving assistance across Member States. For this we have used SFC data on expenditure and output indicators.

A comparison of Member States with regard to the administrative burden incurred in all phases of the programme cycle (submission, set up of management and coordination, project selection, implementation, reporting, evaluation and audit). For this we have used some quantitative data provided by a limited number of Member States as well as qualitative evidence obtained through interviews in all Member States.

Further sources of evidence for answering the evaluation questions concerning efficiency include the operational programmes, the Annual Implementation Reports, the results of the open public consultation and in-depth interviews with MAs and representative Intermediary Bodies (IBs) and partner organisations.

The findings are further enriched and triangulated with the focus groups (EU level and in selected Member States). The final report will be complemented with further information from another EU level focus group and the structured survey.

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<sup>44</sup> Based on the "Study on the use of cost-effectiveness analysis in EC evaluations", carried out by Eureval C3E and financed by DG Budget (2006)

<sup>45</sup> Cost effectiveness also relates to impacts but there is only limited data yet on FEAD impacts

### 3.4.1 Is there any evidence of gold-plating<sup>46</sup> at MS level in implementing the FEAD?

Gold-plating is defined as the “administrative obligations going beyond the requirements set at EU level. It encompasses an excess of norms, guidelines and procedures accumulated at European, national, regional and programme levels interfering with the expected policy objectives”. Gold-plating tends to increase administrative costs and burdens and should therefore be avoided.

To assess gold-plating in the context of FEAD, we have aimed to identify areas where Member States tend to create additional requirements beyond what is stipulated by the relevant EU Regulations<sup>47</sup>, based on two judgment criteria:

1. The requirements for financial management and control for implementing bodies, funding agencies, or end recipients. The aim was to assess the extent to which these requirements have been excessive.
2. The application requirements, project selection procedures as well as monitoring procedures. The aim was to assess the extent to which these requirements and procedures have been disproportionate.

Based on the information provided by Member States on the procedures and requirements they apply and through comparing these to the FEAD Regulation, we find no indication of gold plating in some MS (BE, DE, DK, FI and LT). In these countries, the selection and implementation processes do not increase costs beyond what is deemed necessary for the programme stakeholders. The main reasons for no indication of gold plating include:

- The MA carried out opinion polls and stakeholder consultations in advance, so as to ensure the most appropriate selection of food products (appropriate mix, quantity and quality) and reduce unnecessary costs.
- The programmes strictly follow the EU requirements only and national requirements adhere to these.

For other Member States, there is evidence of gold plating in the following areas:

- a. Monitoring the delivery of assistance. According to the FEAD Regulation, the MA should make available to the intermediary bodies and beneficiaries all the necessary information for the implementation of operations and record data on each operation<sup>48</sup>, while also developing several procedures for management and control of the programme<sup>49</sup>. It does not specify the length of these documents or the number and type of forms/tables/etc. with information on each operation. Some countries require excessive documentation to partner organisations for recording information about end recipients and operations, for example:
  - In Austria, school packages are offered to children and for each of them the paper trail implies approximately ten pages, meaning 400,000 pages a year. In addition to the paper trail, the cases are registered and documented in the FEAD database – which was initially rather slow and not user friendly. The burden was higher for volunteers who had to fill in the database and it took them an inordinate amount of time, especially at the beginning when you could not copy paste. The parallel monitoring of the paper trail and the database trail could be considered gold-plating or excessive controlling.

<sup>46</sup> Gold-plating is an expression which refers to Member States going beyond what is strictly required by EU legislation when they implement it at national level. This may enhance the benefits but can also add unnecessary costs for businesses and public authorities which are mistakenly associated with EU legislation.

<sup>47</sup> FEAD Regulation (EU) No 223/2014 and Common Provisions Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013.

<sup>48</sup> Article 31 (c) and (d) of Regulation (EU) No 223/2014

<sup>49</sup> Annex IV, (3) of Regulation (EU) No 223/2014

- In Slovenia, there is excessive paper trail relating to evidence on the storage, bills, information on the accompanying measures and on persons / target groups getting the food packages.
  - In Romania, the MA requires copies of the lists of end recipients with signatures for receiving food packages, although these could be checked by sampling at the local authorities. This is adding to the administrative burden.
  - In Slovakia, partner organisations fill in a number of forms and tables with details about recipients, delivered packages and auxiliary measures. Social workers are also required to substantiate in writing when they deliver support to secondary recipients (i.e. friends or relatives of end recipients who cannot pick up their package in person).
  - In Romania, partner organisations in charge of monitoring the aid delivery have to copy hundreds of sheets of paper containing data about the aid recipients. In addition, monitoring visits to the delivery sites are not covered by the regular work schedule and traveling budget of the partner organisations.
  - Additional reports are produced in Malta and Poland concerning personal data protection. Although the Regulation<sup>50</sup> expects the processing of personal data to comply with the relevant Directive<sup>51</sup>, it does not require the production of additional reports on this matter.
  - The OPC results reveal complaints about very long questionnaires, demands to provide invoices and about the frequency of reporting.
- b. Procedures and instructions about the programme. Some countries have produced long manuals, application packs and instructions although the Regulation does not require the production of lengthy procedures and documents, for instance:
- In the Czech Republic, the application pack for a call consisted of 19 documents containing altogether 395 pages, the instructions for applicants and end recipients consist of 140 pages and the methodology for the delivery of assistance includes 67 steps and involves many actors.
  - In Greece very lengthy documents for procedures governing the programme were produced (150 pages).
- c. Certification of the situation of end recipients. In Spain and Slovakia, the certification procedure of one's situation of poverty has imposed a heavy burden on scarcely equipped social services. Programme authorities consider this a non-necessary burden given that the delivery of food is done by ground level organisations that are (a) selected based on specific criteria and (b) close enough to the target group to be able to assess whether someone actually merits the support. In addition, the costs of certification may exceed the amount of support (e.g. in Italy, certification costs 20 euros, plus costs for other certificates, against 26.5 euros of support per person – thus FEAD support risks to be counterbalanced by administrative burden). The findings in Italy are backed up by the OPC where respondents criticised the eligibility rules for target groups, such as the certification on standardised income indicator. The OPC results further confirm the issue that strict certification procedures may limit the capacity of FEAD to help everyone who is in need.
- d. National public procurement rules. The Regulation states that the food and/or basic material assistance may be purchased by a public body and made available to partner organisations free of charge and does not unduly delay delivery of the goods and/or products to the partner organisations<sup>52</sup>. However,

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<sup>50</sup> Article 19 (7) of Regulation (EU) No 223/2014

<sup>51</sup> Directive 95/46/EC

<sup>52</sup> Article 23 (4) of Regulation (EU) No 223/2014

in Greece, the national level public procurement rules make public purchases too lengthy (they take approximately 2-3 months, causing delays to the delivery of assistance).

- e. Financial procedures. In Bulgaria, a bank guarantee is required in order to receive advance payments. This is a contradiction, given that if partner organisations had the financial resources, they would not need advance payment. In addition, the transfer of the bank guarantee generates bank taxes. As a consequence, many organisations experience difficulties to participate in a partnership under FEAD.

Conclusion: Although it is difficult to distinguish between gold-plating and administrative burden, there is some evidence of excessive requirements for monitoring, management and control, in particular related to recording data/information on operations and end recipients for monitoring purposes, lengthy documentation with procedures and instructions, excessive procedures for the certification of end recipients and difficult financial procedures.

Recommendation: The FEAD Regulation already requires a significant amount of procedures and controls. In order to minimise gold plating in the future, Member States can be advised to follow the Regulation closely while also sharing the experiences of those Member States which implement the programme without adding excessive requirements to what is already foreseen in the Regulation. A good context for such exchanges and awareness raising are the FEAD Network meetings.

### 3.4.2 To what extent are the costs involved justified, given the outputs/impacts that have been achieved?

To assess the justification of costs, the following judgment criteria have been used:

- FEAD interventions have alleviated material deprivation of individual target groups at a justifiable cost.
- Time and the financial costs to end recipients for accessing and providing the information required are justified.
- The administrative burden costs of the Member States administrations to collect, review and control is justified.

It is difficult to assess the FEAD cost per person given that (a) the programme management involves staff costs which are covered by salaries of public sector organisations and not by FEAD, (b) the delivery often relies on volunteers whose costs cannot be captured and (c) the quantity and frequency of assistance also need to be taken into account.

However, given existing SFC data it is possible to analyse the costs entailed in the delivery of FEAD assistance. The analysis looks firstly at OP I and secondly at OP II costs.

#### OP I costs

In relation to **food support**, we have analysed the unit cost (see table below) based on the following calculations:

- Cost per kg = Total amount of eligible public expenditure incurred by beneficiaries and paid in implementing operations relating to provision of food support (input indicator 2a) / total quantity of food support distributed (common output indicator 11).
- Cost per person: Total amount of eligible public expenditure incurred by beneficiaries and paid in implementing operations relating to provision of food

support (input indicator 2a) / total number of persons receiving food support  
(common result indicator 14)

Table 8. Unit cost of food distributed in Euro (2016)

Country	LU	SI	RO	PL	FR	ES	SK	GR	CZ	IT	EE	LV	BE	LT	FI	BG	MT	IE	Average
Cost per kg	0.20	0.67	0.77	0.81	0.85	0.97	1.49	1.58	1.63	1.65	1.87	1.90	1.92	1.93	1.95	2.48	3.06	5.35	1.73
Cost per person	34	17	16	39	16	61	26	37	12	20	50	61	42	52	13	45	54	16	34
No of persons	11.7	181	3,286	1,183	4,398	1,528	142	410	59.8	2,778	29.5	61.5	301	219	290	273	17.1	54.6	

Note: Number of persons in thousands

Source: AIR2016

Based on these calculations<sup>53</sup>, the average cost of food support is 1.73 EUR per kg of food distributed and 34 EUR per person receiving food support. There are important variations between Member States, with the cost per kg being expensive in Ireland (5.35) and very cheap in Luxemburg (0.20). However, when looking at the cost per person, Ireland has one of the lowest costs (16 EUR) and Luxemburg has the average cost (34 EUR). Estonia, Latvia and Spain have amongst the highest costs per person but close to average cost per kg, while Spain has an even lower cost (just under 1 EUR per kg) and Romania and Slovenia have a low cost per kg and per person.

Comparing some of the biggest EU countries, it can be seen that Spain with the highest cost per person (61 EUR) has assisted 1.5 million people, while France and Romania with a cost that is four times lower (16 EUR) have attended many more people (4.3 and 3.3 million people respectively). Likewise, Poland with a close to average cost per person (39 EUR) has assisted 1.2 million people. Therefore, given that all these countries have a similar (relatively low) cost per kg (less than 1 EUR), it can be inferred that in Spain the cost per person has been relatively high for the results produced.

Other interesting cases are the Baltic countries (Estonia Latvia, Lithuania). They all have a high cost per person (much higher than the average) and a similar cost per kg, but have assisted different numbers of end recipients: Lithuania has assisted 219,000 people, Latvia 61,500 and Estonia 29,500.

When looking at the composition of food support for a selected number of countries, it is difficult to draw conclusions on whether high or low costs in some countries are justified because of the composition of food support. For instance, there are high cost countries that focus their support on flour, bread, potatoes, rice and other starchy products (e.g. Estonia, Latvia, Bulgaria), but also low cost countries that have focused their support on the same items (e.g. Czech Republic, Finland).

- At a cost of 61 EUR per person, Spain has principally provided milk (59%), followed by convenience food (18%), fruit and vegetables (17%), flour/bread/rice (15%), oils (7%) and meat/eggs (5%).
- With the same high cost of 61 EUR per person, Estonia has provided mainly flour/bread/rice (37%) and also meat (22%), while Latvia with also a high cost of 50 EUR per person has provided the bulk of support in flour/bread/rice (65%).
- With 54 EUR per person, Bulgaria provides mainly flour/bread/rice (70%). Bulgaria also has a higher than average cost per kg (2.48).

<sup>53</sup> Estimate based on the eligible costs divided by the amount of distributed aid and number of supported persons. In practice costs include also all expenses paid for accompanying measures and for technical assistance.

- At 37 EUR per person, Greece provides mainly fruit and vegetables (41%), meat (13%) and flour (12%).
- At the lower cost levels, at 12 EUR per person, the Czech Republic provides half of the support in convenience food and flour/bread/rice and Finland with 13 EUR per person provides the bulk of support in flour/bread/rice (70%).

The analysis of this data in light of qualitative evidence from interviews reveals some factors that contribute to justifiable costs for the outputs achieved:

- Ordering in bulk achieves a lower price per article purchased (EE, GR, ES, IT); an economies of scale effect.
- Quality control at various stages of the items purchased (purchase, transport, distribution) ensures high quality is delivered for the cost involved (GR, ES, EE, LV) – value for money effect.

In relation to **basic material assistance**, the cost per person has been calculated as:

Total amount of eligible public expenditure incurred by beneficiaries and paid in implementing operations relating to provision of basic material assistance (input indicator 2b) / Number of persons receiving basic material assistance (result indicator 19)

Table 9. Cost per person of basic material assistance in Euro (2016)

Country	AT	CZ	GR	LU	LV	SK*
Cost per person	70.78	8.58	8.28	13.12	35.67	n/a
Number of persons	40,994	41,417	410,000	11,728	19,657	112,059

Source: SFC2016

\*Slovakia does not report data for indicator 2b

The cost of basic material assistance per person is highest in Austria and lowest in Greece and the Czech Republic. The content of basic material assistance is school bags and school items in Austria and hygiene items - mainly for babies - in the other countries, with Latvia offering both hygiene items and school packages.

The low cost in Greece is due to the fact that it reports the same number of end recipients as for food assistance, although not all of them in practice receive basic material assistance<sup>54</sup>. The high cost in Austria (70.8 EUR per person) may be justified by the content of basic material assistance focusing exclusively on school bags and school items (rather more costly than hygiene items). This may also explain the relatively high cost for Latvia (35.7 EUR), which also includes school items in its basic material assistance. Comparing the Czech Republic and Luxemburg which deliver similar items (basic hygiene), the Czech Republic shows a lower cost per person while assisting a higher number of persons than Luxemburg. This difference in costs may be due to differences in the content and frequency of support.

In relation to the costs of **accompanying measures**, they are delivered at a flat rate of 5% of the costs of purchasing food and other basic material assistance<sup>55</sup>. Not all Member States have used these measures so far<sup>56</sup>, with the implementation not having started or having just started in Croatia, Hungary and Cyprus, and with applications for new actions being currently under review in Portugal. Although the

<sup>54</sup> This figure should be corrected in future SFC reporting.

<sup>55</sup> Article 26 (2) (e) of Regulation (EU) No 223/2014

<sup>56</sup> All MS have to use them eventually. They are not compulsory only in cases where the food and/or basic material assistance is provided solely to most deprived children in childcare or comparable facilities, as stated in Article 7 of Regulation (EU) No 223/2014



Regulation leaves room for manoeuvre in terms of content of such measures<sup>57</sup>, the 5% allocation does not allow for more substantial support (e.g. psychological support, labour market itineraries, social inclusion skills, etc.), therefore most Member States have chosen to deliver information and advice (through e.g. leaflets), cookery and healthy eating courses, and in some cases also more direct support such as referrals/orientation and direct social service support.

The results of interviews reveal a clear need to offer deprived people, in addition to food and basic material assistance, the tools necessary to exit their poverty and social exclusion status. Therefore, the link between FEAD accompanying measures and other instruments (e.g. ESF) that offer such type of support should become stronger. At the moment, even though accompanying measures provide information and advice on social services and other delivery mechanisms, there are no follow-up process to assess the extent to which end recipients have actually used this information to obtain further assistance from social services.

In relation to **administrative costs** for distribution and delivery, these are considered high by programme bodies. The evidence shows:

- High administrative costs related to paper trails (e.g. long application packs in the CZ, lengthy documents with evidence on end recipients in AT, SI, RO, lengthy procedures manuals in GR, etc.). This results in too many forms have to be filled in and databases updated – bureaucratic procedures increase costs.
- High distribution costs from the IBs to partner organisations (ES, CY, GR, RO, SI) due to several layers involved (e.g. purchase by IBs, transport to partner organisations, storage in partner organisation premises, packaging and distribution to delivery points) resulting in organisation intensive distribution.
- High delivery costs from partner organisations to end recipients (AT, GR, ES, BG, EE, SI, LT, RO, SI) due to the need for several people (staff and volunteers) involved to hand out food items/packages and basic material assistance (clothes, school articles, personal and hygiene items, etc.). In countries that offer the option to deliver food at home (e.g. EE) the delivery costs are even higher – resource intensive delivery. In countries with a limited volunteering culture (e.g. GR), the cost of public resources delivering food to end recipients is relatively high. In Romania, the costs of FEAD are high for relatively small effects (3.2 million attended in 2016, when 42% of the population is at risk of poverty and social exclusion). National programmes in this country provide financial aid with less logistics and implementation costs.

Overall, although administrative costs have scope for reduction, the delivery costs are considered high but necessary in order for assistance to reach those most in need.

## **OP II costs**

In OP II countries which offer social inclusion support, the cost per person was calculated as:

The total amount of eligible public expenditure incurred by beneficiaries and paid in implementing operations (input indicator 2) / Total number of persons receiving social inclusion assistance (common output indicator 20)

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<sup>57</sup> They are additional activities aiming at alleviating social exclusion, such as guidance on a balanced diet, budget management advice (Article 1 (11)), reorientation towards competent services (Article 8), etc.

Table 10. Cost per person of OP II assistance in Euro (2016)

Country	DE	DK	NL	SE
Cost per person	167.21	478.95	2,047.65	697.31
No of persons	21,614	474	281	582

Source: SFC2016

Germany has a relatively low cost per person offering street-work, outreach activities and individual counselling to migrants and to homeless and specific activities (workshops, leisure and educational activities) for migrant parents and their children in order to improve the access of these children to education. Germany is currently organising a cost-benefit analysis as part of its ongoing evaluation<sup>58</sup>.

Denmark follows Germany with a higher cost per person offering outreach activities to homeless people (to attract them to shelters for instance) but also more specific social initiatives to help them break out of isolation (e.g. networking, social clubs).

Sweden, with a cost of almost 700 EUR per person, addresses socially excluded foreigners residing in Sweden for less than 3 months, offering them social orientation (language, information on their rights, directing them to shelters, social events) and health promotion (information on personal hygiene and protecting from illness) activities.

Finally, the Netherlands, with a relatively high cost per person, addresses elderly people offering them awareness raising on the support they can access, social networking activities with further capacity building activities that may explain the relative higher cost. The latter includes workshops and coaching to improve skills (e.g. digital skills). The programme in the Netherlands started late, therefore more information in the future may enlighten further the reasons for the relatively high cost per person.

High costs in OPI II type programmes may be acceptable at the beginning due to people taking up existing offers but social integration of target groups would in the long-term reduce the costs to the public purse. The issue with assessing the cost effectiveness of OP II activities is that results can only be seen by following up the individual end recipients by going with them to the regular services. Otherwise, it is very difficult to know whether for instance the counselling or the workshop lead to better integration and further knock-on effects.

**Conclusions:** In conclusion, in OP I countries, there are large variations in the unit cost per person and per kg. Spain appears to have a high cost per person in relation to the results achieved, compared with France, Romania and Poland. The three Baltic countries, have similar costs per person and per kilo. There are large variations also in the cost per person of basic assistance, with some high costs possibly due to the content of support. Accompanying measures have a low allocation but potential for more results. In many OP I countries, administrative costs for the distribution and delivery of food support are considered high, especially in relation to the budget available through FEAD and for the number of end recipients attended.

In OP II countries there are large variations in costs possibly due to the different target groups and types of social inclusion measures these countries offer.

**Recommendation:** In OP I programmes, in order to improve efficiency in terms of outputs justifying the costs, a first step would be to analyse the food basket in terms of quantity and quality and diversify according to real needs in different

<sup>58</sup> Results to be included in the final report.



territories within each Member State (especially relevant for large countries). A next step would be to consider other forms of delivery (e.g. vouchers, 'solidarity cards' with bar codes of eligible items) and involve selected 'FEAD' supermarkets in the process. Such types of vouchers/cards offer the additional benefit of stigmatising less the end recipients, while it may also facilitate the delivery of fresh food which otherwise entails high transport and storage costs. Finally, to make FEAD more efficient, it is pertinent to consider other types of support, notably social inclusion support, given that the delivery of food is not enough to help people get out of poverty.

In OP II programmes, cost effectiveness can be incorporated in the future monitoring system by following up a sample of end recipients after they receive social inclusion support by FEAD.

Overall, although the administrative costs and challenges are highly dependent on national contexts, there is general agreement amongst Member States that more guidance on FEAD implementation from the Commission would benefit FEAD in the future to ensure a concerted and collaborative approach towards tackling poverty and social exclusion through FEAD.

### **3.4.3 What type of operations for which target group proves to be most effective and efficient and why?**

To answer this question, the following judgement criteria have been used:

- The requirements for financial management and control for implementing bodies, funding agencies, or final end recipients by type of operation and target group;

The application requirements, project selection procedures as well as monitoring procedures, by type of operation and target group.

#### **OP I – Food and basic material support and target groups**

**Food support** is the most common type of assistance and absorbs the bulk of FEAD funds (407 million EUR compared to 7.5 million EUR for basic material assistance<sup>59</sup>). This has proved effective in alleviating food deprivation, especially for people in extreme conditions, such as homeless people and those in a severe poverty situation.

Data from SFC offers some indication of the share of different target groups in food distributed (see table below). There is generally a high share of women (49%) and children (29%), although other target groups are significant in some countries, e.g. migrants in Luxemburg (almost 70%), then in Italy (38%), the Czech Republic (33%) and Belgium (31%) old people in Bulgaria (38%) and Romania (25%). One quarter of the end recipients in the Czech Republic are homeless and 13% in Ireland<sup>60</sup>.

Overall, although food support has been particularly effective for the homeless, they represent a mere 1% of the total, this being explained by the difficulty of these people to comply with the eligibility criteria (e.g. present income statements). In the countries that addressed more homeless people (CZ, IE, SI, IT) it is evident that to make the assistance more effective, qualified personnel are required.

<sup>59</sup> AIRs 2016

<sup>60</sup> The figures are not cumulative, i.e. one category may include another, e.g. women may include immigrants, old people, etc....

Table 11. Target groups of food support (2016)

Country	Children	Aged over 65	Women	Migrants	Disabled	Homeless
BE	25%	5%	29%	31%	4%	3.5%
BG	2%	38%	66%	18%	8%	0.0%
CY	100%	0%	0%	17%	0%	0.0%
CZ	41%	8%	51%	33%	5%	25.4%
EE	36%	2%	51%	17%	18%	3.4%
ES	30%	7%	52%	22%	2%	1.5%
FI	12%	20%	36%	8%	1%	0.6%
FR	35%	4%	52%	0%	0%	0.0%
GR	26%	4%	52%	1%	0%	0.2%
IE	37%	13%	47%	7%	5%	13.0%
IT	32%	9%	48%	38%	2%	4.0%
LT	28%	4%	50%	1%	9%	0.2%
LU	30%	2%	53%	67%	3%	0.5%
LV	24%	10%	52%	2%	11%	0.5%
MT	47%	5%	56%	7%	1%	0.0%
PL	31%	5%	50%	1%	16%	2.1%
RO	20%	25%	44%	0%	18%	0.0%
SI	22%	14%	53%	8%	3%	1.7%
SK	53%	3%	25%	0%	6%	0.6%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>29%</b>	<b>11%</b>	<b>49%</b>	<b>11%</b>	<b>6%</b>	<b>1.3%</b>

Note: When the share is 0% this is either because data is not collected for this target group or because there are no end recipients from this target group.

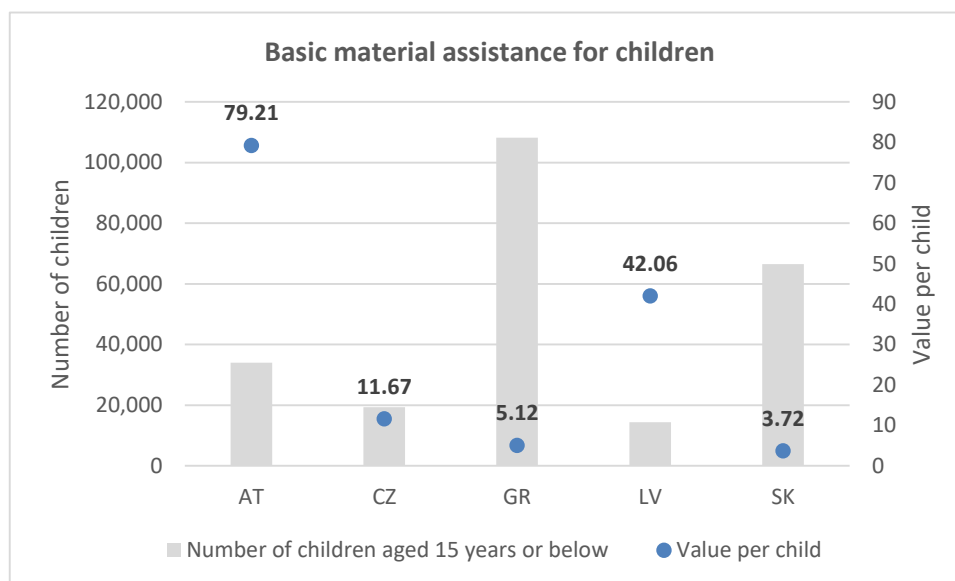
Source: AIR2016

In terms of the content of food support for different target groups, food packages are effective for covering a large number of end recipients, especially families with children, while warm meals cover a smaller number but are effective for addressing end recipients who need food on a daily basis, i.e. people in extreme poverty conditions.

In relation to **basic material assistance**, the main recipients are also women and children. SFC gives the monetary value of goods for children which enables us to calculate the value per child in the countries that offer basic material assistance. The results are depicted in the figure below.

Greece shows the highest efficiency by addressing over 100,000 children at the lowest cost (5.12 EUR per child). Slovakia is also efficient supporting 66,500 children at a cost of 3.72 EUR per child). At the other end is Austria which supported almost 34,000 children at a high cost (79 EUR per child), followed by Latvia which supported 14,400 children at 42 EUR per child. In terms of the content of basic material assistance, school material is effective for students and personal hygiene items for babies.

Figure 31. Efficiency of basic material assistance for children (2016)



Source: SFC2016

The interviews identified certain factors that contributed to the effectiveness and efficiency of food and basic material assistance in OP I countries, notably the capacity to address very specific needs of target groups and tailor the type of delivery to these conditions/needs, e.g:

- Food and basic material assistance for homeless people was more effective if delivered in social canteens where they can access on a daily/frequent basis rather than if delivered to delivery points where food is distributed in packages (homeless people do not cook, while social canteens offer cooked food).
- Delivery of food and basic material assistance for families to local branches to spare them transport costs.
- Home delivery of food to elderly people and groups in extreme situations. In addition, elderly people are less prone to ask for help because of a stronger sense of shame, therefore it is better not to make them go out to receive their food packages.
- Delivery of targeted individual school material for children and personal hygiene items for new born children in deprived families.
- Delivery of cooked meals for people who need immediate support. Latvia for instance has successfully implemented the 'soup kitchens' which offer cooked meals available for consumption or to take away. This has proved efficient in reaching persons in crisis or emergency situations (status granted by the local government).

The OPC results show a higher cost-effectiveness of actions to alleviate food deprivation (75% of OP I respondents). Activities striving to reduce basic material deprivation were cost-effective but not as much as food support (42.5% of respondents).

### OP I - Accompanying measures and target groups

In relation to **accompanying measures**, the provision of psychological, social and other support suggests that accompanying measures may be effective in enabling target groups to move towards social inclusion. For instance, in Spain the provision inter alia of personalised support and orientation to the appropriate social, educational and employment services and other actions as pathways to employment (labour market intermediation, training) were formalised by Royal Decree in 2016. In Greece, one of the partnerships hired specialists (speech therapist, psychologist, dietary

advisor) following a needs assessment based on a consultation with municipalities. They offer psychological support and dietary advice to end recipients according to their needs.

This indicates that more effective accompanying measures are tailored to the needs of different target groups. For instance, more social type activities for the homeless, language support and socialising events for the integration of immigrants, speech therapists for children, psychological support for poor families with dependent children, etc. In relation to labour market needs, people in poverty are either not able or not allowed to work. Social activities organised through FEAD offer viable alternatives to develop personal and professional skills to reintegrate into society and find employment.

It is early to assess the actual results of these measures. Although it would seem that efficiency is low in accompanying measures, it is actually the low level of funding that prevents the production of substantial results.

Accompanying measures in the content of FEAD should not be offered in isolation to food support. Food aid is an important entry point for providing further social support services. People who come to receive food aid often have more substantial underlying social issues and providing them with access to support services which can help them address these more structural issues. This is key in helping them out of poverty and ultimately fully reintegrating them into society.

### OP II – target groups

OP II social inclusion activities are targeted to specific target groups in each country (grey cells in the table below): migrants in Germany and Sweden, homeless in Denmark and to some extent also in Germany and elderly (retired people) in the Netherlands. Of these, a significant proportion are women, except in the case of Denmark which deals with homeless people who are mostly men. Children are significant only in Germany (10%), notably the children of migrants.

Table 12. Target groups of OP II (2016)

Country	Children	Elderly	Women	Migrants, minorities	Disabled	Homeless	Cost per person
DE	10%	2%	48%	71%	3%	24%	167
DK	0%	5%	14%	99%	0%	100%	479
NL	0%	100%	75%	31%	1%	0%	2,048
SE	2%	0%	62%	100%	0%	99%	697
<b>Total</b>	<b>9%</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>48%</b>	<b>72%</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>27%</b>	

Source: SFC2016

This targeted support is expected to be effective in contributing to the social inclusion of these groups (it is still early to see significant results). The low cost-effectiveness of the Netherlands compared to the rest may be due to the fact that it is the only MS implementing activities for strengthening the skills and competences of the elderly (retired with a low disposable income). The others offer mainly networking, outreach, counselling and leisure activities.

The OPC results showed a high cost effectiveness of social inclusion activities (78.85% of respondents), especially amongst German respondents (81%), which confirms the results above of a low cost per person supported in Germany.

The interviews revealed that the main success factors are cooperation at the lowest, i.e. local, level which may bring the best results (Germany) and the capacity to address target group social inclusion needs (e.g. reproductive health needs for women in Sweden or early education needs of migrant children in Germany).

**Conclusions:** In conclusion, in OP I food support is the most common type of

assistance and has been effective in alleviating food deprivation, especially for women and children, and has also been effective in addressing the homeless. Food packages are more effective for the needs of families with children, warm meals in social canteens for the homeless and people in extreme poverty and home delivery of food for the elderly.

Basic material assistance has benefited mainly women and children, while in terms of content, targeted individual school material for school children and personal hygiene items for babies are more effective.

There are indications that accompanying measures can be effective in helping target groups towards their social inclusion, especially if they keep their 'accompanying' character, i.e. offered together with food support.

In OP II social inclusion activities are cost-effective, especially in Germany, due to the low cost per person. In all OP II countries the activities are expected to be effective in contributing to social inclusion.

The capacity to address target group needs and local delivery and cooperation are key factors for the effectiveness of operations in both OP I and OP II.

Recommendations: It is important to ensure the quality of support services and tailoring to the needs of end recipients to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of the different types of assistance. For this to happen, flexibility is key in the delivery of the programme. The target group should be consulted on their needs and the services provided should also present a choice of a range of different food products and social support services.

#### **3.4.4 What is the feasibility of alternative delivery mechanisms and support modes for the provision of support to the most deprived (e.g. shared management, indirect management, budget support)?**

FEAD is implemented in accordance with the principle of shared management. This means that the implementation tasks of FEAD are delegated to Member States. Both the Commission and the Member States respect the principles of sound financial management, transparency and non-discrimination and ensure the visibility of Union action when they manage Union funds.

In practice, FEAD OPs are implemented through 'partner organisations', namely public bodies and/or non-profit organisations that deliver food and/or basic material assistance to the most deprived combined, where applicable, with accompanying measures (OP type I) or that will carry out activities aiming at the social inclusion of the most deprived persons (OP type II).

The analysis of the FEAD delivery system based on shared management has identified the following success factors<sup>61</sup>:

- Building on experiences and lessons learned from previous food aid programmes;
- Good cooperation between the central/national and the local delivery level;
- Extensive network to reach those in need all over the country;
- Involvement of volunteers given that resources are not always sufficient to cover the human resources needs, especially at the delivery stage.

Adaptation to the conditions of the end recipients, such as: delivery of prepared meals in the street or social canteens for homeless people; delivery of food packages to people who can cook; home delivery to people with disabilities; and self-service at delivery centres to put the end-recipient in a consumer situation. Well trained staff at

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<sup>61</sup> Source: interviews

the delivery points so they can listen to the end recipients' problems and redirect them to other types of assistance they may need (e.g. social services).

Alternative delivery mechanisms that could be considered include:

- Indirect management, whereby the European Commission entrusts budget implementation tasks to Member States or to bodies designated by them. In the case of FEAD, these can be national food banks in EU MS or types of development agencies/foundations that deal with social inclusion issues. Indirect management in other contexts<sup>62</sup> has shown that geographical proximity of the indirect management bodies to the final beneficiaries is a strength in terms of transparency, because it strengthens the communication and exchange between target population and donor.
- Direct management, whereby the European Commission is in charge of all EU budget implementation tasks, which are performed directly by its departments either at headquarters or in the EU delegations or through European executive agencies. Therefore, the European Commission or the European executive agency would be the contracting authority for FEAD and would take decisions on behalf and for the account of the partner countries.
- A combination of direct and indirect management where centralised actions are directly managed by the Commission and decentralised actions are managed by the Member State. However, the indications so far are that food and basic material assistance are best coordinated and delivered in a decentralised manner. Therefore this option may not be appropriate for FEAD.
- Budget support delivery mainly intervenes at national or sector level. It can be used for a variety of interventions and objectives. In the EU context, education is the most important sector, followed by agriculture, rural development and food security, and health. With the budget support modality, resources are transferred directly to the partner's country national treasury, so strategy related expenditure (in the case of FEAD, strategy to alleviate poverty and social exclusion) cannot be one-on-one linked with the transferred resources. The forms of budget support defined by the EU<sup>63</sup> (to strengthen government systems, to support transition processes in fragile countries and to support sector policies and reforms) do not seem relevant for FEAD type measures. Given the focused character of the latter to alleviate extreme forms of poverty and material deprivation, resources should not be 'diluted' or bundled together with those aimed at other strategic objectives.

The feasibility of these alternative delivery mechanisms has been analysed in the focus groups that took place at EU level and in selected Member States. There was almost unanimous support for the current system of shared management. The arguments for maintaining the shared management of FEAD include:

- ✓ Accumulated experience with shared management. Shared management is a well-established system and partner organisations have become familiar with it. There are clear requirements and infrastructure in place which should not be lost.
- ✓ National and regional know-how essential. The Member States are more aware of the poverty and social inclusion challenges in their countries and in a better position than the EU to decide where help is most needed and what works best. In OP II in particular, municipalities are also involved in the shared management structure and have responsibilities in programme implementation

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<sup>62</sup> This is the case of ERASMUS+, see DG REGIO, "Effective and efficient delivery of European Structural and Investment Funds investments – Exploring alternative delivery mechanisms", Second Interim Report, August 2017.

<sup>63</sup> Idem

and adapting the FEAD structure into their regular system. This should be maintained.

- ✓ Indirect management is not pertinent. There are too many regional differences to apply indirect management, while it would not allow FEAD to align with national policies. The national level knows the reality better than the EC and can identify target groups more easily.
- ✓ Direct management is not pertinent either. It entails the weakness of the EC not being close to local realities, which is very important in the case of FEAD where the needs of end recipients need to be well known in order to deliver the optimal quantity and quality.
- ✓ Budget support is not pertinent. Budget support would not help achieve the objectives of the programme and would be more open to misuse.
- ✓ A combination of shared management and budget support may also work. It would give more flexibility and budget for accompanying measures and for particular measures responding to real needs of end recipients.

FEAD could only work with the ESF through a common management and control system under the condition that the relatively low administrative burden and the low threshold of FEAD are maintained. Otherwise, FEAD should not be pooled with ESF for the following reasons:

- It would make FEAD more complex since the ESF is much more bureaucratic.
- The FEAD and ESF target groups are not the same; if they were to be merged, some end recipients may not be reached.
- The flexibility to choose the FEAD target group would be lost.
- However, synergies between FEAD and ESF should increase, especially for accompanying measures under OP I and for social inclusion measures under OP II.

The FEAD network meeting of November 2017 introduced the possibility to establishing a human capital umbrella fund that would cover all the existing funds: ESF, FEAD, EASI, YEI. This human capital fund would be managed in shared management or directly, and would unite the social inclusion aspects of the ESF and the FEAD. It would apparently not have an overall strategy but be mainly guided by the country specific recommendations. It would also have fewer indicators. If such an umbrella fund is to be introduced, there are certain elements that would be important to maintain or introduce:

- Improving the link between the different funds;
- Ensuring that the low threshold nature of the FEAD measures is maintained;
- Ensuring that there are fewer rather than more indicators;
- Ensuring greater communication between the ESF and FEAD monitoring committees;
- Encouraging European solutions to European problems;
- Ensuring that sight is not lost of the end recipients in the devising of the programmes.

**Conclusion:** There are strong arguments for keeping the FEAD delivery mechanism of shared management, mainly because of its simplicity, the accumulated experience and the national and regional knowledge of poverty and social exclusion challenges and needs. This view is shared by interviewees, focus group participants as well as participants in the FEAD Network meeting in November 2017.

Should a new umbrella fund be introduced, shared management can still be maintained while ensuring a closer link and cooperation between the different

Funds, proximity to the needs of end recipients and safeguarding the low threshold nature of FEAD.

**Recommendation:** 'Keep it simple' should become the underlying motive for delivering FEAD assistance, whether as a separate fund or as part of an umbrella fund. The elements that have worked well should be maintained, notably the shared management delivery mechanism.

### **3.4.5 Does the procedure for identifying the end recipients facilitate access to FEAD assistance?**

#### **OP I**

The identification of end recipients in OP I is based mainly on income criteria, except for the homeless who are reached mainly with the help of social services. When these are used, income is checked through income statements that end recipients must supply to the relevant authorities or through the databases of national or local authorities. Examples include inter alia:

- In Spain, potential end beneficiaries must present themselves to social services to certify their situation of extreme poverty. However, this has resulted in an 'avalanche' of applications towards scarcely equipped social services.
- In Slovakia, the list of end recipients is derived from administrative data on recipients of minimum income support. The database covers the vast majority of households at the highest risk of poverty and material deprivation. In the Czech Republic, information on end recipients is linked to the social benefit (people are already registered in a database).
- In Greece, all persons eligible and registered for minimum income support can apply for FEAD. Income can be assessed electronically which facilitates the process: end recipients inform the central tax system electronically which in turn informs the social solidarity income programme and FEAD. In Cyprus, all persons eligible for the minimum guarantee scheme are eligible for FEAD support.
- In Romania, the income data of end recipients comes from local authorities and decentralised units of the Ministry of Labour.
- In Austria, the means-tested minimum income has been used to identify the target group (children at risk of poverty).

In some other countries, a more global assessment of one's situation is carried out to identify end recipients, including the following examples:

- In France, the individual situation of each person is analysed by partner organisations with the help of external social workers. This assessment determines the duration and quantities of food distributed. There is a diversity of practices and thresholds of eligibility due to the disparity of the cost of living and the rate of poverty from one region to another one in metropolitan France and overseas. There is also the possibility to receive emergency support where no identification is necessary.
- In Luxemburg, social services undertake a global assessment of the end-recipient's needs in order to direct them to the appropriate service and ensure fair access to the appropriate support.
- In Romania, end recipients do not need to register or provide anything. The lists with the beneficiaries qualifying for aid are prepared by the local authorities.
- In Finland, the approach is even more open as there is no procedure for identifying the end recipients. As the FEAD support is based on open access and equality, the definition of end recipient is a subjective one. This means a person who feels that they need food aid will receive FEAD food aid at the food aid distribution event / location. The aim is to lower the threshold for food aid so



that everyone in need of food aid can receive it and be guided to supporting services.

There is therefore a diversity of procedures to identify end recipients. For some of them, access to FEAD assistance is not easy as they cannot be reached by these processes (e.g. homeless, Roma). This is why some countries have undertaken steps to facilitate access to the most difficult to reach target groups, including:

- Longer delivery periods. In order to reach more isolated target groups such as homeless people and minorities such as Roma, the delivery periods in Greece last longer so as to give time to partners to find and inform these end recipients that their support has arrived.
- Use of local networks. The organisations involved in FEAD in Slovenia and Spain use comprehensive networks and centres throughout the country in order to reach vulnerable groups. Local networks have the advantage that they are well known to target groups, while the support of volunteers enhances their accessibility to target groups.
- Use the right typologies of organisations for outreach. In Finland and Ireland, different types of organisations reach different categories of target groups, e.g. mental health associations for people with disabilities, association for the unemployed for unemployed people, etc.

There are however still some drawbacks that programme authorities need to address, including:

- The potential 're-ranking effect'. For example, a family in Italy with a 2,999 composite family indicator will receive help, whereas another one with 3,001 will not be eligible. As a consequence, the FEAD effect will trigger re-ranking, i.e.: after the effect of the policy, the poorer family before the treatment becomes the richer one afterwards.
- The broad definition of target groups may not facilitate access to those most in need.
- Proving the eligibility criteria is complicated and partly bureaucratic, raising the question whether some people in real need may not have proof to comply with eligibility criteria and are being excluded from the support system as a result.

Against this background, the access of end recipients to FEAD assistance can be facilitated in the future if programme authorities undertake actions that aim to digitalise, individualise and simplify the certification process of end recipients, for instance:

- Avoid duplications. Given the large numbers of end recipients, especially in the larger MS (ES, PL, RO, FR, IT), duplications may occur where end recipients access more than one delivery point. One approach to resolve this via an information system to record and control end recipients and the food they receive. There is however the issue of personal data protection to take into account but many large partner organisations (e.g. national level associations and food banks) already have such tools in place. Another approach is to merge delivery points in the same area and gain economies of scale as well as well as reduce the risk of duplication of support. This approach has already been implemented successfully in the municipality of Barcelona in Spain where delivery organisations (food banks) cooperate to ensure effective access of end recipients to the FEAD support.
- Capacity building. Better skilled delivery organisations would be able to address end recipients more effectively, respond to their needs and control potential duplications. They would also become better able to address target groups that are not easily reached such as the homeless and immigrants.
- Better focus on those most in need. This could be done by introducing some filters or additional criteria in order to address specific groups of end recipients,

for instance single parent families. A social research study in each country can be a good source of information to this end.

- Centralise and localise certification. There are two complementary options:
  - a) More centralised certification, e.g. in each municipality to a unique body so that end recipients do not have to go to several different places to obtain different certifications for different types of support. This would require better coordination of FEAD with other types of support and increase complementarity.
  - b) Greater involvement of local NGOs / flexibility in certification. NGOs who are partner organisations can carry out certification of the end recipients' situation of poverty. The advantages of this is the individualised assessment and trust between NGOs and end recipients, which makes the process more flexible and less stigmatising. NGOs would use clear and objective criteria for certification in order to target those most in need. The latest FEAD Network meeting in November 2017 reinforced this option by underlining the importance of trusting the partner organisations – who are in direct contact with end recipients on a daily basis – to select who they wish to support.

## **OP II**

In OP II type programmes, proactive approaches have been used to identify the end recipients.

In the countries that target immigrants (DE, SE), the identification of end recipients is primarily based on outreach activities. This includes the creation of meeting or gathering places in Sweden where local municipalities can collaborate with civil society. In addition, mobile teams perform outreach work in the street and in temporary settlements, both in Sweden and Germany.

In the Netherlands, which targets pensioners with very low income, the approach of using hostesses to approach the target group is considered to be one of the key success factors of the project and therefore facilitates access to FEAD assistance. On the other hand, the absence of an unambiguous working definition of the target group, seems to make it more difficult for the hostesses to identify whether or not a senior person belongs to the target group.

Conclusions: In conclusion, OP I programmes use mainly income eligibility criteria and end recipients are either registered already in minimum income support database or they have to accredit their situation of poverty through income statements and/or interviews with social services or similar. Some countries undertake proactive outreach approaches to reach end recipients who are at risk of remaining outside the system (e.g. homeless, Roma). In OP II, outreach activities are the main channel used to identify the end recipients. In both OP I and OP II, local coordination and local networks play an important role in helping end recipients access FEAD support.

Recommendations: In the future, the access of end recipients to FEAD assistance can be facilitated in various ways: a) the establishment of information systems that check and avoid duplications<sup>64</sup>; b) the cooperation of delivery organisations to reach all those that need support in the same area; c) the introduction of filters or additional criteria that enable a distinction of those most in need; d) more centralised certification processes linking them also to those of other funds/programmes; e) individualised and more flexible certification through the involvement of local NGOs with knowledge of the area and the target groups. Finally, the capacity building of programme bodies, including the delivery

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<sup>64</sup> Always respecting the personal data protection principles

organisations who are in direct contact with the end recipients would enhance their capacity to effectively deliver the support but also to facilitate access to the most difficult to reach target groups such as homeless people and migrants.

### 3.4.6 Does the use of flat rates under OP I simplify the implementation of operations by partner organisations?

A flat rate as defined in Article 26(2)(c) of Regulation is used to cover the administration, transport and storage costs for the partner organisations. The evidence overall suggests that the use of flat rates for OP I simplifies implementation of operations in most Member States (AT, BG, EE, ES, FR, GR, HU, IE, IT, LV, MT, PL, PT, SI, SK). The advantages of flat rates include:

- An accountable system with legal certainty;
- They contribute to reducing the administrative burden through simplifying the process and reducing the production of documents;
- They simplify the calculation of the amount to be paid to partner organisations.

However, 5% is considered a low rate by most countries (AT, BG, EE, ES, FR, GR, HU, LU, LT, MT, PL, PT, SK), given the high administrative burden, while also the increasing number of end recipients increases overheads. More specifically:

- The administrative costs for transport, logistics and controlling<sup>65</sup> are higher than the flat rate allows, so a higher flat rate or a rate based on real costs would be more appropriate.
- The latest FEAD Network meeting in November 2017 highlighted that the overall funding for the programme should increase, in particular when it comes to the 5% flat rate currently available to cover logistical, technical and administrative costs.

The 5% allocated to the accompanying measures<sup>66</sup> is far too low for these measures to achieve their expected result of contributing to the social inclusion of deprived people. The accompanying measures are resource-intensive activities that need specific skills and good planning, which is why they have not been used much by Member States so far. However, their potential for contributing to social inclusion is widely recognised. If the flat rate does not increase, a different approach should be adopted to encourage the use of accompanying measures. For instance, Managing Authorities may give sufficient autonomy to partner organisations to be creative and innovative in terms of the format of the accompanying measures provided, so they are closely tailored to the needs of individual end recipients. The last FEAD Network meeting also stressed the importance of individualised support for families and of taking into account the different social systems across Member States in the EU.

**Conclusion:** Although flat rates under OP I simplify the activities of partner organisations, yet the actual administrative costs do not justify a rate of only 5%. The flat rate for accompanying measures is also considered low by most countries although the potential of these measures for social inclusion is high.

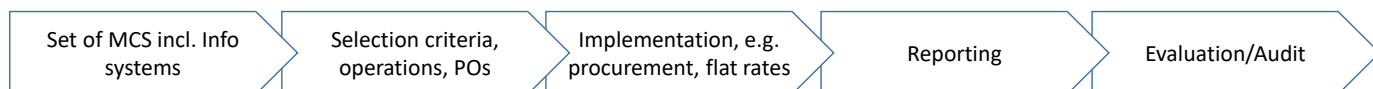
**Recommendation:** Flat rates for logistics should increase while the flat rate for accompanying measures may increase or accompanying measures be more focused on individualised support and closely tailored to the needs of individual end recipients.

<sup>65</sup> According to Article 26.2.c of the FEAD Regulation, eligible costs include administrative, transport and storage costs at a flat rate of 5%.

<sup>66</sup> According to Article 26.2.e of the FEAD Regulation, eligible costs include the costs of accompanying measures at a flat rate of 5% of the costs of purchasing food and other material assistance.

### 3.4.7 Is there any scope for simplification?

Scope for simplification has been identified in most countries. Proposals for simplification are offered along the FEAD delivery process, from its set up to evaluation and audit. The following common steps were assessed:



- a) Management and control systems, including information systems: For some countries, especially those new to the Fund, setting up management and control systems was a challenge (IR, HR, HU, MT, LU). In Ireland for example, they are still waiting to get designation. Suggestions for simplifications include:
  - a. The management calendar to coincide with an annual planning that takes into account the peak periods, e.g. in winter months there is a higher need for food and for certain basic material assistance items.
  - b. Reducing the amount of paperwork required for management and control purposes, e.g. reduce the requirement to show each individual proof of payment for material costs, reduce the number of documents to be verified.
  - c. In countries with a large number of delivery points, introducing an information system that helps avoid duplications of support (end recipients accessing more than one delivery point). The information tool could be used to assign food to different families (e.g. according to needs, number of family members, etc.) and to manage stocks – duplications of end recipients would also be avoided with such as tool.
  - d. Increasing mutual feedback between the different types and levels of control, (e.g. with controls by intermediary bodies and by partner organisations, administrative/financial and quality controls) and potentially also reducing the number of first level controls.
  - e. Improving the management capacity of the organisations involved in the delivery of support through capacity building on methods and processes, including inter alia transport and storage processes.
  - f. Simplifying governance. In some countries, there are too many layers involved (ES, IT) or involvement of a high number of stakeholders lacking capacity and ownership (CZ). This multiplies the controls and monitoring, while maintaining a distance from the end recipients' needs. Reducing these governance layers would make the delivery leaner and coordination simpler. In small countries in particular (e.g. Belgium), it may be more efficient to have a leaner governance system, with no intermediary bodies or different departments having to manage different parts of the programme. In larger countries (e.g. Spain) it may be more efficient to rely where possible on organisations that already have a network and distribution and delivery experience across the country (e.g. the Red Cross, food banks, etc.).
- b) Selection criteria (for operations, partner organisations, end recipients):
  - a. Introducing more flexibility in the selection of delivery organisations so that their work corresponds to their real capacities. The latter can also improve through capacity building (as suggested above as part of the management system)
  - b. Involving local NGOs and/or local social services in selection processes for end recipients. More than simplification, this is also aimed at increasing the effectiveness of support by better targeting as local organisations have a better knowledge of end recipients their needs. It involves empowerment of frontline workers on the ground to actively address poverty and social exclusion. Some local authorities/social services already run their own social programmes and FEAD may just add to this help and complement on costs and diversity.

Improving the content of the food basket according to different needs of end recipients - one option may be a survey amongst delivery organisations to determine needs and thus the optimal content of the food basket. Consider also simpler food items such as pre-cooked food, easy to open cans, packaged food, etc., while ensuring a balance that reduces the generation of large undelivered stock (food waste).

- c) Implementation of assistance. This involves the purchase and delivery of food, the certification of end recipients, and the use of flat rates. This is an area with further suggestions for simplification:
- a. **Simplify the purchase of food.** The purchase of food is based on public procurement rules which tend to be complex and lengthy and are especially burdensome for non-profit organisations (CY, GR, FR, SK, RO, CZ). The requirement to go through them has caused delays in the delivery of food and other material assistance. In the cases where a public procurement takes place for every purchase, every transport and every distribution, the model of a 'framework contractor' is possible under existing procurement rules but is not always followed. It should be encouraged in order that the framework contractor carries out the purchase, transport and storage of food, while the partner organisation manages the operation overall and ensures the delivery to end recipients through its delivery points.
  - b. **Simplify certification requirements.** In some countries (ES, GR, HU, IT, SI), the request to certify one's condition of deprivation increases the administrative burden and causes delays in delivery. The strict eligibility/certification requirements puts a strong burden to partner organisations and many of them withdrew from FEAD as they could not cope with the excessive administrative burden. It may therefore be effective to simplify certification requirements through unification of certification through a unique body in each municipality (suggested in Spain) or providing certification through 'Helpdesks' that cover several partner organisations in the same geographical area (suggested in Greece).
  - c. **Increase flat rates in OP I and lump sums in OP II.** Flat rates in OP I should increase to better reflect administrative costs. One option could be to supplement payments of administrative costs with money from the budget allocated to accompanying measures and vice versa when necessary (BG). Germany (OP II) uses flat rates (e.g. 13% for administrative costs) to pay partner organisations for administrative costs such as rent and in this way reduces the need for detailed information and supporting documents in the statement of expenditure and helps to reduce the administrative burden. Slovakia also used a lump-sum rate to reimburse administrative costs associated with the distribution of food donations.
  - d. **Simplify delivery.** The use of vouchers is suggested in several countries (BG, EE, GR, FI, PT, RO). This could work as a system of personalised vouchers or 'solidarity cards' with bar codes for eligible items to be exchanged for food and basic material in selected 'FEAD' supermarkets. This system could work with a network of supermarkets associated to FEAD against a predefined set of articles (food and other basic material). It would contribute to:
    - i. Economic efficiency by reducing operational costs and simplifying stock management;
    - ii. Food quality by allowing the purchase of fresh food;
    - iii. Inclusiveness, eliminating most of the stigmatization that may result from being recipient of the programme;
    - iv. Social benefits to end recipients allowing them to ration food purchases according to their daily needs;

- v. Economic benefits to local markets by boosting the role of local supermarkets.

The drawback however to the use of vouchers include the need to identify the end recipients, the possibilities of not using vouchers as intended, the need to include supermarkets in the audit trail, while it is not clear how accompanying measures will be provided. At the same time, the role of partner organisations will diminish if vouchers are used, so Member States would need to balance the advantages and disadvantages of a voucher system. A recent experience from Poland where vouchers were used (outside FEAD), showed that the public procurement for printing and delivering the vouchers increased both the costs and the duration of the delivery (lower efficiency)

- d) Simplify monitoring and reporting. Suggested options include:
  - a. The replacement of reporting tables with online forms (although, local organisations operating with volunteers may not be familiar with online reporting) (Finland);
  - b. Reducing the extensive list of data to be recorded and stored in computerised form in the monitoring system (Annex 1 of Commission's delegated regulation (EU) No 532/2014) (Germany);
  - c. The use of electronic tablets at delivery points so the stock is updated fast and online, from Malta the development of a barcode on entitlement letters to end recipients (Greece);
  - d. The production of reports that fully reflect the real counselling situation in Germany. A questionnaire should include content related questions and, with regard to the appointments with the end recipients, it would be good if there were the possibility to write a short text per appointment. It would also be useful to be able to state the reason for an unsuccessful referral. This would have a learning effect (Germany).
- e) Evaluation and audit are different activities and should not be mixed up. In relation to audit, this is difficult to carry out because FEAD relies on the ground on volunteers to a large extent (there are exceptions where volunteers are not used such as in Greece). Simplification of audit procedures should take this into account. In relation to evaluation, overall the guidance received by the European Commission is deemed to be adequate. There is however a certain lack of experience, while the challenge will be to distinguish between ESF and FEAD results in terms of social inclusion and poverty (net effects of FEAD).

In addition to simplification, efficiency can improve through better information provision and capacity building of programme authorities (MA, IBs and partner organisations). In some cases, the administrative burden is high due to lack of experience of programme authorities and partners (RO). In such cases, the issue is not simplification but better information provision. For instance, information sessions offered to partner organisations increases their understanding of the programme requirements and avoids any unnecessary time and resources spent on implementing these requirements. Another option is the elaboration of a FEAD manual or road map (as in Malta) for the provision of information and the effective and efficient implementation of the programme.

Conclusion: In conclusion, there are proposed simplifications encompassing all stages of the programme from the set-up of the management and control system and selection criteria to implementation, reporting and audit.

Recommendation: All the proposals can be considered recommendations for the future.



### 3.5 European added value

#### Key findings

- The FEAD provides additional funding (volume effects), new types of support for new target groups (scope effects) and support for new ways of doing things (role effects). Process effects can also be noted in the field of networking and building partnerships.

#### Volume effects

- The vast majority of Member States experienced a volume effect from the FEAD in their countries, often significant. Their descriptions can be divided into two distinct categories:
- Member States in which the FEAD was adding to national or local initiatives
- Member States in which the FEAD was filling a gap, sometimes to the extent of being the main or only national food support programme (OP I) or programme offering social inclusion support in such a form (OP II)
- The spending on material assistance is minimal compared to the food support. The budget initially allocated to material assistance was 9% of the total public expenditure overall. Spending lies at 2.5% of the initial budget foreseen in the OPs in those countries intending to provide material assistance (AT, CZ, IE, EL, HR, IT, CY, LT, LU, HU, PT, RO and SK).
- There are significant differences in the volume effect per country and per person assisted linked to the Member States decisions on how much money to allocate to FEAD and the selection of target groups and type of assistance.
- An important volume effect is related to the leverage of further sources of food and material assistance (donations) and to the mobilisation of local organisations and volunteers.

#### Scope effects

- The main scope effect is in the inclusion of new target groups in the provision of non-financial support. In eight Member States, the FEAD had a different target group than national policies. Three of them are OP II countries (Germany, Denmark and Sweden) and five of them OP I Member States (Cyprus, Estonia, Malta, Austria, and Romania).
- In OP II MS, the FEAD supports vulnerable groups (EU migrants, homeless people and older people) in accessing existing services. Without FEAD, these groups would possibly not be able to access these services.
- The low threshold nature of the measures also represents a scope effect in that it broadens social services through outreach and easily accessible services to the most deprived.
- FEAD had a strong scope effect in reaching the poorest and most rural regions and in covering all the territory.
- In some countries, the scope effect was small as the same target groups were covered by similar support to national support (e.g. school meals in the Czech Republic). In these cases, there was nevertheless a volume effect.

#### Role effects

- One of the main role effects was mutual learning. Mutual learning in the form of improved cooperation between the authorities and NGOs, between social services and local organisations, between partner organisations on the ground, and between individual stakeholders was noted in most Member States.
- Three quarters of Member States agreed that FEAD contributed to raising awareness for the needs of the most deprived.
- Little evidence of mainstreaming effects was noted in half of all Member States.

- In those Member States where potential for mainstreaming was noted, it was not yet possible to say whether this would be extended after the potential end of FEAD.
- At the time of writing, the effects were generally in the form of an exchange of best practice and deeper cooperation between partner organisations and local or national authorities and each other.

#### Process effects

- Process effects were observed at both Managing Authority level and at the level of the partner organisations.
- At Managing Authority level, effects in terms of organisational skills and administrative capacity as well as better awareness from participating in Networks were noted. At the same time, Managing Authorities also stated that the FEAD was creating an additional administrative burden.
- Partner organisations, particularly at the local level, profited from FEAD in terms of building new forms of cooperation and networking.
- Partner organisations also had to become/become more efficient and professional due to the added workload and new activities.
- Although outside the scope of this evaluation, also at EU level, the cooperation in the framework of the FEAD Networking events was highly praised as it offered an unprecedented opportunity to meet people involved in similar activities in other countries.

#### Consequences of stopping FEAD support

- The interviews, focus groups and OPC results showed that the consequences of discontinuing FEAD would be severely felt by the most deprived.
- In eight Member States, the specific support measures provided by the FEAD would stop without being replaced. In seven further Member States, state/local authorities would not be able to provide a similar level of support to the one provided by the FEAD. FEAD target groups in four Member States, namely Germany, Denmark, Malta and France, would not have access to aid anymore, while for other member states intensity of the aid or coverage of target groups would be affected..
- Stopping FEAD would also have spatial and temporal consequences: it would have a high impact on rural areas in Finland and Latvia, while it would lead to an uneven access to food in Estonia.

### **3.5.1 What kind of EU added value is resulting from the FEAD support volume, scope, role, and process) and how significant is it?**

European added value is particularly relevant in the case of the FEAD as it is stated in the fund regulation that the fund is not meant to “replace public policies undertaken by the Member States to fight poverty and social exclusion”. Given the presence of existing national policy frameworks, the aim of the question on the extent to which FEAD adds to existing actions is indeed to understand what added value FEAD is providing (in terms of volume, scope, role, and process effects) in addition to the existing policies. The four forms of European added value are described below.

Volume effects – FEAD funding adds to existing actions, either by supporting national action in general or specific areas of national policy. On the downside, there may be examples of FEAD overlapping with or displacing other interventions not co-financed by FEAD.

Scope effects – FEAD action broadens existing action by supporting groups or policy areas that would not otherwise receive support.



Role effects – FEAD action supports local/regional innovations in social policies that are taken up at national level or ‘mainstreamed’.

Process effects – FEAD action has lasting effects on processes in the MS, observed in terms of improved systems or methods, or for instance in improved cooperation between various public sector actors.

Under 3.3.1, what is available at national level in terms of legislation and public policies to fight poverty and social exclusion was described.

Against this sketch of the national policy background, we can turn to the evaluation questions on the European added value, starting with the extent to which FEAD adds to existing actions.

**3.5.1.1 To what extent does FEAD add to existing actions, either by supporting national action in general or specific areas of national policy (volume effect)?**

In spite of initial delays in starting FEAD activities in some Member States in 2014 (Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Ireland, Greece, Croatia, Latvia, Luxembourg, Hungary, Malta, Slovakia and Finland) and continued delays in Ireland, Greece, Croatia, Hungary, Malta and Slovakia in 2015, FEAD has already had significant volume effects across the EU by the end of 2016. The delays nevertheless explain some discrepancies in the appreciation of the added value of the FEAD in general and of its volume effect in particular.

Quantitatively speaking, after this delayed start, the food distribution in OP I countries has been continuously increasing in fourteen Member States: Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Estonia, Spain, France, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Slovenia, and Finland. It has slightly decreased between 2015 and 2016 in Belgium (minimally), Italy, Portugal and Romania. In Italy it decreased by about 60% although the number of people receiving food support remained stable. The reason for this is that the food distributed in 2015 also included food bought in 2014 and the distribution in 2016 was delayed by the fact that tenders for the buying of the food were delayed for administrative reasons (introduction of a new public tenders legislation). In Portugal the OP was revised in 2016 - including the definition of the concept of economic need, of the food basket and of the information system - and there was no food distribution under FEAD. During 2016, the government reinforced its action regarding other measures, mainly the social canteens, in order to mitigate the absence of FEAD intervention. In Romania, the distribution has been quite low per person and the distribution rather infrequent. One reason for this is that due to a change in Government at the end of 2016, there was a modification in the governance of the FEAD OP. The Ministry for European Funds has been incorporated into the Ministry for Regional Development, Public Administration and European Funds (MDRAPFE). Hence, the FEAD MA is under the responsibility of MDRAPFE and the Beneficiary for operation food deprivation is MDRAPFE. The money spent in 2016 was actually from the 2015 budget. However, the new FEAD OP has been approved and will be implemented starting with 2017.

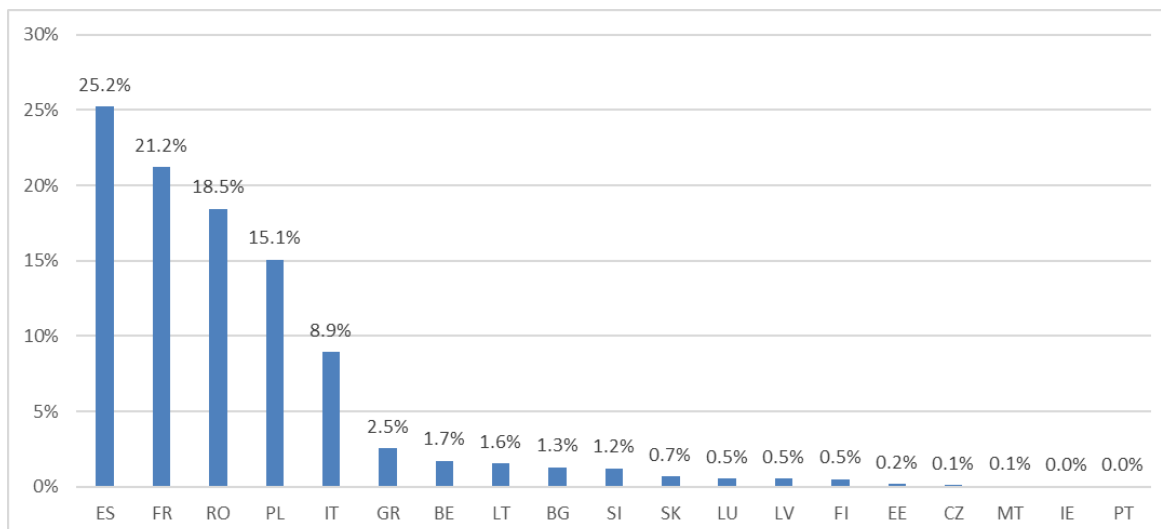
Table 13. Amount of food distributed and evolution 2014-2016

MS	(11) Total quantity of food support distributed.			Evolution
	2014	2015	2016	
BE	4,609	6,682	6,538	
BG	0	442	4,907	
CZ	0	7	432	
EE	0	708	790	
ES	48,779	81,578	95,189	
FI	0	598	1,918	
FR	65,860	74,087	80,176	
GR	0	0	9,553	
IE	0	0	162	
IT	0	87,517	33,762	
LT	3,330	5,925	5,915	
LU	0	1,174	2,047	
LV	0	1,341	1,975	
MT	0	0	301	
PL	4,533	60,227	56,917	
PT	7,707	8,250	0	
RO	19,386	77,336	69,676	
SI	235	1,884	4,637	
SK	0	0	2,507	

Source: SFC2014

In 2016, five Member States were distributing more than 90% of the food distributed overall under FEAD programmes in the EU. These Member States are Poland, Romania, Italy, France and Spain. In Bulgaria, Spain, Malta and Slovakia, FEAD co-financed food products make up 100% in the total volume of food distributed by the partner organisations. In Lithuania, Slovakia, Finland and Italy, the FEAD is now the main food aid provider. In Estonia and Finland the FEAD is the only nationwide regular food aid delivery programme. In France and in Spain, there was a clear volume effect according to interviewees. In Poland, the FEAD OP was considered complementary to national policy, particularly in the area of social assistance. In Romania, which has established food and material assistance systems, the target groups of FEAD are the same as those of the national schemes. However, there is a very limited risk of overlapping because the social inclusion actions in the Romanian FEAD OP aim at combating social exclusion of people, families and vulnerable groups and the FEAD at providing food aid and basic material assistance for children. The fact that the two funds share the Managing Authority (Management Authority of the OP Human Capital (AM POCU) facilitates the coordination of the two funds, reduces the risk of double funding and facilitates complementarity. In Italy, PO and MA disagree on the risk of overlap of the FEAD, but quantitatively speaking the volume effect is still undoubtable. This finding is corroborated by the OPC where the majority of respondents (90% of OP I and 80% of OP II) agreed that FEAD support is needed to expand types and volumes of assistance.

Figure 32. Total quantity of food support distributed in 2016 (in %)



Source: SFC 2014

The vast majority of Member States experienced a volume effect from the FEAD in their countries, often significant. Their descriptions can be divided into two distinct categories:

- Member States in which the FEAD was adding to national or local initiatives, which was considered positive by interviewees but could be a step towards overlap and
- Member States in which the FEAD was filling a gap in the aid already provided.

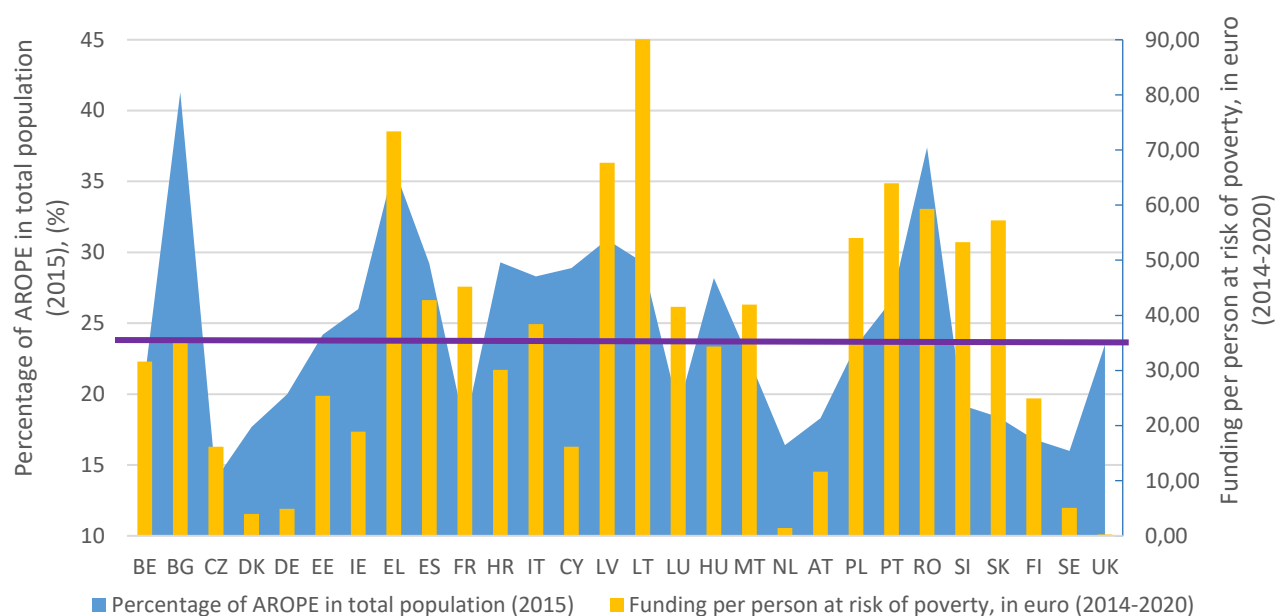
In relation to the first category, the FEAD provides support in countries with very different traditions and organisations of aid to the most deprived.

In seven OP I Member States, the FEAD was adding to national public programmes and policies. These countries are Bulgaria (warm soups distribution), Italy, Malta, Poland, Portugal, Romania and Slovakia. In Italy, the managing authority noted an overlap with other projects, especially with those under ESF (and related to TO9). There is still a volume effect, since the FEAD represents 50% of the overall food support in this Member State. In the Czech Republic, a distinction was drawn between the Specific Objective (SO) I (lunches at school) which was said not to have a volume effect because of administrative burdens and an overlap with national programmes, and the SOII and SOIII (Food and Material deprivation of persons and households in serious social need) which had such an effect. In Poland, the focus group participants agreed that it would have been impossible to cover such a large number of people without the FEAD.

In six OP I Member States, the FEAD was adding to local initiatives: Belgium, Czech Republic (SOII and SOIII), Greece, Spain, Latvia and Slovakia. In these countries, the aid is organised at local level only, often by municipalities, private actors or NGOs. It is worth noting that the FEAD is the first food aid programme coordinated at national level in Greece, which of course gives it a special impact but creates new challenges for stakeholders as well.

Evidence from three Member States, two OP II (Germany and Sweden) and one OP I (Ireland), shows that there was little to no volume effect per person to the FEAD in their countries. This is illustrated in the figure below. Germany and Sweden have some of the lowest percentages of FEAD funding per person at risk of poverty (around five euros for 2014-2020) in the EU. In Ireland, this percentage is under the EU average too (Ireland: 18.91 euros; EU average: 35 euros) while the percentage of persons at risk of poverty in Ireland is higher than the EU average (Ireland: 26; EU average: 24).

Figure 33. Percentage of AROPE in total population and funding per AROPE



Source: SFC 2014 and Eurostat

The table below shows that the funding per person at risk of poverty/percentage of people at risk of poverty ratio differs a lot between Member States: from 0.26 euros (the United Kingdom) to 90.08 euros (Lithuania). These figures show that the volume effect per person at risk of poverty varies between Member States, e.g. Lithuania receives the highest FEAD funding according to this criterion, 17 euros more than the second member in this ranking (Greece), although its rate of persons at risk of poverty is not the highest in the EU. Bulgaria receives the average funding per person at risk of poverty (35 euros), although it has the highest percentage of persons at risk of poverty in the EU (41%).

Figure 34. FEAD funds per Member States and end recipients

MS	FEAD Funding	Population (2016)	FEAD funding per capita (2014-2020), in euro	People at risk of poverty or social exclusion (2015)	Percentage of AROPE in total population (2015)	Funding per person at risk of poverty, in euro (2014-2020)	Number of persons reached within FEAD 2014-2016
BE	73,821,504	11,311,117	6.53	2,336,000	21	31.60	799,196
BG	104,815,264	7,153,784	14.65	2,982,000	41	35.15	279,057
CZ	23,329,849	10,553,843	2.21	1,444,000	14	16.16	61,675
DK	3,944,660	5,707,251	0.69	999,000	18	3.95	474
DE	78,893,211	82,175,684	0.96	16,083,000	20	4.91	21,655
EE	8,002,026	1,315,944	6.08	315,000	24	25.40	56,124
IE	22,766,327	4,724,720	4.82	1,204,000	26	18.91	54,605
EL	280,972,531	10,783,748	26.06	3,829,000	36	73.38	410,000
ES	563,410,224	46,445,828	12.13	13,175,000	29	42.76	5,393,301
FR	499,281,315	66,759,950	7.48	11,048,000	18	45.19	12,661,651
HR	36,628,990	4,190,669	8.74	1,216,000	29	30.12	0
IT	670,592,285	60,665,551	11.05	17,469,000	28	38.39	5,587,338
CY	3,944,660	848,319	4.65	244,000	29	16.17	2,500
LV	41,024,469	1,968,957	20.84	606,000	31	67.70	130,373
LT	77,202,641	2,888,558	26.73	857,000	29	90.08	741,442
LU	3,944,660	576,249	6.85	95,000	19	41.52	20,971
HU	93,882,921	9,830,485	9.55	2,735,000	28	34.33	0
MT	3,944,660	434,403	9.08	94,000	22	41.96	17,051
NL	3,944,660	16,979,120	0.23	2,744,000	16	1.44	281
AT	18,032,734	8,690,076	2.08	1,551,000	18	11.63	74,207
PL	473,359,260	37,967,209	12.47	8,761,000	23	54.03	2,757,540
PT	176,946,201	10,341,330	17.11	2,765,000	27	64.00	857,423
RO	441,013,044	19,760,314	22.32	7,435,000	37	59.32	6,347,777
SI	20,512,235	2,064,188	9.94	385,000	19	53.28	383,744
SK	55,112,543	5,426,252	10.16	963,000	18	57.23	142,349
FI	22,540,916	5,487,308	4.11	904,000	17	24.93	403,015
SE	7,889,321	9,851,017	0.80	1,555,000	16	5.07	582
UK	3,944,660	65,382,556	0.06	15,028,000	24	0.26	

Key					
190,019,930	Minimal FEAD Funding	<1		<22%	<10
		1 to 9		22% to 29%	10 to 19
		10 to 19		>30%	20 to 39
		20 to 30			40 to 49
					> 50

Source: Eurostat and SFC2014

A further volume effect to be noted was a leverage effect in mobilising local resources. Local social resources are mobilised and utilised effectively, especially through the network of delivery organisations in Spain. Local public and private resources are integrated to serve the requirements of FEAD delivery. In France, FEAD facilitates the recovery of unsold products and allows a real multiplier effect through the support it provides to associations in gathering unsold food products. It is important to note the complementarity of sources of supply between commodities purchased with the FEAD and donations in kind.

In conclusion, the FEAD was said to have a volume effect in nearly every Member State. It adds to existing initiatives (without overlap) either on national level (nationwide policies and programmes) or on local level (municipalities, NGOs). In several Member States, the FEAD is the only nationally coordinated food support programme and/or the main food aid provider. The fact that FEAD is sometimes the only source of food aid underlines how indispensable it has become. It has also mobilised local and national resources and had both leverage and multiplier effects.

### **3.5.1.2 To what extent does FEAD broaden existing action by supporting groups or policy areas that would not otherwise receive support (scope effect)?**

Evidence from 17 MS shows that the FEAD had a scope effect, while in nine MS there is little evidence so far of such an effect.

The main scope effect is in the inclusion of new target groups in the provision of non-financial support. In eight Member States, the FEAD had a different target group than national policies. Three of them are OP II countries (Germany, Denmark and Sweden) and five of them OP I Member States (Cyprus, Estonia, Malta, Austria, and Romania). The most mentioned groups were homeless people and EU citizens from other countries. In Romania, people who would otherwise have gone unnoticed were brought to the attention of the authorities, in particular the town hall social services in the larger towns and Bucharest, through FEAD. These people received information about their rights and the services they were entitled to. They also received counselling for various situations they were facing.

In Germany, the low threshold nature of the measures also represents a scope effect in that it broadens social services through outreach and easily accessible services to the most deprived. The German focus group discussed the added value of the FEAD in throwing light on the sensitive issue of freedom of movement of the very poor. This has led to difficult consequences both for the people concerned and for the social services in the target countries such as Germany. FEAD has enabled attention to be paid to these issues and the development of new tools for dealing with them, e.g. mother tongue counselling, outreach work, offers for parents and children, and low threshold offers for homeless people.

Two Member States, namely Poland and the Netherlands, said the target groups supported by the FEAD would have been helped anyway but on a smaller scale. In Poland the partner organisations were nevertheless able to more precisely identify the number of people in need as they established contact with them in their daily work. These organisations were also able to reach those who for some reason are not covered by the social welfare system. Finland and Italy said the FEAD had a strong scope effect in the poorest and most rural regions. In Italy, the focus group discussions revealed that better targeting of end-recipients was possible through the FEAD.

The OPC corroborates these findings with 83% of respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing with the statement that the FEAD contributes to expanding assistance to groups that would otherwise not receive it.

In Slovenia, the FEAD had a scope effect in that it provided accompanying measures in addition to the food and material aid. In Bulgaria, the FEAD was the only programme that provided meals all year long since the national programme only distributed warm meals during winter. Concerning non-food assistance, the FEAD provided specific support filling a gap in terms of types of material aid provided (Luxembourg, Austria, Slovenia and Slovakia). For instance, in Austria the school start package and in Slovakia the distribution of toiletries would not have been provided without the FEAD.

These findings are corroborated by the OPC in which 69% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the statement that the FEAD contributes to testing new activities. These were partly things like founding new food banks or being able to get in touch with hard to reach target groups (e.g. homeless people, ex-offenders and drug addicts) through the food and material assistance (OP I) and guide them towards further assistance. The majority (66%) of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the statement that the FEAD supported new delivery modes.

In several Member States, however, that the scope effect was limited or there was none. Spain, Slovakia and Czech Republic found the scope effect to be small because the target groups were the same as for the other sources of support. Local initiatives

even have a wider scope in Greece, considering that they have no target groups: aid is provided for everyone approaching them. France and Italy's MA claim the PEAD already had the same scope as the current FEAD programme. Finally, no scope effect could yet be noticed in Ireland, Hungary, two Member States in which the programme has just started or is about to start and Portugal.

A geographic scope effect was noted during the focus groups. In Spain, France and Italy, it was noted that the FEAD ensures food support throughout the territory, which was not the case of purely national food support.

FEAD also allows a consistent provision of food throughout the year. Food support is regular and stable over time and of a consistent quality. It often complements national food support allowing a wider range of products to be delivered, e.g. in Greece.

In conclusion, the scope effect of the FEAD was mainly in terms of new target groups and activities and greater territorial coverage. Two thirds of Member States were able to include new target groups such as homeless people and EU citizens. FEAD also contributed to testing new or expanding existing activities. Six Member States (Ireland, Hungary, Greece, France, Italy, Portugal) have not noted a scope effect, either because the scope is the same as the one of national initiatives or because of the late start of the programmes.

#### **3.5.1.3 To what extent does FEAD support local/regional innovations that are taken up at national level or national innovative actions that are then 'mainstreamed' (role effect)?**

Concerning the role effect of the FEAD, Member States had mixed views. In thirteen Member States, there was no evidence of FEAD resulting in a mainstreaming of activities. Interviews in the Netherlands, Sweden and Italy confirmed that there were initiatives but it was sometimes difficult to assess whether these would be extended after the end of the FEAD or would be taken up on national level.

In conclusion, there is not yet much evidence of the role effect of the FEAD. Regarding mainstreaming effects, half of the Member States suggested that it is too early in the FEAD implementation for clear effects to emerge. At this stage, the effects were generally in the form of an exchange of best practice and deeper cooperation between partner organisations and local or national authorities which is treated under process effects below

#### **3.5.1.4 To what extent does FEAD influence Member State administrations and organisations involved in the programmes (process effect)?**

FEAD is administered in shared management between the Commission, the MA and the PO. Process effects can be observed at the level of both MA and PO.

#### **Effects on Managing Authorities**

In two Member States (Belgium and Malta), there was no effect on the administrations because the systems used prior to the FEAD were the same as those required by the programme. In three other Member States, there was also no influence on the national administration, namely in the Netherlands, Slovakia and Cyprus. Managing Authorities in three Member States stated that the FEAD was creating an administrative burden (Luxembourg, Czech Republic and Estonia).

The FEAD was also considered to have a good influence on administrations in several Member States. There was increased cooperation between regional/local authorities and NGOs in Germany, Greece, Slovakia and Italy. In Spain, the FEAD allowed three ministries to work together for the first time (Employment, Agriculture and Health).

Organisational skills (database, accounting, public procurement procedure, monitoring, auditing etc.) were increased in several Member States (Austria, Finland, France, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania).

### **Effects on Partner Organisations**

In two Member States (Denmark and Ireland), the FEAD was mainly implemented by local organisations and had a positive effect on the latter, in particular in Ireland.

The FEAD was also considered to have positive effects on partner organisations in several Member States. In Greece, Poland, Portugal and Finland there was a deeper cooperation between partner organisations. The requirements to the implementation of the FEAD created a strong network of organisations in these Member States. In Poland, this new structure allowed the NGOs to look for different sources of food, such as food collections. In France, the focus group also confirmed that chains of solidarity link all stakeholders: the partners for the implementation of food distribution activities, local authorities that provide premises, businesses by donations or loans of equipment, agro-businesses foodstuffs or distribution providing foodstuffs, individuals on the occasion of donations and volunteers essential to the functioning of food aid schemes.

Overall, this enhanced cooperation has a positive effect beyond the implementation of the FEAD, as it allows organisations to provide all types of support more effectively and will continue after the end of the programme.

The professionalization of partner organisations, especially of local branches, was noted in some Member States. In the Netherlands, partner organisations (i.e. libraries) completely changed their organisation and focus in order to implement the FEAD and they have hired additional staff.

### **Mutual learning**

Belgium, Germany, the Netherlands and Slovenia highlighted the exchange of good practices between organisations. Germany, Estonia and Sweden also said there was a deeper cooperation between partner organisations and local or national authorities. Estonia, Luxembourg and Germany pointed to a visibility effect, for instance through television interviews on the topic of food waste in Estonia. The OPC corroborates this finding with 73% of respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing with the statement that the FEAD contributes to raising awareness.

Details on some of the mutual learning results are provided below:

- A pilot soup project is being run on national level after being suggested by a member of a partner organisation during one of the meetings which are held every three months on programme level in Belgium. The soup is made with leftovers from food used within the programme. This idea was introduced during one of these three month meetings by a person from one of the partner organisations and is now being piloted nationwide. This shows that local initiatives or ideas have a chance at being taken up nationally in the FEAD programme.
- In the framework of OP II in Germany, the local networking approach is a core aspect of FEAD in Germany. The cooperation with municipalities is a mandatory aspect which has to be proven right from the start of each project. Beneficiaries explicitly have to describe their local networking which is also seen as an essential contribution to ensure sustainable and effective results. Mutual learning is also assured through two annual networking events, so-called transfer workshops, at national level. The workshops are meant to raise the awareness of municipal staff for migrant issues. They are also meant to help identify good practice and explore how these can be transferred to municipal structures and national legislation. It is hoped (by the MA and partner organisations) that the



FEAD lessons can be carried over into mainstream policy after the end of the programme.

- In Estonia, campaigns for the collection of food donations were able to take place as a result of the increased cooperation between organisations and local authorities. The project manager of the food bank has established cooperation and partnerships with the local municipalities that assist in administering the food aid. The heads of rural parishes have also taken part. During the swine plague in 2016, the food bank received canned pork and this was helpful for the food bank and for the people. The representatives of the food bank have been invited to the crises commission in order to discuss the involvement of the food bank during potential crises. The television has shown interest in the topic of food waste and has done interviews with FEAD stakeholders.
- In Slovenia, the exchange of best practices allowed organisations to offer new types of accompanying measures to end recipients. The Red Cross also has regular meetings among the local coordinators in order to exchange experiences and to learn from each other. Successful new seminar topics, for instance, are then taken up also by others. Currently, seminars on health issues and various skills are very successful.
- The Swedish stakeholders highlighted that the meetings organised within the FEAD OP allowed all players to have a better understanding of the target group's needs. These networks provide a platform for the production of knowledge regarding the needs of the target group. The FEAD can to some extent be seen to contribute to further role effects in that health promotion interventions for the target group are developed in collaboration between public authorities and civil society organisations. However, as the operations implemented within the FEAD are based on temporary partnerships not included in national policy, the chances for mainstreaming of local and regional innovations are slim.
- In Poland, the experience of creating and developing a network of partner organisations across the whole country has had a significant impact on strengthening these organisations. In addition to food distribution, they are trying to develop other forms of support, such as obtaining food from other sources, e.g. by establishing cooperation with food producers. Cooperation has also been developed at the local level, both with local authorities and the local community. This is primarily accomplished through accompanying measures.

Also during the focus groups, the mutual learning effects were emphasised. In Romania, participants agreed that FEAD brings together local administrations and other public institutions to share information on issues and make proposals for the benefit of the programme and its end beneficiaries.

During the focus group in Spain, various types of mutual learning were noted. These are described in the box below.

*Box 3. FEAD contribution to mutual learning in Spain*

FEAD contributes to mutual learning through:

**Horizontal cooperation:** Between the three Ministries involved in the programme, Ministry of Employment and Social Security (MA), Ministry of Agriculture (IB for food support) and Ministry of Health, Social Services and Equality (IB for accompanying measures), which were not used to cooperating before FEAD. Regular meetings and exchange fora have brought these Ministries closer.

**Vertical cooperation:** Between the different management layers of the programme which are a very specific feature in Spain (national level intermediary bodies, partner organisations, their regional/provincial offices and local delivery organisations). There are several levels of control, exchange fora, meetings and exchange of good practice amongst them which have brought them closer to the reality of end recipients and have promoted team work and better public-private

coordination.

**Greater involvement of local social services:** Social workers of municipalities have become more involved in addressing food deprivation issues and have engaged into cooperation with NGOs.

**Integrated assistance:** Despite the weaknesses in the delivery of accompanying measures for reasons already described, the combination of food support and social support measures offer an innovative integrated approach to food deprivation and social exclusion.

**Participation:** Individual actors have also learned more, simply by participating. This is the case of delivery organisations which have increased their experience and knowledge on poverty and social exclusion issues.

There has also been a learning effect for end recipients who have raised their awareness on the support offered by FEAD and the differences from other types of support and initiatives.

**Tips/Suggestions for the future:**

- Maintain the cooperation structure of FEAD in the future and build on institutional synergies created
- Increase the capacity of delivery organisations to learn from each other through networking

These mutual learning effects are corroborated by the OPC where mutual learning is seen as one of the main fields of added value. 78% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the statement that the FEAD contributes to mutual learning. 74% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the statement that the FEAD contributes to the creation of partnerships. 71% agreed or strongly agreed with the statement that the FEAD contributes to engaging new organisations.

In conclusion, the process effect of the FEAD is mainly in terms of greater cooperation between partner organisations and administrations, between partner organisations with each other (in order to meet the requirements of FEAD implementation) or even between national authorities. Valuable learning effects, which resulted in an increased efficiency of administrations and in a professionalization of partner organisations were appreciated in several Member States. Although outside the scope of this evaluation, the exchange between partner organisations from different countries in the framework of the FEAD Networking events was highly praised as it offered an unprecedented opportunity to meet people involved in similar activities in other Member States.

**3.5.2 What would be the most likely consequences of stopping the FEAD support?**

**OP I**

Taking into account some double counting, the FEAD has provided food support to around 8 Mio people in the EU in 2014 and to more than 14 Mio people in 2015 and 2016. The number of end recipients has continuously increased since the start of the programme in all Member States, except for Spain, Italy (minimal), Lithuania, and Portugal.

In Italy, the PO claims that most of the network would collapse, especially in Southern Italy. The PO reports that in the gap period between PEAD and FEAD, the whole system was at risk, and special measures had to be taken. Special food drives were organised to collect food in front of supermarkets, ad hoc help was asked to companies, and the new special National Fund for foodstuff to the most deprived gave help for around EUR 10 million. Still, the system held only because it was a short

period and because the launch of FEAD was considered imminent. Therefore the end of the FEAD is said to have potentially dramatic consequences.

In France, the FEAD accounts for more than a third of the food distributed, therefore the number of food insecure people would increase if the FEAD was to stop. The choice would be either to reduce the share of food distributed to an equal number of people assisted, or to restrict access to food aid in France to provide assistance only to those in situations of great exclusion (homelessness).

Although FEAD support in Romania has been low, both in quantity and in frequency, it is estimated that stopping the FEAD support would contribute to a decrease in the quality of life of those supported.

In Spain, the most likely consequence is that food support would no longer be delivered to the most deprived on this scale. It would remain a local level, smaller scale initiative promoted by the private and third sectors and to some extent by the public sector.

In Poland, food aid would be for sure continued as it is the part of national policy on eliminating the poverty, however, it could reduce the range of support.

The FEAD provides substantial amounts of food support in comparison to material assistance (1% of the total amount of eligible public expenditure incurred by beneficiaries and paid in implementing operations from 2014-16). Material goods were distributed in 2015 in Austria, Luxembourg and Latvia and in 2016 in Austria, the Czech Republic, Greece, Luxembourg, Latvia and Slovakia. In Austria, the most likely consequence of the FEAD stopping would be that the school start package would no longer be on offer. In Luxembourg, there would be fewer free products and the range of the products would be smaller. In Latvia, the consequences would particularly affect the more remote regions. In Slovakia, food and material assistance would be provided on a much smaller scale through existing NGO and community initiatives. There are no other food aid mechanisms of this scale and volume in the country. Poor households would not be burdened by their expenses on food and basic toiletries, which could lead to a further aggravation of their material distress. In the absence of the FEAD accompanying measures, many recipients would likely be left without information about social benefit entitlements, possibilities to enter the labour market or participate in activities financed from other funds (such as the ESF).

A number of Member States (eight) said the specific support measures provided by the FEAD would stop without being replaced. Seven other Member States explained that state/local authorities would not be able to provide a similar level of support to the one provided by the FEAD. FEAD target groups in four Member States, namely Germany, Denmark, Malta and France, would not have access to aid anymore, because there is no overlap with national programmes. For other Member States, partner organizations would still continue providing some aid (such as via soup kitchens). However, extent, consistency or coverage of the target groups would be affected.

Respondents from six Member States said the support provided would not completely stop, but there would be a scale reduction in food distribution (e.g. only local level initiatives would remain). This is also related to the fact that many Member States do not have a food support programme on a national scale. Luxembourg and Hungary pointed out that the quality and diversity of food distributed would decrease. The end of the FEAD would therefore mean a scale and quality reduction in several Member States.

The spatial and temporal consequences of the end of the FEAD were also highlighted by some Member States: it would have a high impact on rural areas in Finland and Latvia, while it would lead to an uneven access to food in Estonia. Bulgaria's national programme only provides warm meals during winter and end recipients would be left in severe food deprivation the rest of the year if the FEAD was to stop.

In some Member States on the other hand, the end of the FEAD would not be as dramatic. In Poland, it would not mean a complete end of food aid as food distribution is considered a priority for national policy. In Ireland, the impact on most end recipients and charities would be "strong but not fatal", while on the other hand, Italy's PO manager said it would be a "blood bath". The other Member States in which the end of the FEAD would not have a strong impact are Member States in which programmes have just started (e.g. Croatia).

The results of the focus groups, both at EU level and in the seven Member States<sup>67</sup> corroborate this evidence. In Spain, it was agreed that the discontinuation of the FEAD would lead to volume losses, losses in quality of the food provision, losses in terms of people supported by an estimated 1.5 million people. In addition, the local character of FEAD food delivery would also be lost. End recipients would also lose access to information about other types of support and social services; this information is currently offered by the delivery organisations as part of the accompanying measures. The discontinuation of FEAD would lead to socio-economic losses as FEAD generates economic benefits in terms of structures created and human resources employed (supply, transport, logistics, social organisations) as well as people engaged in volunteering. The Spanish results were corroborated by the results of the EU-level focus group which also estimated that there would be losses in quantity, quality, and reliability. Both end recipients and partner organisations would be very disappointed if a support on which they have come to rely was no longer available.

## **OP II**

The four OP II countries received relatively little aid in financial terms (5% of the total from 2014-2016) but used it for target groups who would otherwise not receive support (EU migrants in Germany and Sweden, homeless in Denmark and older people in the Netherlands). In Germany, the municipalities would be very disappointed if the FEAD funding was stopped and the EU migrants would no longer receive the support services they currently receive in this form. It is too early to say whether they would be continued with national resources. In Sweden, the most likely consequences of the termination of FEAD support for individuals would mean that they would no longer benefit from preventive health and social orientation measures, although they would still be eligible for emergency aid. The civil society organisations engaged in the partnerships that have been formed at OP as well as project level would be very disappointed and the knowledge production on the target group and how best to integrate them into Swedish society would be lost. In Denmark, the retraction of support would endanger the outreach work by community organizations and NGO's to vulnerable homeless to help them access existing services. Many of the homeless covered by FEAD are non-Danish nationals whose protection would be compromised. In the Netherlands, it is likely that in absence of the library playing a role in connecting older people to activities, the former (especially those without digital skills) would have trouble finding activities that suit their needs. The personal attention given to them by the 'hosts', including invitations to participate in activities that might suit them, is considered a key success factor of the project. Without this 'host' role, it is likely that a considerable portion of the target group would not take part in existing activities and therefore no longer build up their social network and competences.

The OPC corroborates these findings with just under 30% of respondents stating that the cessation of the FEAD would have a critical effect on networks, types and volumes of assistance and target groups. A further 50% stated that the effects would be severe. Interestingly, slightly more OP II respondents than OP I respondents felt that the effect on types of assistance and target groups would be severe.

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<sup>67</sup> France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Poland, Romania and Spain

## 3.6 Relevance

### Key Findings

- There is an obvious and continuing need for anti-poverty and social protection benefits. These are largely provided by national governments but the FEAD can provide targeted short-term support in the form of food and material goods and, to a small extent, social inclusion support.
- In some OP I countries, the FEAD is the only food programme, in others it supplements existing food programmes. In all cases, it is considered relevant, if not always efficient.
- There is evidence of some gaps in the types of food provided in a small number of Member States, many of which were closed during the implementation, e.g. in Luxembourg with the introduction of additional food products.
- In some countries, gaps are being addressed in the next phase of the programmes, e.g. in Ireland and Portugal.
- Material assistance in OP I accounts for a fraction of all spending incurred so far but there are calls for more provision of hygiene products and other material goods for specific needs (babies etc.).
- The FEAD provides first and sometimes essential steps towards social inclusion through the accompanying measures. This can be through direction towards existing social services or advice and other social activities (cooking together, etc.).
- Accompanying measures have been found to provide empowerment to the end-recipients by helping them out of isolation and giving them access to services for which they are eligible. The accompanying measures also empower the organisations providing them by helping them develop new services and skills.
- The limited resources within FEAD (5% of OP I budget) restrict the quality and scope of accompanying measures, e.g. volunteers may not be able to provide the kind of advice and counselling the target group requires.
- The social inclusion provided in the framework of OP II is filling a gap in the provision of social inclusion measures in the four Member States with OP II.

### 3.6.1 How relevant is the aid to the target groups? How well does it respond to their needs? Are there any gaps?

The relevance of a strategy, initiative or programme is defined in the Better Regulation Guidelines as 'the relationship between the needs and problems in society and the objectives of an intervention'. In the case of FEAD, it refers to the extent to which the support addresses the needs of the persons at risk of poverty and social exclusion in the different Member States.

According to the FEAD regulation, the main target group of the fund are 'most deprived persons', that is "natural persons, whether individuals, families, households or groups composed of such persons, whose need for assistance has been established according to the objective criteria set by the national competent authorities in consultation with relevant stakeholders".

The question of relevance looks for evidence of the extent to which activities and operations implemented through OPs adequately address the needs of persons at risk of poverty and social exclusion.

In accordance with the above, the main questions asked in the interviews with the Managing Authorities and Partner Organisations were:

- How relevant is the aid to the target groups?

- How well does it respond to their needs?
- Are there any gaps?

The analysis draws on the desk research and interviews in each Member State and on the aggregated SFC2014 data from 2014-2016. The results of the focus groups and the OPC have also been included.

### **3.6.1.1 How relevant is the aid to the target groups and how well does it respond to their needs?**

With reference to Chapter 1 of this report, poverty is an enduring problem although there have been positive developments in recent years. Millions of Europeans are still at risk of poverty and unable to fully participate in society as a result. According to SILC, the number of people at risk of poverty in the EU 28 in 2015 was 119.08 million people, or 23.8%, i.e. 0.6 percentage points lower than in 2014. Poverty and social exclusion are of course primarily dealt with by national governments. Social protection benefits make up a significant proportion of GDP, ranging from just under 15% of GDP in Latvia to nearly 35% in France, whereby an average of 4% EU-wide are actually spent on combatting social exclusion and housing.<sup>68</sup>

Compared to national investments, the FEAD support is very small. A significant proportion of the population affected by poverty can nevertheless be reached.

Further important evidence on this matter will be gathered during the survey of the end-recipients.

#### **OP I**

Under OP I, FEAD distributed almost one million tonnes of **food** in 20 MS<sup>69</sup> from 2014 to 2016 to around 37 million end recipients, including 11 million children, whereby some multiple counting of individuals should be taken into account. Women make about half of the total number of people (around 16 million) receiving food support. Migrants (including participants with a foreign background and minorities) make up 3.4 million and homeless people and people with disabilities make up 3.2 million in the reporting period 2014-2016.

In percentages, from 2014-2016, 50% of those benefiting from FEAD food distribution in 2016 were women. 30% of those benefiting from FEAD food distribution were children, 10% were over 65 year-olds, 12% were people with a foreign background, 5% were people with disabilities and 4% were homeless.

In order to understand and define the needs of the target groups, different methods were used by Member States. At least<sup>70</sup> ten Member States (Bulgaria, Germany, Estonia, France, Ireland, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Latvia, Austria and Romania) focused on the target groups and end recipients by using different approaches such as testing the aid provided on a sample of end recipients or conducting surveys. At least 13 Member States (Belgium, Bulgaria, France, Ireland, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Latvia, Malta, the Netherlands, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia, Slovakia), additionally or exclusively, consulted partner organisations. Seven Member States (Belgium, Luxembourg, Latvia, Malta, the Netherlands, Romania and Slovakia) also choose to consult experts, usually on health and nutrition issues. Several surveys and consultations are ongoing (Belgium, Germany, Greece). However, for six Member States (Denmark, Greece, Spain, Finland, Italy and Slovenia), there is no evidence that they have assessed the needs of target groups through a specific procedure.

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<sup>68</sup> Die Presse, 08.12.2017

<sup>69</sup> AT, DK, NL, SE and DE do not distribute food. Due to late implementation, no food was distributed in CY, HR, HU and UK.

<sup>70</sup> These aspects have not yet been validated by MAs across the board. Therefore, we say 'at least' x MS to indicate that it may be more.

There is also limited anecdotal evidence pointing to some misuse of food aid, e.g. selling on of food.

Notwithstanding, the aid was considered to respond to the identified or assumed needs of the target groups in nearly every Member State. In Italy, initially the MA had hoped to implement a voucher system for food support but this was discarded because it was not feasible from an administrative point of view (and the Commission did not approve of such a system since it meant a financial contribution). Italy and France also highlighted that considering the number of end recipients in these Member States (around 4 million in France and around 3 million in Italy), no one size fits all policy was possible. In Austria and Luxembourg, the FEAD was said to be relevant but not to have a crucial role, given than its budget is relatively low compared to national programmes. In Austria, the FEAD is nevertheless used for something that would not otherwise be funded (school start package).

In the Czech Republic, in relation to school lunches for children up to the age of 15, FEAD does not respond the needs to all categories of children who are at risk of poverty and social exclusion. The reason for that is that eligibility for FEAD is linked to the social subsidy of material need. Only people in receipt of the social subsidy get free school lunches, leaving out others who may also need the support.

In France, just over half the eight million food insecure people received food aid in 2015. There is scope for more eligible people to receive food aid and the communication of the availability of the aid is essential. Nevertheless, in France, during the Focus Group, the Partner Organisations distributing aid highlighted the diversity of the people assisted and a certain evolution towards more and more diversification. The beneficiaries are unemployed single people, but also students, elderly people, migrants and more and more families. This is the reason why categories of target beneficiaries should not be set, which would create new exclusions and bring poverty into competition. Unconditional welcome must remain the rule and the principle of action.

The FEAD also enables Partner Organisations to build a diversified and quality food aid strategy based on people's needs, freedom of choice and nutritional balance. It offers multi-year visibility and guarantees the stability of their supplies.

With regard to communication, the Lithuanian expert noted that negative press about food aid leads to some eligible people not picking up their packages because they do not think the food is of good quality.

In some countries (e.g. Bulgaria, Croatia, Estonia, Finland, Lithuania, Poland, Portugal, Romania and Slovakia), FEAD is the only or primary source of food aid. In this manner, it provides an essential service.

The OPC results concurred with the findings of the interviews and desk research with nearly 94% of respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing that food is the most important type of assistance to alleviate the worst forms of poverty. A large number of respondents stated that food packages should be adapted to the beneficiaries, depending on their age, their religion, their allergies or diseases (diabetes) etc. For these reasons, some organisations prefer letting people choose their food by themselves. Several respondents also explained their preference for vouchers when it comes to food and clothes.

FEAD also provided €10.1 million worth of **material goods** in 2015 and 2016 (no material goods were disbursed in 2014). 700,000 people benefited, among them nearly 300,000 children.

The OPC provided further details on the provision of material assistance. Many respondents suggested providing non-prescription medication and medication for chronic diseases. Often mentioned were also condoms, birth control pills and overall family planning support. Some respondents also highlighted the lack of feminine

hygiene products. Several respondents also addressed the issue of glasses, hearing aids and orthopaedic supplies for older people, which can be prohibitively expensive.

Household products were also mentioned by the respondents to the OPC. The most suggested material aid was help with water, electricity and gas bills. Many respondents also suggested providing basic domestic appliances (i.e. fridges and microwaves), furniture such as tables, beds and chairs. Household cleaning products and washing powder were among most mentioned hygiene products. Another potential form of support suggested were public transport tickets. Access to internet and telecommunications was seen as essential. Support to administrative formalities, for instance in providing ID photos was also suggested. Finally, many respondents, especially from French speaking countries, mentioned access to culture as a major issue, particularly for children and teenagers. This was confirmed by the French focus group in which participants underlined the role of FEAD providing access to activities for children and young people.

### **Accompanying measures**

In addition to food and material aid, the FEAD provided accompanying measures under OP I aimed at helping people onto the first rung out of poverty by informing them about social inclusion offers at their disposal.

Indeed, although Member States were satisfied with the relevance of the aid with regard to its quality and to the target groups identified, the sustainability of food aid and material support in general was questioned. The interviewees generally concurred that the aid helped to alleviate poverty and fulfilled the basic needs of end recipients. However, most (15) stated that it was a short-term alleviation which could not meet long-term needs. Many (13) interviewees from OP I Member States said that additional structural and social inclusion support was necessary in the form of accompanying measures in order to achieve long-term poverty alleviation and social inclusion. However, these can only work if initial needs regarding food and material assistance have been addressed. This is confirmed by the findings of the OPC which stated that covering basic needs were essential to human dignity.

Over 90% of respondents of OPC respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the direction to competent services is essential to alleviate the worst forms of poverty. Psychological support and therapeutic measures were also considered important (86% agreed or strongly agreed), as was advice on managing a household budget (84%).

A further finding of the OPC was that the limited resources within FEAD restrict the quality and scope of accompanying measures. Some partner organisations struggle to provide accompanying measures, for example to rent the necessary premises. OPC respondents were concerned by a lack of qualified human resources as volunteers are not always qualified to provide counselling and advice on available measures. Outreach work to the most deprived also takes up a lot of resources that may not be available.

Additional obstacles identified by OPC respondents include the rigidity of implementing provisions, partly resulting from national rules and partly from EU-level rules and regulations. Several respondents would like to see a better alignment and complementarity of FEAD and ESF, without increasing the administrative burden. They would like to see a more holistic offer, e.g. including measures for labour market integration, provided under FEAD.

A further obstacle to the satisfactory implementation of the accompanying measures is the reticence of the end recipients themselves to take part in the accompanying measures, since most deprived individuals are rather accustomed to receiving financial or non-financial assistance rather than training and counselling. A significant share of respondents stated that the end recipients were sometimes unwilling to take steps to improve their quality of life, although this is not surprising as the "first step" can



always be difficult. Further obstacles to offering accompanying measures include language barriers and a lack of education of some marginalised communities.

One of the OPC questions asked whether further types of accompanying measures should be offered. There were 259 responses. Many respondents called for activities related to health, regarding the provision of physical activity, family planning or assistance with access to health insurance. Several respondents mentioned the need to reach out to the public and public authorities with the aim of preventing discrimination of the most deprived. It was also suggested to accompany end recipients to public administrations and health providers.

Other types of accompanying measures that were mentioned in the OPC included the support to find housing, legal counselling, support in raising children, language courses and access to information technology. Some respondents warned about the risk of patronising end recipients for example through measures like personal hygiene advice.

The focus groups held in Brussels and in seven Member States also discussed the relevance of the accompanying measures. In addition to food and material assistance, FEAD offers a full range of services for the most deprived. Participants agreed that accompanying measures are an important step towards poverty reduction, notably if end recipients use them to access social services and get further support that can lift them out of poverty. They are found to be particularly helpful for children and elderly people, e.g. in Greece. Similarly to the findings of the OPC, the participants in, e.g. the EU-level focus group, found that these are sometimes limited in scope and intensity due to budget limitations. Another limitation of accompanying measure raised by several participants relates to difficulties in reaching out to those most in need. For some groups such as homeless and migrants without residence permits, mainstream social services still may remain inaccessible. Suggestions were made on how to expand the accompanying measures, e.g. by organising summer camps as summer is sometimes a difficult time for families without free school meals etc.

It was also stated that for OP II there should be some small proportion of the budget available for food and material assistance e.g. like 5% cap for accompanying measures in OP I.

A further aspect relating to the accompanying measures was empowerment. Accompanying measures in particular contribute to the empowerment of end recipients. In addition, the delivery of FEAD empowers delivery organisations/associations who improve their resource management capacity and the capacity to reach people that need help and build relationships with them. Empowerment is a particularly important intermediate result of OPII, concerning the strengthening of basic life skills through e.g. basic training (including digital) and support.

## **OP II**

With regard to the relevance of the aid to the target groups, in Germany, the FEAD support gives the EU migrants, their children, homeless people and people at risk of homelessness access to their fundamental right to shelter and a certain services. The support helps the target groups access the national services to which they have a right. These groups belong to the most disadvantaged people in Germany and therefore correspond to the FEAD target population.<sup>71</sup> Targeting this group of people also contributes to the fulfilment of the aims of the Europe 2020 strategy.

While the advice and transferral of people to the relevant services works well in Germany, there is a problem in that the services to which the migrants are directed are sometimes not available or full (e.g. German courses or kindergarten places). This

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<sup>71</sup> Ex-ante Evaluation EHAP-OP DE, p. 3-4

is a problem for the FEAD as it raises questions about the sense of directing people to services that are full anyway.

In Denmark, the outreach work provided by street workers, meals, shelters/storage, minor employment opportunities and possible repatriation all appear relevant for the target group of vulnerable homeless that are not ordinarily in contact with existing national services and interventions – and particularly so for those homeless that are non-Danish nationals in Denmark.

The OPC brought up another issue which is health advice for the OP II target groups. 98% of OP II respondents agreed with the provision of health advice. OP II respondents also support the offer of education for migrant children (94% agree or strongly agree) and the social integration of migrants (92%), corroborating the evidence from the interviews and desk research.

### 3.6.1.2 Are there any gaps?

Gaps in the implementation of the FEAD were identified in most Member States, except Austria, Belgium, Denmark, and Luxembourg. In Austria, the gaps were closed by testing the list of articles on a sample of families (children) before launching the scheme for everyone. In Belgium, the Managing Authority contracted experts in poverty and/or social exclusion to help with identifying possible gaps in the food list.

The gaps in other countries concern a number of themes, such as the quality of food provided, its quantity, its variety, the amount of material assistance provided, the reach of the accompanying measures, the territorial coverage of the FEAD and the availability and access of services for FEAD end recipients. These are described below.

#### OP I

Interviewees from a number of Member States said there were some gaps in the **type of food** provided: the variety of food was considered insufficient (e.g. lack of fresh food), and dietary restrictions were not taken into account. In France, the associations cannot always provide people with what they need, depending on their state of health, age, and eating habits but regularly carry out surveys to try to ensure that products to take account of religious practices and cultural norms. Interviewees from Greece, Spain and Finland said the food packages do not cover all the nutritional needs of the recipients. Some food packages were also found incomplete, with oil and sugar missing (Bulgaria). Luxembourg was quick to supplement the gaps, e.g. with oil.

In Latvia, the Food and Veterinary Service, the Consumer Rights Protection Centre and the Health Inspectorate were consulted concerning the food packages. Products were selected taking into account each product's nutritional value and suitability for distribution, expiration date, and if a special storage temperature regime is required. Assessment was carried out of the comparison between the food aid intensity and daily dietary energy value.

In Finland, where the FEAD is the only source of food support in rural areas, it was particularly important that the aid provided had high nutritional value.

The **quantity of the food** was seldom criticized. In Greece, the quantity of the food packages were criticised for not offering sufficient food to a family for every day of the year but it was agreed that this would be too ambitious. On account of criticism regarding the quantity of food in Portugal, the new model to be introduced in 2017 aims at providing food support ensuring 50% of the person's nutritional needs. The food baskets will now be 22 kilos of food per month per person, compared to the previous food support of 1.4 kilos per month, so significantly more.

There was **uneven coverage of the territory** in at least three Member States (the Czech Republic, Ireland and Italy) due to shortcomings in the implementation. In the Czech Republic, some regions showed low interest in the specific objective 1: school lunches due to the high administrative burden associated with the FEAD support.

There are similar support mechanisms financed by state and private funds where the delivery mechanism is easier and more children are eligible. In Ireland, the analysis of FEAD's initial operation over six months in 2016 shows that the number of recipients reached in some rural areas is rather small and this needs to be reviewed and, if necessary, addressed, for instance by engaging additional end recipients/charities in those areas.

Evidence from the Czech Republic, Estonia, Malta and Poland shows that some **target groups** were not reached by the FEAD food aid. In the Czech Republic, eligibility for the FEAD is linked to the national system of social support. Some categories of the population do not qualify for the national social support and therefore not for FEAD. These are single parent families, households with three or more children, and single people. In Estonia, large families living in in-work poverty, single-parent families, and elderly people living alone would need food aid, especially when they have health issues, but do not qualify. In Malta, specific vulnerable groups mentioned were people with disabilities who may be dependent on the household and who are over the age of 16 and single person households, especially elderly. However, in Malta, these target groups are being reached by the new nationally funded food distribution scheme. In Poland, the gaps in coverage are being gradually reduced (to date, from 38% to 10% which are not covered). The demand sometimes still exceeds the need resulting in smaller food packages.

**Material assistance** only made up 1% of the total spending incurred in 2016. In a number of countries, material assistance was requested in addition to food. For example, in Slovenia more material goods (e.g. hygiene products, washing powder etc.) were needed and in France, associations reported an increasing demand for non-food products (hygiene products, products for young children and even intangible goods). In Romania, winter clothes were needed but not distributed under the FEAD. They were not included in the OP and distributing them would mean a change in the OP which is currently not being considered. In Slovakia there is evidence that it might be that the food and material assistance does not sufficiently cover all needs. All in all, however, FEAD seems to provide adequate support with respect to its goals, available resources, administrative limitations, and the needs of target groups.

### **Accompanying measures**

A number of interviews emphasised the need for social inclusion measures to lift people out of poverty. Under OP I, the accompanying measures are considered essential in most countries but not sufficient. The solution would be either an increase in the budget of accompanying measures or closer synergy with other initiatives/programmes (e.g. ESF) that provide this kind of assistance.

### **OP II**

The gaps identified in Germany were not so much in the FEAD but in the regular system of social welfare to which FEAD end recipients are referred. The regular assistance system is sometimes oversubscribed and people cannot actually get places, e.g. on German courses, in kindergartens, etc. This is something that needs to be addressed if FEAD is to be judged successful. NO gaps were identified to date in the other OP II countries Denmark, the Netherlands and Sweden.

## 4 Conclusions

### 4.1 Effectiveness

**Conclusion 1:** FEAD is a small fund whose effectiveness can hardly be measured against the overall objective of reducing poverty and social exclusion. Such assessment is made harder also in light of the 'light' monitoring system, which does not require MAs to specify target in type I OPs and for output indicators in type II OPs. There are however some important outputs and results that are already discernible and indicate that FEAD objectives are on track to be achieved, bearing also in mind that FEAD complements national poverty eradication and social inclusion policies. It is furthermore a key tool to intercept situation of extreme poverty as well as build-up partnership and networks, raise awareness and share knowledge among operators.

First, FEAD is overall an effective fund. Despite its limited scale, it is a key tool for both end-beneficiaries as well as organisations working in the field. In particular, it is deemed as a pivotal to intercept situations of extreme poverty and reach the most deprived, including those that may remain hidden to other forms of social assistance or that need a different approach; it represents a cornerstone of food aid and allows the continuing existence of many Partner Organisations which would otherwise risk disappearing; it improves partnerships and knowledge sharing at the local level both among institutions, partner organisations and social services, as well as across different partner organisations. Both the OPC and the focus groups emphasised the importance of the FEAD being a broad scope/ low threshold programme, which ensures a good coverage of end-beneficiaries needs.

Second, the level of financial progress of FEAD programmes is satisfactory overall, with some exceptions where delays occurred due to late start. This was due, amongst other, to the time needed to devise EU food support programmes where they did not previously exist as well as the time needed for MS to make the necessary steps to comply with FEAD requirements. Type II OPs show better financial progress than type I OPs. This is partly because of late start of some type I OPs and partly because of the comparatively higher allocations on basic material assistance, which has taken on average longer to be activated. The level of certified expenditure is still rather modest, at less than 10% of the overall FEAD allocation. At present, there are no indication that the financial plans would not be matched, however, attention should be given especially to Hungary and Croatia, as well as to basic material assistance activities.

Third, in relation to food assistance in OP I, food support has been distributed in 20 MS, consisting of nearly one million tonnes of food and reaching around 15 million people, most of it in France, Romania, Italy, Spain and Poland. FEAD is a major food provider for disadvantaged people (up to 70% of overall food aid in some countries<sup>72</sup>) in the EU, and ensures the consistent and stable provision of food across the territory and year in most OP I Member States.

Fourth, in relation to basic material assistance in OP I, only six out of 14 MS chose this form of support in their OPs and 6 of these have already provided basic material assistance to 660,000 individuals (Austria and Greece together cover approximately 80% of material support provided through FEAD). Delivery of basic material assistance is therefore lagging behind with respect to food support. The delays in implementation are due to the fact that while the framework for food support was already a well-established mechanism (inherited from the previous programme) in most MS, new forms of support such as basic material support may require longer inception and implementation phases.

Fifth, while essential to cover basic needs, food and basic material assistance alone are not enough to help people get out of poverty. This is why the accompanying

<sup>72</sup> Estimation of FEAD stakeholders (source: EU level focus group)

measures in OP I are an important part of the fund although they are minimal in terms of funding. They are an important step towards poverty reduction, notably if end recipients use them to access social services and get further support that can lift them out of poverty. Most MS (with the exception of Croatia, Hungary, Cyprus and Portugal which are experiencing starting delays) offer information and communication material on social services and other types of public and private assistance for deprived people, as well as basic counselling and advisory activities and in some cases also workshops and basic training e.g. cooking, health and sport, household budget management, culture, etc.). These measures are offered by the delivery organisations through usually volunteers, however, a key challenge is the lack of specific skills.

Sixth, social inclusion measures in OP II have reached approximately 23,000 individuals, the majority of them (21,660) in Germany. These measures are well on track to reach their set targets, both in terms of financial progress and in terms of progress of outputs and results, although there is some variation among MS, and especially the Netherlands is still in the early stages of implementation. The type of support offered includes inter alia counselling, outreach, networking activities, awareness raising and workshops to help target groups towards their social integration. FEAD social inclusion activities offer viable alternatives to develop personal and professional skills to integrate into society and find employment.

**Conclusion 2:** FEAD makes a difference for the most vulnerable groups, especially families with children, homeless people and people who are not reached by public services, such as undocumented migrants, to whom FEAD provides support as well as information about key services. For elderly people with minimum levels of income and who do not have access to the labour market, FEAD helps find solutions.

First, in OP I FEAD has reached especially some of the most vulnerable target groups such as children, families with children, homeless people and people who are not reached by public services, such as EU migrants, to whom FEAD provides information about key services.

Second, in OP I, accompanying measures are particularly helpful for families whose members are not in employment, for families with children and elderly people. The "problem" with accompanying measures is that these are limited in scope and intensity due to budget limitations.

Third, in OP II FEAD provides essential support to EU migrants to help them access social services of which they are otherwise not aware (in Germany and Sweden), to homeless people (in Germany and Denmark) and to isolated older people in the Netherlands. The low threshold nature of the activities is an essential factor in the success of the activities.

Fourth, although children are on average the target group showing the highest level of coverage, it is difficult to obtain a clear view of the numbers of end recipients to better assess the extent to which it has reached the most vulnerable. This is partly due to the way monitoring data is collected (i.e., participants may have been counted more than once in some countries), but are also found with respect to specific features of the programmes as well as limitations in their implementation.

**Recommendation 1:** The accompanying measures are resource-intensive activities that need specific skills and good planning, but represent a key step towards further social integration. They could therefore be complemented with training for partner organisations, staff and volunteers to address the current gap in resources as many delivery organisations do not have sufficient resources/ capacity/ skills to offer adequate accompanying measures.

**Recommendation 2:** A discussion should be promoted to understand whether it would be possible to improve the result-orientation of FEAD through changes to the monitoring system (including setting targets and further working on the issue of double counting). In doing so, careful attention should be paid to the resulting

potential increases in the administrative burden on Partner Organisations and Managing Authorities. .

**Recommendation 3:** Efforts should be spurred for those country lagging behind and especially when it comes to material assistance. It should also be borne in mind that, for the next programming period, any regulation should be approved well ahead of its enforcement so as for MS to make the necessary steps in due time and avoid a late start of the operations.

**Conclusion 3:** FEAD entails certain flexibility to adapt to changing and emerging needs. Member States have undertaken actions to adapt to changing needs by introducing changes to the delivery, the targeting and the selection criteria.

Concerning FEAD flexibility and capacity to adapt to needs as they emerge, a degree of flexibility is recorded particularly with regard to fine-tuning and revising targeting criteria of end recipients. Also the composition of food packages was frequently changed. A similar degree of flexibility is found in the possibility to modify the design of interventions. Still, several MS also reported a certain limitation in the types of interventions that could be implemented including for example the types of material goods that could be provided or the procurement procedures to be followed.

**Recommendation 4:** More flexibility in addressing new and changing needs of end recipients can be achieved if local social services or municipalities are involved in the identification of end recipients.

**Conclusion 4:** Horizontal principles are complied with although little evidence has been found on FEAD contribution to food waste reduction, both in terms of reducing waste deriving from unused purchased/collected food for distribution as well as of promoting food donations by covering costs associated to their collection, storage and distribution.

Despite food donation being at the centre of the attention for many MS, also beyond the possibility to fund the collection, storage and distribution of food donations and surplus, as of 2016 the latter was exploited only by Luxembourg. A certain need for better arrangements in order to train volunteers also for the transport and storage of the food, as well as to build a better infrastructure that serves this purpose (transport vehicles, warehouses and fridges) was highlighted. In some countries (e.g. Italy) where other initiatives exist that cater for funds aimed at collecting and distributing food donations, an important step would be to find better synergies among tools. A certain reluctance has been encountered when discussing the possibility to further exploit funds for the collection, storage and distribution of food donations as these are seen to potentially draw resources from the purchase of foodstuff, eventually putting at risk the work of partner organisations. A better communication in this sense may help emphasise the benefits of this form of FEAD support, which, rather than reducing the quantity of food distributed, can substantially increase the leverage of FEAD funding, as it is the case with Luxembourg.

**Recommendation 5:** Closer links with supermarkets and food banks will contribute to food waste reduction via food donations. In addition, a potential voucher system would contribute to a reduction of food waste since end recipients would obtain what they need from supermarkets and no public purchase of food would take place and potentially generate food waste.

**Recommendation 6:** to make better use of the possibility to use FEAD funding for the collection, storage and distribution of food donations, through better communication on its benefits as well as further efforts to make this feasible in practice, including thinking of improving capacity of Partner Organisations in terms of infrastructures and skills for the collection and storage of food.

**Conclusion 5:** FEAD has achieved several important results that are not directly measurable in terms of poverty alleviation but that play a key instrumental role

towards this goal. The “intermediate” results are important and highly valued by programme stakeholders. They include improved cooperation, partnership and networking, empowerment, awareness raising. There is however no quantitative data to actually measure their extent.

First, the delivery mechanism of FEAD contributes to improved cooperation among partner organisations, local governments and communities and respective Ministries involved in the management and delivery of the Fund.

Second, the implementation of FEAD empowers delivery organisations/associations who improve their resource management capacity and the capacity to reach people that need help and build relationships with them. Accompanying measures in particular contribute to the empowerment of end recipients. Empowerment is a particularly important intermediate result of OPII, concerning the strengthening of basic life skills through e.g. basic training (including digital) and support.

FEAD represents an important opportunity to increase their organisational skills, and, while ensuring a constant flow of food aid, allows them to focus on more social inclusion oriented activities.

Third, the delivery of FEAD support through partner organisations contributes to increasing awareness about the needs of the most deprived. Accompanying measures also play an important role to raise awareness of the social dimension of poverty.

**Recommendation 7:** Develop measurement mechanisms for these “intermediate” results as they constitute a critical pathway towards the achievement of the Fund’s objectives.

## 4.2 Coherence

**Conclusion 6:** Overall, FEAD is found to be coherent and complementary to the national systems. It also complements other EU funds, notably the ESF and AMIF.

First, the Fund complements activities and policies at national level, such as national funds and programmes for food aid to the most deprived and fight against malnutrition, national subsidies and payments for food and programmes that offer a solidarity income to people at risk of poverty and social inclusion. In relation to these programmes, FEAD fills gaps in the assistance of the most deprived and fulfils one of the objectives stipulated in the Regulation, notably to complement sustainable national poverty eradication and social inclusion policies. In a few countries (Greece, Bulgaria) FEAD is the only national programme offering food support but FEAD complements local level NGO initiatives in this field.

Second, FEAD support appears to be complementary to support provided by other European Union instruments, in particular the ESF and AMIF with regard to the target groups supported and the support measures. Most MS report the ESF and AMIF are complementary without overlapping. FEAD supports the most deprived, while the ESF focuses on people who are closer to the labour market. AMIF supports a narrowly defined target group of refugees and asylum seekers and is tailored to their needs. Additionally, many MS mentioned that the MA is responsible for multiple Funds so it can leverage on shared experiences and ensure the complementarity in programme activities and financial resources used.

Third, most MS confirm that FEAD contributed to supplement national public and private interventions and financial resources that were used with similar or complementary objectives. Some also specified that FEAD enabled MS to expand existing programmes or add additional ones. Overall, FEAD seems to be coherent with national systems in this regard.

**Recommendation 8:** Further align FEAD and ESF so as to allow a smooth transition, including the provision of training to delivery organisations on directing people towards the social services, PES and ESF funded activities.

**Recommendation 9:** While it is important to guarantee the flexibility which currently underpins the implementation of FEAD across the Member States, and which is crucial to tailor support services to the needs of end beneficiaries, the Commission could investigate options to strengthen the FEAD ex-ante conditionalities to encourage synergies between FEAD and other EU funds.

### 4.3 Efficiency

**Conclusion 7:** FEAD is a useful fund for contributing to the alleviation of poverty and social exclusion but it is administratively burdensome, mostly self-imposed burden stemming from national regulations and requirements (gold plating).

First, some countries apply monitoring requirements to partner organisations that entail the recording of excessive data and the production of an excessive amount of paperwork, adding to the paper trail.

Second, the identification of end recipients have imposed a heavy burden on the capacities of the organisations that carry out certifications, while in some cases, the cost of certification is also high.

Third, national public procurement rules in many countries are complex and lengthy causing undue delays in the delivery of assistance (while the Regulation stresses that food purchases should cause undue delays).

**Recommendation 10:** The FEAD Regulation already requires a significant amount of procedures and controls. In order to minimise gold plating in the future, Member States can be advised to follow closely the Regulation while also sharing the experiences of those Member States which implement the programme without adding excessive requirements to what is already foreseen in the Regulation, A good context for such exchanges and awareness raising are the FEAD Network meetings.

**Recommendation 11:** Programme authorities can consider options to simplify certification requirements such as (a) designate one organisation for certification and potentially also coordinate with certification required for other types of support and/or (b) offer capacity building to organisations carrying out certifications to improve their skills in this field and carry out the process more efficiently.

**Recommendation 12:** Simplification of public procurement could be based on the results of a comparative EU level study to identify procurement processes that are simpler and faster. The EU could commission such a study and then share the results with Member States.

**Conclusion 8:** There are large variations in unit costs in both OP I and OP II programmes that are explained by the different contents of support. It is not possible to make conclusive comparisons due to the different contexts and different composition of material support in OP I and social inclusion support in OP II.

First, in OP I countries, there are large variations in the unit cost per person and per kg. Spain appears to have a high cost per person in relation to the results achieved, compared with France, Romania and Poland. The three Baltic countries have similar costs per person and per kilo.

Second, there are large variations also in the cost per person of basic assistance, with some high costs possibly due to the content of support, e.g. school bags and school items are more expensive than hygiene items for babies.

Third, in many OP I countries, administrative costs for the distribution and delivery of food support are considered high, especially in relation to the budget available through FEAD and for the number of end recipients attended.

Fourth, OP II countries there are large variations in costs possibly due to the different target groups and types of social inclusion measures these countries offer, e.g. outreach activities and individual counselling to migrants and to homeless in Germany,



outreach activities to homeless people and specific social initiatives to homeless in Denmark, basic social skills, social events and information to short-term foreigners in Sweden, social networking activities but also capacity building activities for the elderly in the Netherlands which are more costly and may explain the relatively high unit cost in this country. It is not possible to assess whether the results justify the costs as there is no follow up of the end recipients after they receive the support.

**Recommendation 13:** in OP I programmes, in order to improve efficiency in terms of outputs justifying the costs, a first step is to analyse the food basket in terms of quantity and quality and diversify according to real needs in different territories within each Member State (especially relevant for large countries). A next step would be to consider other forms of delivery (e.g. vouchers, 'solidarity cards' with bar codes of eligible items) and involve selected 'FEAD' supermarkets in the process. Such types of vouchers/cards offer the additional benefit of stigmatising less the end recipients, while it may also facilitate the delivery of fresh food which otherwise entails high transport and storage costs. Finally, to make FEAD more efficient, it is pertinent to consider increasing other types of support in OP I, notably social inclusion support, given that the delivery of food is not enough to help people get out of poverty.

**Recommendation 14:** in OP II programmes, cost effectiveness can be incorporated in the future monitoring system by following up a sample of end recipients after they receive social inclusion support by FEAD.

**Recommendation 15:** Although the administrative costs and challenges are highly dependent on national contexts, there is overall agreement amongst Member States that more guidance on FEAD implementation from the Commission would benefit FEAD in the future to ensure a concerted and collaborative approach towards tackling poverty and social exclusion through FEAD.

**Conclusion 9:** The potential of the different types of support to address specific target groups depends on the thorough identification of target group needs to tailor the delivery to those needs, the capacity of local delivery organisations and the cooperation/networking of stakeholders involved in the distribution and delivery of assistance in both OP I and OP II.

First, in OP I food support is the most common type of assistance and has been effective in alleviating food deprivation, especially for women and children, and has also been effective in addressing the homeless. Food packages are more effective for the needs of families with children, warm meals in social canteens for the homeless and people in extreme poverty and home delivery of food for the elderly.

Second, basic material assistance has also benefited mainly women and children, while in terms of content, targeted individual school material for school children and personal hygiene items for babies are more effective.

Third, there are indications that accompanying measures can be effective in helping target groups towards their social inclusion, especially if they keep their 'accompanying' character, i.e. offered together with food support.

Fourth, in OP II the main success factors for reaching target groups efficiently are cooperation at the lowest, i.e. local, level which may bring the best results (Germany) and the capacity to address target group social inclusion needs (e.g. reproductive health needs for women in Sweden or early education needs of migrant children in Germany).

**Recommendation 16:** It is important to ensure the quality of support services and tailoring to the needs of end recipients to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of the different types of assistance. For this to happen, flexibility is key in the delivery of the programme. Not only should the target group be consulted on their needs, but the services they are provided with should also present them with a choice to select from a range of different food products and social support services.

**Recommendation 17:** accompanying measures should be tailored to the needs of different target groups, for instance, more social type activities for the homeless, language support and socialising events for the integration of immigrants, speech therapists for children, psychological support for poor families with dependent children, etc.

**Conclusion 10:** FEAD is a relatively small fund (€543 million on average per year) addressing a large number of end recipients (15.86 million people receiving food, other material assistance and social inclusion support in 2016). It is therefore very important for the Fund to be efficient by targeting the assistance to those most in need. FEAD currently offers examples of how to facilitate access to support for the most vulnerable.

First, OP I programmes use mainly income eligibility criteria and end recipients are either registered already in minimum income support database or they have to accredit their situation of poverty through income statements and/or interviews with social services or similar. Some countries undertake proactive outreach approaches to reach end recipients who are at risk of remaining outside the system (e.g. homeless, Roma).

Second, in OP II, outreach activities are the main channel used to identify the end recipients.

Third, in both OP I and OP II, local coordination and local networks play an important role in helping end recipients access FEAD support. What has worked best is the assessment of end recipients' needs as well as the use of different types of delivery organisations specialised in specific target groups and organisations with local networks which have good knowledge of end recipients.

**Recommendation 18:** In the future, there are various options to be considered by programme authorities in order to facilitate access of end recipients to FEAD assistance:

- a) the establishment of more centralised information systems that check and avoid duplications<sup>73</sup>, given that in some countries end recipients access more than one delivery points;
- b) the cooperation of delivery organisations to reach all those that need support in the same area; this approach has already been implemented successfully in the municipality of Barcelona in Spain where delivery organisations (food banks) cooperate to ensure effective access of end recipients to the FEAD support;
- c) the introduction of filters or additional criteria that enable a distinction of those most in need, for instance single parent families; a social research study in each country can be a good source of information to this end;
- d) more centralised certification processes linking them also to those of other funds/programmes;
- e) individualised and more flexible certification through the involvement of local NGOs with knowledge of the area and the target groups;
- f) capacity building of programme bodies, including the delivery organisations who are in direct contact with the end recipients would enhance their capacity to effectively deliver the support but also to facilitate access to the most difficult to reach target groups such as homeless and immigrants.

**Conclusion 11:** Although flat rates under OP I simplify the activities of partner organisations, yet the actual administrative costs do not justify a rate of only 5%. The flat rate for accompanying measures is also considered low by most countries although the potential of these measures for social inclusion is high.

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<sup>73</sup> Always respecting the personal data protection principles

**Recommendation 19:** Flat rates for logistics should increase while the flat rate for accompanying measures may increase or accompanying measures be more focused on individualised support and closely tailored to the needs of individual end recipients.

**Conclusion 12:** There are strong arguments for keeping the FEAD delivery mechanism of shared management and not merging with ESF, mainly because its simplicity, the accumulated experience and the national and regional knowledge of poverty and social exclusion challenges and needs. This view is shared by interviewees, focus group participants as well as participants in the FEAD Network meeting in November 2017.

First, indirect management is not pertinent due to many regional differences, direct management is not pertinent as it would not allow an understanding of local realities and needs of FEAD end recipients and budget support would not help achieve the objectives of the programme.

Second, Member States have already accumulated experience with shared management, while they can adapt FEAD to local realities and needs of end recipients.

Third, although there are potential synergies between FEAD and ESF in relation to accompanying and social inclusion measures, merging the two would entail adapting FEAD to ESF administrative complexities, losing the flexibility of FEAD and also some FEAD end recipients might not be reached.

Fourth, in case a new umbrella fund is introduced, shared management can still be maintained while ensuring a closer link and cooperation between the different Funds, proximity to the needs of end recipients and safeguarding the low threshold nature of FEAD.

**Recommendation 20:** 'Keep it simple' should become the underlying motive for delivering FEAD assistance, whether as a separate fund or as part of an umbrella fund. The elements that have worked well should be maintained, notably the shared management delivery mechanism.

**Conclusion 13:** There are proposed simplifications encompassing all stages of the programme from the set-up of the management and control system and selection criteria to implementation, reporting and audit.

First, management and control systems could be simplified by optimising the management calendar, reducing the amount of paperwork, greater use of information systems that avoid duplications of support and enable an optimal allocation of food, increasing mutual feedback between the different levels of control, introducing capacity building of programme authorities (MAs, IBs and POs) and reducing management layers to simplify governance in some countries.

Second, selection criteria can be more effective in reaching those most in need by involving local NGOs and/or local social services in selection processes for end recipients.

Third, implementation can be simplified by pooling together various recommendations already mentioned, notably, the simplification of procurement procedures, the simplification of certification requirements, the increase of flat rates and the introduction of delivery options such as 'vouchers' or 'solidarity cards' with the participation of selected FEAD associated supermarkets.

Fourth evaluation and audit can improve through better guidance from the Commission, for instance with a FEAD manual.

#### 4.4 European added value

**Conclusion 14:** The FEAD provides additional funding (volume effects), new types of support for new target groups (scope effects) and support for new ways of doing things (role effects). Process effects can also be noted in the field of networking and

building partnerships.
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First, the FEAD has a **volume effect** in nearly every Member State. In the framework of OP I, it adds to existing food and material assistance initiatives either on national level or on local level or fills a gap in provision, particularly in rural and remote areas. In several Member States, the FEAD is the only nationally coordinated food support programme and/or the main food aid provider. It provides stable, all-year-round support which is accessible across the country and for all eligible target groups. It has become an indispensable part of national food and material assistance provision in many Member States having both a leverage and multiplier effect.

Second, in all OP II countries, the FEAD provides a new service for target groups which would have not received support otherwise. While Type II OPs account for a very modest share of the overall FEAD allocation, there is nevertheless a modest volume effect as this funding would otherwise not have been available at all for these target groups.

**Recommendation 21:** Maintain at least present levels of funding upon which partner organisation and end recipients have come to rely in terms of reliable, regular and qualitative food support, growing material assistance and low threshold social inclusion.

Third, the **scope effect** of the FEAD can be clearly observed in terms of new target groups and activities and greater territorial coverage. Two thirds of Member States were able to include new target groups such as homeless people and EU citizens in their provision of support, especially in OP II countries where the support would most likely not have been provided otherwise. In OP II countries, FEAD also contributed to testing new or expanding existing activities. This was also the case in OP I countries where existing support was expanded and enriched with accompanying measures or new initiatives were started, especially in remote and rural regions. Six Member States (Ireland, Hungary, Greece, France, Italy, Portugal) have not noted a significant scope effect, either because the scope is the same as the one of national initiatives or because of the late start of the programmes.

**Recommendation 22:** FEAD should maintain its current scope in terms of providing food aid, material assistance (OP I) and social inclusion support (OP II) but should be more flexible with regard to the amount spent on a) accompanying measures under OP I and b) possibly providing emergency food and material assistance under OP II.

Fourth, in terms of **role effects**, mainstreaming and the future of FEAD-type support after the end of the FEAD remain uncertain due to funding issues. However, there were reports of a visibility effect in that the general population is aware of FEAD in a number of countries.

**Recommendation 23:** Given that the mainstreaming of food and material support and social inclusion activities is often linked to policy/political choices, FEAD should continue to provide this service otherwise end-recipients may no longer receive this form of aid.

Fifth, there is also evidence of considerable **process effects** in terms of mutual learning. Several Member States have greater cooperation between national and local authorities and partner organisations, and between partner organisations and delivery organisations themselves. There is also a learning effect and professionalization of partner organisations and local authorities.

**Recommendation 24:** Continue and increase the mutual learning activities in FEAD, e.g. by providing funding for coordinators in the OP II countries.

Sixth, in the light of this evidence, the **discontinuation of the FEAD** would still have significant and partly dire consequences in many Member States. The FEAD is the main food and material assistance provider in several Member States and provides unique services to otherwise marginalised target groups in the OP II countries.

**Recommendation 25:** Given the reliance of partner organisations and end recipients on food and material assistance support (OP I) and also social inclusion support (OP II), in a large number of Member States, and the unlikely scenario of national schemes stepping in, FEAD should be continued.

#### 4.5 Relevance

**Conclusion 15:** Given the EU 2020 target of reducing poverty by 20 million and the persistence of poverty across Member States, there is a continued need for sustained anti-poverty and social protection benefits. These are largely provided by national governments but the FEAD provides essential targeted support in the form of food and material goods and, social inclusion support.

First, in some OP I countries, the FEAD is the only food programme, in others it supplements existing food programmes. In all cases, it is considered highly relevant.

Second, material assistance in OP I accounts for a fraction of all spending incurred so far but there are calls for more provision of hygiene products and other material goods for specific needs (babies etc.).

Third, FEAD provides first and sometimes essential steps towards social inclusion through the accompanying measures in OP I. However, the limited resources within FEAD (5% of OP I budget) restrict the quality and scope of accompanying measures, e.g. volunteers may not be able to provide the quality of advice and counselling the target group would really require given their situation. Nevertheless, some counselling and direction to existing services is provided as well as a wide range of other activities (cooking courses, healthy eating workshops, advice on how to manage a household budget, etc.). These measures also provide empowerment to the end-recipients and to a certain extent to the organisations themselves in that they expand their range of services and skills.

Fourth, the social inclusion provided in the framework of OP II fills a gap in the provision of social inclusion measures in the four Member States with OP II, especially with respect to the target groups (e.g. migrant children or homeless) and to the type of measures (e.g. health advice or social events to contribute to integration)

**Recommendation 26:** Continued efforts by programme authorities should be made to ensure the quality, quantity and territorial coverage of support in several Member States, with regard to food packages and material assistance in particular.

**Recommendation 27:** The low threshold activities in OP II should be continued, especially in the light of a potential merger with the ESF.

## **5 Good practice**

Good practice has been identified in the country fiches but the evidence for its robustness is largely missing at this stage. The good practice section of this report will be updated in the Final report, supported by evaluative evidence, if available.

## 6 Information sources

### List of interviewees

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Mag.a Monika Wild, Partner Organisation: Österreichisches Rotes Kreuz, Wiedner Hauptstraße 32, 1040 Wien, Austria, Tel: +43 1 58900121 – 17.01.17

Mag.a Andrea Otter, Managing authority: Federal Ministry of Labour, BMASK Social Affairs and Consumer Protection, Section V Stubenring 1 A-1010 Wien, Austria Tel: +43 1 711 00 6122 [www.sozialministerium.at](http://www.sozialministerium.at) (Planned)

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#### BG

Mrs. Milena Encheva, Head of MA - "International Cooperation, Programmes and European Integration" Directorate in Agency for Social Assistance

Mrs. Evelina Milusheva Head of "Social activities and services Unit and Mrs. Vassilka Kamenova Deputy Director General, Head of Financial and Economic Activities Division of Bulgarian Red Cross

Mrs. Dimitrina Kolova, Head of the Social patronage in Montana District

Mrs. Lilyana Kosovska, Monitoring and Evaluation Department of ASA in Vidin District  
Anonymized social worker from Montana

#### CY

MA, National Institute of Labour and Human Resources:

Eleni Lambritzi, (two interviews, in February and in May 2017)

FEAD partnership municipality of Athens, Social Solidarity and Health Directorate:

- Eudoxia Ioannidou, Head of Organisation, Planning and Documentation (OPD)department
- Athanassia Loukoviti, member of the OPD department
- Stavros Theodoridis, member of the OPD department
- Costas Karategos, responsible for the delivery of food packages under FEAD
- Ioanna Kavadia, cooperates with the vice-mayor Maria Stratigaki

FEAD partnership ASDA (west Athens):

- Andreas Katopodis
- Maria Tsakona

#### CZ

Managing Authority, MoLSA:

- Mr Robert Jan Hrebicek
- Mr Ladislav Kucera

SOI actors:

- Ms Miroslava Salavcova, Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports (member of Working Group)
- Ms Tereza Volfova and Mr Filip Kuchar, Kapital City of Prague (beneficiary)

- Ms Jandikova, South Moravian Region (beneficiary)
- Mr Coufal, Central Bohemian Region (potential beneficiary)
- Mr Vana, Central Bohemian Region (potential beneficiary)
- Women for Women
- Ms Radka Soukupova, government Office, Social Inclusion Agency

SOII/SOIII actors

- Mr Jiri Bradac, Department 35, MoLSA (beneficiary)
- Mr Milan Vasek, Charita CR
- Participation in the Meeting of the project partners organised by the Department 35, MoLSA (meeting of the representatives of Food Banks, NGOs and municipalities within the second project), 21. 04. 2017

**DE**

FEAD MA:

- Funda Salomon, Tel: 0049 228 99 527-2654; E-Mail: funda.salomon@bmas.bund.de

Acasa in Dortmund:

- "Willkommen Europa" - Ökumenische Anlaufstelle für EU-Zuwandererinnen und Zuwanderer, Bornstr. 64, 44145 Dortmund, Tel. 0231 28 86 10 40

Duisburg Projekt:

- Robert Tonks, Deputy Director, Office for Elections, European Affairs and Information Logistics, Bismarckplatz 1, 47198 Duisburg, Tel: 0049203283-2058; e-mail: r.tonks@stadt-duisburg.de

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*Ministry of Social Affairs, Gertu Pöial and Merlin Tatrik*

*Estonian Food Bank, Piet Boerefijn CEO of the Food Bank and Kerttu Olökainen project manager of the EU food aid*

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- Andreas Katopodis
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Francisco Greciano, FESBAL (Spanish Federation of Food Banks), Phone: +34 911 935 945, email: [francisco@fesbal.org](mailto:francisco@fesbal.org)

## FI

Sari T. Niemi, Senior Officer, Agency for Rural Affairs, [sari.t.niemi@mavi.fi](mailto:sari.t.niemi@mavi.fi), interview conducted on 19 March 2017

Ritva Hakkarainen, Senior Officer, Ministry of Employment and the Economy, [ritva.hakkarainen@tem.fi](mailto:ritva.hakkarainen@tem.fi), interview conducted on 19 March 2017

Ulla Pesola, Food aid coordinator, Kirkkopalvelut, [ulla.pesola@kirkkopalvelut.fi](mailto:ulla.pesola@kirkkopalvelut.fi), telephone interview conducted on 30 March 2017

Kristian Vilkmán, Executive director, Via Dia, [Kristian.vilkman@viadia.fi](mailto:Kristian.vilkman@viadia.fi), telephone interview conducted on 9 April 2017

Kirsi Virtanen, Chair, Kainuun Kansalaiskeskus, [kirsi.virtaska@gmail.com](mailto:kirsi.virtaska@gmail.com), telephone interview conducted on 27 April 2017

## FR

Ministry of Social Cohesion ( Managing Authority) the department of social and solidarity economy ( Angèle Archimbaud, Corinne Ehrart and Mathilde Arnal and the new of FEAD management unit Jean François Bourdais)

Franceagrimer (Intermediary Body) (Philippe Merillon , Serena Andre)

Les restos du cœur ( Partner Organisation) the food department ( support for food aid, supply and logistics).

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## HR

Managing authority: MRMS

The Intermediate body: Ministarstvo demografije, obitelji, socijalne politike i mladih

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Bátori Zsolt , Director General, Directorate General for Social and Child Protection (SZGYF) FEAD

Virág Gábor, Directorate General for Social and Child Protection  
(SZGYF), FEAD project manager

Kemecsei, Judit, Public Foundation for the Homeless, FEAD project  
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## **IE**

Ronan Harney, Department of Social Protection, FEAD Managing Authority, Tel. +353 71 9672501, email: ronan.harney@welfare.ie, <https://www.welfare.ie/en/Pages/FEAD---EUROPEAN-AID-TO-THE-MOST-DEPRIVED.aspx> (Telephone interviews, 21.03.2017 and 26.06.2017, and emails on 8 and 21.03.2017, 24.04.2017 and 26.06.2017)

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## **IT**

Cristina Berliri – Ministry of labour and social policies, FEAD Managing Authority

Patrizia De Felice - Ministry of labour and social policies, FEAD Managing Authority

Vittore Mescia – Banco Alimentare (main Italian food bank and one of the partner organisations)

## **LT**

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Vaida Kazlauskaite, Vilnius Municipality Social Support Centre, +37067017317,

## **LU**

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## **LV**

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Mr. Jonathan Vassallo, Managing Authority, Director General Tel: 2200 1142

[www.eufunds.gov.mt](http://www.eufunds.gov.mt)

Mr. George Sultana, Policy Development and Programme Implementation, Ministry for Family and Social Solidarity Tel: 2590 3372

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## **NL**

Interview with Giovanni Floor and Chantal de Jong-Marsman, planned 23 June 2017.

## **PL**

- Eliza Lipińska, FEAD coordinator
- Olga Richter, evaluation specialist
- Małgorzata Szyszka, technical assistance
- Judyta Witkowska, budget and finance

## **PT**

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Executive Committee of the Directive Commission of the POAPMC (Operational Programme for the Support of the Most Disadvantaged Population)

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## **RO**

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## **SE**

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National co-ordinator of FEAD. Johan Nordqvist, Managing authority: Swedish ESF Council, Box 47141, SE-100 74 Stockholm. Tel: +46 8 457 33 08.

**SI**

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**SK**

Maria Janeckova, Ivana Stefancikova (Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family of the Slovak Republic - Managing authority)

Mariana Lihanova, Renata Reskova (Central Office of Labour, Social Affairs and Family - Intermediary body)

Zuzana Rosiarova (Slovak Red Cross - Partner organisation)

Marika Kubikova (Slovak Red Cross, territorial unit Liptovsky Mikulas - Partner organisation)

**UK**

Jackie O'Neil, Department for Education, Healthy Pupils Unit, Post-16 and Disadvantage Group, Tel: 01325 340695 - Ext: x640695, email: Jackie.O'NEIL@education.gov.uk (emails on 09.03.2017 and 29.06.2017)

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## **Annexes**

## Annex 1: Overview of national FEAD Operational Programmes

Table 14. Overview of national FEAD Operational Programmes

MS	EC funds <sup>74</sup>	Nat. co-fin <sup>75</sup>	Target groups	Material support	Accompanying measures
AT	18.0	3.2	Families with school children	School material	Improve their social inclusion and tailored advice and orientation activities.
BE	73.8	14.3	People affected by poverty, children	Food; material assistance to children	Measures for social integration
BG	104.8	15.0		distribution of food, free warm meals	Measures for social integration
HR	36.6	6.5		Meals, food packages, hygiene products, school material and sport equipment	Counselling on balanced nutrition, health care and personal hygiene, parenting and financial literacy, etc
CY	3.9	0.7	Most deprived students in public schools	School material (clothing and bags)	
CZ	23.3	4.0	People in serious social need (families with children, homeless persons)	Food, material	Social inclusion activities
DK	3.9	0.7	Homeless persons (target 200 p.a.)	Not specified	Social inclusion activities
EE	8.0	1.4	Most deprived persons	Food, reducing food waste	ESF measures, means of ERDF and social services foreseen and delivered by the state and the local municipalities
FI	22.5	4.0	Most deprived persons	Food aid	yes, not specified
FR	499.0	88.0	Most deprived persons	Food aid	Guidance and support to get out of poverty
DE	78.9	13.9	Homeless persons (or persons threatened by homelessness), most deprived EU migrants, esp. children	Improving access to food aid	Improving access to material support and social services, for immigrating children to offers of early education
EL	280.0	50.0	Most deprived persons, esp. Single parent and multi-child families, homeless persons	Food packages or ready-made meals, shoes and clothes, school items and baby equipment	Leaflet with basic information on FEAD and advisory and support services (psychological, social and dietary support and socialisation activities for children)
HU	93.8	16.6	Most deprived persons (children, homeless, disabled and/or elderly people)	Food (packages, hot meals) and material assistance, special goods for children	Planned: elementary health service for psychological problems and addicting consultation for homeless people; health and basic lifestyle and economic guidance
IE	22.7	4.0	Most deprived people without social assistance	Food, other basic goods (hygiene products, clothing, footwear and school supplies)	Accompanying measures (not specified)
IT	670.0	118.0	Most deprived people, families with children,	Food (60%) , school material, equipment for	Accompanying measures (not specified)

<sup>74</sup> In EUR mio

<sup>75</sup> In EUR mio



MS	EC funds <sup>74</sup>	Nat. co-fin <sup>75</sup>	Target groups	Material support	Accompanying measures
			homeless persons	children (30%), goods for homeless people	
LV	41.0	7.2	Most deprived persons, children	Food, and hot meals, hygiene items, school supplies for children.	Accompanying measures
LT	77.0	13.0	Most deprived persons	Food packages, goods for 300.000 people,	Social integration measures
LU	4.0	0.7	Most deprived persons	Food and basic material assistance	Food advice and other forms of advice (debt, alphabetisation, language courses, legal advice etc.).
MT	4.0	0.6	Households receiving social assistance, having at least 2 children and a revenue below minimum wage/ low pensions	food packages	Provision of advice and information on budget management and/or employment
NL	3.9	0.7	Retired people with a low income or considerable debts		
PL	473.0	83.5	People at risk of poverty and social exclusion (esp. large families, homeless persons)	Food assistance	Workshops, educational programmes on financial issues and healthy nutrition and counteracting wasting food
PT	176.9	31.2	Most deprived persons	Food support and basic goods packages	Social integration measures
RO	441.0	75.0	Most deprived persons, esp. Children	food support, school supplies to children in difficulty	Hygiene and nutritional education, help to access medical services or juridical counselling, orientation to the social services and guidance and support to find a job
SK	55.1	7.7	Homeless people, house-holds relying benefits	food and basic material assistance	Social consultations; leaflets, which contain contact details and information about services offered by the partner organisation and other relevant social service providers. Practical information on how to use and store the supplied food (e.g. recipes) and minimise food waste.
SI	20.5	3.6	Most deprived persons	food aid	Accompanying measures (not specified)
ES	563.4	99.4	Most deprived persons	food aid	Social integration measures (by partner organisations)
SE	7.8	1.2	Most deprived persons, esp. EU-EEA citizens without right to social assistance		Improve knowledge of Swedish society, health and illness prevention
UK	3.9	0.7	Most deprived pupils	Food (breakfast clubs in schools)	Promoting healthy eating habits at young age and helping save money to families
Total	3,810.7	664.8			

## **Annex 2: List of common indicators**

COMMISSION DELEGATED REGULATION (EU) No 1255/2014 of 17 July 2014 supplementing Regulation (EU) No 223/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived by laying down the content of the annual and final implementation reports, including the list of common indicators

### COMMON INDICATORS FOR OP I AND OP II

#### Input indicators

(1) Total amount of eligible public expenditure approved in the documents setting out the conditions for support of operations.

(2) Total amount of eligible public expenditure incurred by end recipients and paid in implementing operations.

Thereof, where relevant:

(a) total amount of eligible public expenditure incurred by end recipients and paid in implementing operations relating to provision of food support;

(b) total amount of eligible public expenditure incurred by end recipients and paid in implementing operations relating to provision of basic material assistance.

(3) Total amount of eligible public expenditure declared to the Commission.

These data shall be expressed in euro.

### COMMON INDICATORS FOR OP I

#### Output indicators on food support distributed (1)

(4) Quantity of fruits and vegetables.

(5) Quantity of meat, eggs, fish, seafood.

(6) Quantity of flour, bread, potatoes, rice and other starchy products.

(7) Quantity of sugar.

(8) Quantity of milk products.

(9) Quantity of fats, oil.

(10) Quantity of convenience food, other foodstuff (not falling under the aforementioned categories).

(11) Total quantity of food support distributed.

Thereof:

(a) share of food for which only transport, distribution and storage were paid for by the OP (in %);

(b) proportion of FEAD co-financed food products in the total volume of food distributed by the partner organisations

(in %) (2).

(12) Total number of meals distributed partly or totally financed by the OP (3).

(13) Total number of food packages distributed partly or totally financed by the OP (4).

(1) The indicators (4) to (11) include any form of these products, e.g. fresh, canned and frozen foodstuff and should be expressed in tons.

(2) Values for this indicator shall be established by an informed estimation of the partner organisations.

(3) The definition of what is to be understood as a meal can be provided at the level of the partner organisation/operation/managing authority. Values for this indicator shall be established by an assessment by the partner organisations.

(4) The definition of what is to be understood as a food package can be provided at the level of the partner organisation/operation/managing authority. Packages do not need to be standardised in size or content. Values for this indicator shall be established by an assessment by the partner organisations.

Result indicators on food support distributed (5)

(14) Total number of persons receiving food support.

Thereof:

(a) number of children aged 15 years or below;

(b) number of persons aged 65 years or above;

(c) number of women;

(d) number of migrants, participants with a foreign background, minorities (including marginalised communities such as the Roma);

(e) number of persons with disabilities;

(f) number of homeless.

Output indicators on basic material assistance distributed

(15) Total monetary value of goods distributed.

Thereof:

(a) total monetary value of goods for children;

(b) total monetary value of goods for the homeless;

(c) total monetary value of goods for other target groups.

(16) List of most relevant categories of goods distributed to children (6):

(a) layette;

(b) school bags;

(c) stationery, exercise books, pens, painting equipment and other equipment required in school (non-clothes);

(d) sports equipment (sport shoes, leotard, swimsuit, etc.);

(e) clothes (winter coat, footwear, school uniform, etc.);

(f) other category — to be specified

(17) List of most relevant categories of goods distributed to the homeless (6):

(a) sleeping bags/blankets;

(b) kitchen equipment (pots, pans, cutlery, etc.);

(c) clothes (winter coat, footwear, etc.);

(d) household linen (towels, bedclothes);

(e) hygiene articles (first aid kit, soap, toothbrush, disposable razor, etc.);

(f) other category —to be specified.

(18) List of most relevant categories of goods distributed to other target groups (6):

(a) categories to be specified.

Result indicators on basic material assistance distributed (5)

(19) Total number of persons receiving basic material assistance.

Thereof:

(a) number of children aged 15 years or below;

(b) number of persons aged 65 years or above;

(5) Values for these indicators shall be determined based on the informed estimation of the partner organisations. It is neither expected nor required that they are based on information provided by end-recipients.

(6) The list shall include all relevant categories covering at least 75 % of the goods distributed.

(c) number of women;

(d) number of migrants, participants with a foreign background, minorities including marginalised communities such as the Roma;

(e) number of persons with disabilities;

(f) number of homeless.

#### COMMON INDICATORS FOR OP II

Output indicators on social inclusion assistance

(20) Total number of persons receiving social inclusion assistance.

Thereof:

(a) number of children aged 15 years or below;

(b) number of persons aged 65 years or above;

(c) number of women;

(d) number of migrants, participants with a foreign background, minorities (including marginalised communities such as the Roma);

(e) number of persons with disabilities;

(f) number of homeless.

These data for OP II are personal data according to Article 7 of Directive 95/46/EC. Their processing is necessary for compliance with the legal obligation to which the controller is subject (Article 7(c) of Directive 95/46/EC). For the definition of controller, see Article 2 of Directive 95/46/EC.

## Annex 3: List of indicators 1, 2 and 3 by MS

Member State	Total amount of eligible public expenditure approved in the documents setting out the conditions for support of operations	Total amount of eligible public expenditure incurred by beneficiaries and paid in implementing operations	Total amount of eligible public expenditure declared to the Commission	Implementation (Indicator 2 / Indicator 1)
	1	2	3	
AT	5,879,698.0	5,771,520.9	2,631,447.3	98.2%
BE	37,074,099.8	28,939,619.9	0.0	78.1%
BG	51,881,092.7	14,692,445.9	6,074,917.7	28.3%
CY	243,527.8	191,000.0	43,048.8	78.4%
CZ	7,271,219.8	1,315,923.6	1,237,406.3	18.1%
DE	53,828,020.5	3,622,108.9	0.0	6.7%
DK	266,210.6	227,024.7	192,971.0	85.3%
EE	2,845,868.0	2,840,314.0	2,139,032.0	99.8%
ES	231,915,984.5	217,667,477.3	155,341,488.0	93.9%
FI	10,917,000.0	5,499,499.7	1,774,642.9	50.4%
FR	239,772,626.4	174,575,795.7	44,426,883.6	72.8%
EL	27,384,783.4	18,501,124.9	13,245,733.9	85.7%
HR	14,058,517.8	131,885.1	131,272.2	0.9%
HU	45,468,095.0	910.0	910.0	0.0%
IE	883,843.0	869,000.0	0.0	98.3%
IT	151,925,000.0	107,645,352.7	0.0	70.9%
LT	28,023,522.2	27,924,742.9	11,004,687.0	99.6%
LU	1,647,083.0	897,433.6	226,377.8	54.5%
LV	19,868,411.0	7,917,550.8	6,610,580.6	39.8%
MT	4,640,777.0	919,518.5	474,961.2	19.8%
NL	4,584,303.0	749,413.0	97,601.0	16.3%
PL	156,507,979.8	99,418,900.5	74,526,000.7	63.5%
PT	23,415,928.2	20,989,839.1	20,906,493.8	89.6%
RO	176,299,669.2	161,273,631.2	4,290,711.9	91.5%
SE	5,403,702.2	465,186.2	148,037.0	8.6%
SI	10,748,828.6	4,700,176.5	2,716,673.8	43.7%
SK	9,208,744.0	4,118,881.5	129,628.2	44.7%
<b>EU27 (UK excl.)</b>	<b>1,321,964,535.5</b>	<b>911,866,277.0</b>	<b>348,371,506.5</b>	<b>69.0%</b>

Source: SFC2014

### Annex 4: Evaluation questions and sub-questions per evaluation criterion

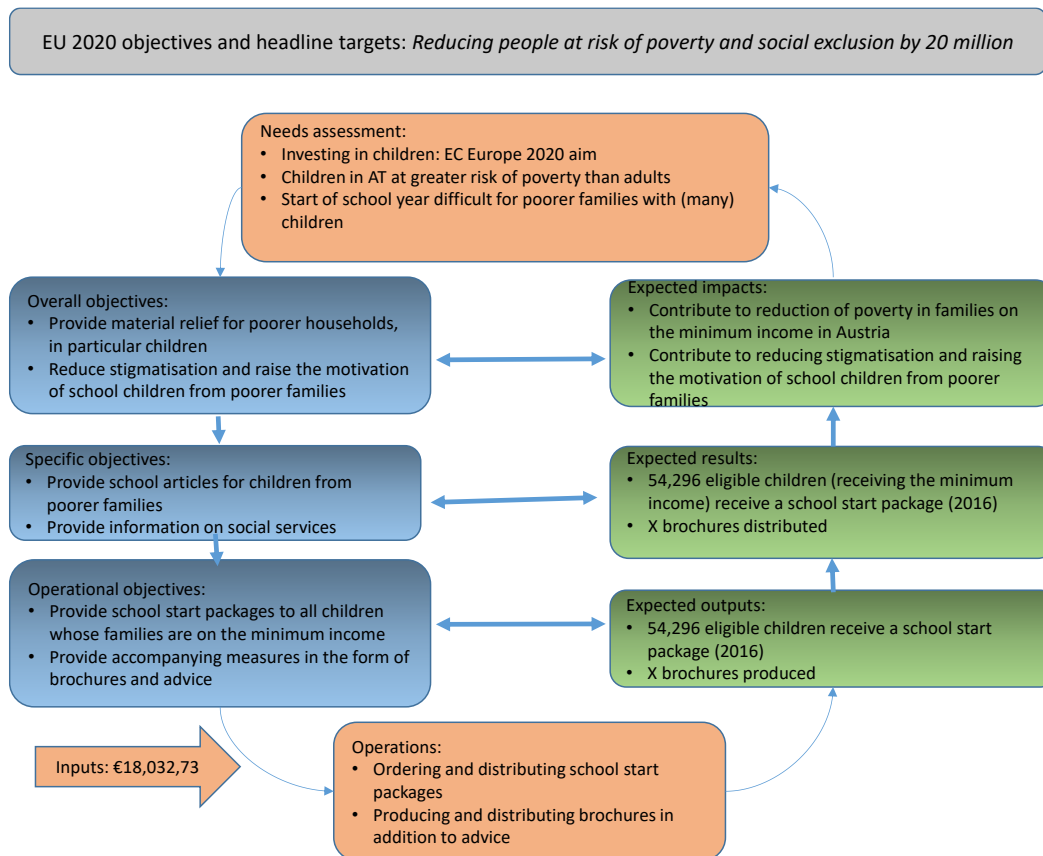
Table 15. Evaluation question and sub-questions per evaluation criterion

Evaluation questions	Evaluation criterion	Sub-questions
EFF1. To what extent does the FEAD contribute to national and EU objectives of achieving poverty reduction and social inclusion?	Effectiveness and coherence	EFF1.1 To what extent are the FEAD objectives (as stated in Article 3 of the FEAD Regulation) on track to be achieved?
		EFF1.2 To what extent has assistance reached the most vulnerable groups (homeless, children at risk of poverty, etc.) and does it help them move further towards inclusion?
		EFF1.3 Are adjustments possible/made when needs change or new needs emerge?
		EFF1.4 Are horizontal principles such as reducing food waste complied with (Article 5 of FEAD regulation)?
		EFF1.5 Are there unintended results? Is there any evidence of impacts yet?
EFF2 How are the various types of assistance delivered?	Effectiveness and coherence	EFF2.1 What are the types of assistance delivered, including those related to food donations and awareness raising activities?
		EFF2.2 What are the types of accompanying measures (OP I) and social inclusion activities (OP II) delivered?
		EFF2.3 How robust are good practice cases (such as leveraging amount of aid) identified by MAs and Partner Organisations?
COH1. To what extent are the interventions coherent with other EU, national and regional interventions which have similar or complementary objectives?	Coherence and effectiveness	COH1.1 What role does FEAD play in the national system of poverty alleviation?
		COH1.2 To what extent is FEAD support complementary to support provided by other European Union instruments, in particular the ESF and AMIF?
		COH1.3 Has the FEAD contributed to supplement or to displace national (public or private) interventions and financial resources used with similar or complementary objectives?
		COH1.4 How coherent are the OPs internally and among themselves (e.g. multiple support forms, delivery methods)?
EFFI 1 Are the elements of Management and Control System (MCS) requirements in FEAD set appropriately to minimise the administrative burden while allowing effective and efficient implementation?	Efficiency and effectiveness	EFFI1.1 Is there any evidence of gold-plating at MS level in implementing the FEAD?
		EFFI1.2 To what extent are the costs involved justified, given the outputs/impacts that have been achieved?
		EFFI1.3 What type of operations for which target group proves to be most effective and efficient and why?
		EFFI1.4 What is the feasibility of alternative delivery mechanisms and support modes for the provision of support to the most deprived (e.g. shared management, indirect management, budget support)?
		EFFI1.5 Does the procedure for identifying the end recipients facilitate access to FEAD assistance?

Evaluation questions	Evaluation criterion	Sub-questions
		EFFI1.6 Does the use of flat rates under OP I simplify the implementation of operations by partner organisations? EFFI1.7 Is there any scope for simplification?
EU1. What kind of EU added value is resulting from the FEAD support volume, scope, role, and process) and how significant is it?	CAV, effectiveness and coherence	EU1.1 To what extent does FEAD add to existing actions, either by supporting national action in general or specific areas of national policy? EU1.2 To what extent does FEAD broaden existing action by supporting groups or policy areas that would not otherwise receive support. EU1.3 To what extent does FEAD support local/regional innovations that are taken up at national level or national innovative actions that are then 'mainstreamed'. EU1.4 To what extent does FEAD influence Member State administrations and organisations involved in the programmes.
EU2. What would be the most likely consequences of stopping the FEAD support?	CAV, effectiveness and coherence	
REL 1 How relevant is the aid to the target groups? How well does it respond to their needs? Are there any gaps?	Relevance and effectiveness	REL1.1 How relevant is the aid to the target groups? REL1.2 How well does it respond to their needs? REL1.3 Are there any gaps?

## Annex 5: Interventions logics of the FEAD Operational Programmes by Member State

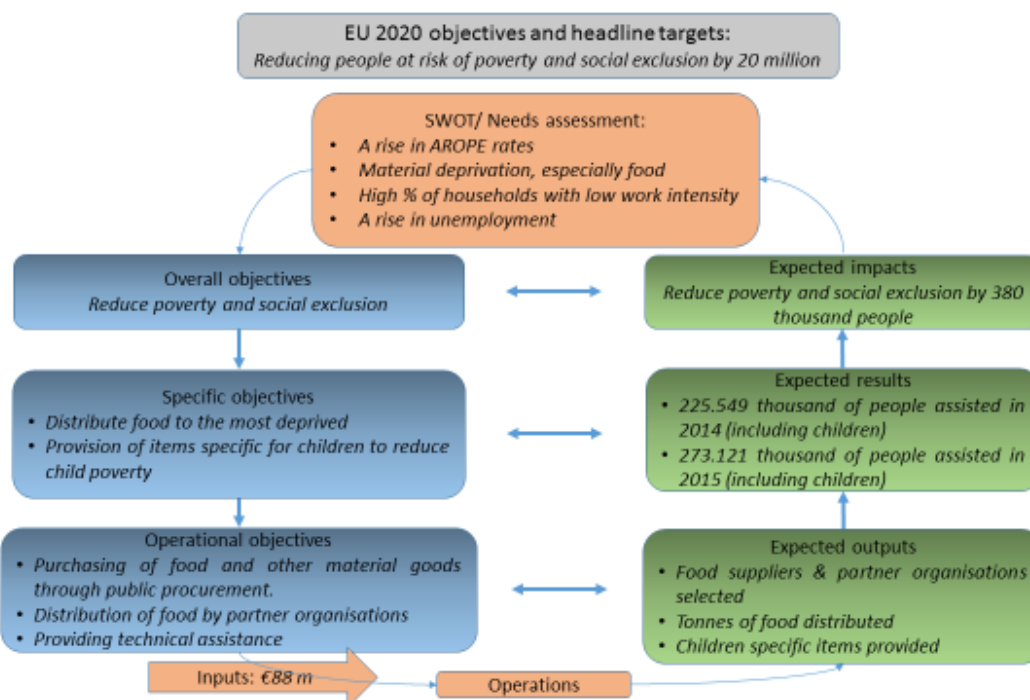
Figure 35. Intervention logic of the FEAD in Austria



Source: Own figure on the basis of the Austrian FEAD OP

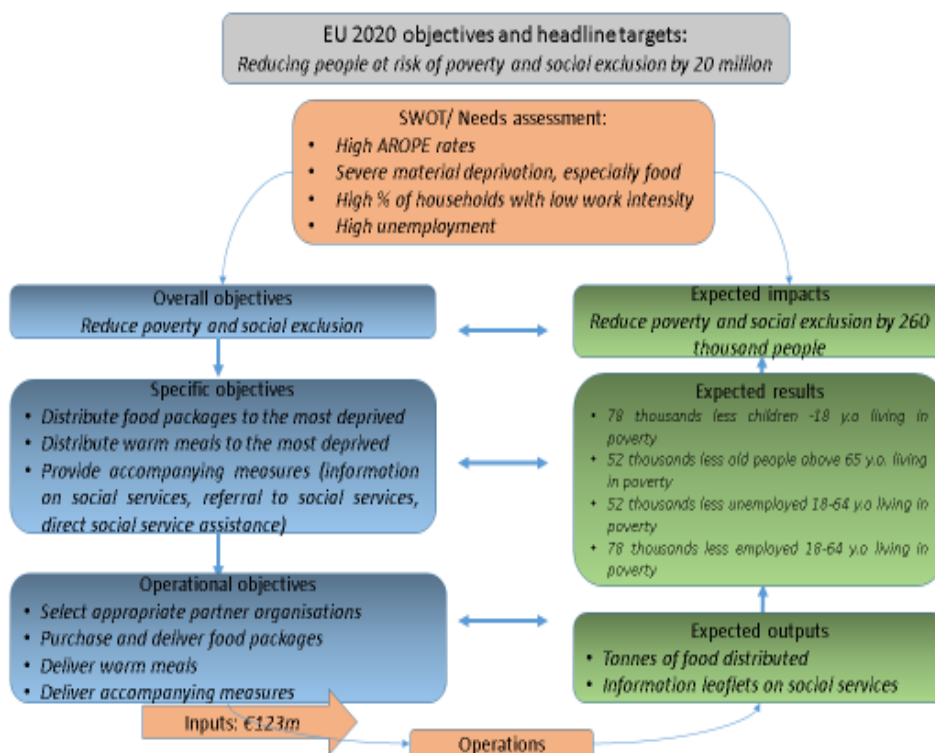


Figure 36. The intervention logic of the FEAD programme in Belgium



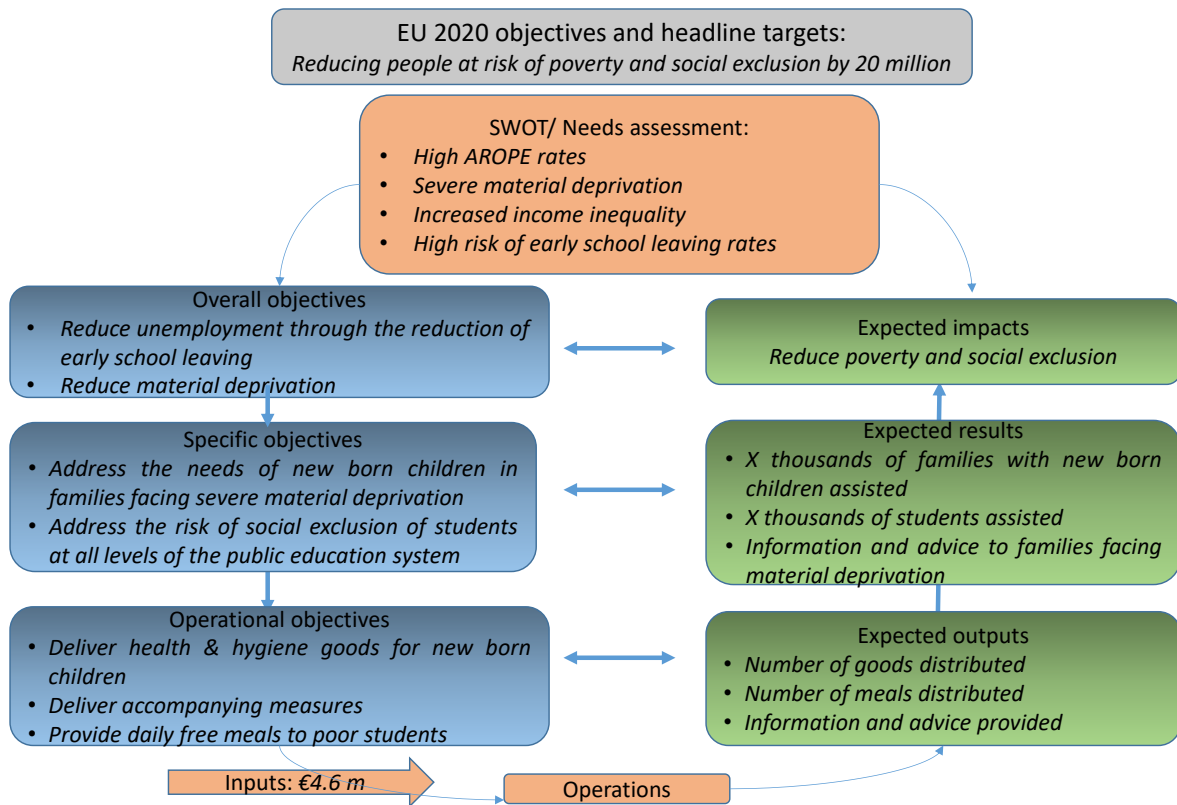
Source: own elaboration based on the OP and interview with Barbara Cerrato of the FPS SI (Federal Public Service for Social Integration, fight against Poverty, the Social Economy and Urban City Policies).

Figure 37. Intervention logic of the FEAD in Bulgaria



Source: own figure on the base of Bulgarian FEAD OP

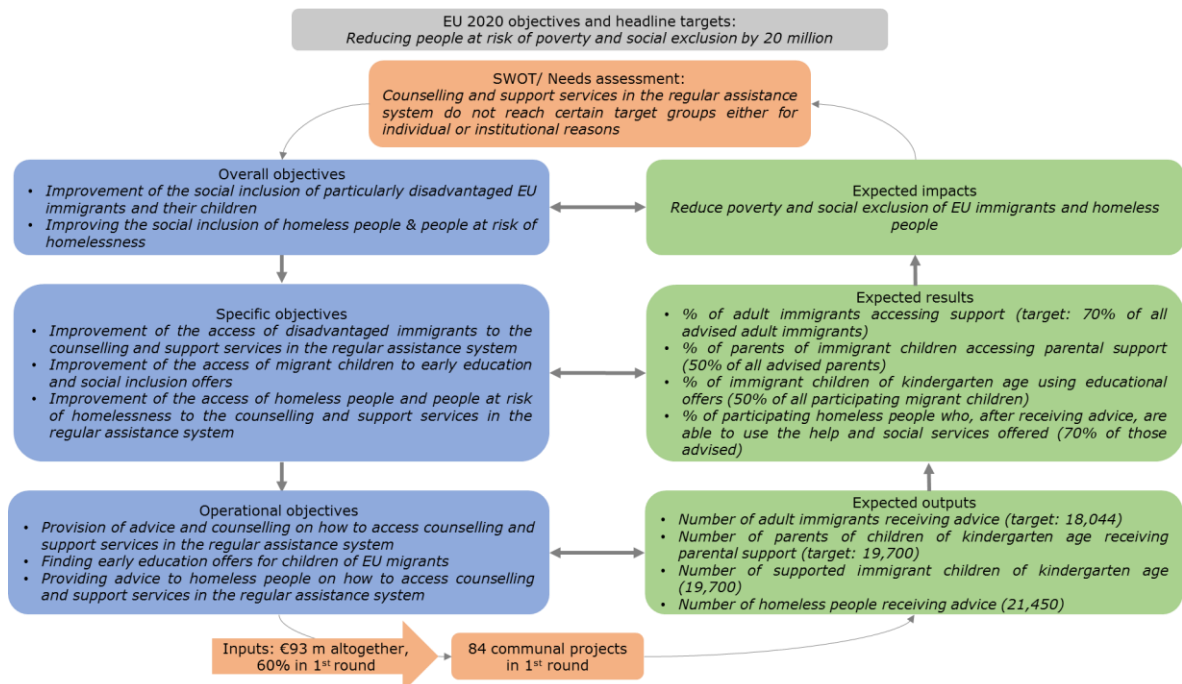
Figure 38. The intervention logic of the FEAD programme in Cyprus



Source: own elaboration based on the OP and interview with the MA

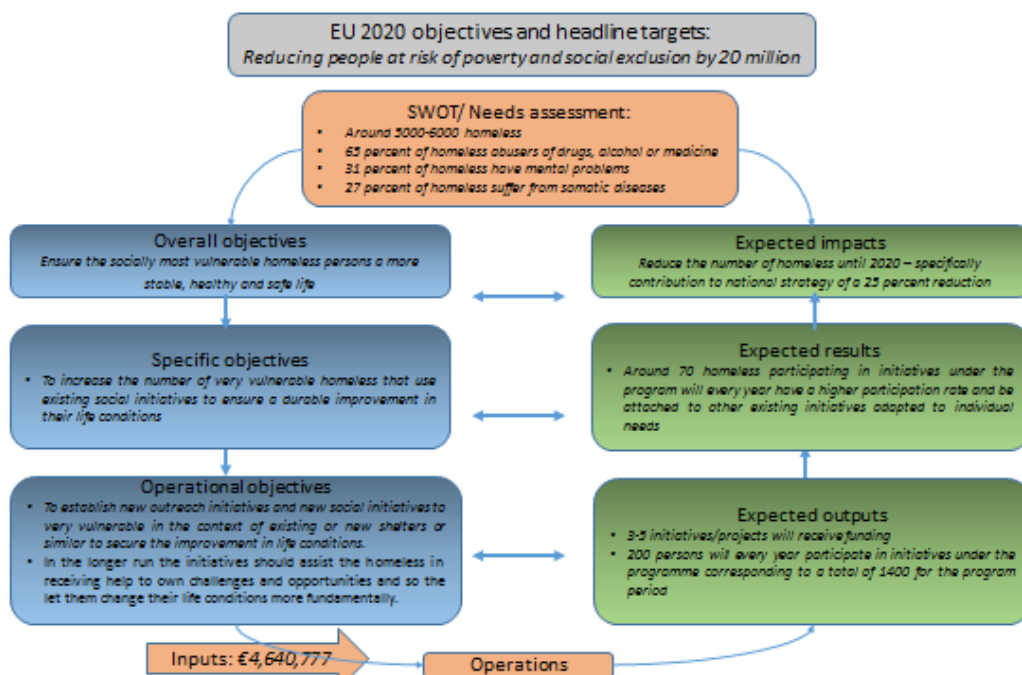
CZ will be added in the final report

Figure 39. EHAP OP DE Intervention logic



Source: Metis GmbH on the basis of the EHAP OP DE

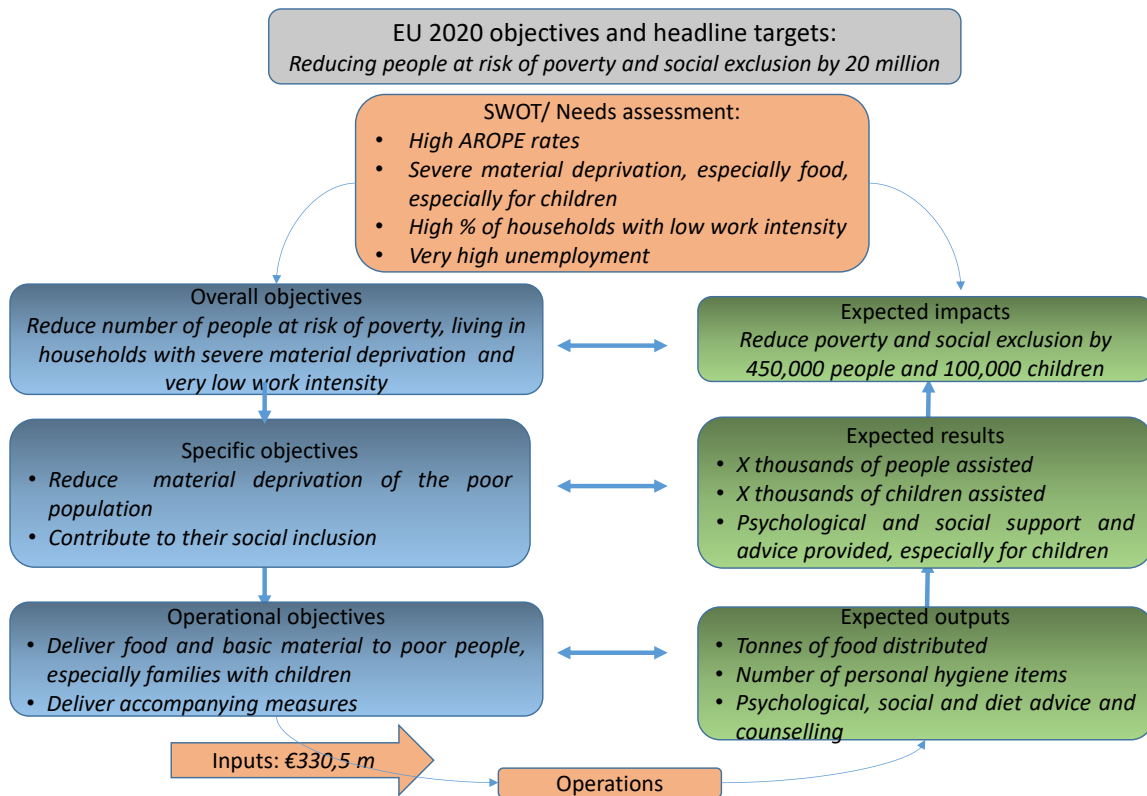
Figure 40. The intervention logic of the FEAD programme in Denmark



Source: own figure on the basis of the Danish FEAD OP

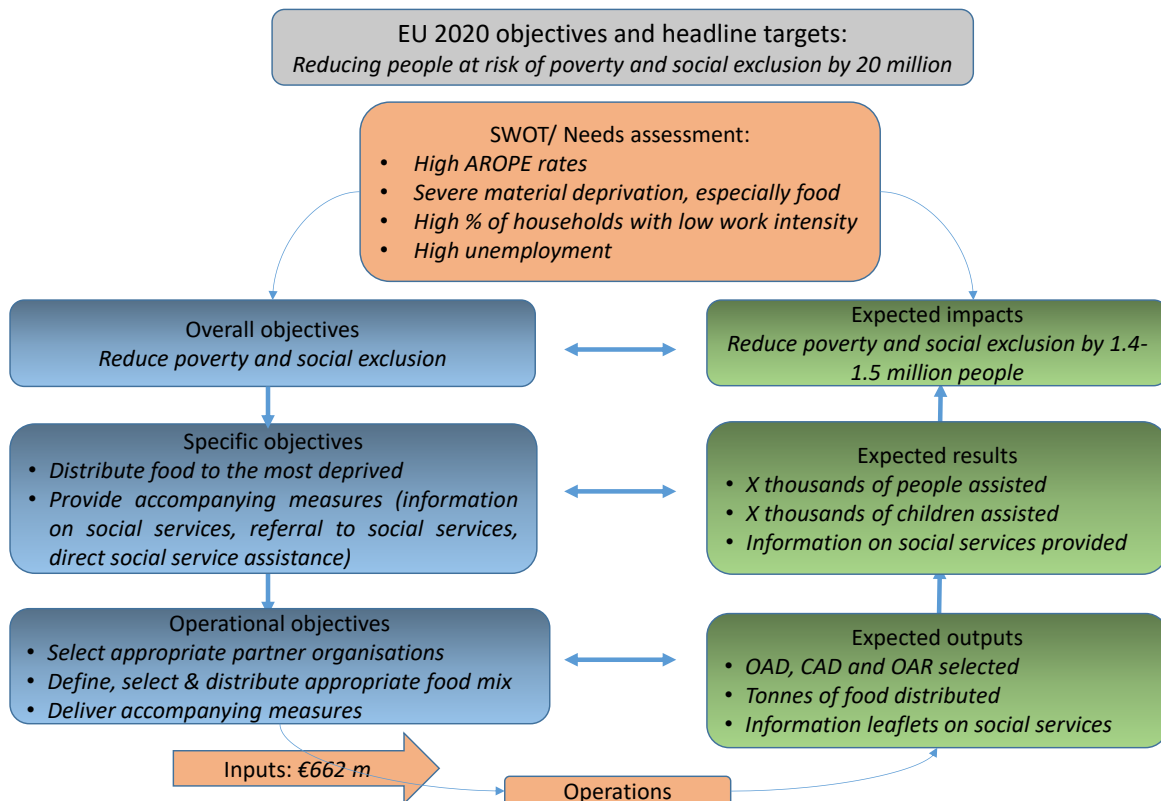
EE will be added in the final report

Figure 41. The intervention logic of the FEAD programme in Greece



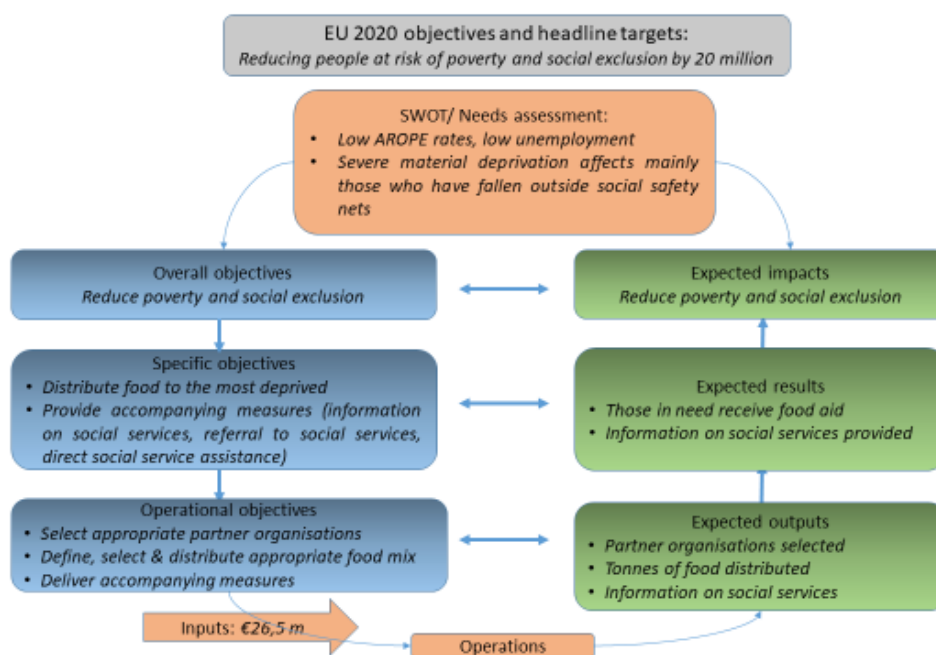
Source: own elaboration based on the OP and interview with the MA

Figure 42. The intervention logic of the FEAD programme in Spain



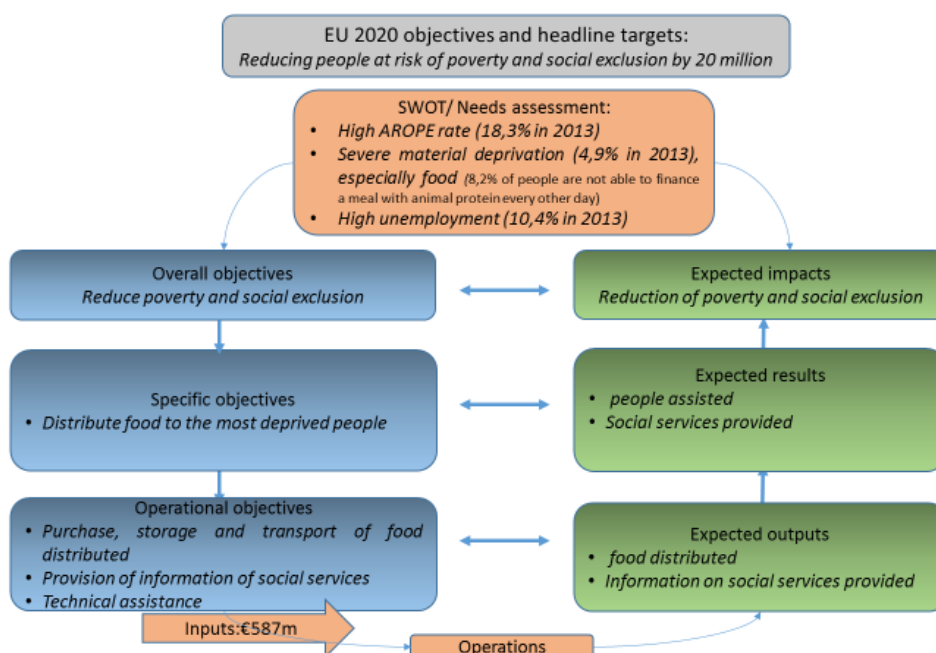
Source: own elaboration based on the OP and interview with the MA

Figure 43. Intervention logic of the FEAD in Finland



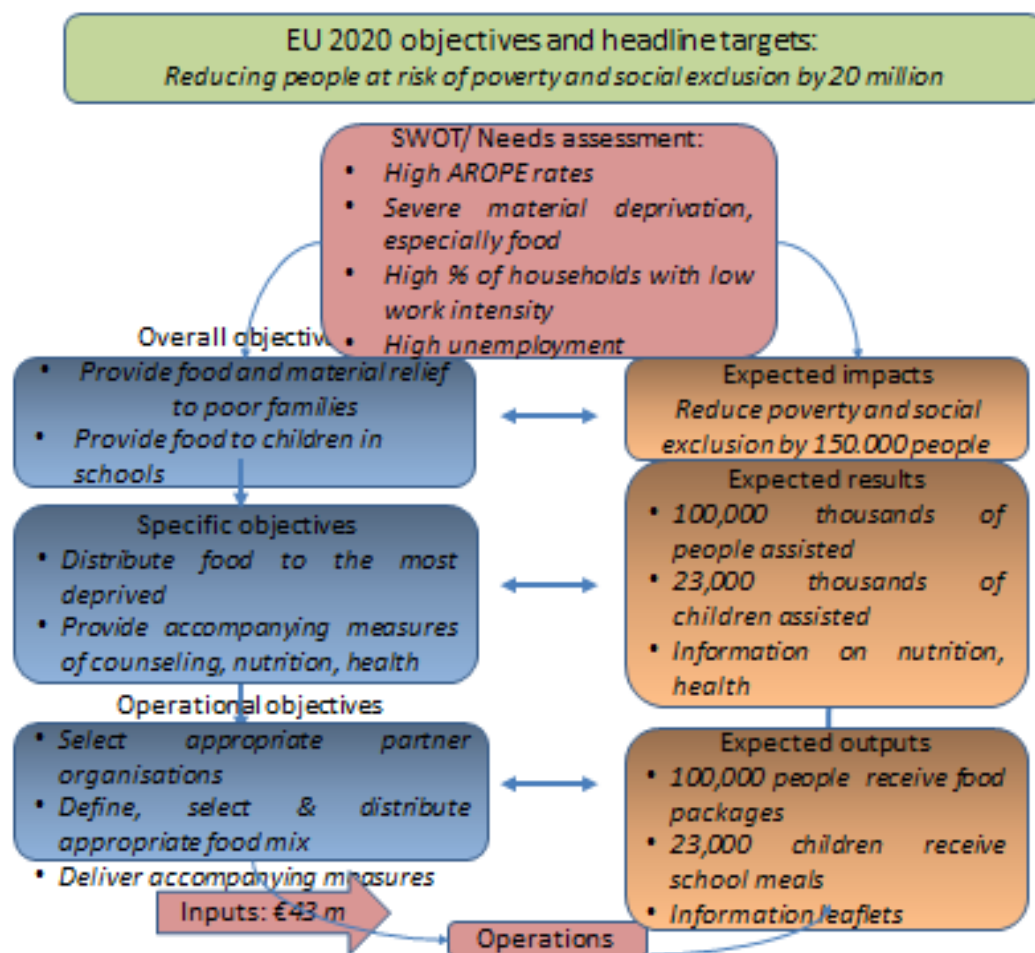
Source: own figure on the basis of the Finnish FEAD OP

Figure 44. Intervention logic of the FEAD in France



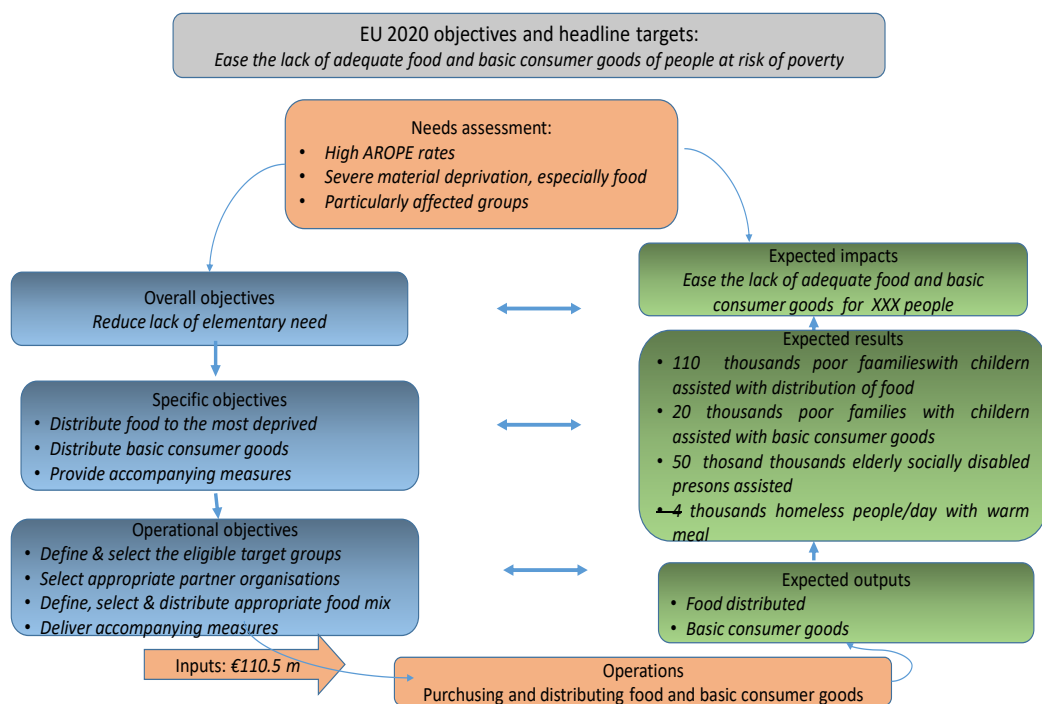
Source: own elaboration based on the OP and interview with the MA

Figure 45. Intervention logic of the FEAD in Croatia



Source: own elaboration based on the OP and interview with the MA

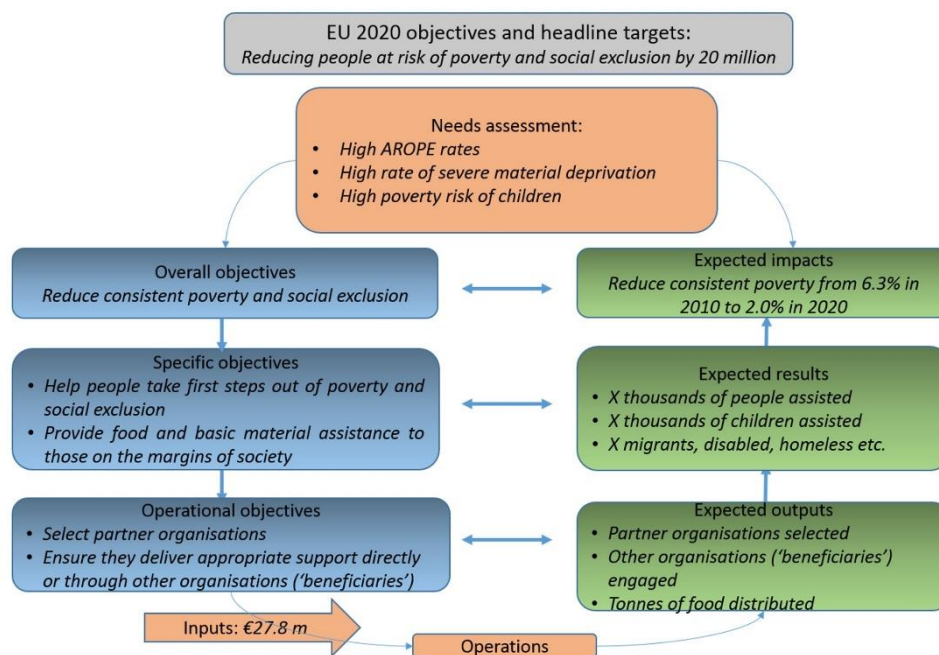
Figure 46. The intervention logic of the FEAD OP in Hungary



Source: own elaboration based on the FEAD OP Hungary, IAR 2016 and interview with the MA



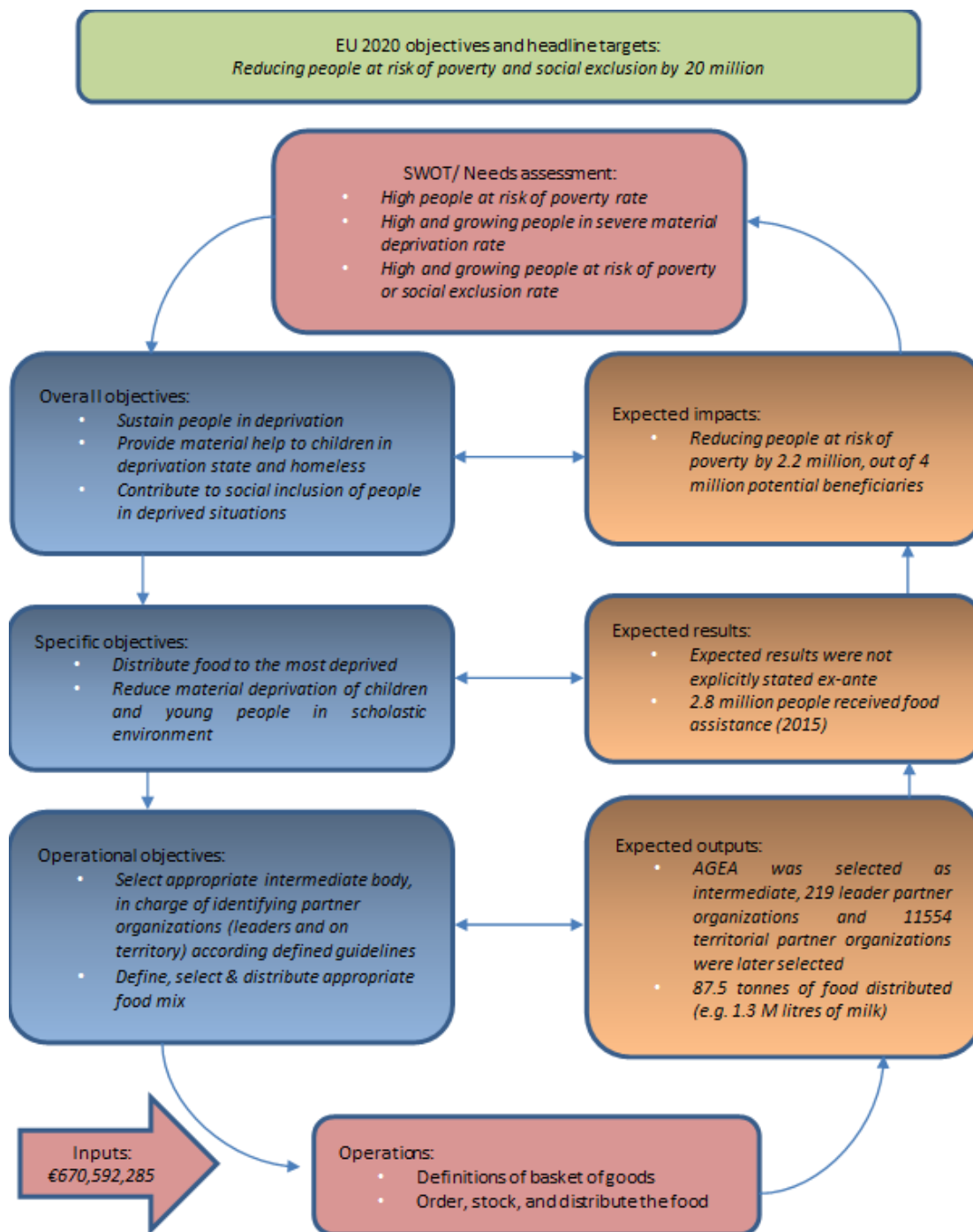
Figure 47. The intervention logic of the FEAD programme in Ireland<sup>76</sup>



Source: own elaboration based on the OP and interview with the MA

<sup>76</sup> There were no targets established as part of the programming or subsequently – see previous footnote

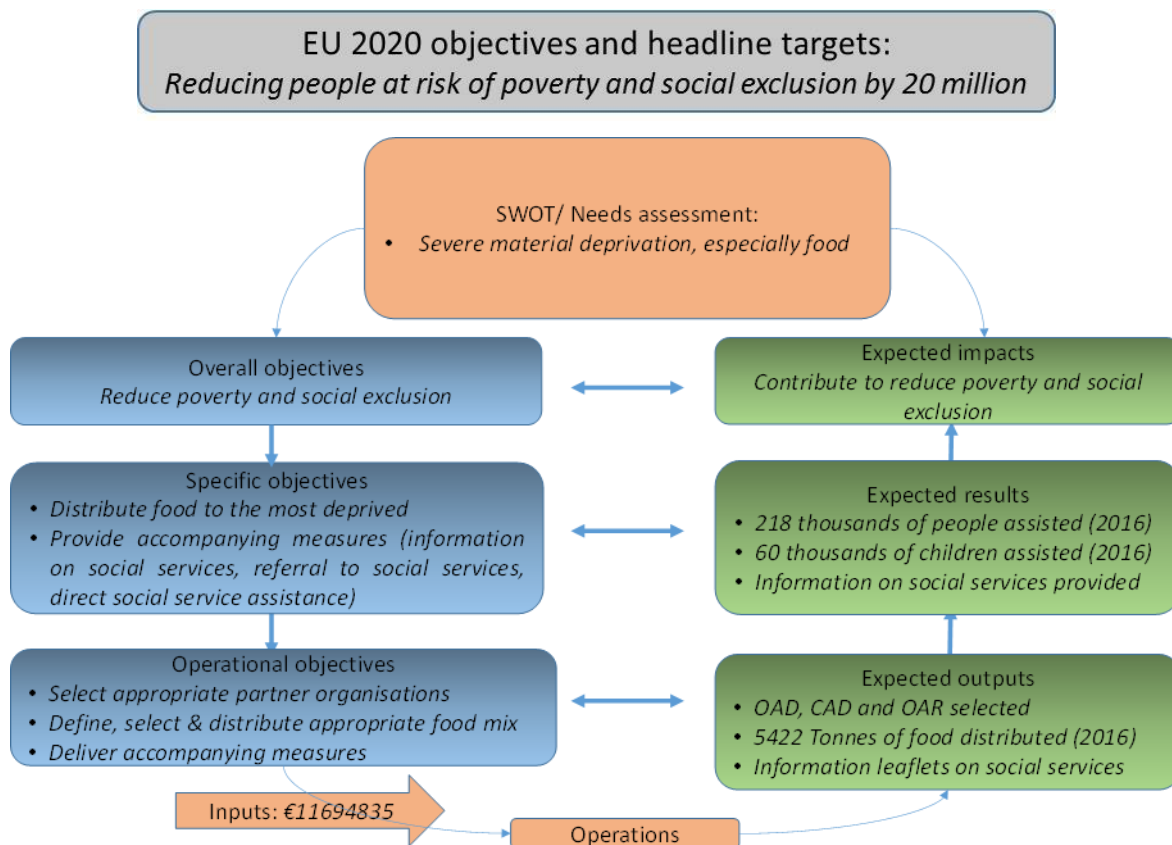
Figure 48. Italian FEAD OP needs assessment, objectives, operation, and outputs



Source: own figure based on Italian FEAD OP.

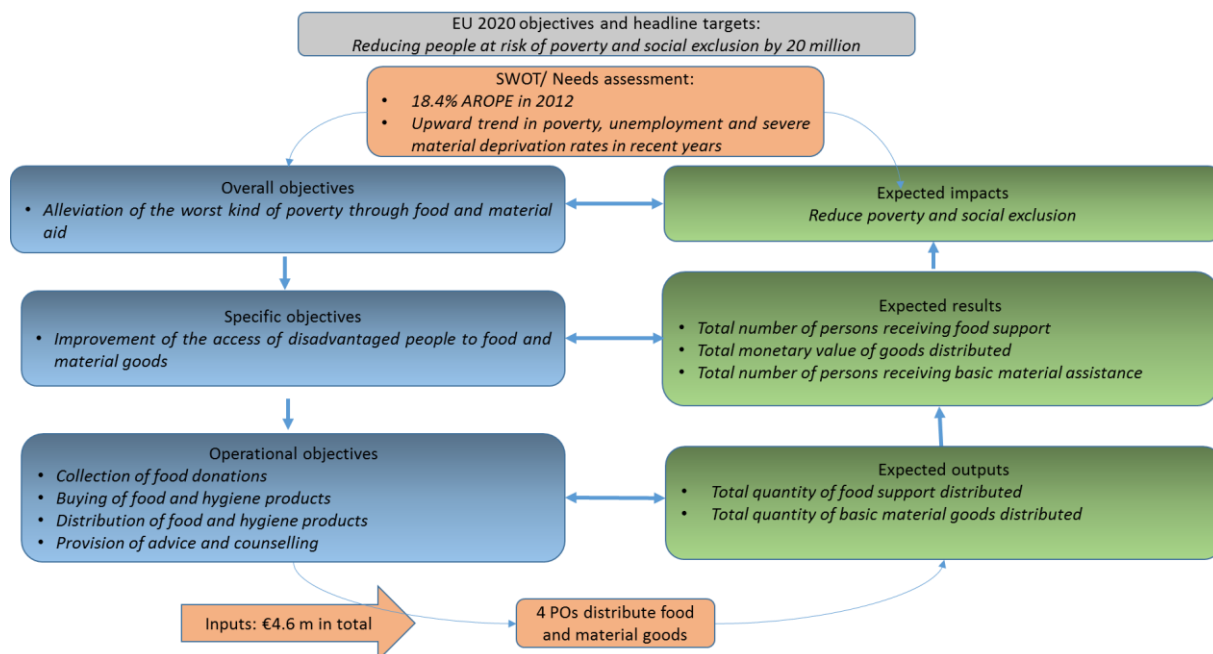


Figure 49. The intervention logic of the FEAD programme in Lithuania



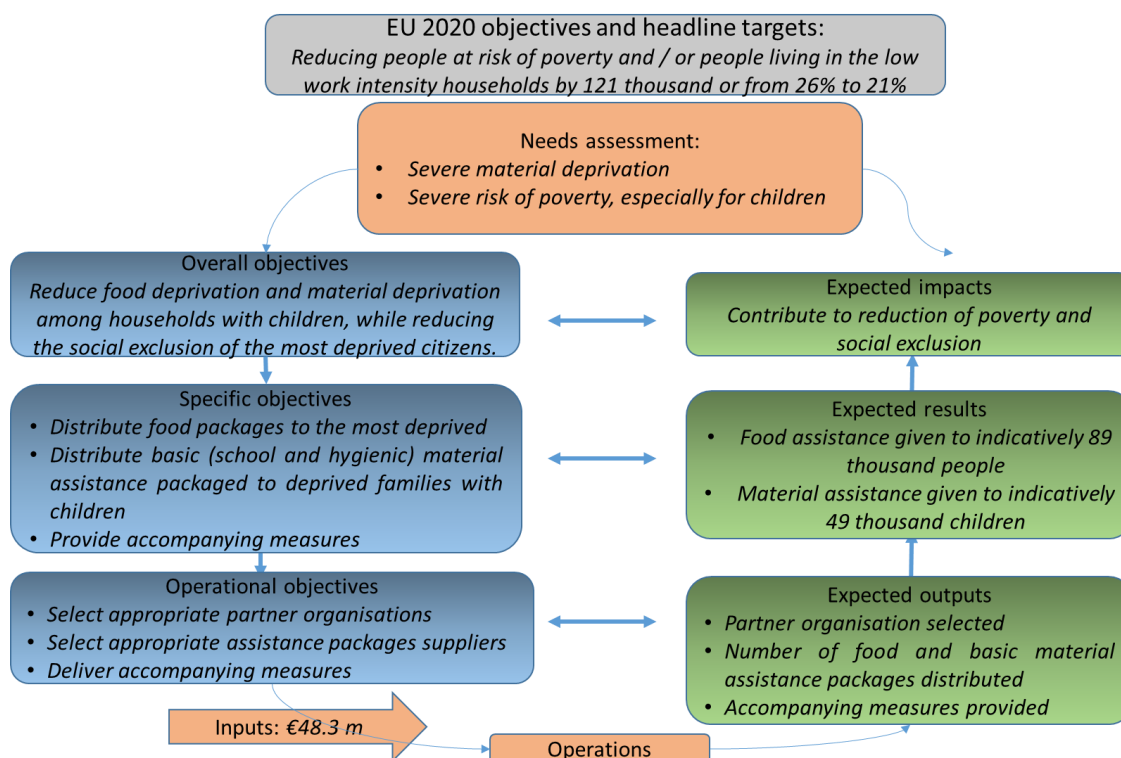
Source: own elaboration based on the OP and interview with the MA

Figure 50. Intervention logic of the FEAD in Luxembourg



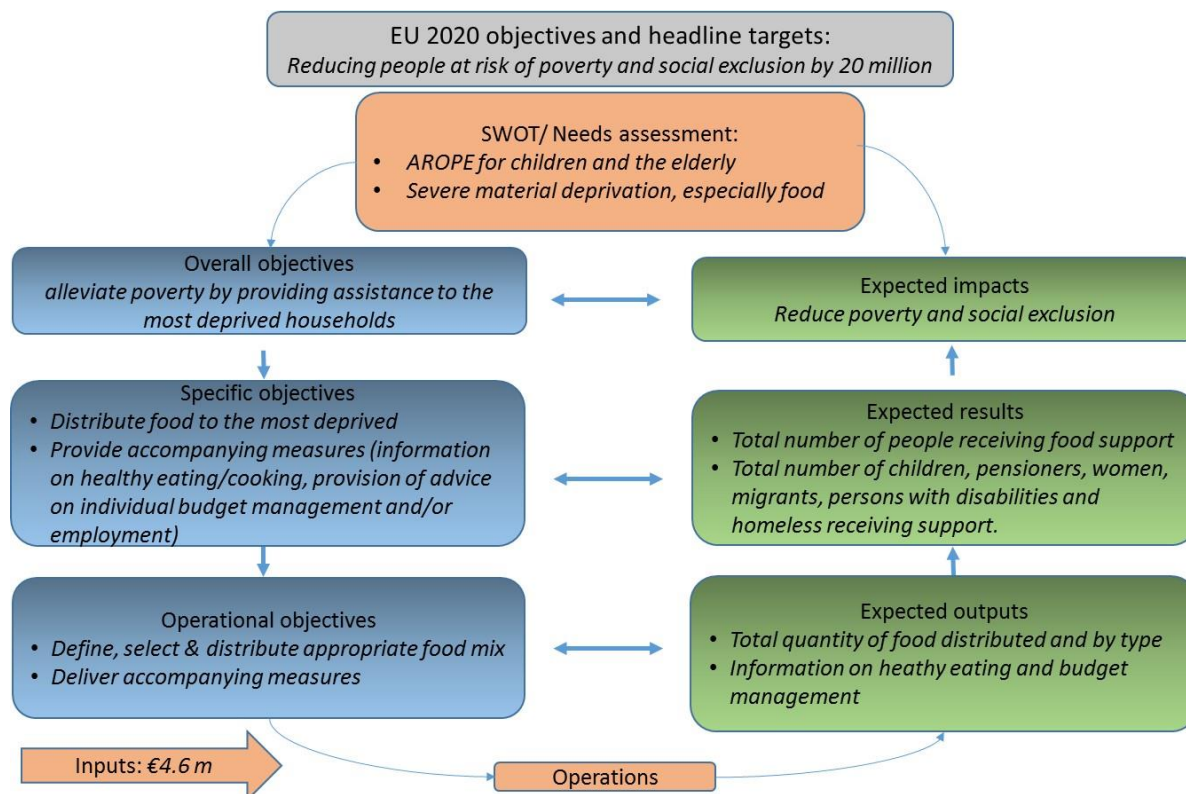
Source: Metis on the basis of the FEAD OP LU

Figure 51. The intervention logic of the FEAD programme in Latvia



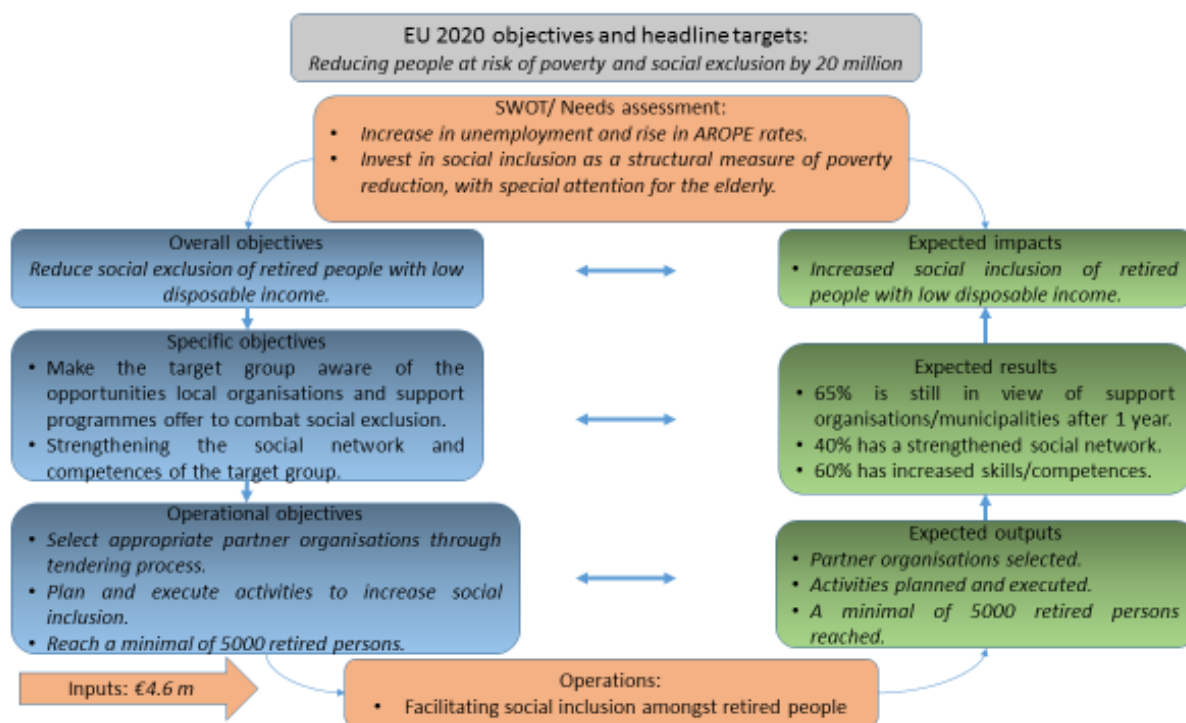
Source: Author's elaborated figure based on the OP, AIR and interview with the MA

Figure 52. The intervention logic of the FEAD programme in Malta



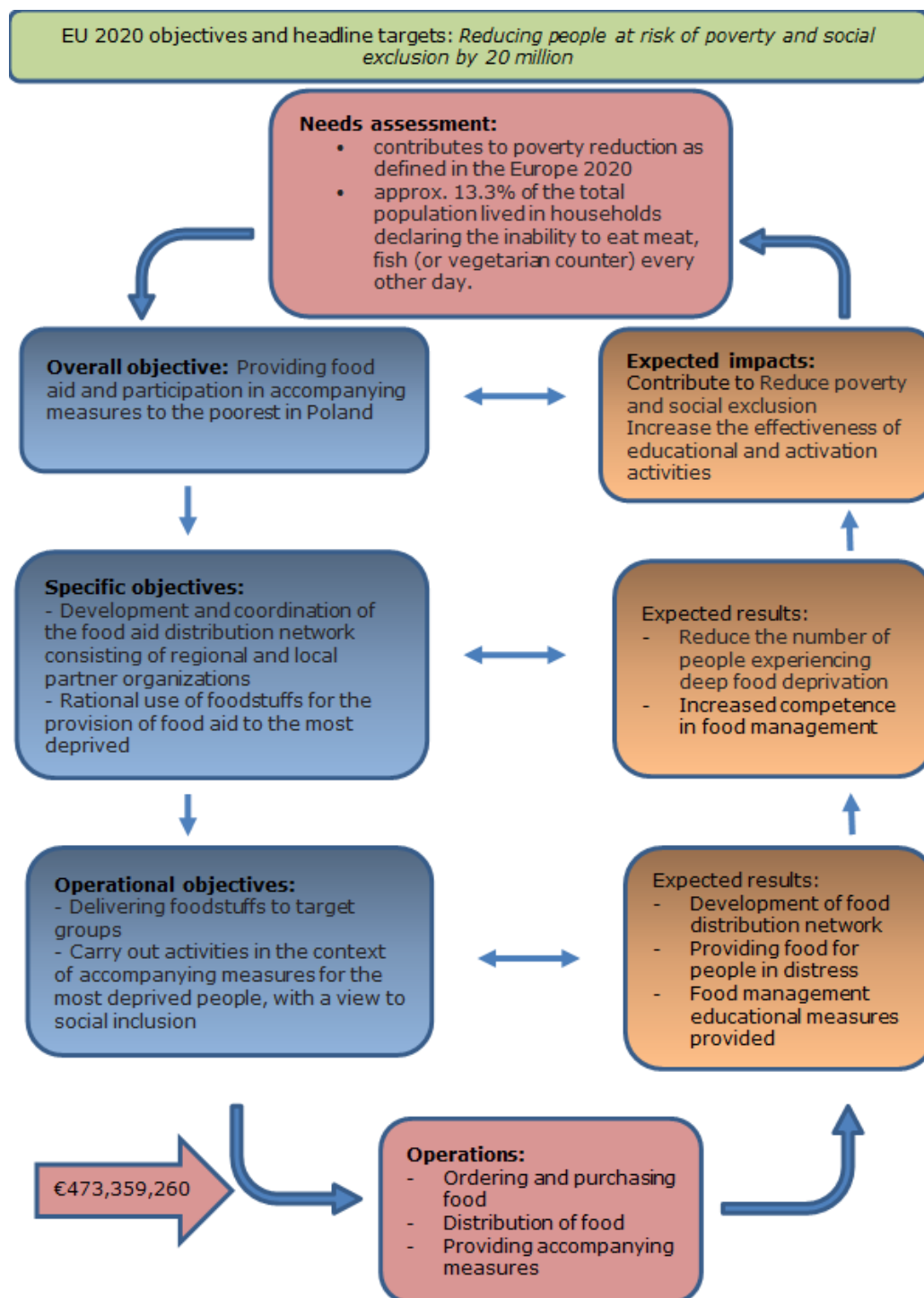
Source: Based on the FEAD OP

Figure 53. The intervention logic of the FEAD programme in The Netherlands



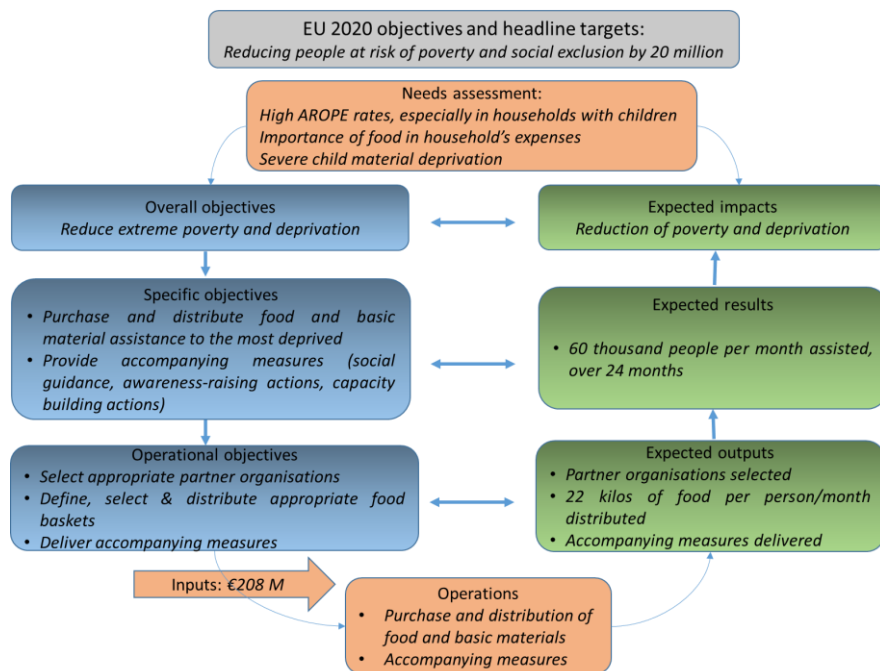
Source: own elaboration based on the OP and interview with the MA

Figure 54. Intervention logic of the Polish FEAD OP



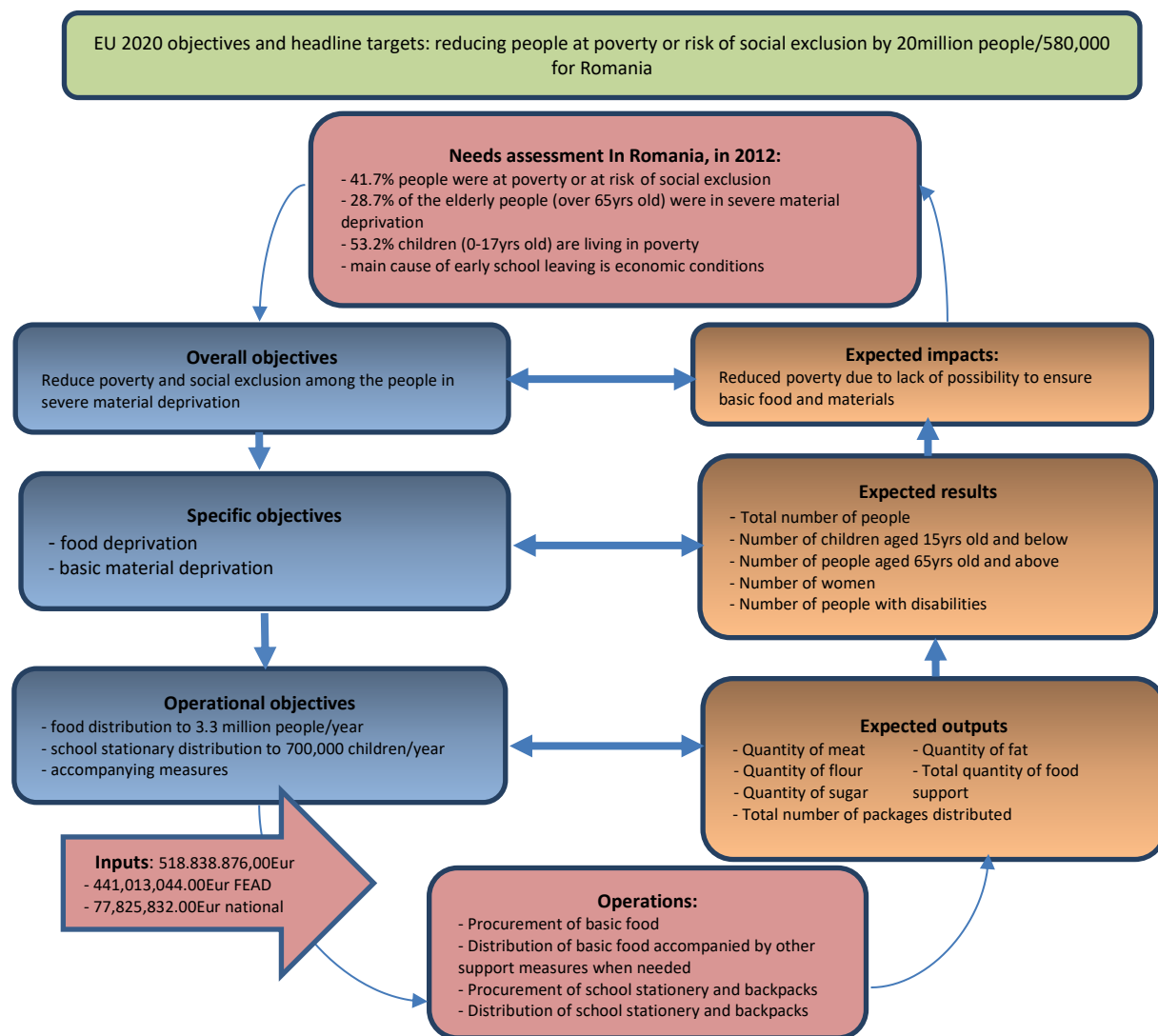
Source: own figure on the basis of the Polish FEAD OP and Guidelines for Sub-programmes

Figure 55. Intervention logic of the FEAD in Portugal



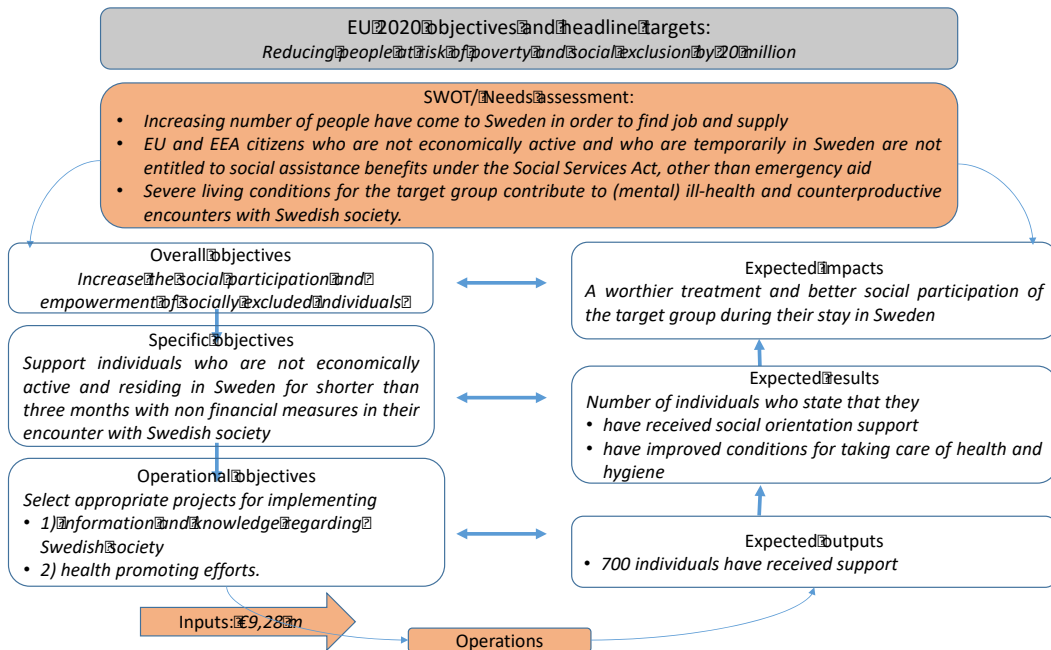
Source: own figure on the basis of the Portuguese FEAD OP and on the interviews

Figure 56. Intervention logic of the FEAD in Romania



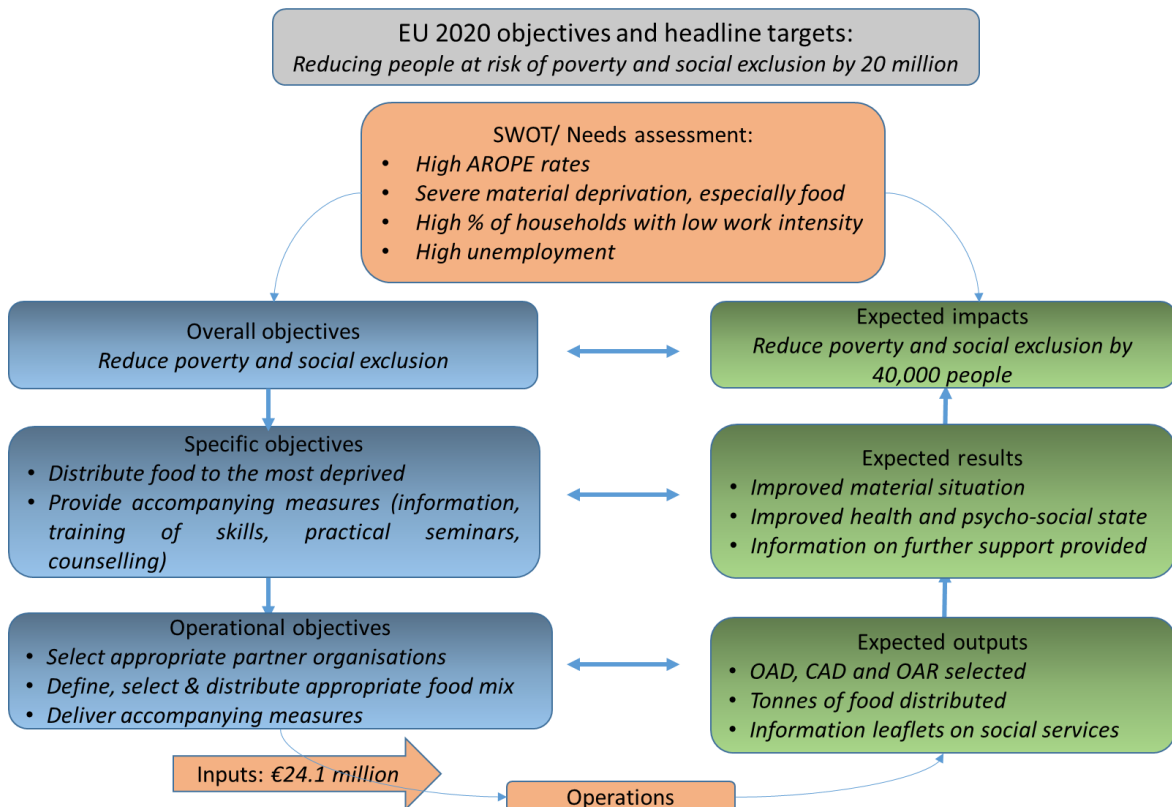
Source: own figure on the basis of POAD 2014-2020

Figure 57. The intervention logic of the FEAD programme in Sweden.



Source: own elaboration based on the OP and interview with the MA

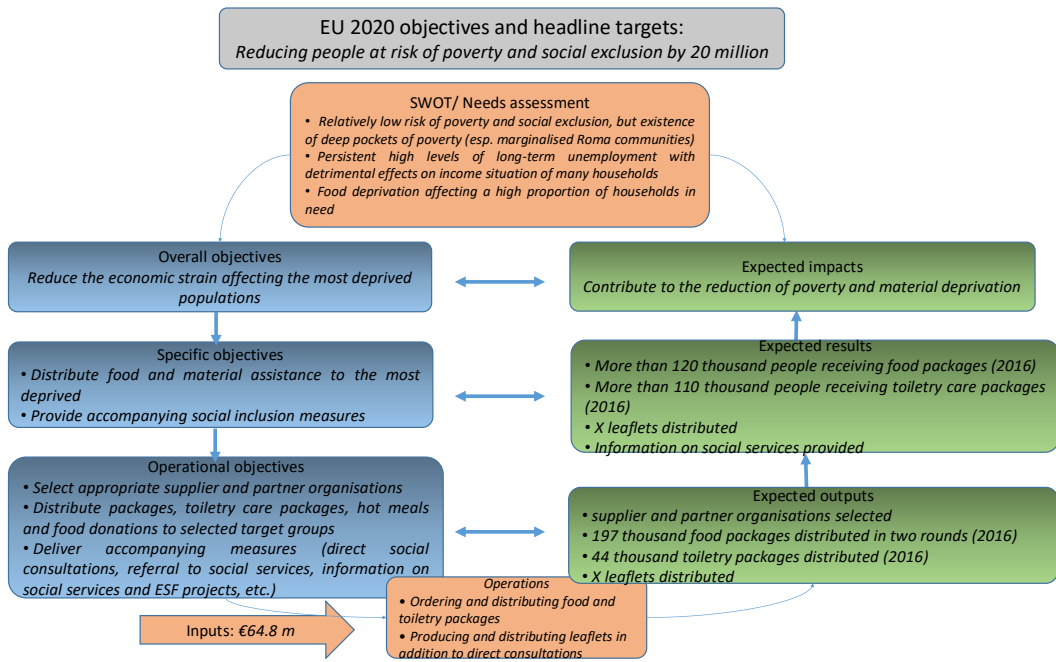
Figure 58. The intervention logic of the FEAD programme in Slovenia



Source: Metis based on information in the Slovene FEAD OP and in the Ex-ante evaluation

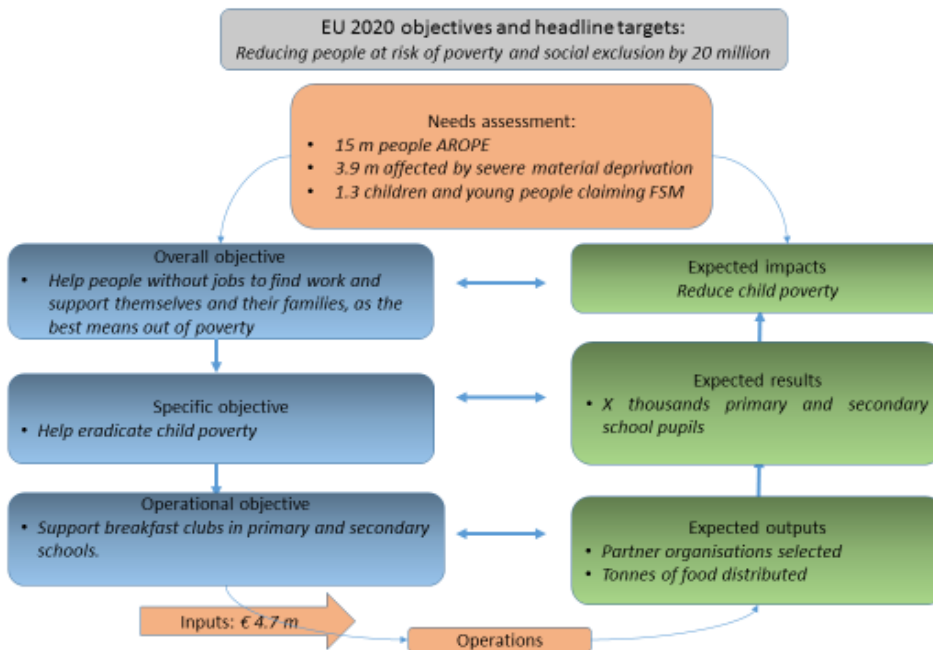


Figure 59. The intervention logic of the FEAD operational programme in Slovakia



Source: Own figure based on Slovak FEAD OP

Figure 60. The intervention logic of the FEAD programme in the UK<sup>77</sup>



Source: own elaboration based on the OP and interview with the MA

<sup>77</sup> There were no targets established as part of the programming



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