

ESF Monitoring -Operations with Special Focus - If an OP is specifically targeting rural areas, do these areas have to be defined according to the DEGURBA methodology (category 3), or can they be determined differently?

The managing authority is free to set objectives for rural areas or other regions using the classification that most suits its objectives, provided the reporting requirements laid down in the Regulations are fulfilled. As mentioned in the EC Guidance document on Monitoring and Evaluation, *“Recording of participants is not done based on the participants’ place of residence or employment, but based on the location where the operation takes place. The only exception to this provision is the common output indicator “from rural areas”, where the data is always recorded based on the participant’s place of residence”*. Like all other common output indicators, the common output indicator “from rural areas” (which is indeed defined as category 3 of the DEGURBA classification) is not linked to specific activities, but has to be reported at the level of the investment priority. As a minimum requirement, data for this indicator have to be reported in the AIR due in 2017 based on a representative sample of participants within each investment priority.

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