**EaSI**

**EUROPEAN UNION PROGRAMME FOR EMPLOYMENT AND SOCIAL INNOVATION**

**What is EaSI?**

The European Union programme for employment and social innovation (EaSI) is a financing instrument at EU level promoting a high level of quality and sustainable employment, guaranteeing adequate and decent social protection, combating social exclusion and poverty and improving working conditions. The three axes of EaSI support the modernisation of employment and social policies (Progress axis), job mobility (EURES axis) and access to microfinance and social entrepreneurship (microfinance/social entrepreneurship axis).

**Specific objectives**

- Support the development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the EU's instruments, employment and social policies referred to in Article 1 of Regulation (EU) No 1296/2013 (promoting a high level of quality and sustainable employment, guaranteeing adequate and decent social protection, combating social exclusion and poverty and improving working conditions) and relevant law, and promote evidence-based policymaking, social innovation and social progress, in partnership with the social partners, civil-society organisations and public and private bodies (Progress axis).
- Promote workers’ voluntary geographical mobility on a fair basis and boost employment opportunities by developing high-quality and inclusive European Union labour markets that are open and accessible to all, while respecting workers’ rights throughout the EU, including freedom of movement (EURES axis).
- Promote employment and social inclusion by increasing the availability and accessibility of microfinance for vulnerable people who wish to start up a micro-enterprise and for existing micro-enterprises, and by increasing access to finance for social enterprises (microfinance/social entrepreneurship axis).

**Why is it necessary?**

The EaSI programme provides EU funds to coordinate the implementation of the employment and social objectives of the Europe 2020 strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth. It focuses on key actions with high EU added value, such as:

- supporting EU policymaking;
- focusing on the transnational dimension of employment, social situation, working conditions, and health and safety at work;
- ensuring the development and proper application of EU laws in the fields of employment, working conditions, health and safety at work and social protection;
- promoting workers’ geographical mobility within the EU by developing recruitment and placement services;
- increasing the availability and accessibility of microfinance, as additional funding is more likely to be attracted from third-party investors such as the European Investment Bank.

**Outlook for the 2021–2027 period**

This programme will be included within the new European Social Fund+ for the next multiannual financial framework (for 2021–2027).

To this end, support structures and initiatives are being established to improve the participation in the EaSI strand and to assist in upscaling, mainstreaming and/or replication of EaSI project results, for instance by using other funds, notably under the shared management strand of the European Social Fund+.

**Budget implementation (in million EUR)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EXECUTED COMMITMENTS</th>
<th>EXECUTED PAYMENTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>129.3</td>
<td>115.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>134.5</td>
<td>126.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>115.8</td>
<td>96.4</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Annex 3 – Programme performance overview**
Key performance indicators

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Baseline</th>
<th>PROGRESS TOWARDS THE TARGET</th>
<th>Target</th>
<th>Results</th>
<th>Assessment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Visits to the EURES platform (1)</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>2.0 m</td>
<td>1.1 million out of 2.0 million</td>
<td>Deserves attention</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth job placements achieved or supported under the preparatory action 'Your first EURES job' and targeted mobility schemes (2)</td>
<td>97%</td>
<td>15 000</td>
<td>14 602 out of 15 000</td>
<td>On track</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EURES advisers’ contacts with jobseekers, job changers and employers (1)</td>
<td>97%</td>
<td>1.4 m</td>
<td>1.4 million out of 1.4 million</td>
<td>On track</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Businesses created or consolidated – microfinance</td>
<td>&gt; 100%</td>
<td>41 000</td>
<td>97 271 compared to a target of 41 000</td>
<td>On track</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Businesses created or consolidated – social enterprises</td>
<td>&gt; 100%</td>
<td>1 100</td>
<td>3 337 compared to a target of 1 100</td>
<td>On track</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proportion of beneficiaries that have created or further developed a business with EU microfinance that are unemployed or belonging to disadvantaged groups: Progress microfinance</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>12% out of a target of 50%</td>
<td>Deserves attention</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(1) Average of results for 2014-2020. (2) Results for the period between 2014 and the 1st semester of 2020.

Where are we in the implementation?

- Up to the end of 2020, almost EUR 883 million had been committed for the implementation of EaSI’s activities. In the 2014-2020 period, 52 calls for proposals led to 425 projects, involving over 1 282 beneficiaries. Of these, 1 170 were from the EU and the rest from other participating countries.
- In 2020, the Progress axis focused on gathering evidence through studies, analysis and statistics to shape policy developments. The axis fostered a shared understanding of policy options through policy debates. It also promoted the involvement of civil society through financial support for 23 key EU-level non-governmental organisations.
- The EURES axis in 2020 supported the European Job Mobility Portal, provided training courses on EURES services, and provided horizontal support to the member organisations of the EURES network. It continued financing cross-border partnerships supporting mobility for frontier workers in the cross-border regions, along with targeted mobility schemes. The 13 EURES calls for proposals launched between 2014 and 2020 resulted in 105 contracts.
- In response to the COVID-19 crisis, deadlines were extended under the calls for proposals launched in 2020, resulting in delays in the award of grants. The crisis also caused delays in the implementation of projects. In order to support the organisations, payments were processed more speedily thanks to: (i) the use of e-signatories and the acceptance of e-documents; and (ii) the larger reliance on ex post verifications. Despite the impact of the crisis, at the end of 2020, three transactions worth EUR 192.2 million had been concluded and 10 transactions worth EUR 66 million were in the pipeline under the microfinance / social entrepreneurship axis. Furthermore, contracts worth EUR 54.3 million were signed in 2019-2020. In 2020, the EaSI guarantee delegation agreement was amended to introduce COVID-19 support measures allowing for higher risk sharing, while the social entrepreneurship strand welcomed financial intermediaries from Germany and Portugal.

Performance assessment

- EaSI’s efforts to scale up projects will be increased under ESF+ through the competence centres for social innovation, the database of social innovation projects and the creation of national contact points to guide applicants and beneficiaries. EaSI will continue to test new small-scale policy approaches through social experimentation methods and to serve as a basis for social innovation upscaling, mainstreaming and/or replication of activities.
- **PROGRESS.** The evidence generated contributed to the European semester, including its annual sustainable growth strategy, and to policy initiatives in the field of employment and social affairs. The latest EaSI performance monitoring reports covering 2017 and 2018 showed that EaSI’s stakeholders provided positive feedback on its deliverables. According to its key performance indicators the axis has already met almost all of its targets.
- **EURES.** In 2020, the number of unique visits to the EURES Job Mobility Portal decreased, but the overall number of visitors was high. Regarding the targeted mobility schemes, the number of placements decreased significantly. These trends relate to the pressure put on labour mobility by the COVID-19 crisis. The 2020 labour mobility report confirmed that in recent years labour mobility has continued to grow, but at a much slower pace. This had an effect on the amount of interest in the EURES portal. It is expected that once the economic recovery kicks in workforce requirements will rebound, which will also lead to an increase in traffic on the EURES portal. The EURES targeted mobility scheme continues to deliver good results, mainly due to improvements in: (i) the integration of the overall EURES service package; (ii) the intervention methodology, thanks to the experience that has been accumulated; and (iii) communication about the projects. While in 2020-2021 placements will be affected by the COVID-19 crisis, in the medium term the impact is not expected to be major. Overall, the number of youth job placements achieved or supported under the ‘Your first EURES job’ action and the targeted mobility schemes has been increasing significantly from one year to the next since 2018.
- **Microfinance / social entrepreneurship.** The number of final-recipient countries increased in 2020. The targets set have largely been reached. However, the indicator on the proportion of beneficiaries that were unemployed or belonging to disadvantaged groups and that created a business with EU microfinance saw a downward trend. This was mainly due to a change in reporting to take into account that one final recipient could fall under four subcategories of the indicator and therefore had to be counted only once. Also, the target may have been set too high, without taking the reporting difficulties duly into account.
### Concrete examples of achievements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>74%</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>14,602</td>
<td>EUR 1.2 billion</td>
<td>EUR 4 billion</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

- 74% of EaSI stakeholders declared in 2018 that they have used / will use EaSI outputs.
- 64% of EaSI stakeholders declared in 2018 that they have used / will use EU-funded social policy innovation for policymaking or implementation.
- 14,602 job placements were obtained from the start of the targeted mobility schemes in 2015 and ‘Your first EURES job’ in 2016 until the end of the first semester of 2020.
- 30,942 vacancies were handled in the first semester of 2020 by 11 EURES cross-border partnerships.
- EUR 1.2 billion worth of loans were awarded to 97,271 microenterprises between 2014 and 2020 thanks to EUR 222.7 million in guarantees for 104 microfinance intermediaries.
- EUR 4 billion of financing for micro- and social enterprises is expected to be unlocked at the end of the borrowing period thanks to the 141 contracts under the microfinance / social entrepreneurship axis.