The Assessment of an Indicator

- Case Studies about The Skåne-Blekinge Programme and The Simplifying the Pathways to Jobs and Competence Programme

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Title:
The Assessment of an Indicator
- Case Studies about The Skåne-Blekinge Programme and The Simplifying the Pathways to Jobs and Competence Programme

Swedish title:
Bedömning av en Indikator
- Fallstudier om Skåne-Blekinge-programmet och i Enklare vägar till jobb och kompetensprogram

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Degree project, second cycle 30 credits
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Abstract

In Sweden, Small-Medium Enterprises (SMEs) are supported by government programme at the EU and national levels to decrease unemployment. The Skåne-Blekinge programme is an EU programme to increase job opportunities in Region Skåne and Blekinge. While the Simplifying the pathways to jobs and competence programme is a national programme to decrease unemployment rate among new arrival and long-term unemployment.

This study aims to assess the nature and function of indicators utilized in the process of implementation of policy programmes using two case studies from Sweden. The understanding of indicator's functions and characteristics are important to help the actors designing indicators which can measure the goal achievement. This study employed document analysis and interview for data collection, and for analysis, this study used a narrative analysis to describe the programme’s characteristics, indicator’s functions and indicator’s characteristics at programme and projects levels.

In summary, the Skåne-Blekinge programme has guidelines which are tools to govern the programme. On the contrary, the Simplifying the pathways to jobs and competence programme utilizes dialogue to create and learn about the projects. Generally, the results-based management is not yet performed. Instead, it starts to be implemented by utilising an indicator that aims to measure the programme’s impact. In term of indicator’s understanding, there is a difficulty to understand it because some people do not notice that an indicator is a measurement tool.

At the programme level, indicators are not fully functioned as it should be. In the Skåne-Blekinge programme, indicators should be more reliable, credible, realistic, and accepted. In the Simplifying the pathways to jobs and competence programme, indicators should be more credible, measurable, realistic, reliable, and accepted. At the project level, indicators are more useful for project leaders under the Simplifying the pathways to jobs and competence programme than for project leaders under the Skåne-Blekinge programme. In detail, the characteristics that make indicators are useful for the project leaders are appropriate, relevant, and accepted.

These findings contribute to increasing knowledge about indicator’s influence at the programme and project levels both in the Skåne-Blekinge programme and the Simplifying the pathways to jobs and competence programme in practice.

Keywords: European Union programme, Swedish national programme, programme level, project level, indicator's function, indicator's characteristic
Sammanfattning

I Sverige stöds små och medelstora företag (SME) både av ett statligt program på nationell nivå och på EU-nivå för att minska arbetslösheten. Exempel på detta är Skåne-Blekinge-programmet som är ett EU-program för att öka sysselsättningen i Region Skåne och Blekinge, och Enklare vägar till jobb och kompetensprogram som är ett nationellt program för att minska arbetslösheten bland nyanlända och långtidsarbetslösa.

Denna studie syftar till att utvärdera arten och funktionen av indikatorer som används i genomförandet av politiska program genom att använda två fallstudier från Sverige. Förståelse för indikatorernas funktioner och egenskaper är viktig för att hjälpa aktörerna att utforma indikatorer som kan mäta måluppfyllelsen. I denna studie användes dokumentanalys och intervjuer som metod för datainsamling. I analysen i denna studie användes en berättande analys för att beskriva programmets egenskaper, indikatorernas funktioner och egenskaper på program- och projektnivå.


Dessa iakttagelser bidrar till att öka kunskapen om indikatorernas inflytande på program och projektnivå både i praktiken i Skåne-Blekinge-programmet och i Enklare vägar till jobb och kompetensprogram.

Nyckelord: Europeiska unionens program, svenskt nationellt program, programnivå, projektnivå, indikatorfunktion, indikatorer egenskaper
Acknowledgement

I would like to say thank you to Hans Westlund who give me guidance and meaningful discussion during the master thesis period. I also would like to offer my gratitude to Frida Andersson who offers the opportunity to carry out my thesis in Tillväxtverket (Swedish Agency for Economic and Regional Growth). Withal, my gratitude goes to all interviewers for the interesting knowledge and discussion which without them, my thesis will never be done. Furthermore, I also would like to thank my examiner, Vania Ceccato, who gives me great suggestion and encouragement to finish this thesis report.

Much appreciation should also be extended to Linda Langefros who helps me with English-Swedish translation and some interesting discussion. In addition, I would like to express my gratefulness to my family in Indonesia who always keep pray for me and my friends who keep my sanity especially during the thesis period. Finally, my sincere goes to the Indonesian Endowment Fund for Education (LPDP) who has financially supported me throughout the whole master program.
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1. Introduction

1.1 Background

Small-Medium Enterprises (SMEs) are supported by Swedish government's funding to improve their entrepreneurial behaviour. The entrepreneurial behaviour has affected the regional growth for at least two decades (Fritsch & Storey, 2014). This fact can be linked to findings by Capello and Lenzi (2016) who stated that entrepreneurial behaviour could generate job opportunities. Consequently, the government constructs strategies and measures to create entrepreneurial behaviour through innovation and business development.

These SMEs are supported on several levels. On the national level, Sweden's National Strategy for Sustainable Regional Growth and Attractiveness 2015-2020 mentions one out of four priorities which is innovation and business development (Regeringskansliet, 2015). On a larger scale, the European Commission has also committed to supporting innovation and business development. For instance, EU Structural and Investment Funds (ESI) is financial support from European Commission during the time period 2014-2020 to promote economic growth in Sweden which addresses innovation and business development (Tillväxtverket, 2016b). Thus, there is an intention from the multilevel government: EU and national levels to create an entrepreneurial climate in Swedish regions.

However, the paradigm is shifting in the EU and Swedish context where this funding policy is required to be more result-oriented rather than activity-oriented to more contribute to the objective achievement (Regeringskansliet, 2015). The result-oriented paradigm is not only adopted at the general policy level but also on the implementation of programmes and projects, including innovation and business development strategies and measures.

In Sweden, Tillväxtverket (The Swedish Agency for Economic and Regional Growth) is the agency that responsible for managing the ESI together with Svenska ESF-rådet and Jordbruksverket (Tillväxtverket, 2016c). The state agencies carry out these funding policies by creating operative programmes that help SMEs (Tillväxtverket, 2017). Tillväxtverket also manages the national budget related to the regional growth by developing and implementing national programmes and measures (Interview 5, 2018). Therefore, the organisations can apply for a grant under the EU or national programme to support their projects.

When planning a programme or project, an organisation is required to design the results-based management. In this management, the goal of a programme or project is more important than the activities. Upon it, the managerial team need a tool to make sure that a programme or project implementation contribute to reaching its goal (SIDA, 2014). Answering that urgency, UN Women (2012) mentions that an indicator is a
common tool for determining whether a programme or project reach its objective or not.

When aiming to achieve a goal, an indicator must be employed throughout all cycles: planning, monitoring, and evaluation stages (SIDA, 2014). Without regard to another stage, Ilosse and Sontheimer (1996) point out the importance of monitoring and evaluation to assess the goal achievement based on the indicators. This assessment is essentially performed on the EU and Swedish national programmes and projects within them since Sweden adopts the results-based management. In detail, the research chooses the Skåne-Blekinge programme along with its four projects to represent the EU programme. The programmes are selected because they use the different framework and this study interests to compare them. In addition, the Simplifying the pathways to jobs and competence programme and its four projects are representative of the Swedish national programme.

The programmes, the Skåne-Blekinge programme and the Simplifying the pathways to jobs and competence programme, are selected to represent the implementation of the programme from different government levels. The Skåne-Blekinge programme represents how the European Commission’s intervention logic is implemented in Sweden. The European Commission has many programmes in Sweden which are divided into the regional programme, national programme, and Interreg programme. The regional programme aims to solve issues in a specific region. The national programme solves issues that occur in more than one region within a country. Then, the Interreg programmes cover issues that happen in more than one country (Tillväxtverket, 2016a). Those programmes have the same intervention logic from the European Commission which makes regional programme or Interreg programme be similarly implemented. That implies on the case study, the Skåne-Blekinge programme, which is selected because it has some good projects and could represent the EU programme that can be compared with the Simplifying the pathways to jobs and competence programme (Interview 3, 2018). On the other hand, the Simplifying the pathways to jobs and competence programme is selected to represent a programme which works under the Swedish government’s intervention logic. This programme is selected because its projects have various indicators which make it interesting (Interview 1, 2018).

In summary, to create further understanding of (a) programme and project’s characteristics, (b) how monitoring and evaluation performed, and (c) how indicators are governed, this research investigates those aspects on the EU and Swedish national programmes. The assessment investigates both programmes to compare the intervention logics from the European Commission with the Swedish government. Those understanding can help to understand the effect of different intervention logic on the usefulness of indicators. Furthermore, such enhanced understanding can also help a program or project team to design indicator which profoundly affecting
achievement of a goal. In this way, this research explores the fruitfulness of an indicator which is reflected from the monitoring and evaluation of both programmes.

1.2 Aim and Research Questions

This study aims to assess the characteristics and functions of indicators in policy programmes using two case studies from Sweden. In addition, this research compares those indicators’ functions and characteristics on the EU and Swedish national programmes. Therefore, some research questions are constructed, as follows:

1. What are characteristics of the Skåne-Blekinge programme and the Simplifying the pathways to jobs and competence programme?
2. At the programme and project levels, what is the function of an indicator?
3. At the programme and project levels, how do characteristics of an indicator influence its implementation?

In detail, the first question is building the context of what happened in the implementation of both programmes. Further, inspired by Flyvbjerg (2002), the second question is colloquial asking two questions which are ‘what the function of an indicator should be’ and ‘what the function of an indicator in practice is’. Additionally, the third question is examining the quality of an indicator and asking is a good indicator helping the project leader to carry out a project?

1.3 Disposition

Above, the research has been framed through a background discussion about the topic of the programme and project management in a Swedish policy context, and the aim of the study is declared. The next section describes Tillväxtverket’s duty to manage the EU and Swedish national budgets. The second chapter is theoretical background which consists of three sections. Section 2.1 explains the EU Commission and Swedish government’s strategies to create an entrepreneurial climate. Section 2.2 explains the results-based management in the monitoring and evaluation phases. Then, section 2.3 discusses the theoretical concept of a good indicator.

The third chapter explains the methodological framework and empirical strategy for this study which are policy document analysis and interviews. The fourth chapter is the case studies which summarizes the Skåne-Blekinge and the Simplifying the pathways to jobs and competence programmes including projects within them. The fifth chapter includes analysis of the document and interview results based on the theoretical background. This chapter is divided into four sections to answer three research questions which are (1) characteristic of the Skåne-Blekinge and the Simplifying the pathways to jobs and competence programmes, (2) function of an indicator on both programmes, and (3) characteristic of an indicator at programme and project level. The last chapter contains conclusion of the research, including a summary of the previous
chapter, concluding remarks, the implication for the activity studies and future research, and limitation of the study.

1.4 The Budgets Managed by Tillväxtverket

There are two budgets that are managed by Tillväxtverket, an EU-allocated budget and a nationally allocated budget. The EU budget for Sweden is allocated under the EU Structural and Investment Funds (ESI funds) (Tillväxtverket, 2016b). Tillväxtverket gets an allocation from the Swedish government through *utgiftsomrade* 19 about regional development and *utgiftsomrade* 24 about business development (Interview 5, 2018). Further, the *utgiftsomrade* 19 has three categories for regional development programme, transportation support for companies in the North of Sweden, and co-finance EU funding in Sweden during 2014-2020 (Regeringen, 2017a).

Tillväxtverket manages the EU and national budget by creating relevant programmes to promote regional development and business development (Interview 5, 2018; Regeringen, 2017a, 2017b). They give a grant to entrepreneurial organisations under those appropriate programmes. This action is alike with a recommendation from Roxas, Lindsay, Ashill, and Victorio (2006) who mention that an entrepreneurial organisation needs help from more prominent institution to develop a project. Hence, Tillväxtverket operates as kind of bank that manages and distributes the budgets to entrepreneurial organisations through a grant system (Interview 5, 2018).

1.4.1 EU Structural and Investment Funds (ESI funds)

The ESI funds 2014-2020 supports implementation of the European 2020 Strategy for creating more and better jobs along with inclusive society (European Commission, 2015). The mentioned strategy has three socio-economic targets which are sustainable growth, smart growth, and inclusive growth (Regulation EU No 1303/2013). Those goals are specified on eleven thematic objectives that emerge as an investment area of the ESI funds (European Commission, 2015).

However, each member state, including Sweden, need also to consider their national priorities as equal as the European 2020 Strategy when assigning the ESI funds. Sweden receives about SEK 67 billion of ESI Funds for 2014-2020 (Tillväxtverket, 2016a). According to Tillväxtverket (2016a, p. 4), there are four types of ESI funds in Sweden as follows:

1. European Regional Development Fund (ERDF);
2. European Social Fund (ESF);
3. European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD);
4. European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF).
This study concentrates on the ERDF since it has similar focus with the aim of the *utgiftsområde* 19 and *utgiftsområde* 24 which is to improve economic and social coherence, and reduce regional disparities within European Union (Tillväxtverket, 2016a). The ERDF supports a programme which relates to investment for research, technology development and innovation, ICT, SMEs, and low-carbon economy (Regulation EU No 1301/2013).

ERDF supports programmes related to investment for growth and jobs as well as European regional cooperation with priorities to SMEs, ICT, research and low-carbon economy (European Commission, 2015). One of those priorities, SMEs, is closely related with to Tillväxtverket’s aim to support SMEs to have an entrepreneurial behaviour. Additionally, Tillväxtverket (2016a, p. 8) mentions that the ERDF is distributed through Regional Structural Fund Programmes; National ERDF Operational Programme; and Interreg Programmes. The differences between those mentioned programmes are their working area.

Regional Structural Fund programmes have the smallest working area since they are distributed to eight regions which are: Övre Norrland, Mellersta Norrland, Norra Mellansverige, Östra Mellansverige, Stockholm, Västsverige, Småland and Öarna, and Skåne-Blekinge. A company can apply for a grant under this programme, and if the project is not suitable, the company can apply for a grant under applying the National ERDF Operational programme. Then, the Interreg programme has different target since it covers a cross-country project that needs a joint solution (Tillväxtverket, 2016a). Considering all programmes and discussion with Tillväxtverket, this study chooses to focus on the *Skåne-Blekinge programme* especially the SMEs priority. The SMEs priority axis is selected because it gets the biggest allocation compared to other priorities in the *Skåne-Blekinge programme* (further explanation section 4.1).

### 1.4.2 Swedish National Budget

As mentioned before, Tillväxtverket manages the *utgiftsområde* 19 and 24. Those budgets are used for administration and programmes which are stated in the regulatory letter. Specifically, this letter always comes in December and states list of programmes that should be implemented in the upcoming year (Interview 3, 2018; Interview 5, 2018). Besides of those programmes, Tillväxtverket sometimes receives extra tasks during the year which is usually linked to current political condition (Interview 3, 2018). Related with extra tasks, Interview 5 (2018) mentions that those tasks could arrive with additional budgets or alternatively must use the current budget. Thus, Tillväxtverket has two lists of programmes based on the regulatory letter and additional tasks.

Nevertheless, Tillväxtverket at least runs two kinds of programmes which are ‘regular’ and ‘thematic’ programmes. The regular programme is a programme that runs every year such as regional business support. This programme assists the competitiveness of a company with significant investment, at least SEK 25 000 000, on selected areas
(Interview 4, 2018). If a company has a lower investment than the amount stated above, they can apply for a grant from the regional level (Interview 2, 2018). The beneficiary who can apply for this support is a company working within production or tourism sectors which currently lack attention from the government (Interview 4, 2018).

On the other hand, the thematic programme is run to solve current issues which sometimes political such as competence topic. Under the competence topic, Tillväxtverket wants to increase knowledge for filling in need of industries for an employee with right skills (Tillväxtverket, no date). There are some programmes within this topic, for example, the Simplifying the pathways to jobs and competence programme, ‘enklare vägar till jobb och kompetens’ in Swedish. The Swedish government puts great interest in this programme (Interview 1, 2018; Interview 6, 2018).

In comparison, the cited programme above is different from the regional business support programme which has homogenous indicators for its projects (Interview 4, 2018). Compared to that fact, the Simplifying the pathways to jobs and competence programme and the projects within it have a different list of indicators (Interview 1, 2018). Since the aim of this study is to investigate an indicator (see section 1.2), the Simplifying the pathways to jobs and competence programme is more interesting than the regional business support to be scrutinized.
2. Theoretical Background

2.1 Regional Growth and Strategies for Creating Entrepreneurial Climate in Sweden

Even though growth in Sweden is strong (OECD, 2017), like other countries, Sweden still aims to increase the regional growth to fulfill citizen's needs. Not only the government, but many scholars have also been interested in the regional growth by researching factors that influence this growth. According to Aronsson, Lundberg, and Wikström (2001), regional growth depended on the following factors: average income, major city area, public expenditure, industry index, unemployment, and population density. In another study, Boschma, Eriksson, and Lindgren (2014) emphasised the importance of the labour market for regional growth. Even both studies mention some different factors; the studies emphasise the importance of job opportunity to increase the regional growth.

Following that finding, Lundberg (2001) explains that government expenditure can directly increase job opportunities. Supporting that argument, Fritsch and Storey (2014) mention that government expenditure also can increase the opportunity to create an entrepreneurial climate for all business including SMEs. However, for creating an entrepreneurial climate, the role of a formal institution like government law or contract, and informal institution such as social culture is crucial (Roxas et al., 2006). Focusing on the formal institution's role in Sweden, the EU Commission and Tillväxtverket are representatives of those institutions which promote incentive and constraint for creating an entrepreneurial climate for SMEs. They give grants, under their programmes, for many projects which aim to contribute to creating an entrepreneurial climate in Sweden.

2.2 Monitoring and Evaluation Methods

In Sweden, both the programmes and the projects within these programmes should be based on the result-oriented management (Regeringskansliet, 2015). The results-based management is an approach which focuses on the outcome or end result of a programme (SIDA, 2014). On the effort to implement the results-based management, the EU Commission and Tillväxtverket have a rigorous method for achieving a goal of a programme or a project.

Looking back to the definition, a programme or a project should consist of an activity series to achieve its objectives with a fixed budget within a specified period (Barbera, no date). Further, a programme or a project always has a certain cycle which should aim to achieve its goal. Since 1978, the monitoring and evaluation have been becoming more important as those stages are based on identifying new programme or project (European 2004; Delevic, 2011). That fact is supported by Delevic (2011) who claims that a programme or a project also must have a monitoring and evaluation system.
Thus, it is important to have a monitoring and evaluation framework for a programme or a project.

In addition, the evaluation framework can be divided into ex-ante and ex-post evaluations. The ex-ante evaluation is an early evaluation during the design phase of a program or a project to provide a baseline of result indicator (European Commission, 2014), for instance, a cost-benefit or cost-effectiveness analysis (World Bank, 2004). The ex-post evaluation alternatively aims to see the program or project as a whole and investigate its effectiveness and efficiency (European Commission, 2014) such as performance indicator; the logical framework approach; theory-based evaluation; and impact evaluation (World Bank, 2004). Additionally, the World Bank (2004) also mentions some collecting data methods such as formal survey; rapid appraisal methods; participatory methods; and public expenditure tracking surveys.

2.2.1 Ex-ante evaluation framework

1. The cost-benefit and cost-effectiveness analysis
   This framework assesses the suitability of outcomes and impacts for justifying an activity cost. This framework can also be used to measure and estimate an input in monetary value. Another function of this framework is to estimate an outcome in non-monetary quantitative terms, a grading system for instance. In addition, this framework is handy to be used to convince policymakers because it can identify a project that is more resource efficient and offers highest rate return investment. In other words, this method can explicitly illustrate the economic value of a project. However, the required data for performing this method is hard to obtain, and the result is dependent on the assumption from the evaluator (World Bank, 2004).

2.2.2 Ex-post evaluation framework

1. The performance indicator
   This framework aims to monitor or evaluate an objective achievement from the input, process, output, outcomes, and impact of project development. The result of this framework is important as a base for key stakeholders to make the decision, for instance, the necessity of further in-depth evaluation. The strength of this framework is to facilitate comparison in benchmarking between different locations, times, and organisations. Another advantage is the efficiency of this framework since it only focuses on the influencing indicators that are relevant to the objective. However, this framework is not able to define whether an indicator is good or not and involves too much subjectivity in instances where the actors tend to choose many indicators without an accessible data source (World Bank, 2004).

2. The logical framework approach (LFA)
   The LFA has a similar aim to the performance indicator in that it aims to see the objective achievement. However, the LFA not only looking at the programme objective but also the activity objective on the input, process, output, outcomes, and impact (Rosenberg & Posner, 1979). Many international organisations like The
World Bank and The United Nations use this framework to review project progress and give the project manager a suggestion for corrective action (World Bank, 2004). Additionally, Couillard, Garon, and Riznic (2009) claim this framework is suitable for summarising design of complex activity and increase its quality. The LFA has advantages to ensure engagement of the stakeholders in the planning and monitoring process so they can help to identify issues and analyse the risk of a project (Couillard et al., 2009). On the other hand, this framework limits creativity and innovation since it cannot be updated during the implementation of the project (World Bank, 2004).

3. **Theory-based evaluation**

This framework is based on a similar concept to the LFA, which in that it can map the complex activity design. However, this framework has a deeper understanding of the related issues and does not rely on a linear assumption about the cause and effect relations between programme and activities within it. Besides that, this framework helps to determine indicators that important to the success and how they interact. That fact helps the team to see the implementation in practice and select which stage that needs further monitoring action. Additionally, the benefit of this framework is providing early information if something is not working which can be used by the owner to solve the issues as soon as possible. However, there is a risk of overcomplexity since theory-based evaluation uses an extensive list of indicators and assumption (World Bank, 2004).

4. **The impact evaluation**

This framework identifies the effects of a programme or a project on the target group which can be on the scale of an individual, a household, an institution, or an environment. In addition, this framework measures the outcomes and impacts including determining the influence of external factors. The result of this framework can help to draw lessons learned for improving upcoming activity management. The examples of techniques within this framework are randomised pre-test post-test evaluation, quasi-experimental design, ex-post comparison of the project and non-equivalent control group, and rapid assessment impact evaluations. Further, the advantage of this framework is answering the core of development question likes the result of a project or impact estimation on the target group. However, some techniques mentioned before are costly and time-consuming, and hard to identify appropriate counter-factual from this framework (World Bank, 2004).

2.2.3 **Collecting data method**

1. **A formal survey**

A formal survey provides consistent data from selected samples of people or households. In addition, a formal survey can provide baseline data to compare the result of a programme or a project. The examples of this method are the Living Standards Measurement Survey (LSMS), Client Satisfaction Survey, and Citizen Report Cards. This method is widely used because it is replicable and quantitatively produces an estimation of distribution impact on the target group. However, this
method is expensive, time-consuming, and irrevocable since it uses a lot of resources (World Bank, 2004).

2. **Rapid appraisal methods**
   This method is used to collect specific information that needed from the stakeholders. Using the result of this method, the decision maker can illustrate and interpret the context of a situation from the collected qualitative data. The examples of this method are key information interview, focus group discussion, community group interviews, direct observation, and mini-survey. Compared to the formal survey, this method is less expensive, easier to be used, more flexible for exploring new ideas. However, the finding also less valid, credible, and reliable than a formal survey. Additionally, this method is not replicable because it only reflects a specific context (World Bank, 2004).

3. **Participatory methods**
   This method grants an active involvement from people with a stake in the project to make sure a programme or a project is designed with the local knowledge. From the participant's perspective, this method can allow them to learn about the local conditions and priority issues. Some tools that are included in this method are the stakeholder analysis, participatory rural appraisal, beneficiary assessment, and participatory monitoring and evaluation. The advantage of this method is that it provides reliable information and enhances capacity, skill, and knowledge of local people along with increases local partnership (World Bank, 2004).

4. **Public expenditure tracking surveys (PETS)**
   The PETS is specifically used to track the flow of public funds, which is a vital part of determining budget allocation to reach a target. In the implementation, this method is supporting formal surveys, especially about service quality. However, the PETS can quantitatively diagnose the problem on the service delivery and present evidence on delay or corruption. Further, this method can support accountability especially when financial information is insufficient and improve management by mapping bureaucratic bottlenecks on the delivery service system. On the other hand, the drawback of this method is the resistance from the government agencies to open their financial data (World Bank, 2004).

In summary, the collecting methods which are mentioned in subsection 2.2.3 support both the ex-ante and ex-post evaluation frameworks in section 2.2.1 and 2.2.2. In the implementation, the evaluator usually combines methods of data collection. For an illustration, evaluators want to see the qualitative data for complementary of a formal survey; they can also use the mini-survey. Differ with the collecting method; the evaluation framework is substituted each other. Hence, a program or a project should have a definite framework for evaluation that can use a range of data collecting methods.
2.3 Monitoring and Evaluation Indicators

The evaluation framework should have a metric to define whether their goals are achieved or not. Regarding the goal achievement, it is important to understand the differences between objective, target and indicator. An objective is the definition of an ideal condition that needs to be achieved by determining some important to do lists. Then, a target is a specific level of ambition that is more detail than the goal (Carin & Bates-Eamer, 2012). Besides that, according to UN Women (2012) indicators are evidence of progress that can be used to determine whether a programme or a project is achieving its objectives. Supporting that argument, Carin and Bates-Eamer (2012) also say that indicator is a tool to determine whether the target or objective is achieved or not. Hence, an indicator is a measurement tool.

Furthermore, there are many types of indicators that are used by programme writer to measure the goal achievement. According to Ilosse and Sontheimer (1996), an indicator could be measured on different levels such as input, activity, output, the result (outcome), and impact. In detail, result indicator should help to think what results that they want to accomplish and an output indicator should help to measure and verify the production of outputs (Sandhu-Rojon, 2015). However, the type and definition of indicators that are used in a programme or project is different depending on the intervention logic that is used (UNDP, 2009).

Furthermore, it is important to look at the characteristics of those indicators. Some authors describe characteristics of a good indicator which is later used as the theoretical framework for this study. In 1982, the S.M.A.R.T indicator was introduced and had been used as a basis for developing an indicator by many organisations. The S.M.A.R.T is an abbreviation of specific, measurable, assignable, realistic, and time-related (Doran, 1981). Another study by UN Women (2012) mentions that an indicator should be valid, reliable, precise, measurable, timely, and programmatically important. In another occasion, Mansfield and Grunewald (2013) hold a workshop that gathered experts who discussed characteristic of a good indicator. The participants mentioned some characters of a good indicator which are usable, effective, appropriate, useful, coherent, and meaningful. Besides those studies, MANCP (2015) describes a good indicator should be relevant, accepted, credible, easy to monitor, and robust.

Those cited studies mention characteristics of a good indicator that can be used to evaluate whether an indicator is helping or hinder to achieve its objective. Thus, the list of characteristics of a good indicator mentioned by Doran (1981); MANCP (2015); Mansfield and Grunewald (2013); UN Women (2012) is as follows:

1. Credible: an indicator has a definite and unambiguous target;
2. Measurable: an indicator can be used to quantify and can offer information on progress;
3. Assignable: an indicator explicitly mentions actors who will carry it out;
4. Realistic: achievable and measurable with available resources;
5. Time-related: have a precise time frame to achieve the result;
6. Valid: an indicator should be a rigorous measure of expected output or outcome of the project or programme;
7. Reliable: an indicator can be measured over time in the same way by different people;
8. An assessment tool: could be used as a cost-effective assessment tool;
9. Appropriate: an indicator meets the needs of the target group and reason of the activities;
10. Useful: an indicator can be used by someone to make judgement and decision;
11. Relevant: an indicator has relation to the objective;
12. Accepted: all control actors who monitor the progress must agree upon an indicator;
13. Robust: an indicator can stand from a critique.

In summary, the good characteristics listed above can illustrate how an indicator should be. Ideally, it can be used to verify the change of a programme or a project that indicates the result. However, an indicator only indicates a condition, but it could not explain the condition. On the assessment of success or failure a programme or a project, an indicator must be supported by common sense, managerial judgement, leadership, and creativity (Sandhu-Rojon, 2015). Thus, this study is not judged whether a programme or a project is a success or not but more about how the characteristics influence the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of a programme or a project.
3. Methodology

In term of methodology, the study used a qualitative approach to gather and analyse data. A qualitative approach is more suitable for this study because its inquirer usually constructs knowledge based on the social constructivism (Creswell, 2003). This study chooses the case studies strategies where two programmes are selected and explored in depth. According to Stake (1995), a case study focuses on the selected cases which help the researcher to collect more in-depth information about those cases.

One of the methods that can be used to gather data is an interview to include the observant individual knowledge to construct phenomena on the ground. The interviews in this study are open, this means the interviewer has a question guide for an interview but flexible to the opportunity to discuss related issues (Creswell, 2003). Further, data collection methods are detailed as follows:

- Literature review to determine empirical strategies, different types of monitoring and evaluation methods and characteristic of good indicators
- Policy document analysis to identify the characteristic of the programme, project examples and indicators
- Interview with the programme managers and evaluators of both programmes to find out the programme managerial
- Interview with project leaders who receive the grant to find out whether the indicator help them to implement the project or not

In term of the data collection method, this study performed document analysis to find out information about implementation of both programmes and project within them. The relevant information included objectives and indicators. Further, to complete the data, the interviews were performed with 21 informants. The interview and document analysis are completing each other since if only one method conducted, the result of this result will be different. They are actors who give the grants, evaluators, and some project leaders who get a grant from both programmes. The interview with actors at programme and project levels are important to understand both perspectives which completing information from the document analysis.

There were two types of interviews which are an in-person interview and phone interview. The phone interview was selected because the interviewee preferred to do a phone interview, or the interviewee lived outside Stockholm which make phone interview more feasible. Moreover, the purpose of the interview was to find out information, not about the physiological reaction; the phone interview could be suitable for this research. Related to the interview, the researcher told the aim of this study. The project carried out with the high respect of ethical considerations. The researcher did not force the respondents to answer the interview. They answer the questions as they wish.
After completing the data collection, the analysis was performed. Then, the narrative analysis is the primary analysis method. This study wants to understand what happened on the reality from the actors’ perspective which makes narrative analysis is suitable. The method helps the researcher to understand the usefulness of an indicator in a programme from the EU and Swedish government (Creswell, 2003). In detail, the analysis methods are mentioned below:

- Narrative analysis of interview results and policy analysis to identify the characteristic of the programmes
- Narrative analysis of interview results and policy analysis to find out what is the function of an indicator in both programmes and projects within them
- Narrative analysis of interview results and policy analysis to analyse which characteristic of an indicator that helps to perform the project

In summary, the data from the documents analysis and interviews were used as based on the narrative analysis. This study told an assessment of the differences between both programmes including the monitoring and evaluation systems of both programmes. Then, the assessment about the function and characteristic of an indicator was told at programme and project levels. The assessment of an indicator previously mentioned is inspired by Flyvbjerg (2002) who did a study in Denmark with questioning what should and what happened. This study takes that logic and uses it to find out what should be a function of an indicator and what is an indicator’s role at programme and project levels. The same assessment is performed for the characteristic of an indicator, which compared the indicator’s characteristics with the characteristics of a good indicator mentioned in the Theoretical Background chapter.
4. The Case Studies

This study uses the EU programme, the Skåne-Blekinge programme and the Swedish national programme, the Simplifying the pathways to jobs and competence programme as case studies. Those two programmes are chosen because they have similarities since both programmes aim to increase entrepreneurial behaviour of SMEs. However, the regions that are covered by both programmes are different. The Skåne-Blekinge programme works under the EU framework and is only implemented in the Region Skåne and Region Blekinge. On the other hand, the Simplifying the pathways to jobs and competence programme works with the Swedish framework and covers all Swedish regions. Even though the Skåne-Blekinge programme is only implemented in Region Skåne and Region Blekinge, this programme uses the intervention logic from the European Commission. Hence, the programmes can be used to compare the intervention logic from the European Commission and the Swedish government.

4.1 The Skåne-Blekinge Programme and Projects within this Programme

This research focuses on exploring the implementation of SMEs priority axis within the Skåne-Blekinge programme. This priority axis aims to strengthen the small medium enterprises (Interview 8, 2018) which further can contribute to answering the challenges in the regions (counties) Skåne and Blekinge (Tillväxtverket, 2014). The SMEs priority axis has been implemented since 2014 and will be ended in 2020 (Interview 8, 2018) with EU funding about 226 MSEK (Tillväxtverket, 2014). This programme is still ongoing at the time of research.

This priority axis is expected to contribute to the achieving the EU strategy to promoting smart, sustainable, and inclusive growth. That effort is performed by assembling the list of objective and investment priority for each thematic (European Union, 2013b). The SMEs priority axis also needs to match the geographical opportunity to increase the export rate, and challenges of low productivity and high rate of unemployment (Interview 8, 2018). Hence, the representative from Region Skåne and Region Blekinge, who developed the programme, appointed a thematic objective and two investment priorities for the SMEs axis. They also designed specific objectives that contribute to the national and regional context (Interview 8, 2018). Detail information about the programme, thematic objective, investment priority, and specific objective can be seen in table 1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Thematic objective</th>
<th>Investment Priority</th>
<th>Specific Objective</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Enhancing the competitiveness of small and medium-sized enterprises,</td>
<td>Promoting entrepreneurship, in particular by facilitating the economic exploitation of new ideas and fostering the creation of new</td>
<td>a. Strengthened entrepreneurship and enterprise</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
At the programme level, this programme has a performance framework, result indicator, and output indicator to follow up and evaluate the programme. The performance framework is used to see the working process of the programme (Interview 12, 2018). The performance framework that is used in this programme are number of enterprises receiving support and expenditure (detail information sees Appendix 1) (Tillväxtverket, 2014). The performance framework helps to increase the results-based management to ensure that the programme is implemented as planned (European Commission, 2016).

The result indicator provides information about a certain aspect of a result (European Commission, 2014) that corresponds to the specific objective (Interview 20, 2018). There are five result indicators that are used in this priority axis (detail information sees Appendix 1). A result indicator is used to measure the programme’s impact on the society (Interview 20, 2018), for example, value-added of SMEs. In general, those five indicators are quantitative measurements which can be assessed using quantitative measurement unit, number of full-time employees resulting from the programme (Tillväxtverket, 2014). Further, there is a list of result indicator that can be chosen by programme writer. That list of result indicator is written by Tillväxtverket based on the European Commission’s guideline (Interview 20, 2018).

In contrast with the result indicator, the output indicator measures the physical product of the programme (European Commission, 2014) which is linked to the investment priority. Likes the result indicator, there is also a list of output indicator provided by Tillväxtverket and EU. In detail, the output indicators that are provided by EU has a code ‘CO’ in their ID (Interview 20, 2018). There are eight output indicators that are used to measure the investment priority, for instance, number of enterprises receiving support (more output indicator sees appendix 1). Similar to the result indicator, the output indicators are also mostly a quantitative indicator which has quantitative measurement likes enterprises (Tillväxtverket, 2014).

Moreover, the result and output indicators are important because the Commission measures successfulness of the programme based on those indicators (Interview 8, 2018). Looking back at the designing process, all indicators are chosen by representatives from Region Skåne and Blekinge. Compared to previous programming periods, the 2014-2020 programming period gives a new experience since the

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Thematic objective</th>
<th>Investment Priority</th>
<th>Specific Objective</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>the agricultural sector (for the EAFRD) and the fisheries and aquaculture sector (for the EMFF)</td>
<td>firms, including through business incubators</td>
<td>b. More new businesses with growth potential</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Supporting the capacity of SMEs to grow in regional, national and international markets, and to engage in innovation processes</td>
<td>Enhanced growth in existing small and medium-sized enterprises</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Tillväxtverket (2014, pp. 25-26)
programme writer can design indicators for their programmes. However, some indicators governed in the EU level are sometimes not suitable to be adapted on the regional level (Interview 12, 2018). Another new rule in this programming period is a result indicator concept which has not been used before (Interview 20, 2018). Shortly, all types of indicators are monitored and evaluated by Tillväxterket and external evaluator. The external evaluation was carried out by Sweco which worked on the thematic level. In detail, Sweco evaluated the SMEs priority axis in all programmes in Sweden, but they also made some points about this priority axis in the Skåne-Blekinge programme (Interview 21, 2018). Some results of the monitoring and evaluation are presented in Appendix 2.

The beneficiaries of this programme are regional and municipal operators, public funded operators in the innovation infrastructure, as well as the non-profit sector (Tillväxterket, 2016d). The application period is open twice a year, and there are two types of projects in this programme which are the regular and pre-study projects. In a “regular project”, a project aims to solve the real issue and has a real objective and target. On the contrary, in a “pre-study project”, a project aims to learn a new thing. The regular project has a maximum period of implementation about 3 years and 4 months while the pre-study only has 6 months (Interview 8, 2018). By the time of this research written in 2018, the programme has been granted 19 projects (Tillväxterket, 2018e). Those selected projects are chosen based on the assessment from Tillväxterket and representative of Regions Skåne and Blekinge (further selection information see appendix 3) (Interview 8, 2018).

This study chooses four projects for further investigation on how an indicator affects their implementations which are the business Ronneby, Southern Sweden going global, Sustainable competition Skåne, and Future technology training (summary of the projects sees Table 2). The writer interviewed all project leaders except for the future technology project because the leader does not give any response. The writer only interviews the external evaluator to get information about the project. The detail explanation of those projects sees Appendix 3.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project name</th>
<th>Aim</th>
<th>Owner</th>
<th>EU Budget (time implementation)</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The business Ronneby</td>
<td>Creates a positive entrepreneurial climate to attract business and people</td>
<td>Ronneby Kommun</td>
<td>SEK 842 196 (1 May 2015 to 30 April 2017)</td>
<td>Ronneby municipality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southern Sweden going global</td>
<td>Supports life-science based small companies on going global</td>
<td>Invest in Skåne AB</td>
<td>SEK 9 130 319 (1 September 2015 to 31 December 2018)</td>
<td>Region Skåne</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Table: Project Overview

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project Name</th>
<th>Aim</th>
<th>Owner</th>
<th>EU Budget (time implementation)</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sustainable competition Skåne</td>
<td>Supports SMEs working with industry to have a sustainable production based on the lean philosophy</td>
<td>IUC Syd</td>
<td>SEK 2 894 467 (3 August 2015 to 30 November 2018)</td>
<td>Region Skåne</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Future technology training</td>
<td>Links job seekers with companies, especially about technology skills</td>
<td>Hässleholms Kommun</td>
<td>SEK 6 028 514 (1 September 2015 to 31 December 2018)</td>
<td>Hässleholms municipality</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Tillväxtverket (2015a, 2015b, 2015c, 2015d)

At the project level, the project leaders need to design objectives that link to the programme. However, the project leaders could not design their own measurement for their objective instead they need to choose an output indicator from the list of output indicators in Tillväxtverket (2018f). Consequently, even the Southern Sweden going global has a different goal with the Sustainable competition Skåne, both projects have similar output indicator, which is a number of companies getting support (Tillväxtverket, 2015c, 2015d). That similarity is beneficial for the programme manager since they can generalise the output from projects within the programme (Interview 8, 2018). However, all indicators are quantitative which make it is hard to understand the quality of a project. In addition, some project leaders do not really put attention on the selected output indicators instead they only pay attention to achieve the objective (Interview 14, 2018; Interview 17, 2018).

### 4.2 The Simplifying the Pathways to Jobs and Competence programme and the Projects within this Programme

Differing with the Skåne-Blekinge programme, the Simplifying the pathways to jobs and competence programme was ended last year. This method aims to find a model or method that can solve the problem of unemployment among new arrival and long-term unemployment (Interview 6, 2018). The background of this programme was the Swedish government has a goal to have the lowest unemployment rate at 2020 within the EU members. However, Sweden has had a challenge with the unemployment among low-skilled people which had been rising between 2005 and 2016 since many asylum seekers come to Sweden (Tillväxtverket, 2018c). Thus, Tillväxtverket developed the Simplifying the pathways to jobs and competence to tackle that issue.

This programme was implemented during 2017, with a cost of 50 MSEK of the national budget (Tillväxtverket, 2018c). This programme was only aimed to spot the model or method (Interview 6, 2018). Based on the evaluation by Kontigo AB, this programme
was declared as a good practice because that model can be implemented in the next three years starting from 2018 (Interview 1, 2018). The further explanation about the result of the programme can be seen in Appendix 5.

At the programme level, this programme had three types of indicators which were performance framework, outcome indicator and effect indicator. The performance framework defined a goal for an activity within the programme. This programme had four performance indicators. All indicators were a quantitative indicator and had a specific number for each indicator such as 40 projects completed (more indicators see appendix 4). In addition, all indicators were designed by the programme manager except the 95% of projects participated which is a given indicator from the government (Tillväxtverket, 2017g).

Further, an outcome indicator was to understand a result of various activities in the target group (Tillväxtverket, 2017g). This programme had four outcome indicators which aimed to show the effect of this programme on the society (Interview 3, 2018). However, it needs to be noted that this indicator influenced but did not define the society. The outcome indicators had quantitative and qualitative indicators. However, the indicators did not have a metric except the given indicator from Swedish government (more detail about the indicators see appendix 4) (Tillväxtverket, 2017g).

Lastly, an effect indicator is to measure direct and indirect effects that arise from the programme. There were six effect indicators in this programme which were compromised of both short and long-term effects from the programme. In the document, there is no clear information whether an indicator is a short or long-term effect. However, there was a definition that the long-term effect only can be measured a few years after implementation. Thus, some indicators that could only be measured one to three years after implementation were considered long-term effect indicators. An example of such indicator was ‘increased collaboration between authorities, companies, and actors’ which could be measured 2-3 years after the implementation (Tillväxtverket, 2017g). For further information about indicator see Appendix 4.

The beneficiaries of this programme were municipalities, companies, and other organisations (Interview 1, 2018). The programme only ran for a year and the project within this programme run about six to eight months depending on when the projects received their decisions (Interview 6, 2018). In general, most projects in this programme were pre-study projects since they only aimed to find a method or model that might be useful for the next programming period. In this programme, the beneficiaries designed and tested the model to verify its ability to reach the desired result (Tillväxtverket, 2018c). That designed model was contributing to achieving the programme’s objective since each beneficiary worked on different method or model (Interview 6, 2018).
There were 41 projects that can be divided into three categories which were employers, processors, and intermediates (Tillväxtverket, 2018c). In detail, Tillväxtverket (2018c, p. 16) mentions three general types of the model as follows:

- To refine and develop individuals’ skills so that their ability to obtain (simple) jobs are strengthened,
- Working with and developing employers’ ways of organising work so that more jobs with lower qualification requirements can be created, and
- To develop and strengthen the coordination between the skill of the unemployed and workplaces with simpler jobs.

However, the division was not strict since a project can belong to more than one of those categories if a project aimed to increase individuals’ skills and pair them with jobs for instance (Interview 6, 2018). An example of activity within this programme was helping the new arrivals to learn Swedish culture in the workplace and language training (Tillväxtverket, 2018d).

This study selected four projects for deeper analysis to see how an indicator affected the implementation of those projects. The projects are a stable alternative career path, VRHR START – Virtual HR department for small business in the fashion industry, Livejobb, and Jobbsprånget (summaries of the projects see Table 3). Furthermore, a detailed explanation of those projects can be seen in Appendix 6.

Table 3. Summary of Projects under the Simplifying the pathways to jobs and competence programme

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project name</th>
<th>Aim</th>
<th>Owner</th>
<th>Swedish Budget</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A stable alternative career path</td>
<td>Created inclusive working environments for people with disabilities</td>
<td>Stockholm Stad</td>
<td>SEK 930 000</td>
<td>Stockholm City</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VRHR START – Virtual HR department for small business in the fashion industry</td>
<td>Helped small fashion industries to increase their recruitment skills through virtual HR departments</td>
<td>Design United AB</td>
<td>SEK 928 000</td>
<td>Stockholm County</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Livejobb</td>
<td>Provided an interview application along with an interpreter to bridge the language barrier</td>
<td>Grundbulten 20450 AB</td>
<td>SEK 1 996 185</td>
<td>Södertälje Municipality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Project name</strong></td>
<td><strong>Aim</strong></td>
<td><strong>Owner</strong></td>
<td><strong>Swedish Budget</strong></td>
<td><strong>Location</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>---------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>--------------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jobbsprånget</td>
<td>Provided an internship for newly arrived academics from other countries</td>
<td>Kungliga Ingenjörs-vetenskaps-akademin</td>
<td>SEK 2 006 400</td>
<td>Whole Sweden</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Tillväxtverket (2017a, 2017b, 2017c, 2017d)

*At the project level*, the project leader needed to design their own objectives and output indicators. However, Tillväxtverket also provided help through dialogue with project leaders who had difficulties creating an indicator (Interview 1, 2018). Through that dialogue, the objective and indicators of a project could be discussed together, so the programme manager, who gave the grant, could make sure that a project contributes to the programme’s objective (Interview 6, 2018). However, the projects within this programme had various indicators which made it impossible to generalise those indicators (Interview 9, 2018). Even though the indicators could not be generalised, according to project leaders, those indicators were helpful to understand the project likes to help them to find out whether a concept is working or not (Interview 11, 2018). In relation with that argument, Interview 13 (2018) also mentions that indicators in Jobbsprånget were easy to use because they were previously used in the similar project.


5. Analysis and Discussion of Results

This chapter is dedicated to answering three research questions. The first research question is discussed in section 5.1. Then, section 5.2 and 5.3 are committed to answering the second research question. Lastly, the third research question is responded in section 5.4.

5.1 Comparison of the Skåne-Blekinge and the Simplifying the pathways to jobs and competence programmes

Generally, both programmes aim to solve an unemployment issue in Sweden through different means (summary of both programmes can be seen in table 4). The Skåne-Blekinge programme gives a grant for beneficiaries that supporting SMEs for increasing job opportunity (Interview 8, 2018; Tillväxtverket, 2014). Then, the Simplifying the pathways to jobs and competence programme also gives a grant for beneficiaries that supporting SMEs and specific target groups which are new arrivals, long-term unemployment, and disable people (Interview 6, 2018; Tillväxtverket, 2018c). In that sense, the Simplifying the pathways to jobs and competence programme has more focused target groups than the Skåne-Blekinge programme.

Touched upon in the previous paragraph, it does not mean that the Simplifying the pathways to jobs and competence programme is better than the Skåne-Blekinge programme. That programme is more focused because it responses to specific instructions and has a shorter period of one year (Interview 6, 2018), compared to the Skåne-Blekinge programme that has been run since 2014 and will end at 2020 (Interview 8, 2018; Tillväxtverket, 2014). In other words, the Simplifying the pathways to jobs and competence programme is the equivalent of one-seventh of the Skåne-Blekinge programme period. Even a regular project within the Skåne-Blekinge programme has a longer period than the Simplifying the pathways to jobs and competence programme. From those facts, it can be understood that a short programme may have a more specific target group.

In addition to a more, specific target group, but also the Simplifying the pathways to jobs and competence programme aims to find a method or model and does not have a real objective such as creating number of jobs or decreasing unemployment rate (the programme’s objectives see Appendix 4) (Interview 9, 2018). This programme is a success because producing some methods which will be implemented in the next programming period (Interview 1, 2018; Interview 6, 2018). This programme has some successful factors:

“Compared to other programmes, this programme is un-bureaucratic and smooth because they need to design this call very quickly. It is a very quick process. They have call and discussion with some projects. They are some informal discussion with the projects. Project leaders very happy with the response from the Tillväxtverket.”

(Interview 9, 2018)
“Have a meeting with them in advance. What they want, what we will be financed. Discussion about what is possible.”

(Interview 6, 2018)

Further, *the Skåne-Blekinge programme* has a more general target with longer implementation period. This programme has more of a variety of projects because the target group is broader than *the Simplifying the pathways to jobs and competence programme*. Currently, *the Skåne-Blekinge programme* has two calls a year which focus on the different topics that are relevant to the opening period (Interview 8, 2018). However, that topic can be varied by learning from *the Simplifying the pathways to jobs and competence programme* to have a specific target group for each calling of *the Skåne-Blekinge programme*.

At *the project level*, there are two types of projects that are adopted in both programmes namely pre-study and regular project. A pre-study project is a preparation to check a project’s suitability before a regular project can be implemented (Interview 8, 2018). Both programmes give a grant for the pre-study project. In addition, *the Skåne-Blekinge programme* also gives grants for the regular project. That difference is because *the Simplifying the pathways to jobs and competence programme* had a short-time implementation and only aimed to find a model or method (Interview 6, 2018).

In a pre-study project, a project aims to learn a new thing which makes it important to use monitoring and evaluation approach including an indicator that is oriented on the learning process. Consequently, it is important to have flexibility in exploring their creativity to find a method or a model. The support from a higher institution such as meeting, dialogue, and study visit is crucial for this project. In a regular project, a project should have a fix method or model and real objective. Consequently, when selecting an indicator, it is important to choose an indicator that has a steering power and can be used to measure the result achievement on the monitoring and evaluation stages. Likes the pre-study project, a regular project still needs those mentioned supports to help them carried out a project.

Touched upon in the previous paragraph, another strategy from *the Simplifying the pathways to jobs and competence programme* that can be adopted on *the Skåne-Blekinge programme* is to have one or two years pre-study period then having regular projects. The pre-study gives an opportunity for the programme to learn what kind of project that can give a positive influence on the programme’s objective. If a pre-study project is a success, it could be continued to the regular project. Thus, the regular project that will be implemented is probably more success than a regular project without previous pre-study. For the illustration, *the Skåne-Blekinge programme* can only accept projects that aim to find a method or model to decrease unemployment and increase productivity as explained by Interview 6 (2018) about *the Simplifying the pathways to jobs and competence programme*. Then, in the next funding period, *the Skåne-Blekinge programme* can begin to fund the regular projects.
Table 4. Comparison of the Skåne-Blekinge and the Simplifying the pathways to jobs and competence programmes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Profiles</th>
<th>Skåne-Blekinge Programme</th>
<th>Simplifying the pathways to jobs and competence Programme</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The aim of the programme</td>
<td>To enhance the regional growth and employment in the counties of Skåne and Blekinge</td>
<td>To match the need for employment from the companies and the unemployment in Sweden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Programming</td>
<td>The programme was written by Representative of Region Skåne-Blekinge</td>
<td>The programme was written by the programme manager</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monitoring</td>
<td>The project sends a monitoring report to Tillväxtverket every six months</td>
<td>The project sends a monitoring report to Tillväxtverket every once or twice during the programming period, dialogue, and project visit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation</td>
<td>The evaluation is on the thematic level that evaluates all projects related to the SMEs thematic objective. Each project also need to have an evaluation</td>
<td>The evaluation was performed by external evaluator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Timeframe</td>
<td>2014-2020</td>
<td>2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Budget</td>
<td>226 MSEK, A project must have at least 50% of co-finance</td>
<td>50 MSEK, A project must have at least 20% of co-finance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The beneficiaries</td>
<td>Regional and municipal operators, operators in the innovation infrastructure who have most of the public funding and where public ownership exercises control, as well as a non-profit sector</td>
<td>Companies, municipalities, and other organisations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Target group</td>
<td>Regional and municipal operators, the innovation infrastructure (including universities/colleges), private enterprises and organisations, ideas-based sector, and entrepreneurs</td>
<td>SMEs, job seeker: new arrivals and long-term unemployment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indicators in the programme</td>
<td>The selected indicators are designed by more powerful actors</td>
<td>The selected indicators are designed by the programme manager</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grant application</td>
<td>The grant application opens twice a year based on the assessment from Tillväxtverket, Region Skåne-Blekinge, and Regional</td>
<td>The grant application period early February – mid-April 2017 Based on the assessment from Tillväxtverket (further explanation see Appendix 6)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Further, the programmes are similar when it comes to monitoring and evaluation frameworks that they have been used (the monitoring and evaluation results for both programmes see Appendix 2 and 5). In both programmes, Tillväxtverket follows up the programme by using the monitoring report that each project regularly sends (Interview 6, 2018; Interview 8, 2018). However, in the *Simplifying the pathways to jobs and competence programme*, the programme manager also had a dialogue with the project leaders and visited some projects (Interview 6, 2018; Tillväxtverket, 2018c). On the contrary, in the *Skåne-Blekinge programme*, some project leaders mention that there is a lack of dialogue with Tillväxtverket during a project’s implementation (Interview 15, 2018; Interview 16, 2018). It is crucial that dialogue is a good method to keep the project on track. Dialogue also helps the project leader to know what is expected and helps Tillväxtverket to understand the project (Interview 14, 2018).

*In the Skåne-Blekinge programme*, a guideline is a tool to govern the programme. On the other hand, *the Simplifying pathways to job and competence programme* utilizes a dialogue to learn and monitor a project within this programme. A strict guideline *in the Skåne-Blekinge programme* indicates that this programme is governed by the higher actor than the programme manager, the European Commission in this case. On the contrary, *the Simplifying the pathways to jobs and competence programme* gives the fact that communication is important to create a good project. The dialogue between the project leaders and Tillväxtverket allows them to find an innovative solution. Thus, *the Skåne-Blekinge programme* aims to more steering than learning while *the Simplifying the pathways to jobs and competence programme* aims to more learning than steering.

When it comes to the evaluation framework, both programmes use the theory of change for their evaluation frameworks (Interview 9, 2018; Interview 12, 2018). In *the Skåne-Blekinge programme*, the theory-based evaluation is selected as stated in the guidelines (European Commission, 2014) and in *the Simplifying the pathways to jobs and competence programme*, it is used by Tillväxtverket (Interview 9, 2018). The theory-
based evaluation enables the evaluator to see the effect and answering why and how something works (Interview 9, 2018; European Commission, 2014). Success or failure of a programme can be seen by its objective’s achievement (World Bank, 2004).

When evaluating a project, there is a dialogue between evaluator and project leader in both programmes (Interview 9, 2018; Interview 21, 2018). In general, in both programmes, a project was evaluated by one external evaluator (Interview 9, 2018; Interview 21, 2018; Tillväxtverket, 2018c). In addition, the *Skåne-Blekinge programme* has another evaluation rule for a project under this programme. If a project gets a grant no more than 3 MSEK, the project leader needs to conduct additional self-evaluation. However, if a project gets a grant more than 3 MSEK, they need to hire additional external evaluation (Interview 8, 2018). In addition, according to Interview 8 (2018), a project can get another external evaluation if that project overlaps with another thematic objective. Consequently, a project can only get one external evaluator or at least three external evaluators (see figure 1 for the illustration). Mentioning the effect, Interview 8 (2018); Interview 21 (2018) mention that a project leader that is hit by more than three external evaluators get tired of contacted by many evaluators.

![Figure 1. Illustration of a project evaluation within the Skåne-Blekinge programme](source: Author's illustration, 2018)

5.2 The Function of an Indicator at Programme Level

Before going deep into a discussion about analysis, there is an urgency to distinguish between an objective, a target and an indicator. An objective is a statement about what is important to carry out in a programme. Further, it is important to understand that an indicator is only a measure, while a target is the level of ambition or condition that should be measured. When defining a target, it should be noticed that it should contribute directly to the objective (Carin & Bates-Eamer, 2012). From that explanation, the programme manager is to try achieving an indicator but use it to measure a target towards the objective. For example, the objective is decreasing the
number of unemployment in Stockholm. Then, a target for this objective is by 2020, 80% of people between 16-64 years will have an occupation. Furthermore, an indicator, which is the number of working people between 16-64 years, is employed to measure the mentioned target. Thus, an indicator is a measurement.

At the programme level, the type of indicators that are used on the Skåne-Blekinge programme differs from those in the Simplifying the pathways to jobs and competence programme. The Skåne-Blekinge programme uses performance framework, result in indicator and output indicator (see Appendix 1) (Tillväxtverket, 2014). On the other hand, the Simplifying the pathways to jobs and competence programme used performance framework, outcome indicator, and effect indicator (see Appendix 4) (Tillväxtverket, 2017g). From those indicators, both programmes use the performance framework. A performance framework is important to measure a performance objective. The performance objective is a direct target of the managerial process that wants to be attained at the end of a programme (Interview 20, 2018).

Besides the performance objective, the Skåne-Blekinge programme has result and output objectives. A result’s objective is a target condition in a region because of the indirect effect of a programme, and an output’s objective is a direct target of a programme (Interview 20, 2018). Besides that, the Simplifying the pathways to jobs and competence programme has outcome and effect objectives. An outcome objective is something that needs to be affected by the programme, but it cannot be defined how much a programme affects it. Further, an effect objective could be a direct or indirect impact from the programme in short or long-term (Tillväxtverket, 2017g). Consequently, according to UN Women (2012), all objectives need to be measured using an indicator, so a programme's success can be judged.

Figure 2. Illustration of indicators at programme level
Source: Author illustration, 2018
As mentioned before, an indicator should measure a direct or indirect effect of a programme. In the performance framework, an indicator should measure a direct effect of the managerial process on both programmes (Interview 20, 2018). In both programme practices, the performance framework indeed measures the direct effect of a programme (see figure 2). In the Skåne-Blekinge programme, the indicators measure the quantity of granted projects, and the amount of spending money (Tillväxtverket, 2014) and undoubtedly the Simplifying the pathways to jobs and competence programme also measure the same objectives (Tillväxtverket, 2017g). Thus, the performance framework is worked as how this indicator should be.

In the Skåne-Blekinge programme, the output indicator (see figure 2, Appendix 1) at the programme level is aggregated from the project levels. Those output indicators are monitored one a year. In this programme, an output indicator is used to be a direct impact measurement (Interview 20, 2018). On the contrary, the Simplifying the pathways to jobs and competence programme uses an effect indicator (see figure 2, Appendix 4) which not only measures a direct impact but also indirect impact from a programme (Tillväxtverket, 2017g). Even those programmes use a different type of indicators to measure the programme’s impact; both programmes measure the impact of a programme on society. The Skåne-Blekinge programme uses a result indicator which is measured once in two years (see Appendix 1) and the Simplifying the pathways to jobs and competence programme uses an outcome indicator (see Appendix 4) to see the link of a programme to the society (Interview 3, 2018; Interview 20, 2018).

In practice, in the Skåne-Blekinge programme, an output indicator can measure the direct impact of its programme as it should be. However, there is a difficulty to use the output indicator since some people have a hard time to understand how to use an output indicator (Interview 20, 2018). In the Simplifying the pathways to jobs and competence programme, an effect indicator could not be used as it should be because the indicators were evaluated when the programme was ongoing (Interview 9, 2018). Besides those indicators, result indicator and outcome indicators could not be used as they should be because they can only be measured but could not be explained how much those indicators are influencing the society (Interview 20, 2018; Tillväxtverket, 2017g). In the Skåne-Blekinge programme, according to Interview 20 (2018), a result indicator is a new experience, and there is a difficulty to find a reliable data. Even some indicators are not functioned as should be, in the Simplifying the pathways to jobs and competence programme, Interview 6 (2018) mentions that effect and outcome indicators are helpful for selecting the projects.

When it comes to the evaluation phase, the selected indicators on both programmes are unhelpful for the external evaluation (Interview 9, 2018; Interview 19, 2018). Additionally, Interview 19 (2018) mentions that those indicators are not helpful for the first and second evaluation because they are too early to be used and there are no available resources for those data. The similar reason is mentioned by Interview 9 (2018) argues that in the Simplifying the pathways to jobs and competence programme,
those indicators could not be used since there is no data to measure them. Thus, in both programmes, the indicators are not measurable because there is no available data when the measuring is performed.

“That projects have picked some result indicators, but we cannot measure the indicator now.”

(Interview 19, 2018)

“We are not really used the indicator for evaluation; we develop more qualitative indicators because we feel that there is no data about that indicator and there is no common definition about that indicator, so we could not really use it. The projects have different indicators that could not be aggregated on the program level.”

(Interview 9, 2018)

From those stories, it can be concluded that the indicator in a performance framework is more noticeable than the outcome, effect, result and output indicators. The programme manager is more concerned with the indicator in the performance rather than outcome, effect, result and output indicators since it can help to find out whether they give funding to the right project or not. Specifically, in the Skåne-Blekinge programme, Tillväxtverket will get punished if they do not fulfil the performance framework (Interview 9, 2018; Interview 20, 2018). In summary, the output, result, effect, and outcome indicators are not fully functioned as it should be because there is a difficulty to understand them. Hence, section 5.4 is dedicated to explaining the characteristic of the outcome, effect, result, and output indicators at the programme level to identify why an indicator is difficult to grasp.

5.3 The Function of an Indicator at the Project Level

At the project level, this research pinpoints an output indicator. The summaries of project examples for both programmes are presented in Appendix 3 and 6. For a project that applies to the Skåne-Blekinge grant, the project leader designs their own objectives and chooses output indicators from the prepared list of output indicator (Interview 20, 2018). On the other hand, a project that applied for the Simplifying the pathways to jobs and competence grant, the project leader designed their own objectives and output indicators (Interview 6, 2018).

At the project level, from the perspective who financed the project and who implement the project itself, an indicator should measure a direct effect. In practice, on the planning process, the actor, who granted a project, uses an indicator to make sure that all projects contribute to the programme’s objective. In the Skåne-Blekinge programme, Tillväxtverket has similar aim by giving a list of output indicators that guide the grant applicant about what is expected from them (Interview 20, 2018). In the Simplifying the pathways to jobs and competence programme, a project design their own output
indicator and Tillväxtverket helped if a project has difficulty in developing an output indicator (Interview 1, 2018).

On the monitoring process, both programme managers collect a report from the project leaders. Each project describes what they have done including what happened with their selected output indicators. From that document, the actor who granted the project monitors how does a project work to achieve the project’s objective (Interview 6, 2018; Interview 8, 2018).

On the evaluation process, a project is evaluated by external evaluator hired by Tillväxtverket. For the external evaluator, the output indicators are not appropriate to measure the objective. The reason for this condition is that there is no common definition of those output indicators and no data to measure them (Interview 9, 2018; Interview 19, 2018). In addition, for projects under the Skåne-Blekinge programme, they also perform another evaluation either internal or external evaluation (Interview 21, 2018). On such evaluation, an output indicator is used as a measurement as it is said on the guideline (Interview 16, 2018; Interview 18, 2018).

For the project team who implements a project, the benefits of an output indicator are varied. Many project leaders say that an output indicator is important to implement the project (Interview 10, 2018; Interview 17, 2018). However, in some projects within the Skåne-Blekinge programme, output indicators are not useful since, without that, the project team already knows what they should do (Interview 15, 2018; Interview 17, 2018). Additionally, as a measurement tool, it is partially captured the result.

“In this project, the indicator does not help the project. Our goal to work with 35 companies. Even, there is no indicator about that; we will still work with companies. I don’t think it really guides me in terms of changing how we would have done without indicators.”

(Interview 15, 2018)

“In this project, the indicators show the fraction of the result of the project, but they did not capture the added value of the project”

(Interview 14, 2018)

On the contrary, a project within the Simplifying the pathways to jobs and competence, an output indicator gives a pressure to the project team, so they have something to look forward (Interview 7, 2018). Additionally, an output indicator helps the project leader to understand their project and help them to achieve the project’s objective (Interview 10, 2018; Interview 11, 2018). Nevertheless, in a project, the selected output indicators help the project team to measure their achievements and decide the programme’s development forward (Interview 13, 2018). Thus, an output indicator can give various values for the project leaders. Further information about the function of an output
indicator at the project level sees table 5 (detail information about output indicators for each project see Appendix 3 and 6).

The mentioned difference might be caused by various factors. In a project within the Skåne-Blekinge programme, an output indicator is not useful because the project leaders are not involved in developing an output indicator. Instead, they are more focusing on the objective (Interview 17, 2018). On the other hand, an output indicator’s value in a project within the Simplifying the pathways to jobs and competence programme is different because of the different backgrounds. On a project, an output indicator helps the project team to understand the project if it is an innovative project that learns to develop or implement a new concept (Interview 10, 2018; Interview 11, 2018). On another project, it helps them to measure the progress because the output indicators are previously used in another project (Interview 13, 2018). Thus, the following section is also explaining the characteristic of an output indicator at the project level to see which characteristic that different influence function of an output indicator.

Table 5. The function of an output indicator at the project level

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Actor who gives the grant</th>
<th>A project within the Skåne-Blekinge programme</th>
<th>A project within the Simplifying pathways to job and competence programme</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In the programming period, make sure that the project contribute to the programme</td>
<td>In the programming period, make sure that the project contribute to the programme</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In the monitoring, to follow up the project’s achievement</td>
<td>In the monitoring, to follow up the project’s achievement</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>External evaluator</td>
<td>The output indicators are not appropriate for the evaluation</td>
<td>The output indicators are not appropriate for the evaluation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project team</td>
<td>The output indicators are not appropriate</td>
<td>The output indicators are used as measurement tools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The output indicators are partly measure the result</td>
<td>The output indicators help to achieve the objective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>The output indicators are used to understand the project</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Author illustration, 2018

5.4 The Characteristic of an Indicator at Programme and Project Levels

Continuing the discussion about the function of an indicator in the programme and project levels, this section tries to look the reason why an indicator has various functions. At the programme level, the discussion is focusing on the characteristic of result, output, outcome, and effect indicators (see Appendix 1 and 4). The reason is that the performance framework is functioning as it should be. Moreover, this research focuses on the results-based management which makes mentioned indicators’ functions are critical. Unfortunately, when comparing the policy documents and
interview result with the theoretical background of what a good indicator is, some characteristics are not possible to be explained since they are not covered by collected data.

At the programme level, the explanation of the character focuses on finding out why result, output, outcome, and effect indicators do not fully guide the monitoring and evaluation process in both programmes. Ideally, those mentioned indicators are functioned as they should be. It can be alarming since, in the result-based framework, it should be one of the measurement tools to see how far the achievement in a programme is (SIDA, 2014). However, in both programmes, the results, outputs, outcomes, and effect indicators are tough to be followed up on and evaluated. The summary of the characteristic result, output, outcome, and effect indicators can be seen in table 6. However, this discussion is only focusing on some characteristics that might be influencing the function of an indicator as mentioned in section 5.2. In both programmes, the characteristics that influence the mentioned issues are credible, measurable, realistic, reliable, and accepted.

The first characteristic, credibility, means that an indicator has a clear definition and a specific target (MANCP, 2015). In the Skåne-Blekinge programme, there is a definition of each indicator and target that it should achieve in a specific time (Tillväxtverket, 2014). Ideally, a guideline can help people to pick and use an indicator. However, in reality, many people need a long time to understand how an output indicator works. In this case, a guideline does not ensure all people understand it (Interview 20, 2018). On the contrary, not all indicators in the Simplifying the pathways to jobs and competence programme has a definition, and there is no target mentioned for each indicator (Tillväxtverket, 2017g). The unambiguous definition of an indicator in this programme is one reason why the external evaluator does not use the indicators in the evaluation process (Interview 9, 2018). Thus, it is important that a programme defines simple and unambiguous indicator along with a specific target that is understood by all actors (Interview 20, 2018).

“One thing that we have a problem with the output indicator is the one that we explain to you is everyone does not understand that. that is important is to make sure that people understand the indicator.”

(Interview 20, 2018)

The second characteristic is measurable. In both programmes, an indicator should be able to show the quantity of quality of target achievement, so it can be used to measure an objective (UN Women, 2012). In the Skåne-Blekinge programme, all indicators have measurement unit that makes sure an indicator can be quantified (Tillväxtverket, 2014). On the contrary, in the Simplifying the pathways to jobs and competence programme, there is no measurement unit stated in the document (Tillväxtverket, 2017g) which might be the reason why it is hard to be quantified. In that sense, a measurement unit can be useful to help programme manager to understand how to
quantify an indicator. In addition, it is important to understand that a measurable indicator is not only quantitative indicator but also a qualitative indicator that can be quantified by using quality scaling, for instance from bad to good (Sandhu-Rojon, 2015).

The third characteristic, being realistic, means that an indicator should be measurable with the available source (Doran, 1981). In both programmes, the planning documents mention sources for indicators (Tillväxtverket, 2014, 2017g). However, in both programmes, their external evaluator claims that there is no available data for the selected indicators (Interview 9, 2018; Interview 19, 2018). That unmatched condition can be caused because of the wrong time-frame and unreliable data source. That reason is explained by Interview 20 (2018) who say that it is hard to know which data source that reliable and deciding when it the right time to measure an indicator. That argument is supported by Interview 9 (2018) who said that when evaluating the programme, there is no data coming up, so it cannot be measured. Thus, defining the right time to measure an indicator might help to choose data source.

The fourth characteristic, reliable, means that an indicator can be measured by different people in the different time (UN Women, 2012). In the Skåne-Blekinge programme, the reliability of an indicator is shaped by providing a definition for each definition on the guideline. In the guideline for the Skåne-Blekinge programme, to make the definition clear, an indicator’s definition is written instead of the name of an indicator (Tillväxtverket, 2014). On the contrary, in the Simplifying the pathways to jobs and competence programme, an indicator could be not as reliable as in the Skåne-Blekinge programme because indicator’s definition is limited (Tillväxtverket, 2017g). The ambiguousness of that indicator is a reason why external evaluator does not use the designed indicator (Interview 9, 2018). In other words, an indicator is understood by an actor who designs it, but other actors have a hard time to understand it. Thus, it could be good if there is a clear definition of each indicator to increase its reliability.

"that is important in our model that people on the system know what it is. If the detailed indicator is higher than the general indicator we can see that there is something wrong on that because the detailed indicator should explain the general indicator. A simple indicator that gets people understand is important."

(Interview 20, 2018)

The fifth characteristic, accepted, means an indicator should be agreed by all actors (MANCP, 2015). For the programme manager, there is a difference between both programmes regarding the acceptance level. In the Skåne-Blekinge programme, the programme writer is different with the programme manager. Then, the programme manager is straightforwardly accepting the selected indicators by the programme writer (Interview 8, 2018). While in the Simplifying the pathways to jobs and competence programme, the programme writer is the programme manager which means that the selected indicators are accepted by an actor who plan and monitor them (Interview 6, 2018). Besides that, related it back to the previous section which claims that the
external evaluator does not use the selected indicators in both programmes, it can be a sign that the external evaluator does not accept that indicators. The external evaluator chooses to develop different indicators that they feel more relevant to evaluation process instead of using the programme’s indicators (Interview 9, 2018; Interview 19, 2018).

In summary, the programme tries to adopt the results-based management but not yet fully performed that kind of management which can be caused by issues to understand the result, output, outcome, and effect indicators. Such problem is because of an indicator’s characteristics. In *the Skåne-Blekinge programme*, an indicator should be more reliable, credible, realistic, and accepted. The strategy that can be adapted to increase the quality of those characteristics is building a dialogue between the programme writer, programme manager, and evaluator. That is crucial since currently there is a guideline for *the Skåne-Blekinge programme*, but there is various interpretation about that guideline which can be minimized by dialogue between all actors. On the other hand, in *the Simplifying the pathways to jobs and competence programme*, an indicator should be more measurable, realistic, reliable, credible, and accepted. *The Simplifying the pathways to jobs and competence programme* needs to increase the quality of programme’s guideline, so other actors besides the programme writer understand the indicators and how to use them. Additionally, providing a clear definition and target are also helpful for the programme manager.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The character of a good indicator</th>
<th>The Skåne-Blekinge programme</th>
<th>The Simplifying the pathways to jobs and competence programme</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Result Indicator</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Credible</td>
<td>Measuring a definite target</td>
<td>Does not measuring a definite target</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Unambiguous since the</td>
<td>Unambiguous since the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>programme write the</td>
<td>programme manager involve writing the indicator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>explanation of the indicator</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Measurable</td>
<td>Has a measurement unit</td>
<td>Does not have a measurement unit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assignable</td>
<td>Not applicable</td>
<td>Not applicable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Output Indicator</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Credible</td>
<td>Measuring a definite target</td>
<td>Does not measuring a definite target</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Unambiguous since many</td>
<td>Unambiguous since the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>people do not understand</td>
<td>programme manager involve writing the indicator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>how to use the output</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Measurable</td>
<td>Has a measurement unit</td>
<td>Does not have a measurement unit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assignable</td>
<td>Not applicable</td>
<td>Not applicable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Outcome Indicator</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Credible</td>
<td>Does not measuring a</td>
<td>Does not measuring a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>definite target</td>
<td>definite target</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Measurable</td>
<td>Has a measurement unit</td>
<td>Unambiguous since the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assignable</td>
<td>Not applicable</td>
<td>programme manager involve writing the indicator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Effect Indicator</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Credible</td>
<td>Does not measuring a</td>
<td>Does not measuring a</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>definite target</td>
<td>definite target</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Measurable</td>
<td>Has a measurement unit</td>
<td>Unambiguous since the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assignable</td>
<td>Not applicable</td>
<td>programme manager involve writing the indicator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Realistic</strong></td>
<td>The resources for the data</td>
<td>The resources for the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>are clearly stated but there is no available data at the measuring time</td>
<td>data are clearly stated but there is no available data at the measuring time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Time-related</strong></td>
<td>There is a time frame for the result, but there is no target during the monitoring period</td>
<td>There is no clear target stated on this indicator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Valid</strong></td>
<td>It only measures the quantity of an expected result, not the quality</td>
<td>It only measures the quantity of an expected result, not the quality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reliable</strong></td>
<td>There is an explanation about the list of result indicator</td>
<td>Most of the indicators are programme specific; it needs to be examined</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>There is an explanation about the list of output indicator</td>
<td>Most of the indicators are programme specific; it needs to be examined</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The character of a good indicator</td>
<td>The Skåne-Blekinge programme</td>
<td>The Simplifying the pathways to jobs and competence programme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Result Indicator</td>
<td>Output Indicator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a cost-effective assessment tool</td>
<td>Not applicable</td>
<td>Not applicable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appropriate</td>
<td>The selected indicators only partially picture the objective</td>
<td>The selected indicators only partially picture the objective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Useful</td>
<td>The indicators are not used by the external evaluator</td>
<td>The indicators are not used by the external evaluator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relevant</td>
<td>The programme writer did write the objective and selected relevant indicator from the list of result indicator</td>
<td>The programme writer did write the objective and selected relevant indicator from the list of the output indicator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accepted</td>
<td>The programme manager is automatically agreed since it is a straightforward directive from the higher institution</td>
<td>The programme manager is automatically agreed since it is a straightforward directive from the higher institution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robust</td>
<td>Not applicable</td>
<td>Not applicable</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Interview 6 (2018); Interview 8 (2018); Interview 9 (2018); Interview 19 (2018); Interview 20 (2018); Tillväxtverket (2014, 2017g)
At the project level, the discussion is more about to see why an indicator has various functions (detail information about project’s indicators see Appendix 3 and 6). However, before discussing the function of an output indicator for the project team, its function for the actor who gives grant and external evaluator is firstly explained. As mentioned in the previous section, in both programmes, the output indicators are functioned to make sure project’s contribution to the programme and following up that achievement (Interview 6, 2018; Interview 8, 2018). The characteristics, that enable such function, are relevant and measurable.

In the Skåne-Blekinge programme, there is a list of output indicator which makes sure it is relevant to the programme and EU objective (Interview 20, 2018). In the Simplifying the pathways to jobs and competence programme, the programme manager assessed output indicators from all projects to make sure they contribute to the programme’s objective (Interview 6, 2018). In the monitoring, measurable is the characteristic that helps both programme managers to follow up an indicator. The output indicators that can be quantified can be a tool to monitor the progress achievement of a project which is reported in the monitoring report (Interview 6, 2018; Interview 8, 2018).

On the other hand, an output indicator is not appropriate for the external evaluator because some characteristics which are credible, realistic, reliable and accepted. In a project within the Skåne-Blekinge programme, there is a list of commonly used output indicator which gives guideline how to use them (Tillväxtverket, 2018f). However, the external evaluator does not accept indicators instead of they use their own indicators. Moreover, the external evaluator also mentions that there is no available data for that indicator which indicates the indicators are not realistic (Interview 19, 2018).

In the Simplifying the pathways to jobs and competence programme, the external evaluator does not accept the indicator because there is no common indicator used in the projects instead a project chooses specific indicators for a specific project. In term of credibility, there is no definition of that indicator which makes it hard for the external evaluator to use them. Another issue with indicators from the external evaluator’s perspective is that there is no available source to measure that indicator (Interview 9, 2018). Thus, an indicator cannot be used by different actor except actor who designed it.

From the project team’s perspective, an output indicator has various functions. Ideally, an output indicator should measure a direct effect of a project (Sandhu-Rojon, 2015). However, in a project within the Skåne-Blekinge programme, an output indicator is not appropriate and partly measure the project’s result (Interview 14, 2018; Interview 15, 2018; Interview 17, 2018). In a project within the Simplifying the pathways to jobs and competence programme, an output indicator can be functioned as measurement tools. Additionally, an output indicator helps the project team to understand the project and achieve its objective (Interview 7, 2018; Interview 10, 2018; Interview 11, 2018; Interview 13, 2018). In this case, an output indicator is more positively influencing a
project within the Simplifying the pathways to jobs and competence programme rather than a project within the Skåne-Blekinge programme.

The various functions of an output indicator might be caused by its characteristics. Exploring that argument, some characteristics, credible, valid, appropriate, relevant, and accepted, are compared (all characteristics see table 7). The first characteristic, credibility, means that an indicator has a clear definition and target (MANCP, 2015). In a project within the Skåne-Blekinge programme, there is a definition of each indicator and how to use it (Tillväxtverket, 2018f). When the project team is applying for a grant in this project, they need to select an indicator that related with their objective and define how many targets that they want to accomplish (Interview 14, 2018). On the contrary, there is no guideline on how to choose an indicator for a project within the Simplifying the pathways to jobs and competence programme; a project defines their own indicators (Interview 6, 2018; Interview 10, 2018). In some projects, there is a target stated for each indicator and some projects could not define the target of each indicator (Tillväxtverket, 2017a, 2017d). In that sense, an indicator a project within the Skåne-Blekinge programme is more credible than within the Simplifying the pathways to jobs and competence programme since it has a clear definition and target.

The second characteristic, validity, means that an indicator should measure the expected direct effect of a project (UN Women, 2012). In a project within the Skåne-Blekinge programme, ideally, an indicator can be used to quantify a direct effect of a project. However, the list of common output indicator only measures the quantity of the project’s result but there is no measurement of the project’s quality (Tillväxtverket, 2018f). That argument is supported by Interview 14 (2018) who mentions that a qualitative indicator is underestimated. Different with the previous project, in a project within the Simplifying the pathways to jobs and competence programme, some qualitative indicators are stated on the project documents. However, the definition of an indicator, both quantitative and qualitative indicators are poorly defined (Tillväxtverket, 2017c, 2017d). Thus, there is need to use a qualitative indicator to explain the quality aspect of a project.

The third characteristic, appropriate, means that an indicator should meet the needs of the target group and activities’ reasons (Mansfield & Grunewald, 2013). In a project within the Skåne-Blekinge programme, an indicator is not appropriate since it only pictures some project’s result not the added value of a project (Interview 14, 2018). Moreover, Interview 17 (2018) also mentions that is important to see what happened to the target group after the implementation of a project. On the contrary, in a project within the Simplifying the pathways to jobs and competence programme, an output indicator is tried to measure the specific issue related to the target group (Interview 11, 2018). Hence, the output indicator in a project within the Simplifying the pathways to jobs and competence programme is more appropriate than in a project within the Skåne-Blekinge programme.
The fourth characteristic, relevant, means that an indicator is linked with the project’s objective (MANCP, 2015). In a project within the Skåne-Blekinge programme, the project team choose an output indicator that related to their objective. That condition gives a risk that the listed indicators could not measure all issues that want to be addressed on the objective. On the other hand, that can be a tool from the Commission to limit what kind of objective that relevant to the EU 2020 strategy (Interview 14, 2018). On the contrary, in a project within the Simplifying the pathways to jobs and competence programme, the project team designs an output indicator that they think relevant to their project. In that sense, the project team can choose the indicators that linked to their objectives. If an indicator can measure the objective of a project, it is useful for the project team to help them carry out the project (Interview 10, 2018; Interview 11, 2018; Interview 13, 2018).

The fifth characteristic, accepted, means that an indicator is accepted by all actors (MANCP, 2015). In a project within the Skåne-Blekinge programme, when the project team chooses an output indicator, it does not mean that they agree on those indicators. The project team pick those indicators because it is mandatory requirements when they want to apply for the grant under the EU programme (Interview 15, 2018). On the other hand, in a project within the Simplifying the pathways to jobs and competence programme, an output indicator is developed by the project team (Interview 6, 2018) which means they are not only agreed, but they have a sense of belonging on those indicators. That can be a reason why an indicator plays an important role for the project leaders under the Simplifying the pathways to jobs and competence programme.

In general, for the actor who gives grant, projects within the Skåne-Blekinge programme have indicators that are more credible and relevant than projects within the Simplifying the pathways to jobs and competence programme. For external evaluator in both programmes, the indicators are not appropriate because they are not credible, realistic, reliable, and accepted. On the other hand, an indicator is more useful for project’s leader within the Simplifying the pathways to jobs and competence programme compared to an indicator within the Skåne-Blekinge programme. That is because an indicator within the Simplifying the pathways to jobs and competence programme is appropriate, relevant, and accepted.

Table 7. Characteristic of Output Indicator at the Project Level

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The character of a good indicator</th>
<th>Projects within the Skåne-Blekinge programme</th>
<th>Projects within the Simplifying the pathways to jobs and competence programme</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Credible</td>
<td>The indicators are used to measure a specific number of target. There is a standard about what indicator that should be used, but they are still ambiguous since many.</td>
<td>The quality of selected indicators between projects are varied because some project does not really understand what an indicator is, and another project can clearly define a what target that they want to measure.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The character of a good indicator</td>
<td>Projects within the Skåne-Blekinge programme</td>
<td>Projects within the Simplifying the pathways to jobs and competence programme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>People do not understand how to use the output indicator</td>
<td>The quality of projects is varied. Some projects have a target that they measure some of them do not quantify a target</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Measurable</td>
<td>Has quantitative value</td>
<td>Some indicators could not be measured since there is no available data for that</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assignable</td>
<td>Not applicable</td>
<td>Not applicable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Realistic</td>
<td>The resources for the data are clearly stated</td>
<td>Some projects do not have a clear target stated on their indicators. Some projects state a target at for the evaluation but not for the monitoring period</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time-related</td>
<td>There is a time frame for the target, but there is no target during the monitoring period</td>
<td>The quality of projects is varied. Some projects do not have a clear target stated on their indicators. Some projects state a target at for the evaluation but not for the monitoring period</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valid</td>
<td>It only measures the quantity of expected output, not the quality</td>
<td>Some projects try to measure both quantity and quality of expected outputs. However, they need to understand more how to construct a qualitative indicator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reliable</td>
<td>There is an explanation about the list of output indicator, but the understanding is varied</td>
<td>Most of the indicators are project specific; it needs to be examined further if the indicators are wanted to be replicated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appropriate</td>
<td>The selected indicators only partially picture the objective</td>
<td>The list of the indicators specifically measure issue that stated on the project’s objective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Useful</td>
<td>The indicators are not really affecting the implementation of the projects</td>
<td>The indicators are important for the project leader to help them understand the project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relevant</td>
<td>The project leader wrote the objective and chose relevant indicator from the guideline</td>
<td>Relevant since the project leader involved in writing the objective and the indicators</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accepted</td>
<td>The project leader is automatically agreed since it is a straightforward directive from the higher institution</td>
<td>The actors who write and monitor the indicator are the same</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robust</td>
<td>Not applicable</td>
<td>Not applicable</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Interview 7 (2018); Interview 10 (2018); Interview 11 (2018); (Interview 13, 2018); Interview 14 (2018); Interview 15 (2018); Interview 17 (2018); Tillväxtverket (2018f)
6. Conclusions

In the chapter 5, all research questions are discussed. Then, in this section, those research questions are summarized. In general, this research wants to compare the usefulness of an indicator at programme and project levels between the EU programme and the Swedish programme. Additionally, the research investigates the indicators’ characteristics which might influence their functions at programme and project levels. In summary, there are some results that need to be pointed out to answer the research questions as follows:

1. The first research question

   There are some different characteristics between the Skåne-Blekinge programme and the Simplifying pathways to job and competence programme. The first characteristic is the EU programme writer tends to steer the programme implementation while the Swedish programme writer tends to learn about the programme. The Skåne-Blekinge programme uses a guideline which aims more to steer than to learn about the programme implementation. While the Simplifying pathways to job and competence programme used a dialogue, which allowed the actors to learn together to make the programme success.

   The second characteristic is that the Skåne-Blekinge programme has the pre-study and regular project, while the Simplifying pathways to job and competence programme only has the pre-study project. The last characteristic is the programmes use the theory of change as the monitoring and evaluation framework and start to use the results-based management. However, results-based management is not yet performed in both programmes because some indicators are lack of attention which make them not be implemented as they should be.

   From the characteristics of the programmes, the European Commission want to steer the programme implementation using a guideline since they are not directly implemented it. However, the guideline is not helping them to achieve their goal because in the implementation, their indicators which are stated on the guideline is not functional. Taking a lesson from the Swedish government, even having a guideline, European Commission still need to have intensive communication with all actors since dialogue is the Swedish government’s key success when carry out their programmes. Consequently, even a programme that is steering by higher actor, the programme manager still need a dialogue with all actors. In addition, the academic field, the answer proves that communication between all actors in the policy management is important and it should be enhanced in practice.

2. The second research question

   At the programme level, the function of an indicator differs with its function at project level. The results are divided into programme and project levels. At the programme and project levels, many actors have difficulties to understand the function of an indicator including all types of indicator used in both programmes which are the result, output, outcome, and effect indicators. Furthermore, at the programme level, the result, output, outcome, and effect indicators are partially
functioned as should be since those indicators can be understood by actors who designed them, but they are not useful for other actors. On the contrary, at the project level, the output indicators are more useful for the project leaders within *the Simplifying the pathways to jobs and competence programme* than the *Skåne-Blekinge programme*.

In general, at both levels, the indicators are perfectly understood by actors who involved on the designing of them. However, those indicators are hardly understood by other actors. The definition and justification of indicators help people to have an overview of what an indicator is. Such explanation is usually written at the implementation guideline of the programme. However, the explanation is not enough because people have various interpretation when they read the explanation. Consequently, written explanation is not enough and actors who design the indicators need to transfer their knowledge to others. Consequently, in practice, the transfer knowledge from the indicators’ authors to other actors are important to ensure they are understood the indicators. Additionally, on the policy management research, this study might be open a new question about the understanding of the written indicators’ explanations by various actors from different backgrounds.

3. **The third research question**

The indicators the programme level have different characteristics with indicators at project levels. The characteristics might be influence why an indicator is useful or not for the actors. At the programme level, *the Skåne-Blekinge programme*, the result and output indicators are not functioned as should be because their characteristics such as reliable, credible, realistic, and accepted. Moreover, at the programme level, *the Simplifying the pathways to jobs and competence programme*, the outcome and effect indicators are not functioned as should be because their characteristics such as measurable, realistic, reliable, credible, and accepted. On the other hand, at the project level, for the project leaders, the output indicators within *the Simplifying the pathways to jobs and competence programme* are more appropriate, relevant, and accepted rather than the output indicators within *the Skåne-Blekinge programme*.

In general, not all characteristics are important to define the usefulness of indicators. The most important characteristic to make an indicator useful for an actor is acceptance. The acceptance from the actors opens the willingness of the actors to acknowledge and use the indicators. After the actors accept the indicators, they will learn about those indicators from the written guideline and try to understand them. On the contrary, if the actors do not accept the indicators, they will not look at the indicators even a programme has a good indicator guideline. Consequently, in practice, the programme manager need to make sure that all actors accept those indicators. In the academic work, the urgency of indicators’ acceptance is needing to be more explored in the policy management.

In summary, *the Skåne-Blekinge programme* has better programming than *the Simplifying pathways to job and competence programme* since it has an implementation
guideline. Without the interviews, the Skåne-Blekinge programme is better than the Simplifying the pathways to jobs and competence programme since it has better explanation about indicators used within this programme. However, after completing the data with interviews, the result is different. Even though the Skåne-Blekinge programme has the explanation about its indicators, many actors could not fully use those indicators. After looking at the characteristic of those indicators, the acceptance of the actors to the indicators has an influence on the usefulness of them. When an indicator is accepted by an actor, the actor might have a sense of belonging then willing to use that indicator. In addition, the Simplifying the pathways to jobs and competence programme uses a dialogue to help the actors understand the indicators. In that sense, the dialogue helps to increase the acceptance from all actors. Thus, a dialogue is important to make all actors have a sense of belonging to the indicators which further make those indicators useful at programme and project levels.

6.1 Recommendation

Based on the conclusion section, there are some recommendation for all actors. In general, the recommendations aim to increase the indicator’s quality and its acceptance. The recommendations are as follows:

1. Having a workshop to increase the actors' understanding about indicators. 
   Such discussion is important because some people have difficulty understanding the indicators. Actors who use indicators need to understand that indicators are only measurement tools not something that need to be achieved. Thus, a workshop or a training can help all actors understand that indicators are tools to measure the objective's achievements.

2. Creating a good guideline to ensure the quality of indicator.
   The guideline is a good tool to ensure the credibility and measurability of indicators. The common list of indicators is useful to steer the implementation of programme or project. The indicators that are credible and measurable indicator enable generalisation of the results, so a change can be seen. A guideline likes common list indicators, is good for a regular project that already know what result that they want to achieve. Thus, a programme manager should create a common list indicator for a regular project.

3. Having an intense dialogue to increase the sense of belonging to the indicator
   A dialogue is a good tool to enhance communication between the programme manager and project leader. For a pre-study project, a dialogue can be a learning process for the programme manager to understand if something works or does not work. For the project leader, a dialogue also can help them to know what is expected and to learn developing suitable indicator. On the contrary, for a regular project, discussion can be a tool to communicate the common list indicator with the project leader and help them to understand and increase their sense of belonging. Thus, a dialogue is important to be performed to increase the possibility to achieve the objectives.
In summary, those three recommendations aim to increase the understanding of an indicator for all actors through dialogue. That understanding is crucial in the results-based management since indicators play an important role. Such understanding also helps the project leaders to understand their projects, which further can increase the possibility on achieving a good result. Hence, the three recommendations of this study are (1) having a workshop to learn about an indicator, (2) creating a common list of indicators for a programme or a regular project, and (3) increasing the dialogue between the programme manager and project leader during the implementation.

### 6.2 The Implication, and Limitation of this Study including the Future Research

This subsection tries to recap the implication and limitation of this study along with some possible further research.

a. **Implication of this Study**

This study tries to fill the gap between theory and practice of monitoring and evaluation. This study can show the use of an indicator at the programme and project levels in Swedish context. From the result of this study, it can be learned that the acceptance of indicators by all actors is important. Both the EU and Swedish programmes should be accepted by actors who have a stake in those programmes, so they can also accept the indicators. Then, works together to achieve the programme’s goal. However, this study proves that actors who are not designing the indicators are not interested in using the indicators. Whereas, understanding the indicators are important to know which indicator and activity contribute to achieve the goal. That knowledge is important for the policy maker to decide what kind of activities they can finance since the government agencies need to ensure all money spent contributes to achieving the goal.

b. **Limitation of this Study**

In general, this study indicates that the results-based management is partially implemented in both programmes. However, that argument need to be examined in the further research since this research only assess it based on the indicator’s role. The involvement of different aspect might give different results. In addition, this research only focuses on exploring the function and characteristics of indicators based on two programmes and eight projects, which makes the information limited to those case studies.

c. **Future Research**

Based on some drawback and potency of this study, some further studies can be performed. The further study that can be conducted is applying the same method to more programmes and projects. The next study that can be conducted is examining the indicator’s characteristics more complete than this study to explore some characteristics of a good indicator at the programme and project levels such as assignable and robust. Another study that can be carried out is to enhance the understanding about the indicators by testing the understanding of some indicators guideline from different actors from different backgrounds to find out whether a written guideline is enough or not.
References


Tillväxtverket. (2018h). Slutrapport - VRHR START - Virtuell HR för småföretagare i modebranschen START.


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Appendices

**Appendix 1. Indicators of the Small-Medium Enterprises Axis in the Skåne-Blekinge Programme**

In this programme, the theory of change is employed as theoretical knowledge for the evaluation framework. Tillväxtverket also employs the performance framework, result indicator, and output indicator to monitor and evaluate this programme. In detail, the performance framework focuses to see the working process and management towards the goal (Interview 12, 2018). Supporting the explanation, Interview 20 (2018) says that indicators in this framework are chosen from the list of output indicator (see table 8).

### Table 8. Performance framework of The Small Medium-sized Enterprise Axis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ID</th>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Measurement Unit</th>
<th>Data Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CO01</td>
<td>Number of enterprises receiving support</td>
<td>Enterprises</td>
<td>Project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>020</td>
<td>Expenditure</td>
<td>EUR</td>
<td>Managing authority</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Tillväxtverket (2014, p. 70)

About the result indicator, Interview 20 (2018) says an result indicator measures the achievement of specific objective and an output indicator measure direct effects of investment priority. Specifically, the list of selected result indicators can be seen on table 9 (European Commission, 2014). Those result indicators are measured at the aggregated level which means the assessment looks at combination several projects not only one project (Interview 8, 2018).

### Table 9. Result Indicators of The Small Medium-sized Enterprise Axis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Specific Objective</th>
<th>ID</th>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Measurement Unit</th>
<th>Data Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strengthened entrepreneurship and enterprise</td>
<td>0306</td>
<td>SMEs with 0-249 employees per 1000 inhabitants, average population (16-64 years)</td>
<td>SMEs</td>
<td>Central Bureau of Statistics, Business economics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More new businesses with growth potential</td>
<td>0305</td>
<td>Companies with at least 10% annual growth rates (turnover) over three years, the company must have at least three employees at the start of the measurement period</td>
<td>Number</td>
<td>Central Bureau of Statistics, Business economics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enhanced growth in existing small and medium-sized enterprises</td>
<td>1300</td>
<td>Value-added of SMEs</td>
<td>Valued added, MSEK</td>
<td>Central Bureau of Statistics, Business economics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1301</td>
<td>Employment in SMEs</td>
<td>Number of full-time employees</td>
<td>Central Bureau of Statistics, Business economics</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Different with result indicator, an output indicator describes the physical product of policy intervention. As mentioned before, the program writer can choose the output indicator from a common list of output indicators which also stated on the Monitoring and Evaluation Guidance. Those lists are defined by the Union and can be used if relevant to the operational programmes, permitting aggregation for EU and national level (European Commission, 2014). In this priority axis, the selected output indicators are chosen from the productive investment category (see detail output indicator on table 10).

Table 10. Output Indicators of The Small Medium-sized Enterprise Axis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Investment priority / Specific objective</th>
<th>ID</th>
<th>Indicators</th>
<th>Measurement Unit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Promoting entrepreneurship, in particular by facilitating the economic exploitation of new ideas and fostering the creation of new firms, including through business incubators</td>
<td>CO01</td>
<td>Number of enterprises receiving support</td>
<td>Enterprises</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CO03</td>
<td>Number of enterprises receiving financial support other than grants</td>
<td>Enterprises</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CO04</td>
<td>Number of enterprises receiving nonfinancial support</td>
<td>Enterprises</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CO07</td>
<td>Private investment matching public support to enterprises (non-grants)</td>
<td>EUR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CO08</td>
<td>Employment increase in supported enterprises</td>
<td>Full-time equivalents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Supporting the capacity of SMEs to grow in regional, national and international markets, and to engage in innovation processes</td>
<td>CO01</td>
<td>Number of enterprises receiving support</td>
<td>Enterprises</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CO04</td>
<td>Number of enterprises receiving nonfinancial support</td>
<td>Enterprises</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CO08</td>
<td>Employment increase in supported enterprises</td>
<td>Full-time equivalents</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Tillväxtverket (2014, pp. 61-62, 69)

Appendix 2. Monitoring and Evaluation Result of the Skåne-Blekinge Programme

The monitoring report of this programme has been sent to the Commission each year. Those reports are written by straightforwardly following the Commission's rules. The
rules that written by the Commission are very strict and dictates what kind of intervention logic that should be used to monitor the program (Interview 12, 2018).

In the monitoring assessment, Tillväxtverket looks at performance framework, result indicator, and output indicator. For the performance framework, the Commission want to see how many activities and how much money spent on this programme (Interview 12, 2018). In 2018, when the research is carried out, the SMEs axis is used about 60% of the budget for 19 projects (Interview 8, 2018; Tillväxtverket, 2018e). In addition, Interview 8 (2018) mentions that SMEs has a better outcome compared to other priority axes. However, for the result indicator, it can be measured but it cannot be explained how much the influence of this programme on that since the specific objective can be affected by other conditions (Interview 20, 2018).

In the Swedish context, the evaluation is performed in the thematic level after learning from the past evaluating period which was performed at the programme level. There are three phases evaluation which at the thesis is written, the second phase of evaluation has been performed and the final evaluation is not yet executed (Interview 21, 2018). Even though evaluation has been carried out in the thematic level, it still makes points about what happen in the Skåne-Blekinge programme (Interview 12, 2018). The first evaluation about SMEs was performed in 2016 but the report was published in 2017 (Interview 21, 2018).

In the first evaluation, it was more focusing on the theory behind the project (Interview 19, 2018) to see whether a project has a good application or not (Interview 21, 2018). In general, the evaluation assesses programme management and progress of all projects to achieve the goal. The Skåne-Blekinge programme and projects within SMEs priority axis are well designed and aim to achieve the goals. To achieve those objectives, they use indicators to measure their achievement. However, the selected indicators were not the guiding principle when evaluate the projects (Tillväxtverket, 2017e).

In the second evaluation, it was more focusing on the process to see what happened in the project implementations. In this evaluation, Sweco has a partnership with Handelskolan to work with the quantitative indicators and they also used a qualitative method as main evaluation framework. However, in this evaluation, the result and output indicators are not so useful like in the first evaluation phase. Anyhow, those indicators might be more useful on the last evaluation (Interview 19, 2018).

**Appendix 3. Examples of EU Projects within Skåne-Blekinge Programme**

Within the SMEs priority axis, there is about 226 MSEK of ERDF budget for 2014-2020 (Tillväxtverket, 2014). The beneficiaries who want to apply for a project grant need to have 50% co-financing from other funding. The co-financing can be obtained from the municipality, region, or national authorities (Interview 8, 2018). Therefore, considering all budgets, Sweden invests around 450 MSEK for SMEs priority in Skåne-Blekinge. When applying for a grant, the project team need to submit (1) co-financing certificate from all co-financers, (2) procurement plan for projects, (3) risk analysis, and (4)
supporting document for strengthens the signatory if she/he is not the person authorized to sign such as delegation letter (Tillväxtverket, 2018a).

After submitting the documents, the applicant need to wait around 4-5 months depending on the circumstances (Interview 8, 2018). In detail, she explains the overview of the application process as follows:

1. The applicant sends an application,
2. Tillväxtverket evaluates and grades the application based on the criteria,
3. Tillväxtverket sends the application to the Region Skåne-Blekinge that later also grades the application,
4. After the grading from Tillväxtverket and Region Skåne-Blekinge, the application is sent to Regional Committee which based on the given grades chooses a project that gets the grant,
5. Tillväxtverket sends approval or disapproval to an applicant based on the Regional Committee’s decision.

Related to the second point, Tillväxtverket and Region Skåne-Blekinge assess an application based on the selection criteria published on the handbook and website (Interview 8, 2018). From those lists, the mandatory criteria are coordination with other strategies and programs, survival and long-term perspective, business involvement, renewal and development as well as horizontal criteria for sustainable development. Beside those list, there are more criteria which were written by the Programme Committee (Tillväxtverket, 2017h).

When applying for a grant, the project team need to write output indicators that corresponds with the project’s objective from the given list of output indicators stated on the programme handbook (Interview 14, 2018). The programme handbook mentions 37 output indicators completed with the definition of each indicator, measurement method, and how to report it to Tillväxtverket. Even the indicators are not the absolute result measurement, it can give a guideline about what is expected from the beneficiary (Tillväxtverket, 2018f).

At the time of this data collection, April 2018, there are 19 projects which get funding under the SMEs Axis in Skåne-Blekinge (Tillväxtverket, 2018e). The biggest investment is for Sydsvensk Entreprenörfond AB with a grant amount is 100 MSEK (Tillväxtverket, 2018e). In this project, they get 100 MSEK from EU funds and another 100 MSEK from co-finance (Interview 8, 2018). On the contrary, the lowest investment is for Hässleholms Kommun with total investment SEK 243 000 (Tillväxtverket, 2018e). However, after discussion with the programme manager, this study chooses four projects which are business Ronneby, Southern Sweden going global, sustainable competition Skåne, and future technology training.
A. Business Ronneby

This project was implemented in Region Blekinge with EU funds about SEK 842 196 from 1 May 2015 to 30 April 2017 (Tillväxtverket, 2018e). Considering both the EU funds and co-financing, it had a total budget around 1,69 MSEK. The project had a steering board from the municipality, business office, university, Region Blekinge, project manager, and economical administration (Interview 14, 2018).

This project aimed to establish a positive environment where business could grow and attracting people to come and bring ideas. In practice, the project was not only creating a physical environment but also activities. An activity was important to attract people and make a vibrant environment. The example of an activity within this project was a lecture that was open to everyone so all stakeholders can meet (Interview 14, 2018).

According to Tillväxtverket (2015a), the objectives of this project are:

1. Strengthen coordination between business support activities in Ronneby;
2. Strengthen the presence of a sustainable business in Ronneby;
3. Simplify business development and business establishment in Ronneby;
4. Test and evaluate common methods for business support activities.

Moreover, Tillväxtverket (2015a) also mention the output indicators of this project which are:

1. Number of new companies 6
2. Number of jobs 16
3. Number of participating unique companies 19
4. Number of participating other unique organisations 30

The project team selected output indicators that relevant with objectives and decided the target number that could be achieved for each output indicator. Every six months, the project team described the achievement of the indicator on the monitoring report to Tillväxtverket. However, there were many things that could not be written on the report since those issues were not relevant because of the strict protocol (Interview 14, 2018).

Ideally, an indicator should help the team to implement a project, but it depends on the indicator because sometimes it is not applicable for the project goal. In some cases, the goal is too broad, and the selected indicators partially show the project’s successfulness. In this project, the selected indicators only illustrated a fraction of the result, but the added value was not captured (Interview 14, 2018).

B. Southern Sweden Going Global

This project has been implemented in Region Skåne, Lund and Malmö, with EU funds of about SEK 9 130 319 (Interview 15, 2018) from 1 September 2015 to 31 December 2018 (Tillväxtverket, 2018e). Considering the EU funds and co-financing, the project
which is run by Investing Skåne has a total budget around 18,26 MSEK. This project support life-science based small companies which most of them are a start-up, spin-offs from the university with only 1-5 employees (Interview 15, 2018).

In this project, there are two main agendas which are supporting the companies to attend an international conference or a trade fair and providing activities for increasing the competence. Technically, a company may ask to go for certain international activity or they can go with a delegation which consist of 5-10 companies. Besides that, the activities to increase the competence are seminar or workshop on a topic that useful for the internationalisation likes how to attract international client and how to get international agreement (Interview 15, 2018).

Further, Tillväxtverket (2015d) mentions the objectives of this project which are:

1. All participating companies should be included in cooperation with an international player;
2. The project partners will involve creating a platform (both tools and processes) for internationalisation that can be used by life science companies even after the end of the project.

Moreover, Tillväxtverket (2015d) also mentions output indicators for this project which are:

1. Employment increased in the companies that get support
2. Number of companies getting support
3. Number of companies getting support other than financial support

In this project, the indicators do not help the implementation of the project, for example number of companies. Even the project does not use that indicator, the team still works with companies, so it does not really a guideline. Unfortunately, this project does not have a qualitative indicator which might be useful to more understand the project conditions such as environment, gender equality, and diversity (Interview 15, 2018).

For the evaluation process, this project employs external evaluator to evaluate it from the beginning. However, the external evaluator does not involve on the project and will report the evaluation result for Tillväxtverket when the project is over. When evaluating this project, the external evaluator relies on an evaluation guideline which can be found on the website. The selected indicators above are part of the measurement. However, except those output indicators, the external evaluator also employs qualitative indicators (Interview 16, 2018).

C. Sustainable Competition Skåne

This project has been implemented in Region Skåne with EU funds about SEK 2 894 467 and run by IUC Syd from 03 August 2015 to 30 November 2018 (Tillväxtverket, 2018e). Moreover, this project aims to help companies getting sustainable production by using
lean philosophy. Those target companies are SMEs working with industry such as wooden production, packing machine, or printing label companies (Interview 17, 2018).

In general, this project provides two services which are companies education and consultancy support. The educations are performed with a training about lean philosophy basic. There is one training every six month which invites six companies with two people from each company. The second activity is consultation that consist of two types which are 24 and 40 hours of couching support. The company can choose which consultancy support that suitable for them (Interview 17, 2018).

According to Tillväxtverket (2015c), the objective of this project is that the 55 companies received grant shoud have established or improve their competitiveness through:

1. Basic order and finding using 5S and other methods
2. Better knowledge about how they create value for the customer and how they can eliminate tasks that not related with creating customer value
3. Implemented a number of specific measures that suitable for their needs based on Lean Production toolbox
4. More motivated and committed staff through stronger involvement in developing business towards long-term goals.

Moreover, Tillväxtverket (2015c) mentions the output indicators for this project are:

1. The employment increasing in the companies receiving support
2. Number of enterprises receiving support other than financial support
3. Number of companies receiving support

At the beginning of the project the indicators were not a guideline for the team. On the other hand, the team leader has considered the effort to reach the goal which to invite as many companies as possible. Even though the selected indicators are not a guiding, the project team mentions that an indicator is important. Indicators that are interesting are indicators related to the companies receiving support, for instance an indicator that measures the productivity and profit of the companies (Interview 17, 2018).

D. Future Technology Training

This project has been implemented in Skåne with EU funds about SEK 6 028 514 by Hässleholms Kommun from 1 September 2015 to 31 December 2018. This project aims to link jobseeker with the need of technology skills from companies. Further, the target groups for this project are schools, regional and local business (Tillväxtverket, 2018e). In this project, the team helps companies to get in touch with schools to inform the youth about their activities. This activity is important to increase students’ interest to study skills and knowledges which relates to the companies’ needs about technology skills (Interview 18, 2018).

According to Tillväxtverket (2015b), the objectives of this project are:
1. Increased gender equality in technology education and technology companies
2. Competence raising of teachers and students in labor market knowledge in the technology industry
3. Increased activity in schools from technology companies with demanded skills
4. Increased number of individuals in the 15-64 age group seeking technical education
5. Quality assurance programs in accordance with the needs of the technology companies

Moreover, Tillväxtverket (2015b) mentions the output indicators as follows:

1. Employment increase in companies receiving support
2. Number of companies receiving support other than financial support
3. Number of companies receiving support

Unfortunately, the project leader of this project could not be contacted for an interview. The additional information about this project was obtained from the external evaluator. From the listed indicators above, the external evaluator do not really understand the intention of the ERDF using that selected indicators. On the other hand, the external evaluator uses a lot of qualitative indicators on the evaluation. In addition, the external evaluator explains that it is important to combine quantitative and qualitative indicators (Interview 18, 2018).

Appendix 4. Indicators of the Simplifying the pathways to jobs and competence programme

The monitoring and evaluation are important to create exchange experience which can be an advantage for future decision making (Tillväxtverket, 2017g). In this programme, the theory of change was also employed as the theoretical background. Further, this programme also used indicators which were selected from commonly used indicators on the previous programmes which match with the programme’s goal. Those indicators were selected based on their abilities to aid the programme team when deciding and giving funds for right projects (Interview 6, 2018).

Specifically, this programme used performance framework, outcome indicator, and effect indicator. Regarding the performance framework, it was used to control the management of the programme. It described what should be achieved during the programme implementation. Each objective in this framework had an indicator to measure its achievement (Tillväxtverket, 2017g). Detail of performance framework can be seen on table 11.
Table 11. Performance framework of Simplifying the pathways to jobs and competence programme

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objectives</th>
<th>Indicators</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>40 projects Granted</td>
<td>40 projects completed</td>
<td>Final Report submitted</td>
<td>Progress and final reports</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New methods/models developed</td>
<td>40 methods/models have been developed</td>
<td>The method described and documented</td>
<td>Progress and final reports</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methods/Models tested</td>
<td>25 methods/models have been tested</td>
<td>Companies and persons have participated</td>
<td>Progress and final reports</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Experience hits completed</td>
<td>95% of projects participated</td>
<td></td>
<td>Competitors</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Tillväxtverket (2017g, p. 7)

Further, each outcome objective had an outcome indicator that measure achievement of the result (see table 12). An outcome objective assessed a change that happen on the target groups after programme implementation. However, the programme only influenced the condition to achieve the outcome but did not define it. It needs to be noted that the last objective was a mandatory objective referring to regulatory letter (Tillväxtverket, 2017g).

Table 12. Outcome Indicators of the Simplifying the pathways to jobs and competence programme

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objectives</th>
<th>Indicators</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Relevant methods/models have been developed</td>
<td>Methods/models tested and showing results</td>
<td>New jobs are created. New arrivals have been given a job.</td>
<td>Final reports. Procured Evaluation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methods/models that have been developed can be disseminated</td>
<td>Generalizability works with legislation and regulations etc.</td>
<td>Interest from other Actors, authorities or both</td>
<td>Final reports. Procured Evaluation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80 percent of the companies, organisations and authorities that grow and have benefited from the programme/operation in their</td>
<td>Percentage of companies, organisations and authorities who get benefit from the programme/operation</td>
<td></td>
<td>Measurement via questionnaire/telephone. The following question should be used: 1. I believe that our business has benefited from XXXX... Fully agree Agree very much</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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<tr>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Another measurement is effect indicator that measure an effect objective. An effect objective is a direct or indirect effect which can be measured in the short and long-term (Tillväxtverket, 2017g). In the short-term, the impact can be seen during the programme implementation. On the other hand, the long-term impact only can be measured few years after a programme was finished. It needs to be noted that the last objective was a mandatory objective referring to regulatory letter (Tillväxtverket, 2017g). The short and long-term output indicators can be seen on the table 13.

Table 13. Effect Indicators of Simplifying the pathways to jobs and competence Programme

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objectives</th>
<th>Indicators</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>respective activities.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Agree to some extent</td>
<td>Do not agree</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Tillväxtverket (2017g, pp. 7-8)
### Objectives

| Companies participating in programmes run by Tillväxtverket, two years after the end of the program, be more successful regarding growth, such as increased turnover, increased employment or where it is relevant increased commercialisation than a group of comparable companies that did not participate in the programs. | Percentage of companies participating in the programme that are more successful in growth terms than a group of comparable companies. | Measured two years after the programme is completed. Turnover plus Employment | Ordering data from SCB |

Source: Tillväxtverket (2017g, pp. 8-9)

The performance framework was important to monitor the budget on this programme. Besides that, the outcome and effect indicators were helpful especially during programming and implementation periods. However, in the monitoring phase, it was hard to define which outcome and effect indicators that can be followed up (Interview 6, 2018). That problem was also faced on the evaluation which was carried out by external evaluator. When evaluate this programme, the outcome and effect indicators were not the main evaluation tools. The external evaluator used their defined qualitative approach to assess this programme.

### Appendix 5. Monitoring and Evaluation Results of the Simplifying the pathways to jobs and competence programme

The monitoring was carried out by Tillväxtverket by performing interview and meeting, collecting monitoring report, and visiting the project (Interview 6, 2018; Tillväxtverket, 2018c). Not only monitor the projects, Tillväxtverket also provided dialogue and other supports during the programme implementation. In the monitoring process, the interview and meeting with project owners and key actors were substantial to discuss and identify challenges then find its solution (Interview 6, 2018).

In addition, the external evaluation carried out by Kontigo AB from September to December 2017 when the projects were still ongoing (Interview 6, 2018). Kontigo did not only evaluate the programme management but also the programme’s result. The evaluation used the theory of change method to understand the effect of this programme. At the beginning, a questionnaire was used to find out challenges and opportunities. After that, they used phone interview with all project leaders. The final method were field observation and in-depth interview to deepen the analysis (Interview 9, 2018).
At the end, this programme had some good pilot projects and some project that only find a method or model (Interview 6, 2018). Nevertheless, this programme was claimed as a good practice by the Swedish government and will be continued for the next three years with budget around 170 MSEK (Interview 1, 2018). Besides that, there are some points that noteworthy the result as follows:

1. The method or model for the Simplifying the pathways to jobs and competence programme (See figure 3) (Tillväxtverket, 2018c).
2. The companies do not take part in all stages of this model rather each project only fills certain stages of the model (Interview 9, 2018).
3. The short period of this programme gave a negative impact for programme and projects because they only have little time for implementation (Interview 6, 2018).
4. The un bureaucratic process of this programme helped the project leaders on the implementation (Interview 9, 2018; Tillväxtverket, 2018c)

Figure 3. The Simplifying the pathways to jobs and competence Model
Source: Adopted from Tillväxtverket (2018c)

Appendix 6. Examples of Swedish national projects within the Simplifying the pathways to jobs and competence programme

The programme was implemented in 2017. After accepting the regulatory letter in December 2016, Tillväxtverket discussed how to carry out the programme. The Ministry wanted to see an innovative solution (Interview 1, 2018) and the method or model was the main agenda in this programme. In the programming period, Tillväxtverket had initial dialogue with industry representatives regarding the proposal call within this programme (Tillväxtverket, 2018c).

The programme applications opened in early February 2017 and closed in mid-April 2017 (Interview 6, 2018). The call divided into two stages which are expression of interest and declaration of interest. At first stage, expression of interest, there were about 300 applications. However, some projects were advised not to continue the application because their expression of interests was somewhat unclear. At the second stage, there were about 200 applicants that submitted the declaration of interest (Tillväxtverket, 2018c). In the end, 41 selected projects got the grants (Tillväxtverket,
The first project implemented in April and the last project implemented in June (Interview 6, 2018).

According to Tillväxtverket (2018c, p. 18), the projects were selected based on some criteria which are:

a. The project owner must have experience working with new arrivals, people who are not working for a long time, or both.
b. The project shall be designed and implemented in close cooperation with Tillväxtverket, the local authorities or both and the business community.
c. The project owner shall consult with the regional authority to find out regional needs and conditions.
d. The project owner must describe the proposed model/method on the application.
e. The project owner should describe how the project will work to ensure equality and equal treatment in the application.
f. The model/method should have the potential to be scaled up, spread, or both but the project can be of a pilot nature.
g. Project owners will collaborate with Tillväxtverket’s procured evaluators, participate in the exchange of experience and provide authored the final report.
h. The project owner shall finance at least 20% of the costs of implementation with companies’ budget or partner funds.

However, in practice, it was hard to use those criteria for the assessment. When decided to choose the project, Tillväxtverket relied on two values which were the documented responsible contact to ensure the participant involvement and geographical distribution of the selected projects (Tillväxtverket, 2018c).

In general, the granted projects can be divided into three categories which are industries and employment; processors; and intermediaries. First, Industries and employment are the project owner who want to secure supply skills for their companies (Tillväxtverket, 2018c). Supporting that fact, Interview 6 (2018) also mentions that these companies needs support to make a welcoming workplace for the new employees. Second, the processors are the actors who focus on developing individual skill, so they can get job faster. The last type, intermediaries are actors who work to develop and match the individuals and jobs (Tillväxtverket, 2018c). After discussing with the programme manager, this research chooses stable alternative career paths, VRHR START, Livejobb, and Jobbsprånget projects for further investigation.

A. **Stable Alternative Career Paths**

This project was implemented in Stockholm City with a budget around SEK 930,000 (Tillväxtverket, 2018b). This project aimed to create more inclusive working life by creating alternative ways to working life for people with disability (Tillväxtverket, 2017c). The background of this project was to give understanding for the companies
that people with a disability can contribute to their working environment (Interview 7, 2018). Technically, this project prepared people with disability of physical, mental or intellectual to work and the companies ready to facilitate them when adapting to the working life (Tillväxtverket, 2017c). The objectives and indicators of this project can be seen at table 14.

Table 14. Objectives and Indicators of Stable Alternative Career Paths

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objectives</th>
<th>Indicators</th>
<th>Expected Outcomes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>More people with disabilities should find, get and maintain a job.</td>
<td>Number of persons in internship and work</td>
<td>20 people are offered internships within the framework of the project, and 10 of them receive project completion employment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create a partnership with business and thus get into working life for the target audience.</td>
<td>A number of companies wishing to become partners with the city.</td>
<td>Expected outcome: 6-10 companies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prevent negative attitudes and prejudices against people with disabilities.</td>
<td>Number of internship/employment and number of partnership companies (same as both previous indicators)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Tillväxtverket (2017c)

The indicators stated in this project were selected by the project owner team and helped them to implement the project because the objectives gave the team a motivation (Interview 7, 2018). At the end of the project, only the second objective, partnership with business, was achieved and the others were not (Tillväxtverket, 2018g). The failure of achieving the expected outcomes because of the limited time to adopt the project. When the project was evaluated, the project just started, so the result could not show the best performance. However, even the project was completed, the result from this investment is still occurring and give benefit for the project owner (Interview 7, 2018).

B. VRHR START - Virtual HR department for Small Businesses in the Fashion Industry

This project was implemented in Stockholm County with a budget around 928,000 SEK (Tillväxtverket, 2018b). This project aimed to help the small industries within fashion industry increasing their ability to recruit new employees. The background of this project was the need of a company to grow by hiring people with right skill (Interview 10, 2018) since hiring a wrong person has a high cost and can be fatal for a small company (Tillväxtverket, 2017d). Thus, this project built a virtual HR department that can help the small business in the fashion industry recruit new employees.

According to Tillväxtverket (2017d), objectives of the projects are:
a. Project VRHR START will take the first step in developing a virtual HR department for small business owners within fashion industry using existing digital solutions. The project creates a basis for concepts in consultation with a reference group of key actors.

b. Testing the concept along with three fashion small businesses that want to grow

c. Implement campaign VR HR department targeted at 100 small business owners in the fashion industry in Stockholm region

d. Reporting to Tillväxtverket

Tillväxtverket (2017d) also mentions some indicators for this project which are:

a. The concept is evaluated based on the experiences of small-scale test companies. Small business owners felt that they were better off to recruit?

b. Response from the 100 contacted small business owners during and after the campaign VRHR START.

c. How many of the contacted small business owners used VRHR START without coaching?

d. How were their experiences?

e. How many of the contacted small business owners would be coached to use VRHR START?

f. How were their experiences?

In this project, the indicators were developed by the project team. In practice, the designed indicators helped the project team to be more focus during the implementation, to understand more the project and how to develop the service (Interview 10, 2018). At the end of the project period, the VRHR START was finished and could be used to fulfil the needs of the small business owner when recruiting people. The final report of this project mentions about project achievement to test a concept, contact small business, and number of used service (Tillväxtverket, 2018h).

However, introducing the new services is hard. The issues arising when implementing the project was how the project team should develop the service? As a software company, the project team has different project management with the other companies. Software business has shorter implementation period, six weeks, compared to development management that usually has 12 months of implementation period. In practice, the shorter time frame is more suitable for a software company because when have a shorter horizon, the project continuously produces a result. Consequently, an indicator should be dynamic which allows which allows the project team to adopt the horizon difference (Interview 10, 2018).

C. Livejobb

This project was implemented in Södertälje Municipality with a budget of SEK 1 996 185 (Tillväxtverket, 2018b). This project aimed to aid the job recruiting process by enhancing the interview process with the availability of the interpreter through phone
or video call (Tillväxtverket, 2017f). Basically, this project wanted to bridge the language barrier between employee and job seekers. Technically, the application is the digital tools for this interview method which can be installed on the phone or computer supported with internet access (Interview 11, 2018).

According to Tillväxtverket (2017b), the objectives of this project are:

1. In the short term, the increase of competitiveness from the participant companies through more efficient recruitment;
2. Addition of simple jobs in the local market as well as increasing of proportion new arrivals and long-term unemployed in simple jobs;
3. The regional actors learn from the experience of recruitment model in the pilot project for a simple job and take advantages of the project result.

Moreover, the expected outcomes according to Tillväxtverket (2017b) are:

1. The local business network has joined Live job as active users and interviewing people with that application;
2. The positive response from the companies and applicant about the live video and direct matching as the complement of text-based application;
3. At least 50 people from the target group work under the pilot;
4. Showed that soft skills could be judged during a live video interview.

Tillväxtverket (2017b) mentions indicators for this project are:

1. Cost per recruitment of simple jobs should decrease;
2. How long is a recruiter active in Live Jobs per service;
3. How many times do the project team use to spread information about Live Jobs;
4. Number of active business users per day;
5. Positive responses to market research on live video;
6. Follow up the number of jobs added;
7. Interview with companies if they get reliable skills through live video.

At the end of this project, it got a positive response from all stakeholders, especially enthusiasm from the job seekers (Interview 11, 2018). The application was successfully produced and used to recruit people. That fact was supported by evidence of agreement between Livejobb and 119 companies in the municipality and 1 341 interests from the job seekers (Tillväxtverket, 2017f). The interest fact that collected from this project was the figure of language barrier issue because around 25% of the job seekers who participated could not speak Swedish and English (Interview 11, 2018).

In this project, the assumption when designed the indicators was measurable, but there were some unpredictable conditions which made the indicators unmeasurable. The indicators are important in the project because it influences the project implementation. Consequently, the indicator needs to be flexible but not too flexible.
since it has double edges sword that can motivate or demotivate the project team. It can motivate towards the achievement of the goal or demotivated when the project team realized that there are some indicators that unmeasurable (Interview 11, 2018).

**D. Jobbsprånget**

This project implemented in the whole country with a budget around SEK 2,006,400 (Tillväxtverket, 2018b). This project provided an internship programme for newcomer academics who have a degree in engineering, architecture, science, and business/finance in their home countries. The target groups were people who come to Sweden as an asylum seeker or move with their partner who employed by Swedish companies. The applicant must be registered at the Årberformedlingen because this project was performed in cooperation with them (Interview 13, 2018). The objectives and indicators for this project are explained in Table 15.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Output Objectives</th>
<th>Result Objectives</th>
<th>Indicators</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mainstreaming and increasing opportunities for employers and new arrivals to match the skill needed for an internship</td>
<td>Close cooperation with three municipalities and develop a method for employers and relevant authorities to meet through an internship</td>
<td>The number of interns differs through this effort in comparison with the overall process of this creation internship project. The number of successful contact area with the relevant municipalities and its stakeholders. The number of municipalities that are interested in participating.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facilitate employers to find local skills within the target group by offering internship</td>
<td>Identify the existing applicants who match with this project's target group from the Job Spread’s existing portal. Then the employers in the region can be processed in a more methodical way to find available skill in the region</td>
<td>Identify three regions with candidates in the target group who have not obtained an internship.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scale up the method at the national level</td>
<td>A written document of the method that can be presented</td>
<td>A written document of the method.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create more efficient management and information flow for the signing internship agreements as well as clarity about the applicant opportunities</td>
<td>Faster handling of internship agreement according to the employers' needs.</td>
<td>Number of information exchanges with the Swedish Employment Service and follow up about how many applicants start a job after internships.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Tillväxtverket (2017a, p. 3)
At the end of this project, there were about 150 companies or organisations that participate which were comprised both private and public sectors (Interview 13, 2018). This project that was funded by Tillväxtverket is a part of the Jobbsprånget’s goal for 2020 (Tillväxtverket, 2017a). The Jobbsprånget was originally founded in January 2016, a year before the Simplifying the pathways to jobs and competence programme was introduced. The Jobbsprånget used the knowledge from the previous project, Tekniksprånget which implemented in 2012. Based on that knowledge, the team choose the indicators and used previous data collection method which made this project easier to be implemented. Related with the function of an indicator, the project leader says that it is important because it helps the project team to understand their position during the implementation and develop the program forward (Interview 13, 2018).