

EVALUATION ROADMAP			
TITLE OF THE EVALUATION/FC	Mid-term evaluation of the "EU programme for employment and social innovation – EaSI" REGULATION (EU) No 1296/2013 OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL of 11 December 2013		
LEAD DG – RESPONSIBLE UNIT	EMPL F3	DATE OF THIS ROADMAP	11 / 2015
TYPE OF EVALUATION	Interim evaluation	PLANNED START DATE	01 / 2016
		PLANNED COMPLETION DATE	06 / 2017
		PLANNING CALENDAR	http://ec.europa.eu/smart-regulation/evaluation/index_en.htm
This indicative roadmap is provided for information purposes only and is subject to change.			

A. Purpose
(A.1) Purpose
<p>The purpose of the European Union Programme for Employment and Social Innovation (EaSI) mid-term evaluation is to ‘measure, on a qualitative and quantitative basis, progress made in meeting the Programme's objectives, to address the social environment within the Union and any major changes introduced by Union legislation, to determine whether the resources of the Programme have been used efficiently and to assess its Union added value.’ (Art. 13(1) of the EaSI Regulation No. 1296/2013 of 11 December 2013)¹.</p> <p>The evaluation will be carried out in compliance with the Better Regulation Guidelines, ensuring that the five obligatory evaluation criteria of efficiency, effectiveness, coherence, relevance and EU added value are adequately covered on top of the EaSI Regulation evaluation requirements.</p> <p>If the evaluation reveals major shortcomings and if appropriate, a proposal for amendments reflecting the results of the evaluation will be submitted to the European Parliament and the Council in compliance with Art. 13 (2) of the EaSI Regulation.</p>
(A.2) Justification
In accordance with Art. 13(1) of the EaSI Regulation a mid-term evaluation of the Programme should be carried out by 1 July 2017.

B. Content and subject of the evaluation
(B.1) Subject area
<p><u>The Employment and Social Innovation (EaSI) programme²</u> is a financing instrument at EU level to promote a high level of quality and sustainable employment, guaranteeing adequate and decent social protection, combating social exclusion and poverty and improving working conditions. It aims to contribute to the implementation of Europe 2020, including its headline targets, Integrated Guidelines</p>

¹Regulation (EU) no. 1296/2013 of 11 December 2013: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2013:347:0238:0252:EN:PDF>

²The relevant information related to EaSI is available on the European Commission website: <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=1081>.

and flagship initiatives, in particular the European Platform against Poverty and Social Exclusion, An Agenda for New Skills and Jobs, and Youth on the Move.

The Programme is directly managed by the European Commission (DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion), assisted by the EaSI committee made up of national representatives (Member States, EFTA/EEA countries as well as candidate and pre-candidate countries). The EaSI committee's tasks include approving the annual work plans and ensuring that the programme delivers according to these plans.

The Programme brings together three EU programmes managed separately between 2007 and 2013: PROGRESS, EURES and Progress Microfinance.

As of January 2014, these programmes form the three axes of EaSI. They support:

- the modernisation of employment and social policies with the PROGRESS axis (61% of the total budget);
- job mobility with the EURES axis (18% of the total budget);
- access to micro-finance and social entrepreneurship with the Microfinance and Social Entrepreneurship axis (21% of the total budget).

The total budget for 2014-2020 is EUR 919,469,000 in 2013 prices.

(B.2) Original objectives of the intervention

According to Article 4, the programme shall seek to achieve the following general objectives:

(1) strengthen ownership among policy-makers at all levels, and produce concrete, coordinated and innovative actions at both Union and Member State level, in respect of the Union objectives in the fields referred to in Article 1³, in close collaboration with the social partners, as well as civil society organisations and public and private bodies;

(2) support the development of adequate, accessible and efficient social protection systems and labour markets and facilitate policy reform, in the fields referred to in Article 1, notably by promoting decent work and working conditions, a prevention culture for health and safety at work, a healthier balance between professional and private life and good governance for social objectives, including convergence, as well as mutual learning and social innovation;

(3) ensure that Union law on matters relating to the fields referred to in Article 1 is effectively applied, and, where necessary, contribute to modernising Union law, in line with decent work principles and taking into account the Smart Regulation principles;

(4) promote workers' voluntary geographical mobility on a fair basis and boost employment opportunities by developing high-quality and inclusive Union labour markets that are open and accessible to all, while respecting workers' rights throughout the Union, including freedom of movement;

(5) promote employment and social inclusion by increasing the availability and accessibility of microfinance for vulnerable people who wish to start up a micro-enterprise as well as for existing micro-enterprises, and by increasing access to finance for social enterprises.

³ Article 1 (EaSI Regulation no. 1296/2013): "This Regulation establishes a European Union Programme for Employment and Social Innovation ('the Programme') which aims to contribute to the implementation of Europe 2020, including its headline targets, Integrated Guidelines and flagship initiatives, by providing financial support for the Union's objectives in terms of promoting a high level of quality and sustainable employment, guaranteeing adequate and decent social protection, combating social exclusion and poverty and improving working conditions."

These five EaSI objectives are supported by the following transversal activities as defined in the EaSI Regulation:

- (1) pay particular attention to vulnerable groups, such as young people;
- (2) promote equality between women and men, including through gender mainstreaming and, where appropriate, gender budgeting;
- (3) combat discrimination based on sex, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation;
- (4) promote a high-level of quality and sustainable employment, guarantee adequate and decent social protection, combat long-term unemployment and fight against poverty and social exclusion.

(B.3) How the objectives were to be achieved

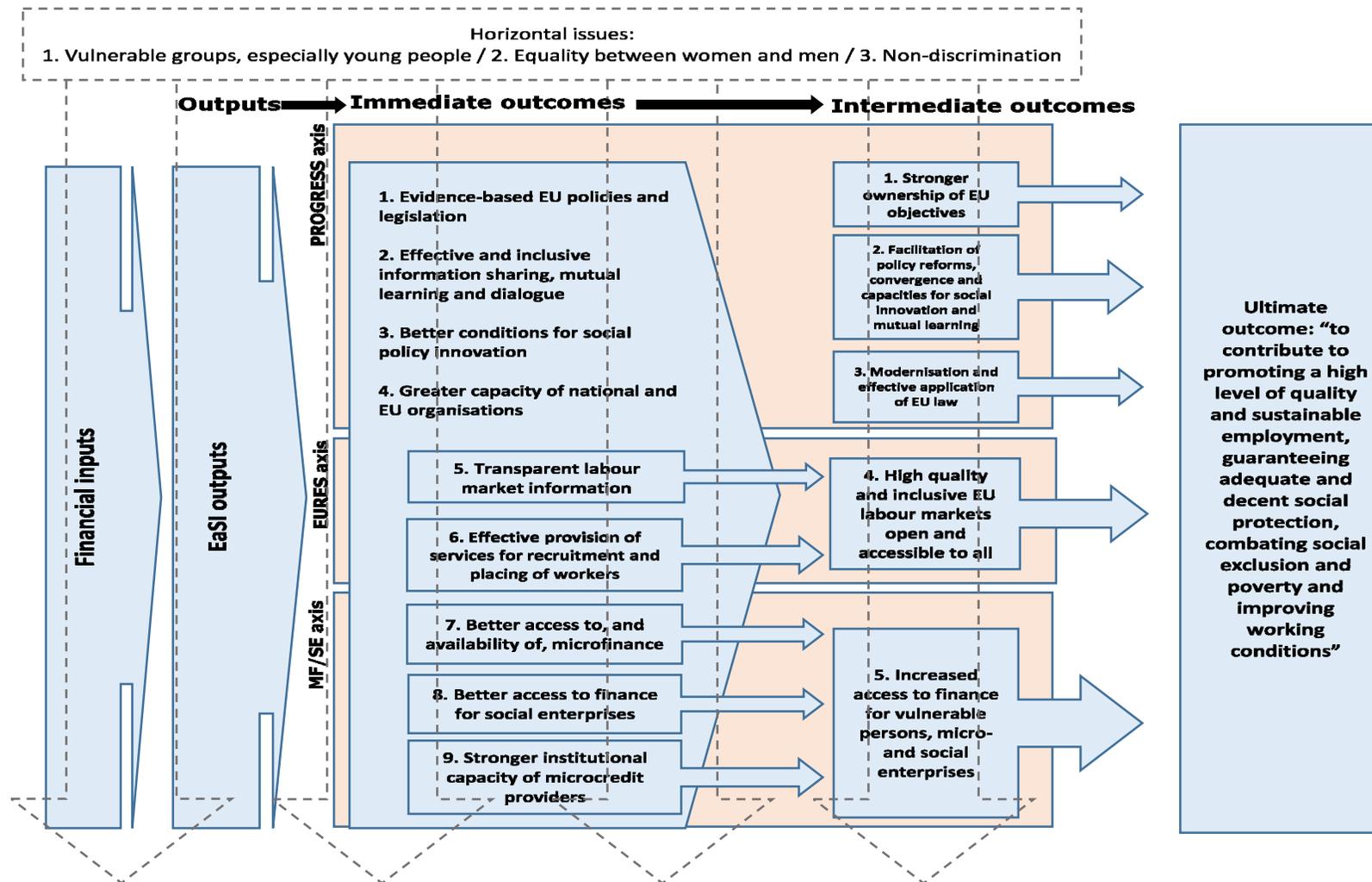
The EaSI logical framework (Figure 1) was established along with the system to measure EaSI performance, including qualitative and quantitative key performance indicators (KPIs)⁴. The construction of this EaSI logical framework was based on the interpretation of legal and policy documents governing the programme. It aims to operationalise the ways in which the programme will contribute to the achievement of its general policy goals (Regulation 1296/2013, Article 4).

EaSI incorporates and extends the coverage of three previous programmes, namely the Programme for Employment and Social Solidarity (Progress), European Employment Services (EURES) and the European Progress Microfinance Facility (Figure 1):

- The PROGRESS axis focuses on providing support to policy-making and implementation process through production of policy evidence, organisation of information sharing and mutual learning activities, creating better conditions for social policy innovation projects and providing capacity-building support to EU and national organisations.
- The EURES axis aims to improve the geographical mobility in the EU through making information on placements more transparent and accessible as well as funding the actual services for jobseekers and employers.
- The microfinance and social entrepreneurship axis aims to improve access to finance for vulnerable people, micro- and social enterprises through funding for financial intermediaries and capacity building of relevant actors.

⁴ The intervention logic (Figure 1) is published with the annual monitoring programme (AMP). The 3rd section of the EaSI monitoring report 2014 (September 2015) reviews the extent to which the programme has contributed to the achievement of its long-term objectives (<http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=89&newsId=2291&furtherNews=yes>).

Figure 1: EaSI logical framework



C. Scope of the evaluation/FC

(C.1) Topics covered

The mid-term evaluation should focus on the programme's activity period running from January 2014 until December 2016.

The scope of the evaluation covers the activities undertaken under the three axes of the EaSI programme (PROGRESS, EURES, Microfinance and Social Entrepreneurship) as well as its transversal issues, i.e. paying particular attention to vulnerable groups, promoting equality between women and men, combating discrimination based on sex, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation, promoting a high-level of quality and sustainable employment, guaranteeing adequate and decent social protection, combating long-term unemployment and fighting against poverty and social exclusion.

The evaluation covers the five following evaluation criteria: relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, coherence and EU added-value of the EaSI programme.

The evaluation covers all Member States and other participating countries, and encompasses relevant stakeholders, in particular the EaSI Committee, different policy committees, social partners, national authorities and bodies, and key EU civil society organisations.

(C.2) Questions/issues to be examined

Evaluation questions

Relevance

The evaluation of the relevance shall generally assess the extent to which the EaSI programme and its logical framework⁵ is relevant in respect to needs, problems and issues identified in target groups.

1. With regard to the current socio-economic situation, policy development and major changes in the EU legislation to date, to what extent do the general objectives identified in Article 4 of the EaSI Regulation continue to be relevant? What existing/emerging challenges should be taken into account in the second part of the programme (2017-2020)?
2. With regard to the programme's general objectives and considering the socio-economic situation and the policy development, to what extent do the specific objectives as well the actions/projects financed each year of the three axes continue to be relevant?
3. With regard to the specific objectives of each axis, and considering the socio-economic and policy development, to what extent is the split between the three axes and the split between thematic sections still relevant (PROGRESS axis with 61% of the total budget/ EURES axis with 18% of the total budget/Microfinance and social entrepreneurship axis with 21% of the total budget)?

Effectiveness

The evaluation of the effectiveness shall generally assess the extent to which EaSI has progressed towards its general objectives and its horizontal provisions (Articles 4 of the EaSI Regulation), as well as those specifically defined for PROGRESS (Article 15 of the EaSI Regulation), EURES (Article 20), and Microfinance and Social Entrepreneurship (Article 26 of the EaSI Regulation).

1. To what extent has the programme as a whole and each of its axis delivered the expected outcomes

⁵ See Figure 1.

in term of quantity and quality in order to achieve the general objectives and its horizontal provisions? To what extent the available financial means have enabled the programme as a whole and each of its axis to fulfill their objectives entirely and in a timely manner? To what extent does the current programme allow for effective upscaling of interventions and for follow-up conditions and mechanisms? What have been the good practices in scaling-up of interventions?

2. What have been - at this stage of the implementation - the qualitative and quantitative changes/effects of the interventions? To what extent can these changes/effects be credited to the interventions? To what extent did other different factors influence the achievement observed?
3. Which targeted groups of the programme have been involved in the programming and implementation of the EaSI programme? Has there been sufficient involvement of stakeholders in the programming and implementation of the EaSI programme? What were the most effective methods of involvement of the targeted groups and stakeholders?

Efficiency

The evaluation of the efficiency shall generally assess the extent to which the intended outputs and outcomes of EaSI have been achieved efficiently, and to what extent flexibility, adjustment and follow-up conditions are being set.

1. To what extent is the budget allocation and spending as a whole, and by axis and thematic sections proportionate and efficient for achieving the programme's objectives? To what extent the available financial means have enabled the programme as a whole and each of its axis to fulfill their objectives efficiently?
2. Which are the most significant advantages and benefits resulting from these activities for the EU policy makers, practitioners and the programme's final beneficiaries (e.g. social enterprises employees, vulnerable people)?

Coherence

The evaluation of the coherence shall generally assess to what extent the programme's activities have been coherent with other interventions with similar objectives.

1. To what extent did the merge of the three previous programmes PROGRESS, EURES and PROGRESS micro-finance improve EaSI internal/external consistency, complementarity and flexibility? What kind of synergies has the Programme developed or improved between the axes? What level of flexibility - both between axes and between actions - would be required in order to get better outcomes?
2. To what extent is this programme coherent and complementary (Article 7.1 of the EaSI Regulation) with other funding instruments such as the European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF), in particular the European Social Fund (ESF)? What kind of synergies or joint actions (Articles 6 and 7.2 of the EaSI Regulation) has the programme developed with these funding instruments?
3. To what extent is national, regional and local authorities' involvement demonstrating consistency and complementarity (Art 7.4 of the EaSI Regulation)? What would best be done at EU level to ensure that the programme's objectives are achieved? What would best be done at Member State level?

European Union added value

The evaluation of the EU added value shall generally assess the additional value resulting from the programme compared to what could be achieved by Member States at national, regional and local levels.

1. What has been the EU added value of the EaSI programme's activities? To what extent did the programme's activities bring European added value and transnational dimension which could not have been achieved (or not as effectively and/or efficiently) if they had been designed and implemented only at Member State level? To what extent do the issues addressed by the EaSI programme continue to require action at EU level? What would be the most likely consequences of stopping the existing EaSI programme's activities?
2. To what extent are the results and the EU added value of the programme's activities communicated and disseminated to relevant stakeholders and to the public? What have been the good practices in producing EU added value? What were the most effective ways of communication and dissemination of the programme's results to the relevant stakeholders and the broaden public?

(C.3) Other tasks

In compliance with the Better Regulation Guidelines, an open public consultation will be carried out in parallel to other evaluation works.

The section D.4 provides detailed information on the consultation strategy.

D. Evidence base

(D.1) Evidence from monitoring

With a view to the regular monitoring of the Programme, the Article 12 of the EaSI Regulation (EU) No 1296/2013 foresees that 'the Commission shall draw up an initial qualitative and quantitative monitoring report covering the first year, followed by three reports covering consecutive two-year periods. A contractor was appointed to assist the Commission in delivering the monitoring report and in improving the dissemination of good practices.

The EaSI monitoring report 2014 (published in September 2015) presents the actions taken to launch the Programme, as well as the first results for 2014, including the financial implementation of the Programme.

The data for EaSI performance monitoring are collected via EaSI stakeholders' web-based surveys conducted to provide a representative picture of the opinions of stakeholders involved in the programme design and implementation. Separate questionnaires were developed for each axis: PROGRESS, EURES, and Microfinance and Social Entrepreneurship.

The report is public and available on the European Commission website: <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=89&newsId=2291&furtherNews=yes>.

Monitoring the good practices is also part of the monitoring of the performance of EaSI. It foresees reports on projects considered to be examples of good practices to capture evidence on the effectiveness of a practice.

For the time being two reports have been published and the third one is being finalised. The 1st and 2nd volume of good practices reports of projects funded by PROGRESS and EURES are available on the European Commission website:

- <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=738&langId=en&pubId=7727&type=2&furtherPubs=yes> (1st volume)

- <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=738&langId=en&pubId=7762&type=2&furtherPubs=yes> (2nd volume)

(D.2) Previous evaluations and other reports

The ex-ante evaluation supporting the Commission's proposals for the Procedure 2011/0270/COD COM (2011) 609: Proposal for a REGULATION OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL on a European Union Programme for Social Change and Innovation. This ex-ante evaluation will be used to analyse the baseline and the inputs of the negotiations between the Commission and the other EU Institutions for the adoption of the EaSI Regulation (SEC/2011/1134 final; <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:52011SC1134>).

The ex post evaluation of the Programme for employment and social solidarity PROGRESS 2007- 2013 and recommendations for the successor programmes to PROGRESS 2014-2020 (2014):
<http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=89&newsId=2112&furtherNews=yes>

The interim evaluation of the Progress Micro-Finance Facility:
<http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=738&langId=en&pubId=7760>

The interim evaluation of the Your first EURES job mobility scheme:
<http://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=12676&langId=en>

Ex-post evaluation on the Your first EURES job mobility scheme and options for the future EU measures on youth intra-EU labour mobility (available Q3 2016)

The ex-post evaluation of the EURES programme covering the period 2009-2013 (available Q4 2015).

A series of semi-structured interviews and questionnaires will be conducted with officials from DG EMPL services dealing with EaSI programme and relevant stakeholders, in particular public authorities, EaSI committee members and EaSI programme's beneficiaries, including final beneficiaries (e.g. social enterprises employees, vulnerable people).

(D.3) Evidence from assessing the implementation and application of legislation (complaints, infringement procedures)

NA

(D.4) Consultation

Consultation strategy

Objectives and context of the public consultation

The evaluation - carried out in compliance with the Better Regulation Guidelines - has to ensure that the five obligatory evaluation criteria of efficiency, effectiveness, coherence, relevance and EU added value are adequately covered by the EaSI Regulation evaluation requirements. The purpose of this public consultation is to gather stakeholders' views on these elements, to draw preliminary lessons on the first years of the implementation of the programme and to seek views on its further development.

Stakeholder mapping

All citizens and organisations from Member States and other participating countries are welcome to contribute to this consultation:

- Public authorities
- EaSI committee members
- Other European Commission policy committee members (please specify)
- Social partners (please specify)
- Private organisations
- Social economy organisations, including social enterprises
- Business intermediaries
- Banking/investment sector
- Academia
- Individual citizens
- Other

Contributions are particularly sought from relevant stakeholders such as EaSI Committee members, different policy committees members, social partners, EaSI programme's beneficiaries, national authorities and bodies, and key EU civil society organisations. The EaSI Committee members will cooperate with the Commission in the mapping of the relevant stakeholders by identifying and suggesting a list of relevant stakeholders from their respective countries.

Tools and methods

The main method for consultation is the internet based open public consultation. The online public consultation will run during the evaluation process (12 weeks). The questionnaire and the consultation documents will be published in the three EU working languages: French, English and German. The contributions may be submitted in any official EU language.

The tool used is a questionnaire - created using EU survey tool - composed both by open-ended and close-ended questions covering the five evaluation criteria.

Another information collection tool which will be used is the semi-structured interview with relevant stakeholders, in particular EaSI committee members and EaSI programme's beneficiaries, including final beneficiaries (e.g. social enterprises employees, vulnerable people)..

Communication

The consultation will be announced on the '[Open consultations](#)' page on '[Your Voice in Europe](#)' website. The consultation documents – background on consultation and links to EaSI published working documents will be published on the '[Your Voice in Europe](#)' website. The stakeholders' e-access to consultation documents/questionnaire will be ensured via the '[Your Voice in Europe](#)' website.

After analysis of the contributions, a summary report of the public consultation results will be published

on the 'Your Voice in Europe' dedicated webpage as well on the publications page of DG EMPL website. The contributions will be fed into the mid-term evaluation of the EaSI programme.

A synopsis report of the entire consultation results will be also published on the consultation website and added as an annex to the evaluation staff working document. The synopsis report will document each consultation activity, inform which stakeholders have participated, describe the results of the stakeholders' consultation activity, and provide feedback. In particular, the feedback will inform stakeholders on how and to what extent their input has been taken into account, and why certain suggestions could not have been taken up in the policy formulation.

The DG EMPL's website will inform on the publication of the synopsis report.

(D.5) Further evidence to be gathered

The Commission will contract out an external study to support the evaluation. The contractor will gather relevant data necessary for the successful conduct of the evaluation going beyond the monitoring data provided through the system as referred to in section D.1.

E. Other relevant information/ remarks

NA