

Interventions

Results & Monitoring

- 2. Interventions
 - 2.1 What is an Intervention?
 - 2.2 Why do we need interventions?
 - 2.3 Two main types of Interventions
 - 2.4 Terminology
 - 2.5 Levels of Intervention
 - 2.6 Support Entities
 - 2.7 Features and Identities

2. Interventions

2.1 What is an Intervention?

The 2017 [Better Regulation Package](#) uses the term "**Intervention**" to refer to activities undertaken by the European Union (EU), which are grouped together for assessing performance. The concept was formally introduced for DG INTPA (formerly DG DEVCO) and other RELEX-family DGs (DG NEAR and FPI) in early 2018, with the approval of a document entitled "**OPSYS terminology: harmonisation of 5 key terms**" by the Management Meetings of INTPA and NEAR ([Ares\(2018\)831615](#) - 13 Feb 2018).

An Intervention is therefore a **coherent set of activities and results**, which constitutes the most effective (hence optimal) level for the operational follow-up and reporting by the European Commission of its operations:

- Monitoring of results and indicators;
- Monitoring the quality of deliverables;
- Monitoring of missions and site visits;
- Evaluations;
- Annual reporting on KPIs in the EAMR.

Interventions are therefore entities that refer to the *monitoring of EU implementation activities, with the purpose of assessing performance*. It contains the **Actions (and Action Components)** created during the *design phase*, the related **Contracts**, as well as the **Results** of these activities.

Interventions fully describe **WHAT** we want to achieve (i.e. the goal/target of our activities), whereas the actual planning and implementation of activities is the **HOW** we are going to achieve a pre-defined goal/target. Each Intervention has a geographical scope, and covers the full range of evaluation (relevance, impact, sustainability, effectiveness and efficiency).

Interventions shape the portfolio and activities with the aim of improving performance of EU spending and results, with the *reporting exercise* organised from **EAMR Reporting Interventions**.

In OPSYS, the **Intervention** (along with its attached Logframe) is the key entity for collecting results and monitoring performance on EU implementation activities.

The **scope of an Intervention** corresponds to an Action or Action Component, and it can contain one or group multiple Contracts.

The **scale of an Intervention** and its levels (Action, Action Component, and Contract) is determined in function by:

- The coherence of the planned activities and results; **and**
- The responsible entity (e.g. Delegation in charge).

Every Intervention has an **internal coherence** (or theory of change) translated into a Logical Framework Matrix (or **Logframe**) that defines:

- (a) the rational mechanism for delivering the intended change; and
- (b) the concern for monitoring, reporting and communicating results.

The Intervention as an entity:

- Coherent set of inputs and results;
- Standard structure format (Logframe);
- Theory of developmental change;
- Optimal unit for operational follow-up.

The regular update of the initial Intervention's Logframe, including its indicators and values, is necessary and reflects progress in the realisation of activities and achievement of results, and represents an optimal reporting solution to ever moving situations in the field.

For more information, please see the [OPSYS Glossary](#).

2.2 Why do we need interventions?

The **business objects** that are traditionally used (e.g. Indicative Programming Documents, Actions, Financing Decisions, Contracts, Payments, Financing Agreements, etc.) are conceived for administrative, financial and accounting processes (input-related), but not specifically designed for operational (results-related) management acts, such as:

- Managing operational implementation;
- Following up on implementation results;
- Assessing performance;
- Monitoring and Evaluation;
- Internal and external reporting and communication;
- Aggregation for higher level reporting.

Interventions, on the contrary, are **specifically created to constitute base units for these results-related processes**. They are assigned to Operational Managers who deal with them as a single operational entity in OPSYS.

2.3 Two main types of Interventions

There are two main types of interventions:

1. Primary Interventions

Primary Interventions respond to the institutional needs to define a complete portfolio of operations that are related to ensure the proper operational management, internal monitoring and annual reporting, results collection, and to the definition of the operational perimeter for external monitoring and evaluations. They are created in an institutional and formal manner with hierarchical validation through the Action Document approval process.

Three main business rules apply to Primary Interventions, with a view to governing the process of defining the corporate portfolio:

1. **Exhaustive coverage of the entire portfolio** - The totality of result-bearing activities under a given AOSD's responsibility is covered;
2. **Non-duplicity** - Activities within Actions and Contracts under the responsibility of different AOSDs must be reported only once;
3. **AOSD single responsibility** - There is no activity authorised by multiple AOSDs. Actions under the responsibility of different AOSDs must be reported broken down at the proper level.

2. General or other Interventions

General or all other Interventions are broader and more flexible scope, where any type of aggregation is possible for operational purposes (monitoring review, strategic evaluation, ad-hoc operational probes, etc.). They are created according to needs, by the Operational Manager on behalf of the Authorising Officer by Sub-Delegation (AOSD).

2.4 Terminology

What we currently refer to as Programmes and/or Projects, are in fact Primary Interventions. This is why the labels Primary Intervention, Programme or Project are equivalently used as a generic form.

This equivalence could serve both, the internal technical audiences that will refer to "**Primary Interventions**" and the external public (and EU services not necessarily familiar about the different types of Interventions) that use and will continue to use the term "**Project**" or "**Programme**", while acknowledging from the outset the equivalence among these terms might avoid possible misunderstandings among services.

2.5 Levels of Intervention

Operational follow-up can take place, and consequently, Primary Interventions can be composed of an Action, a Contract, or a group of any of them. The Operational Manager will define the level of each Primary Intervention at the **optimal level** of observation required. Operational follow-up can also take place at the level of Contract's elements or sub-components; however, this sub-level is not considered by OPSYS for the time being.

The relation of an Action with its Primary Intervention(s) and the related constituting elements are defined as soon as the **Action Document** is drafted and first encoded in OPSYS.

Typical examples of observation levels are:

- Contract (most common case);
- Group of Contracts (e.g. sequence of annual programme-estimates);
- Action (e.g. budget support, guarantees, blending);
- More than one Action (e.g. top-up cases).

The use of Interventions is also critical in facilitating global (or more detailed) information and **data aggregation** (or **disaggregation**). In some cases, we will need more than one level of observation; this situation can be addressed by aggregating (or disaggregating) Interventions. The aggregation allows for observation at a higher level, while the disaggregation will be for lower levels (as necessary).

An aggregation can be defined at any stage, nesting the Logframes of constituting Interventions. Since Logframes are regularly updated with indicator values, it is also possible to aggregate the results achieved. Examples of aggregation of Interventions could be at sector level (based on the DAC codes), at any geographical level (based on the disaggregation available for core indicators).

A disaggregating approach can also be applied to Interventions. An Intervention is formulated for an entity that gives then place to smaller-level entities. This is the case, for instance, of an *intervention logic* at programming level, such as NDICI priority areas with their related indicators for result assessment that can link to a number of Action Interventions, themselves linked to their implementing Contract-level ones.

2.6 Support Entities

Not all Contracts can be directly assigned to one Primary Intervention, as not all produce direct results. To consider all Contracts exhaustively, a "**support entity**" category needs to be defined as an individual Contract that does not produce any direct reportable results.

The typology of *support entities* is diverse, and the main categories are:

- Financial commitments (level 2) for outstanding payments beyond the initial commitment;
- Support contracts for administrative assistance (including general technical cooperation facilities in support to the national authorities dealing with EU cooperation);
- Feasibility studies not linked to specific follow-up Primary Interventions;
- Evaluation, audit or verification contracts not linked to a specific Primary Interventions.

2.7 Features and Identities

There are **specific features and identities** that define Interventions and their relations with linked entities:

- i) Each Contract is linked to a single Decision/Action and to a single Primary Intervention (excluding support entities).
- ii) Every Primary Intervention is linked to at least one Contract at some point during its lifecycle.
- iii) Every ROM review is linked to one Primary or to one General/Other Intervention.
- iv) Every evaluation is linked to one Primary or to one General/Other Intervention.
- v) The list of all Primary Interventions constitutes all operational activities for a specific context (i.e. for INTPA, NEAR, FPI, etc.).
- vi) The total of all Interventions plus all support entities provides the total portfolio for a specific context (i.e. for INTPA, NEAR, FPI, etc.).