

Interview questions for the ex-post evaluation of the SAPARD Programme

Group of respondents: senior ministry officials, the related ministries and authorities concerned, social partners and representatives of the Agriculture and Rural Development Agency (ARDA).

The interviews are confidential, conducted anonymously, and it will not be possible by any means to establish the identities of the respondents from the material summarising these interviews.

Recommendation on methodology: When conducting the interview, it is advisable to get to the point after a brief introduction and an overview of the purpose of the interview. Although every question from the questionnaire must be asked, I would recommend that an atmosphere should be established during the interview in which further pieces of information can be gained following up the questions from the respondents regarding the SAPARD Programme. Any insight not strictly related to the questions but important with respect to programme evaluation must be recorded as fully as possible.

Relevance

1. In your experience, to what extent did the content of the planned and implemented measures/interventions correspond to the actual development needs of rural regions and agriculture?

The planned measures/interventions

- a. were defined fully in accordance with the needs of rural areas and agriculture ;
- b. answered only partly the needs of rural areas and agriculture ;
- c. did not answer the actual needs at all ;

The implemented measures/interventions

- d. were defined fully in accordance with the needs of rural areas and agriculture ;
- e. answered only partly the needs of rural areas and agriculture ;
- f. did not answer the actual needs at all ;

Explanation:

2. In your experience, to what extent did the proportion of funds intended for specific measures/interventions correspond to the actual development needs of rural areas and agriculture?

At the outset of the programme :

- a. it fully reflected the actual needs;
- b. it partly reflected the actual needs;
- c. it did not reflect the actual needs at all ;

at the conclusion of the programme :

- d. it fully reflected the actual needs;
- e. it partly reflected the actual needs ;
- f. it did not reflect the actual needs at all ;

Explanation:

3. What percentage of the potential participants (agrarian population) do you think were provided available assistance by the eligibility criteria laid down in the programme's agricultural development measures?
 - a. to all the potential participants;
 - b. to the majority of the potential participants;
 - c. to only a fraction of the potential participants;
 Explanation:

4. What percentage of the potential participants (agrarian population) do you think were provided available assistance by the eligibility criteria laid down in the programme's "rural development" measures?
 - a. to all the potential participants;
 - b. to the majority of the potential participants;
 - c. to only a fraction of the potential participants;
 Explanation:

5. Are you aware of, and if so, can you list any external (economic, environmental, social etc.) effects which influenced the success of the programme during its implementation?
List below:

6. Based on your experience, do you think the interim amendments to intervention content and assistance criteria were well suited to the changing external circumstances during programme implementation, and to what extent were these amendments able to solve the problems and needs that surfaced in the process?
 - a. the programme was effectively adapted to the changing external circumstances, problems and needs;
 - b. the changing external circumstances, problems and needs were not always taken into account,
 Explanation:

7. Based on your experience, to what extent were the interim amendments to the scale of interventions (sources) able to follow the changing external circumstances and the needs that surfaced during programme implementation?
 - a. the program was effectively adapted to the changing external circumstances and needs;
 - b. the changing external circumstances and needs were not always taken into account;
 Explanation:

Internal coherence

8. Do you think the objectives set by the programme were attainable/realistic using the available framework of funds?
- yes, all programme objectives were attainable, the amount and proportion of funding were in accordance with the objectives;
 - partly, some objectives were too ambitious, or the amount and proportion of available funding were not always in accordance with the objectives;
 - the objectives were not attainable at all using the funds available;
- Explanation:
9. Do you think the objectives set by the programme were attainable/realistic with respect to realising the planned interventions?
- yes, the interventions were in accordance with the objectives;
 - in part, some interventions were not in accordance with the objectives;
 - the objectives were not attainable at all with the planned interventions;
- Explanation:
10. Did you find the programme successful, have the predefined objectives been achieved?
- yes;
 - partly;
 - no;
- Explanation:

External coherence

11. In your experience, was the SAPARD programme connected to other national or EU programmes and policies, if so, to what extent? Please give specific examples, indicating the scale of interaction:
- considerable dependence and interaction with the following;
 - weak interaction with the following;
 - no connection;
- Examples:

Implementation

12. How do you assess the efficiency of implementation (including project management, the signing of contracts, payments and audit)? Please indicate on a scale of 1 -5 (1 being the lowest, 5 the highest rating). How did this change in the course of programme implementation?

	1	2	3	4	5	Change (improved, no change, deteriorated)
Competence						
Speed, flexibility						
Accuracy						
Sensitivity for time and season						
Transparency						
Applicant-friendly procedures						
Cost-efficiency						
Fair and honest (impartial) procedure						

13. How efficiently did the support systems aiding the implementation operate?

- a. operated efficiently;
- b. did not operate efficiently enough;
- c. other support systems aiding the implementation were missing ;

Explanation:

14. Please list any factors regarding the application conditions and the rules of procedure which, in your opinion, may have

- a. deterred potential applicants;

List below:

- b. caused unnecessary delay in the judging of applications and in making payments;

List below:

- c. incurred unnecessary expenses for the applicants;

List below:

15. What specific information/training activities took place?

List below:

16. Please assess the efficiency (clear, target -group oriented etc.) of the advertising and marketing campaign of the SAPARD programme, conducted to raise awareness of the programme among potential applicants (1 is the lowest, 5 the highest grade)?

Explanation:

17. What activities could have been launched to further promote the programme? Why do you think they were not realised?

List below:

18. Were there any campaigns/tools you knew about funded from SAPARD TS, which specifically aimed at spreading knowledge about EU regulations?

- a. yes, there were
- b. no, there weren't
- c. I don't know

List below if you have answered yes :

19. What was the percentage of the funds allocated within that measure? %

20. Who were the target groups of the above -mentioned activities?

List below:

21. The frequency and timing (trend) of campaign actions, feedback?

22. What is your opinion on their efficiency? Which of the activities were most effective in the dissemination of information? Why were they not realised?

23. Please give an estimate of the number of potential beneficiaries taking part in the information days, seminars and campaigns organised under TS (ARDA, MA only)?

..... people

24. How many people participated from your organisational unit in the dissemination of information about the programme? How many of them were assigned the specific task of providing information on EU requirements? Approximately what percentage of employees at the organisational unit were represented by these two figures (ARDA, MA only, or qualified authority or directorate)?

- a. number of participants in the implementation of the TS : persons, their proportion within the organisation: %

30. What do you perceive as the strengths and weaknesses of the SAP ARD programme and the application procedure?

Strengths

Weaknesses

31. Please specify the concrete successes during the programme implementation.

32. Please specify any failures experienced during the programme implementation and their causes.

33. Please specify any best practices to be followed during the programme implementation.

34. Are there any questions or problems that have not been dealt with in connection with programme implementation and that you think should be raised in the evaluation?

Technical issues:

35. To what extent were the programme objectives and priorities in accordance with the development needs and problems of your field of specialty?

- a. fully;
- b. partially;
- c. not at all;

Explanation: (if your answer is “b” or “c”, please explain what kinds of changes would have been necessary)

36. To what extent was the content of interventions in accordance with the development needs and problems of your field of specialty?

- a. fully;
- b. partially;
- c. not at all;

Explanation: (if your answer is “b” or “c”, please explain what kinds of changes would have been necessary)

37. To what extent was the method of interventions in accordance with the development needs and problems of your field of specialty?

- a. fully;
- b. partially;
- c. not at all;

Explanation: (if your answer is “b” or “c”, please explain what kinds of changes would have been necessary)

38. To what extent was the funding framework of the interventions in accordance with the development needs and problems of your field of specialty?

- a. fully;
- b. partially;
- c. not at all;

Explanation: (if your answer is “b” or “c”, please explain what kinds of changes would have been necessary)

39. What are the concrete, quantifiable results and effects of the programme regarding your field of specialty?

List below:

40. Are the appropriate indicators and methods available in the programme and in the monitoring system to measure them?

- a. yes;
- b. partly;
- c. no;

Explanation:

41. Please complete the chart below by choosing the appropriate answers related to your field of specialty.

	In my field of specialty,				
	the vast majority	the majority	a smaller part	only a few	as yet none
	of the agricultural undertakings, food businesses and farmers regularly employed the harmonised EU standards in the areas mentioned below before the SAPARD programme				
Environmental protection					
Food quality and consumer protection					
Animal health and welfare					
Work safety and sanitation					
	regularly employed the harmonised EU standards in the areas mentioned below after the SAPARD programme				
Environmental protection					
Food quality and consumer protection					
Animal health and welfare					
Work safety and sanitation					

Are there any certified data, documents (Statistical Office surveys, AKII, university studies, statistics, and reports by authorities) that support your opinion, and if so, what are they?

42. Please list any new regulations and provisions introduced as a result of the SAPARD programme in your field of specialty, specifying or relating to the application of the EU Common Agricultural Policy and compliance with EU standards. In what ways, if at all, do they affect the SAPARD programme or the objectives mentioned above?
List below:

43. In your opinion, what have been the results of the programme implementation in rural areas and in the agriculture with respect to the following factors?

	Significant impact	Medium impact	Low impact	No impact expected	Comments
Acquiring the necessary know-how to apply to EU rural development programmes					
Getting familiar with EU requirements					
Establishing the system of institutions					
Change of attitude for applicants and institutions					
Agricultural employment					
Income drawn from agriculture					
More efficient utilization of production factors					
Product quality					
Improving working conditions					
Compliance with animal health and welfare regulations					
Enforcing food safety standards					
Improving the condition of the environment					
Upgrading the machine stock					
The quality of agricultural infrastructure					
The quality of rural infrastructure					
Changes in producer prices					
Competitiveness					
Change of added value					
The proportion of quality products					
The proportion of locally produced and marketed goods					
Increasing income from non-agricultural activities					
Quality of life of the rural population					
Preserving the cultural and natural heritage in rural areas					
Population retention in rural areas					