

Frequently Encountered Question

Lead Appraisers have encountered some confusion regarding two of the data items reported on the SEI Published Appraisal Results page (<http://sas.sei.cmu.edu/pars/pars.aspx>). The confusion relates to the relative value of population sample and project sample sizes.

Excerpt from MDD Activity 1.1.3, Parameters & Limits

Organizational unit size (i.e., number of people and number of projects) and sizes of projects and support groups (i.e., number of people) in the organizational scope must be documented as well as the percentage ratio of these two measures:

- Population %: the number of people in the organizational scope divided by the number of people in the organizational unit (x100)
- Project %: the number of projects in the organizational scope divided by the number of projects in the organizational unit (x100)

Potential Confusion Calculating “Population %”

The measure uses “number of people in the organizational scope” which is not the same as the number of interview participants. It is expected that the numerator used to compute the ratio includes a count of all people working within the projects and functional groups included in the organizational scope of the appraisal. This total is divided by the count of all people working in the Organizational Unit.

Potential Confusion Calculating “Project %”

The percentage reported does not account for the sampling of functional groups, only for projects. Some organizations define functional groups that are not embedded within the projects. Examples of such groups include, but are not limited to:

- Quality Assurance
- Configuration Management
- Measurement Support
- Engineering Process Group
- Supplier Management

The expectation is that functional groups such as these are excluded from the computation of the *Project %* measure.

Potentially Confusing Patterns of “Population %” and “Project %”

If one or more functional groups are not included in the organizational scope of the appraisal, though they are included in the Organizational Unit, there may be some question about the relative values of *Population %* and *Project %*. Because the count of projects is not affected by the count of functional groups, it is possible to change

the *Population %* measure without affecting the *Project %* measure – i.e., including or excluding one or more functional groups leads to a larger or smaller *Population %* without changing the *Project %*.

If individuals in the organizational scope of the appraisal are assigned to more than one project, there may be some unexpected patterns in these two measures. If enough individuals are assigned to enough projects, it may be possible to have a *Project %* that is less than 100% with a *Population %* that is equal to 100% - this would mean that it is possible to include all individuals within the Organizational Unit without including all projects.