IMPLEMENTATION OF E-COHESION

General characteristics

NETHERLANDS

No. of **targeted national/regional operational programmes** covering ERDF/CF: **4**

No. of **e-Cohesion systems**: **1**

At a glance:

e-Cohesion system: EFRO-Webportal.

Introduction of the system: Operational since 2015.

Type of the system: National system - it covers four regional OPs and does not support any Interreg programmes.
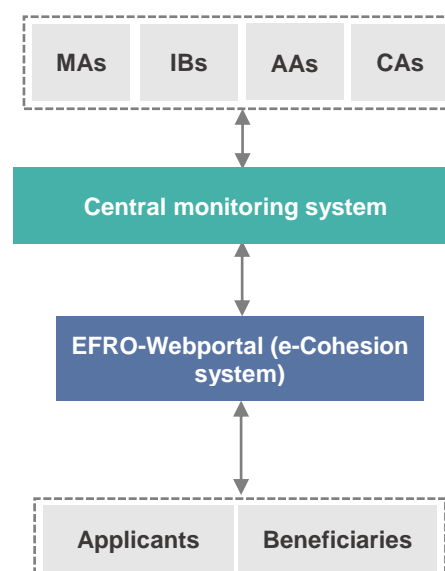
Implementation mode: Highly centralised.

Use during 2021-2027: The system will be used in the funding period 2021 - 2027.

Fund coverage of the system: ☑ ERDF ☐ CF

Context and structure of e-Cohesion

- Netherland's implementation of e-Cohesion is **highly centralised** – EFRO-Webportal is the only system used in the country and covers 4 OPs;
- EFRO-Webportal is linked with Netherland's central monitoring system via interface;
- It is not known whether the system is connected with the **European Commission's System for Fund Management (SFC2014)** or **national registers**;
- All major **authorities** access the data submitted by applicants and beneficiaries through the central monitoring system;
- The e-Cohesion system supports not only the key processes related to implementation, but also handles the application process. Thus, **applicants and beneficiaries** exchange information directly using EFRO-Webportal.

MAs	IBs	AAs	CAs

Central monitoring system

EFRO-Webportal (e-Cohesion system)

Applicants	Beneficiaries

Key principles of e-Cohesion: interoperability and once-only encoding

Principles: Extensive reuse of information.

EFRO-Webportal **supports once-only encoding**. Data and documents provided by beneficiaries are shared with all relevant authorities.
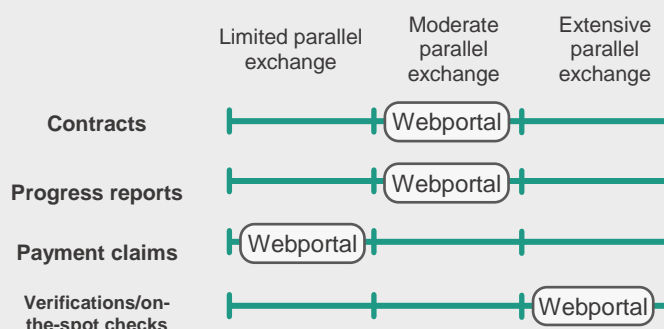
The system **extensively supports the pre-filling of information**:

- Information is pre-filled based on data entered during the project application and during previous steps of the operation.
- **The pre-filling of information is highly valued** – nearly all beneficiary respondents using EFRO-Webportal aware of this functionality perceived it as useful to their operations (resulting in efficiency gains and reducing the number of errors).

Parallel data exchanges: Moderate exchange of information outside of the system.

EFRO-Webportal is the officially provided solution for applicants and beneficiaries. **Data exchanges outside the system are extensive for verifications/on-the-spot checks,** and are moderate during the preparation of contracts and progress reports.

	Limited parallel exchange	Moderate parallel exchange	Extensive parallel exchange
Contracts		Webportal	
Progress reports		Webportal	
Payment claims	Webportal		
Verifications/on-the-spot checks			Webportal

Key processes: Support of project cycle from start to finish.

- **EFRO-Webportal supports all operations related to project application and implementation** (progress reports, modification requests, payment claims and management verifications / on-the-spot checks).

- **Payment claims are a key process of EFRO-Webportal** – Most beneficiary respondents indicate that they submitted all their relevant data and documents only through the system for this operation.

Functionalities: Support for most required functionalities.

- **EFRO-Webportal supports most functionalities associated with user-friendliness** (interactive forms, automatic calculations, checks for incorrect/missing data, system-generated alerts, validity of e-signature and availability of previous data).

- **Nearly all beneficiary respondents aware of the functionalities provided by EFRO-Webportal consider them as useful**, meaning that they result in notable time gains and reduce the number of errors for their users.

Results of the introduction of e-Cohesion

Effectiveness – results and simplification

- The introduction of EFRO-Webportal has resulted in **extensive improvements and simplification**;
- Nearly all respondents agree that the introduction of the system has led to significant improvements in various areas and has simplified the way they handle information compared with paper-based processes or email exchanges;
- **EFRO-Webportal has extensively improved information exchanges between authorities and beneficiaries** – most respondents report that its use has reduced repeated transmission of the same information, indicating that once-only encoding is highly valued by users of the system.

Efficiency – benefits vs costs

- **The benefits of using EFRO-Webportal compared to its costs are extensive** across beneficiaries' key processes;
- Most respondents indicate that the benefits (reduced administrative burden, simplified procedures) of using the system outweigh any associated costs (the time and effort required to use it).

User–friendliness

- **EFRO-Webportal shows extensive user-friendliness** – most beneficiaries perceive the system as easy to navigate and operate, and consider it as clear and self-explanatory;
- Indication for high satisfaction among users of e-Cohesion systems is whether authorities continue to develop and improve the existing system. In the case of EFRO-Webportal, **more than half of beneficiary respondents feel that the system's functionalities and its overall functioning are being continuously improved, indicating moderate improvements.**