



OPEN CALL FOR PROPOSALS N° VP/2008/006

BUDGET LINE 04-04-01-01

**PROJECTS CONTRIBUTING TO THE EVALUATION OF THE
EUROPEAN EMPLOYMENT STRATEGY – EES (NATIONAL
EVALUATION PRACTICES)**

In view of the large number of enquiries, please do not telephone.

Questions should be sent by e-mail only to: empl-d2-cfp@ec.europa.eu

To ensure a more rapid response it is helpful if applicants send their queries in
English, French or German

The English version of the call is the original

1. Introduction

The Social Agenda (2005-2010) has fixed as its overall strategic goal to promote more and better jobs and to offer equal opportunities for all. The realisation of the Social Agenda relies on a combination of instruments comprising EU legislation, the implementation of open methods of coordination in various policy fields and financial incentives such as the European Social Fund.

The Decision n°1672/2006 establishing a Community programme for employment and social solidarity – PROGRESS was adopted by the European Parliament and the Council on 24 October 2006 and published in the OJ on 15 November 2006.

PROGRESSSS aims at supporting the core functions of the European Community towards fulfilling its Treaty-delegated tasks and powers in its respective areas of competence in the employment and social sphere. PROGRESS mission is to strengthen the EU contribution in support of Member States' commitments and efforts to create more and better jobs and to build a more cohesive society. To that effect, PROGRESS will be instrumental in:

- providing analysis and policy advice on PROGRESS policy areas;
- monitoring and reporting on the implementation of EU legislation and policies in PROGRESS policy areas;

- promoting policy transfer, learning and support among Member States on EU objectives and priorities; and
- relaying the views of the stakeholders and society at large.

More specifically, PROGRESS will support:

1. the implementation of the European Employment Strategy (section 1);
2. the implementation of the open method of coordination in the field of social protection and inclusion (section 2);
3. the improvement of the working environment and conditions including health and safety at work and reconciling work and family life (section 3);
4. the effective implementation of the principle of non-discrimination and promotion of its mainstreaming in all EU policies (section 4);
5. the effective implementation of the principle of gender equality and promotion of its mainstreaming in all EU policies (section 5).

The present Call for proposals is issued in the context of the implementation of the 2008 annual plan of work which is consultable at

http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/progress/annwork_en.htm

2. Context

Article 4(b) of the PROGRESS Decision stipulates that the programme shall support the implementation of the European Employment Strategy among others by: "monitoring and evaluating the implementation of the European Employment Guidelines and Recommendations and their impact"

The European Employment Strategy (EES), initially launched by the Luxembourg Summit (1997), has undergone successive revisions and has become the employment pillar of the Lisbon Strategy¹. A major review of employment policies was conducted in the context of the impact evaluation of the EEE in 2002². There is now wide consensus among policy makers and stakeholders on the need for continuous policy evaluations and for improving evaluation expertise and capacity in the Member States.

A similar call for evaluation of the EES was published in 2003 (VP/2003/012), 2004 (VP/ 2004/014), 2005 (VP/2005/010), 2006 (VP/2006/011) and 2007 (VP/2007/007)³.

All information on the European Employment Strategy can be found on the site http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/employment_strategy/index_en.htm

¹ See http://ec.europa.eu/growthandjobs/index_en.htm

² See http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/employment_strategy/impact_en.htm

³ See http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/emplweb/tenders/results_cfp_en.cfm

3. Objective of the call for proposal

Objective

This call for proposals aims at supporting projects contributing to the evaluation of Member States' employment policies developed in the framework of the EES and projects improving the longer-term evaluation capacity of the Member States.

Projects supported are expected to improve national evaluation practices with a special focus on the following priorities:

- improvement of the effectiveness of the implementation at the national level of the Employment Guidelines (by demonstrating that policies have been adjusted subsequent to evaluation results);
- building up of longer-term evaluation capacity of a Member State through the establishment of networks, surveys, development and testing of innovative evaluation methods and other relevant activities;
- evaluation practices focussing on the assessment of the effectiveness of policies in improving the integration into the labour market of the long-term unemployed in particular as concerns people at the margins⁴.

Geographical coverage

The projects should focus on the implementation of the EES at national and/or cross-national level. Projects focusing on the regional level are in principle not the subject of this call for proposal, unless there is a clear relevance for the EES, notably from the point of view of governance e.g. cases where regional authorities play a substantial role in the employment policy of a Member State.

Scope

Projects can look at the employment policies covered by the EES in a comprehensive or thematic way. The policy and stakeholder coverage of the evaluations should be as large as possible, even if the scope is merely of a methodological nature (surveys, databases, indicators)

4. Total available budget

The total available budget is EUR 600.000. The intention is to finance no more than 5 projects from the total budget.

⁴ People who have difficulties to find stable employment and as a consequence are more dependent on benefits and social services.

5. Exclusion and Eligibility criteria

Exclusion and Eligibility of the applicant

- Applicants must be in conformity with Articles 93(1)⁵, 94⁶ and 96(2)(a)⁷ of the Financial Regulation;
- Applicants must be legal persons properly constituted and registered in one of the EU Member States, candidate countries (Croatia, FYROM, Turkey and Serbia) or other participating EEA/EFTA countries;
- Eligible applicants are public authorities or state or semi-state agencies⁸ at central or regional level;
- Non-profit organisations active mainly in the area of employment policy, quality of work or social inclusion may also submit proposals on the condition that they are active at international, national or regional level and submit a proposal in partnership with a public authority or state or semi-state agencies as described above;

⁵ Situations referred to in Article 93 of the Financial Regulation are the following:

- (a) bankrupt or being wound up, having their affairs administrated by the courts, have entered into an arrangement with creditors, have suspended business activities, are the subject of proceedings concerning those matters, or are in any analogous situation arising from a similar procedure provided for in national legislation or regulations;
- (b) convicted of an offence concerning their professional conduct by a judgement which has the force of res judicata;
- (c) guilty of grave professional misconduct proven by any means which the contracting authority can justify;
- (d) not fulfilled obligations relating to the payment of social security contributions or the payment of taxes in accordance with the legal provisions of the country where the contract is to be performed;
- (e) the subject of a judgement which has the force of res judicata for fraud, corruption, involvement in a criminal organisation or any other illegal activity detrimental to the Communities' financial interests;
- (f) currently subject to an administrative penalty referred to in Article 96(1): 1. The contracting authority may impose administrative or financial penalties on the following: (a) candidates or tenderers in the cases referred to in point (b) of Article 94; (b) contractors who have been declared to be in serious breach of their obligations under contracts covered by the budget. In all cases, however, the contracting authority must first give the person concerned an opportunity to present his observations.

⁶ Situation referred to in Article 94 of the Financial Regulation are the following:

- (a) are subject of conflict of interest;
- (b) are guilty of misrepresentation in supplying the information required by the contracting authority as a condition of participation in the contract procedure or who fail to supply this information.

⁷ Administrative or financial penalties shall be proportionate to the importance of the contract and the seriousness of the misconduct, and may consist in: the exclusion of the candidate or tenderer or contractor concerned from the contracts and grants financed by the budget, for a maximum period of ten years.

⁸ Public authorities and agencies with decision-making competencies in the area of employment policies, ie. in particular relevant ministries or other governmental bodies at national or regional level. This does not cover all public bodies like public universities or research institutes, which may be, however, involved as project partners.

- In application of article 114 of the Financial Regulation, social partner organisations without legal personality are also eligible provided that their representatives have the capacity to undertake legal obligations on their behalf and assume financial liability.

Eligibility of the proposal

Grant applications must be made in writing, on the standard application form and be sent by the deadline indicated in section 11 below. The project must be linked to the objective of the call (as described under section 3 above) and not benefit from other Community funding. It must comply with the European Community co-financing percentage of maximum 80% and with the rules of start dates and duration of the project defined in section 10 below.

The application must be submitted electronically online and by post in 3 hard copies (1 original and 2 copies) by the deadline for submitting the application set out below.

The application must be complete and include all the documents indicated in the checklist (Point 13).

Proposals which do not comply with the above criteria are not eligible and will be rejected.

6. Selection criteria

Applicants must provide evidence of their operational, economic and financial capacity, based on the following criteria:

1. The applicant's operational capacity for performing the required work must be confirmed by:
 - A list of the main projects carried out in the last three years relating to the objective of the call. In the case of work done for the Commission, applicants must also indicate the reference number of the contract and the department for which the contract was performed;
 - The curriculum vitae of the proposed project manager/co-ordinator and the persons who will perform the main tasks;
 - A declaration of the project manager/co-ordinator certifying the competence of the team to carry out the required tasks;
 - In the case of proposals from partnership: written confirmation from each partner of the partnership that they are willing to participate in the project and briefly describing their role;
2. Economic and financial capacity to carry out the project activities (*not applicable for public authorities or agencies*).
 - Declaration on honour;

- The applicant must provide proof of turnover in the last financial year at least equivalent to 100% of the grant requested;
- Balance sheets from the last financial year.

7. Award criteria

The grants will be awarded following a comparative assessment of the proposals in order to determine those which

(i) best meet the objective of this call

a) Particular attention will be paid to:

- The degree to which the proposal meets the objective
- The potential of the project for informing the stocktaking of the employment strategy at national level or at EU level should be spelled out
- The degree to which the expected results add value to the existing situation or to results already obtained in the past through projects supported under the budget heading
- The extent to which the project concerns innovative measures or new subjects in relation to the evaluation of the EES
- The proposal should also identify possible lasting and/or multiplier effects of the project⁹, its follow-up, dissemination of results and possibility of transferability of results to other countries/regions.

b) The proposal should clearly specify what methodology, including the work plan, is intended to be applied for the project and its innovative character.

- In case of projects consisting of several working packages, the methodology should be clearly described for each working package.
- The feasibility and clarity of the work plan will be assessed as well as proposed structure of the team and its relation with the tasks to be performed. In case there are different partners involved, the division of tasks between applicant and partners should be stated.

(ii) have an adequate cost/efficiency ratio

Only projects with an adequate cost/efficiency ratio will be financed. Therefore the proposal must include a **detailed budget breakdown** (see part G of the online Application form) enabling the Commission to identify the efficiency in relation to the cost of the various tasks. In particular, the cost distribution and unit costs will influence the assessment of the project.

This procedure will approximately take four months after the date for submission.

⁹ The multiplier effect refers to how the project and its results will promote change in other fields eg geographical, sectoral, thematic etc

8. Guide on how the activities shall be carried out

a) Requirements concerning equal opportunities

The PROGRESS Programme aimed at promoting gender mainstreaming in all its five policy sections and commissioned or supported activities. Consequently, the Beneficiary will take the necessary steps to ensure that:

- Gender equality issues are taken into account when relevant for the drafting of the technical offer/proposal by paying attention to the situation and needs of women and men;
- Implementation of the requested tasks includes a gender perspective by considering systematically women and men dimension;
- Performance monitoring includes the collection and gathering of data disaggregated by sex when needed.
- Its proposed team and/or staff respects the gender balance at all levels.

Equally, needs of disabled people shall be duly acknowledged and met while implementing the action. This will in particular entail that where the Beneficiary organises training sessions, conference, issues publications or develops dedicated websites, people with disabilities have equal access to the facilities or the services provided.

Finally, the European Commission encourages the Beneficiary to promote equal employment opportunities for all its staff and team. This entails that the Beneficiary shall foster an appropriate mix of people, whatever their ethnic origin, religions, age, and ability.

The Beneficiary will be required to detail in its activity report accompanying the request for the final instalment the steps and achievements it made towards meeting these requirements.

b) Publicity and information requirements

1.- As a matter of principle, with a view to favouring valorisation by the European Commission of all results obtained and outputs delivered under PROGRESS programme, the Beneficiary will be required to provide - either upon specific request or in any event with the final activity report - for each of the activities co-financed under the present Call the following:

- Presentation of their key points in one page. Key points should be concise, sharp and easily understandable. They shall be provided in English, French and German. Other Community languages would be welcome even if not compulsory.
- And an executive summary in 5/6 pages in English, French and German.

2.- In accordance with the General conditions, the Beneficiary is under the obligation to acknowledge that the present activity is delivered on behalf of/with the support the European Community in all documents and media produced, in particular final delivered outputs, related reports, brochures, press

releases, videos, software, etc, including at conferences or seminars. In the context of PROGRESS, the following formulation shall be used:

This (publication, conference, training session) is supported by the European Community Programme for Employment and Social Solidarity (2007-2013) – PROGRESS. This programme is managed by the Directorate-General for Employment, social affairs and equal opportunities of the European Commission.

This programme was established to financially support the implementation of the objectives of the European Union in the employment and social affairs area, as set out in the Social Agenda, and thereby contribute to the achievement of the Lisbon Strategy goals in these fields.

The seven-year Programme targets all stakeholders who can help shape the development of appropriate and effective employment and social legislation and policies, across the EU-27, EFTA-EEA and EU candidate and pre-candidate countries.

PROGRESS mission is to strengthen the EU contribution in support of Member States' commitments and efforts to create more and better jobs and to build a more cohesive society. To that effect, PROGRESS will be instrumental in:

- *providing analysis and policy advice on PROGRESS policy areas;*
- *monitoring and reporting on the implementation of EU legislation and policies in PROGRESS policy areas;*
- *promoting policy transfer, learning and support among Member States on EU objectives and priorities; and*
- *relaying the views of the stakeholders and society at large*

For more information see:

http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/progress/index_en.html

For publications it is also necessary to include the following reference: "*The information contained in this publication does not necessarily reflect the position or opinion of the European Commission*"

With regard to publication and any communication plan linked to the present action/work programme, the Beneficiary will insert the European Union logo, and if any another logo developed for the employment and social solidarity fields.

c) Reporting requirements

PROGRESS will be implemented through a results-based management - RBM. Managing for outcomes and results is about working to maximise results for European citizens. This includes:

- Identifying the most important results for European citizens;
- Managing for these results, including setting clear desired results, implementing plans based upon these results and learning about ‘what works’ in the process;
- Seizing opportunities to work together whenever this helps achieve the results.

As a first step, a Strategic Framework for the implementation of PROGRESS has been developed in collaboration with Member states and organisations from the civil society. The Strategic Framework provides the framework for implementing PROGRESS, complemented by the Performance Measurement, which defines PROGRESS mandate, its long-term and specific outcomes. See in Annex the overview of PROGRESS performance measurement framework. For more information on the strategic framework, please visit PROGRESS website.

The Commission will in that context monitors the effect of PROGRESS supported or commissioned initiatives and considers how these initiatives contributes to PROGRESS outcomes as defined in the Strategic Framework. In that context, the Beneficiary will be asked to loyally work in close cooperation with the Commission and/or persons authorised by it to define their expected contributions and the set of performance measures against which their contribution will be assessed. The Beneficiary will be asked to collect and report on its own performance on a regular basis to the Commission and/or persons authorised by it. In addition, the Beneficiary will make available to the Commission and/or persons authorised by it all documents or information that will allow PROGRESS performance measurement to be successfully completed and to give them the necessary rights of access.

9. Financial conditions¹⁰

- The Community's financial contribution will not exceed **80% of the total eligible costs** of the activities involved. Sources of co-financing can be public or private.
- Only costs directly linked to the performance of the action will be accepted. Contributions in kind are not eligible. For further details concerning eligibility of costs, including the regime applicable to staff costs, see the **Financial Guidelines for Applicants**.

¹⁰ For detailed provisions on Community grants, please refer to Title VI of the Council Regulation 1605/2002 on the Financial Regulation applicable to the general budget of the European Communities (http://ec.europa.eu/budget/documents/implement_control_en.htm).

10. Start date and duration of projects

The projects should start after signature of grant agreements, expected within five months of the date of submission. Duration of each project is 12 months maximum, unless specific circumstances require longer duration (to be justified).

11. Date for submission

The proposals must be submitted electronically online and by post in 3 hard copies to the Commission **not later than 04 July 2008**.

12. Practical modalities

Applicants are invited to fill in the application form and present the project proposal preferably in **English, French or German**, in order to facilitate the treatment of the proposals and carry through the evaluation as soon as possible. However, it should be noted that proposals in other Community languages will be accepted.

The **Application form, the Financial Guidelines for Applicants** and further information related to the call for proposals is provided on the following website: http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/emplweb/tenders/index_calls_en.cfm

Questions can also be sent by e-mail to empl-d2-cfp@ec.europa.eu

The Application form is an electronic form which must be filled in online. Annexes, which are compulsory, must be also filled in and uploaded online (see part E of the online Application form). For this purpose, the Internet Web application SWIM must be used. SWIM enables you to introduce, edit and submit a grant application. You can access to SWIM at the web site <https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/swim/external/displayWelcome.do>

Before starting, please read carefully the "User's guide", which you will find at the top of the page ("Help on SWIM").

Applications accompanied by the annexes and all the required documentary proof should also be submitted in hard copy in triplicate to the addresses cited below **by 04 July 2008** (their submission date will be taken as the date of dispatch, as evidenced by the postmark or the express courier receipt date) and proposals submitted after this date will not be eligible:

a) by post to the following postal address:

European Commission
Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities DG
Unit D2-Employment Strategy – Call for proposals VP/2008/006
Archives-Courier service J27 0/115
B-1049 Brussels

- b) or by personal delivery against a signed receipt from the Commission's central mail service (direct or through any authorised representative of the applicant, including private messenger service etc.) by 16.00 hours on 04 July 2008 at the latest to the following address:

European Commission
Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities DG
Unit D2-Employment Strategy – Call for proposals VP/2008/006
Central Courier Service
Avenue du Bourget, 1
1140 Evere

Failure to submit the application by post and online by 04 July 2008 will entail the ineligibility of the request for subsidy. Complementary documents sent by post, by fax or by electronic mail after the deadlines mentioned above will not be considered for evaluation. Please do make sure that the full set of the application form and all accompanying documents as listed above are included in your sending by post by the closing date.

Incomplete or unsigned application forms, hand-written forms and those sent by fax, will not be taken into consideration.

The **Financial Guidelines for Applicants** annexed to the present call for proposals provides more detailed information for the applicants, especially as regards guidelines for presenting the proposal's provisional budget along with the rules governing which categories of expenditure are eligible and which are not

The information contained herein together with the Financial Guidelines for Applicants provides all the information you require to submit an application. Please read it carefully before doing so, paying particular attention to the priorities that have been set for the programme.

Regarding the presentation of the application file, it is recommended to:

- Follow the order of documents as listed in the checklist (Point 13);
- Print the documents double-sided, where possible;
- Use only 2-hole folders (please do not bind or glue).

13. Checklist of the required documents to accompany your application

Please send in the following documents **in triplicate** (original + two copies or three copies where original is not required). The Application form must be submitted also **electronically**.

Regarding the presentation of the application file, it is recommended to:

- Follow the order of documents as listed in the checklist;
- Print the documents double-sided, where possible;
- Use only 2-hole folders (please do not bind or glue).

	Document	Check
1	Original letter of application quoting the reference of the call (VP/2008/006) duly signed and dated by the legal representative of the applicant organisation.	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	Print-out of the online Application form (https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/swim) duly completed, dated and signed by the legal representative of the applicant organisation. NOTE: The electronic form must be electronically submitted before printing. After the electronic submission no further changes to the application are possible	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	Printed version of Annex E1: Declaration on honour on compliance with Articles 93 and 94 of the Financial Regulation, duly filled in, dated and signed by the legal representative of the applicant organisation.	<input type="checkbox"/>
4	Printed version of Annex E2: CO-funding commitments signed by the legal representatives of the organisations concerned and specifying the amount of each cash contribution.	<input type="checkbox"/>
5	Printed version of Annex E3: Financial identification form duly filled in, dated and signed by the legal representative of the applicant organisation and bearing the bank stamp and signature of the bank representative. The Financial identification form must correspond to the Legal entity form (see above).	<input type="checkbox"/>
6	Printed version of Annex E4 Legal entity form duly filled in and signed by the legal representative of the applicant organisation.	<input type="checkbox"/>
7	Copy of the official registration certificate or any other official document attesting to the legal establishment of the organisation (not necessary for public bodies).	<input type="checkbox"/>
8	Copy of articles of association/statutes or equivalent , proving the eligibility of the organisation	<input type="checkbox"/>
9	Copy of a document confirming the applicant's tax or VAT number , if available.	<input type="checkbox"/>
10	Description of the action (free format) dated and signed by the legal representative of the applicant organisation.	<input type="checkbox"/>
11	Work Programme of the project (free format) dated and signed by the legal representative of the applicant organisation, including a timetable linking months to activities and outputs.	<input type="checkbox"/>
12	Declaration of the project manager/coordinator certifying the competence of the team to carry out the required tasks.	<input type="checkbox"/>
13	Detailed CVs (educational and professional qualifications) and job specification of the proposed project manager/coordinator and of persons who will perform the main tasks, with a brief description of their outputs related to the subject of the proposal..	<input type="checkbox"/>
14	The proof of turnover in the last financial year at least equivalent to 100% of the grant requested (<i>not necessary for public bodies</i>).	<input type="checkbox"/>
15	A list of the main projects carried out in the last three years relating to the objective of the call. In the case of work done for the Commission, applicants must also indicate the reference number of the contract and the department for which the contract was performed.	<input type="checkbox"/>
16	Annual balance sheet and profit and loss account for the last financial	<input type="checkbox"/>

	<i>Document</i>	<i>Check</i>
	year, duly dated and signed by the legal representative of the applicant organisation,	
17	For grant requests over € 500.000,00 or for organisations subject to statutory audit of their annual accounts, an external audit report produced by an approved auditor, certifying the last accounting exercise and assessing the financial viability of the applicant organisation.	<input type="checkbox"/>
18	Others any additional/optional annexes which you may wish to add, e.g. if you wish to provide longer answers to the questions concerning your project under heading B of the online application.	<input type="checkbox"/>

ANNEX - OVERVIEW OF PROGRESS PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT FRAMEWORK

PROGRESS Ultimate Outcome

Member States implement laws, policies and practices in a manner that contributes to the desired outcomes of the Social Agenda

PROGRESS works toward its ultimate outcome by helping strengthen the EU's support for Member States' efforts to create more and better jobs and to build a more cohesive society. PROGRESS seeks to contribute to (i) an **effective legal regime** in the EU in relation to the Social Agenda; (ii) **shared understanding** across the EU with regard to Social Agenda objectives; and (iii) **strong partnerships** working toward Social Agenda objectives.

In operational terms, support provided by PROGRESS facilitates (i) provision of analysis and policy advice; (ii) monitoring and reporting on the implementation of EU legislation and policies; (iii) policy transfer, learning and support among Member States; and (iv) relaying to decision-makers the views of the stakeholders and society at large.

Legal Regime Outcome: <i>Compliance in Member States with EU law related to PROGRESS areas.</i>	Shared Understanding Outcome: <i>Shared understanding and ownership among policy/decision-makers and stakeholders in Member States, and the Commission, of objectives related to PROGRESS policy areas.</i>	Strong Partnerships Outcome: <i>Effective partnerships with national and pan-European stakeholders in support of outcomes related to PROGRESS policy areas.</i>
<p style="text-align: center;">Performance Indicators</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Transposition rate of EU law on matters related to PROGRESS policy areas 2. Effectiveness of application in Member States of EU law on matters related to PROGRESS policy areas. 3. EU policies and legislation are grounded in thorough analysis of situation and responsive to conditions, needs and expectations in Member States in PROGRESS areas 4. Extent to which PROGRESS-supported policy advice feeds into the development and implementation of EU legislation and policies 5. Cross-cutting issues are addressed in PROGRESS policy sections 6. EU policies and legislation display a common underlying logic of intervention in relation to PROGRESS issues 7. Gender mainstreaming is systematically promoted in PROGRESS 	<p style="text-align: center;">Performance Indicators</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Attitudes of decision-makers, key stakeholders and general public regarding EU objectives in PROGRESS policy areas 2. Extent to which national policy discourses or priorities reflect EU objectives 3. Extent to which principles of good governance (including minimum standards on consultation) are respected in policy debate 4. Extent to which the outcomes of policy debates feed into the development of EU law and policy. 5. Greater awareness of policy-and decision-makers, social partners, NGOs, networks regarding their rights/obligations in relation to PROGRESS policy areas 6. Greater awareness of policy-and decision-makers, social partners, NGOs, networks regarding EU objectives and policies in relation to PROGRESS policy areas 	<p style="text-align: center;">Performance Indicators</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Existence of common ground/consensus among policy and decision-makers and stakeholders on EU objectives and policies 2. Identification and involvement by the EU of key actors in a position to exert influence or change at EU and national levels 3. Effectiveness of partnerships in relation to outcomes related to PROGRESS policy areas. 4. Number of individuals served or reached by networks supported by PROGRESS. 5. Extent to which advocacy skills of PROGRESS-supported networks have improved 6. Satisfaction of EU and national authorities with the contribution of networks 7. Extent to which PROGRESS-supported networks take a cross-cutting approach