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GUIDANCE NOTE

FEAD STRUCTURED SURVEY ON END RECIPIENTS OF OP I

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This document aims at providing guidance on the implementation of the structured survey on end recipients as defined by the Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2016/594, supplementing Regulation (EU) No 223/2014 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived laying down the template of the structured survey on end recipients.

It builds on the definitions provided in the FEAD Regulation (Regulation (EU) No 223/2014 of the European Parliament and the Council), Eurostat and on the guidance fiche "Monitoring under FEAD" ([link](#)).

DISCLAIMER: *This is a document prepared by the Commission services. On the basis of the applicable EU Law, it provides technical guidance to the attention of public authorities, practitioners, beneficiaries or potential beneficiaries, and other bodies involved in the monitoring, control or implementation of the FEAD policy on how to interpret and apply the EU rules in this area. The aim of this document is to provide Commission's services explanations and interpretations of the said rules in order to facilitate the implementation of operational programmes and to encourage good practice(s). However this guidance note is without prejudice to the interpretation of the Court of Justice and the General Court or evolving Commission decision making practice.*

Definitions provided by the FEAD regulation

Art. 2 (1) 'basic material assistance' means basic consumer goods of a limited value and for the personal use of the most deprived persons for example clothing, footwear, hygiene goods, school material and sleeping bags;

Art. 2 (2) 'most deprived persons' means 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, while avoiding conflicts of interest, or defined by the partner organisations and which are approved by those national competent authorities and which may include elements that allow the targeting of the most deprived persons in certain geographical areas;

Art. 2 (3) 'partner organisations' means public bodies and/or non- profit organisations that deliver food and/or basic material assistance, where applicable, combined with accompanying measures directly or through other partner organisations, or that undertake activities aiming directly at the social inclusion of the most deprived persons, and whose operations have been selected by the managing authority in accordance with point (b) of Article 32(3);

Art. 2 (5) 'food and/or basic material assistance operational programme' (also referred to as 'OP I') 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;

Art. 2 (10) 'end recipient' means the most deprived person or persons receiving support as defined in Article 4 of this Regulation;

Art. 2 (11) 'accompanying measures' means activities provided in addition to the distribution of food and/or basic material assistance with the aim of alleviating social exclusion and/or tackling social emergencies in a more empowering and sustainable way, for example guidance on a balanced diet and budget management advice.

Definitions provided by Directive 2011/95EU of the European Parliament and of the Council

A **refugee** means a third-country national who, owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, political opinion or membership of a particular social group, is outside the country of nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself or herself of the protection of that country, or a stateless person, who, being outside of the country of former habitual residence for the same reasons as mentioned above, is unable or, owing to such fear, unwilling to return to it.

Definitions provided by EUROSTAT

A **household**, in the context of surveys on social conditions or income such as EU-SILC or the Household budget survey (HBS), is defined as a housekeeping unit or, operationally, as a social unit:

- having common arrangements;
- sharing household expenses or daily needs;
- in a shared common residence.

A household includes either one person living alone or a group of people, not necessarily related, living at the same address with common housekeeping, i.e. sharing at least one meal per day or sharing a living or sitting room.

An **asylum seeker** is an asylum applicant awaiting a decision on an application for international protection, granting or refusing a refugee status or another form of international protection.

Other explanation

In the absence of a single food package definition, a food package can also consist of food items.

1. Background

Following Article 17 (4) of the FEAD Regulation the managing authority of an OP I shall carry out a structured survey on end recipients in 2017 and 2022, in accordance with the template adopted by the Commission on 18 April 2016 by the Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2016/594.

This survey is targeted towards end recipients of FEAD assistance and aims at gaining insights into their socio-economic background, current and past situation and their views on FEAD assistance.

This survey will thus allow Managing Authorities to draw lessons on the implementation of FEAD assistance. It will also allow aggregating results at EU level, which can be used by the Commission in the context of the FEAD mid-term and ex post evaluations.

2. Selection of end-recipient for the structured survey and timing

The survey carried out by MA should seek to be as much representative as possible of the population of end recipients of the FEAD, while being proportionate.

To calculate a sample size the Commission is proposing to apply the following parameters: a confidence level of 95% and a confidence interval of 3%. Figures reported with an estimated maximum margin of error exceeding 3% and not exceeding 5 % are deemed less reliable, implying that with a view to ensuring the overall reliability of the monitoring and information system, improvements could be considered. Estimations with a margin of error exceeding 5 % are considered not sufficiently reliable.

An example of the sample size calculation is provided in Annex I. This example is based on a methodology for the statistical sampling for unknown populations. Alternative methods such as statistical sampling for known populations with similar parameters also may be used.

Non statistical sampling may be used in appropriately justified circumstances such as very low sampling population. In all cases sampling method chosen should be described when reporting the results of the survey (Annex II of this guidance note).

It is expected that the survey is carried out on the premises where food/goods are delivered and covers the various types of assistance provided in 2017 and 2022. It is not necessary to carry out surveys in all locations but the sample should cover various types of partner organisations and types of assistance being delivered.

The structured survey has to be carried out in 2017 and in 2022 respectively. However if the MS already implemented all interventions before 2022, the structured survey does not have to be carried out in 2022.

The MA is encouraged to plan the survey well in advance to obtain the required number of comprehensive responses, taking account of the planned distribution of assistance throughout the year. The effect of nonresponse or partial response should be offset by increasing the respective number of respondents receiving similar support.

However there is a risk of selection bias if this results in specific groups under- or over-represented in the survey. Therefore it is recommended that additional samples would have same or similar characteristic to those of non- or partially responding.

It is expected that the MA will provide a summary of the methodology applied together with the results of the survey to the Commission using template outlined in the Annex II.

3. The survey process

Article 17 (4) of the FEAD Regulation determines that the Managing Authority shall carry out the survey. This means that the MA is responsible for carrying out the survey but the survey may be carried out by staff of the MA, by external contractors or in cooperation with partner organisations (and, in this case, through their staff). The latter option might generate a better response rate, as end recipients are familiar with the staff of partner organisations, however it also carries a risk of influence on the end recipients' responses. Guidelines should thus be provided by the MA on the conduct of the survey. If survey is performed by the partner organizations, it should take in account the principle of proportionality having regard to the level of support allocated and the limited administrative capacity of organisations that often rely on volunteers.

It should be borne in mind that deprivation is a complex concept of a multi-dimensional nature and all evaluations and surveys should respect the privacy and dignity of end recipients and be carried out in such a way so as not to stigmatise the most deprived persons (see also recital 20 of the FEAD regulation). In case the end recipient is a child, the responses should be obtained from parent(s) or from an authorised representative. In case an authorised third party collects food/goods on behalf of an end recipient, this third party may fill the survey on behalf of the end recipient.

It is essential that interviewers are properly trained, and familiar with the functioning of the FEAD in the Member State. The survey may be completed on paper or electronically, and procedures should be in place that allow for checking the quality of the survey results and of the aggregation. The records of the individual interviews, which are anonymised may also be used for evaluation purposes by MS or the Commission.

4. Detailed guidance on the template

This section provides detailed guidance on the template for the FEAD structured survey as approved by the implementing [regulation](#) of Commission (EU) 2016/594.

Part A of the survey - Questions for Partner Organisation at the level of distribution point

In some MS, partner organisations have several distribution points. Therefore for the purpose of the survey, the distribution point is a place where the assistance is distributed to the end recipients.

If a distribution point is the same for several end-recipients, the response can be pre-filled by the partner organisation and/or interviewer.

Part B of the survey - Questions for FEAD end recipient

It is expected that the survey will be carried out through a face-to-face interview with the FEAD end-recipient. The interviewer will transcribe the oral responses of the end-recipient into the written survey form.

The survey can be also carried out as a questionnaire and filled directly by the end-recipient if the MA considers it as a relevant and reliable method for data gathering. One survey form should be used for each individual end-recipient.

In all cases, end recipients should first be informed of the purpose of the survey: e.g. *"This assistance has been funded by funds of the European Union. We would like to know from those that receive support, if this assistance is useful in order to improve it"*, and asking for collaboration. It should be explained that participation is voluntary, and underline that it is not a condition to get assistance. It should also be explained that the survey is anonymous and confidential and that data collected will be used solely for purposes of monitoring and evaluation of the FEAD. Also, that information on the personal situation will be asked solely to inform about the needs of the recipients.

The interviewers should in principle follow the order of the questions proposed. Providing more detailed guidance if these are of benefit to the survey is possible. Interviewers shall read out each question and wait for the response from the end recipients. Reporting of results of the survey must be done in accordance with the layout set in the Annex II of this guidance note.

To reduce the burden of data collection, if data and responses requested by the survey are already available from up-to-date, reliable and robust sources, or if the responses are obvious (e.g.: for B4 if only one type of support is provided), it is possible to reply to

these questions without asking the end recipients. The list of pre-filled questions and sources used should be provided together with the aggregated results of the survey.

Most answers can be recorded by the interviewer by ticking "✓" in the corresponding case. However, some require more detailed answers (usually when the response category requires it as for Question A1, A2, B10a, B11a, etc.). Multiple answers are allowed in most cases (e.g. question A1, A2, A3, B4, B5, B6, B10a, etc.).

In some instances, an end-recipient may still not understand the question. In such cases, the answer to record should be "Doesn't know or does not understand the question"

If the end recipient does not want to provide an answer, then the answer to record should be "Does not wish to answer".

The categories "Does not wish to answer" and "Doesn't know or does not understand the question" should not be read to the respondents. The interviewer will select them only if the respondent spontaneously says so. This is done to encourage respondents to answer most questions fully.

In some cases, it would be appropriate that an interviewer does not spell out categories of answers, and waits for a response to receive unbiased reply (e.g. question B10a, B11a, B13a, B23a, etc.)

Although the structured survey focuses on FEAD end-recipients, in some cases the responses might not be linked directly with FEAD assistance, for the purpose of assessing the level of deprivation (e.g. questions B13, B13a, B23a, etc.) or to characterise the target groups (e.g. questions B3, B16, B17, etc.)

For questions marked "other (to be specified)", the answers should be recorded in a way that allows subsequent aggregation of the most reoccurring categories.

5. Data protection

National data protection rules implementing Directive 95/46/EC on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data shall apply to the processing of survey data.

The data collected, entered and stored shall be processed solely for management, evaluation and audit purposes. The Commission does not require nor receive the micro data but only aggregated data sets of FEAD survey. It may however ask to have access to this microdata, when carrying out evaluations.

The Member State/managing authority shall ensure the physical protection of confidential data by regulatory, administrative, technical and organisational measures (statistical disclosure control). These measures should however not limit the use of the

data for the purposes set out in the Regulations and this guidance. Member States should take appropriate measures to prevent and sanction any violation of statistical confidentiality.

6. Data aggregation and transmission to the Commission

The MA is responsible for data collection, validation, aggregation and reporting to the Commission. The data from the survey should be aggregated at the OP level in the format provided in Annex II.

To have a meaningful aggregated data, any selected recipient who decides not to respond should be replaced by another one with the same characteristics – type of assistance received, type of target group, period of collection of assistance,

In the context of shared management of the FEAD and in view of the FEAD mid-term and ex post evaluations, this aggregated data should be made available to the Commission, and uploaded in SFC2014 during the first quarter of 2018 and the first quarter of 2023 respectively (using the menu "evaluation") together with a summary of the methodology applied to carry out the survey. In addition a short summary of the structured survey shall be reported also in Annual Implementation Report submitted by the end of June 2018 and June 2023 respectively.

Annex I Example of sample size calculation

Annex II Reporting of results