

# IMPLEMENTATION OF E-COHESION

## General characteristics



**BELGIUM**



No. of **targeted national/regional operational programmes** covering ERDF/CF: **3**



No. of **e-Cohesion systems**: **2**

### At a glance:

**e-Cohesion systems:** 2 regional systems identified.

**Introduction of the systems:** The systems were introduced at different points in time during the 2014-2020 funding period. EUROGES2014 was launched in 2015 and covers 2 regional OPs, while E-Loket was launched in 2017 and covers 1 regional OP.

**Types of the systems:** Regional systems - they cover regional OPs and do not support any Interreg programmes.

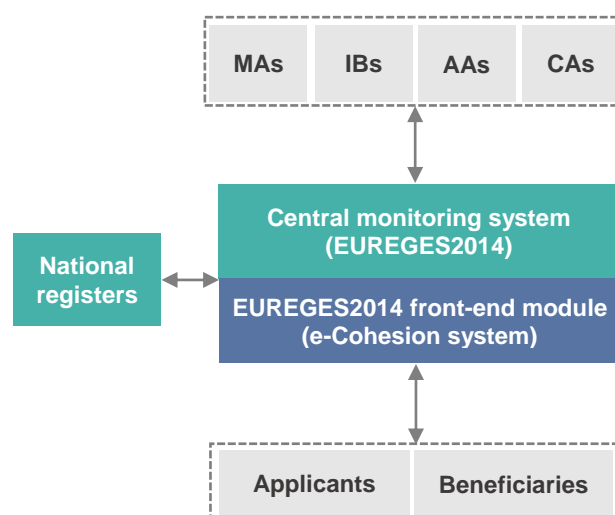
**Implementation mode:** Decentralised.

**Use during 2021-2027:** EUROGES2014 will be replaced by a newly developed system for the 2021 - 2027 funding period. It is not known whether E-Loket will continue to be used for this funding period.

**Fund coverage of the systems:** ☒ ERDF ☒ CF

## Context and structure of e-Cohesion

- Belgium's implementation of e-Cohesion is **decentralised**. The two regions Flanders (E-Loket) and Wallonia (EUROGES2014) use their own e-Cohesion systems;
- In the funding context, Brussels is regarded as a separate third region and uses the Wallonia system;
- EUROGES2014 is designed as a **central monitoring system** with an **integrated e-Cohesion front-end module**;
- E-Loket is linked to a different central monitoring system;
- E-Loket is integrated with the **European Commission's System for Fund Management (SFC2014)**;
- The systems are connected with some national registers;
- All major **authorities** access the data submitted by applicants and beneficiaries through the central monitoring system.



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



### Principles: Extensive reuse of information.

The e-Cohesion systems **support once-only encoding**. Data and documents provided by beneficiaries are shared with all relevant authorities;

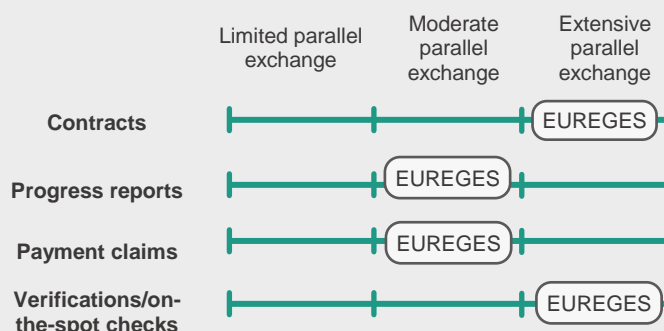
Both systems **extensively support the pre-filling of information**:

- 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 EUROGES2014 or E-Loket aware of this functionality perceived it as useful to their operations (resulting in efficiency gains and reducing the number of errors).



### Parallel data exchanges: Extensive exchange of information outside of the system.

EUROGES2014 is 1 of 2 provided solution for applicants and beneficiaries in Belgium. **Data exchanges outside the system are extensive for the preparation and signing of grants and verifications/on-the-spot checks.**



## Implementation of e-Cohesion features



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

- **EUREGES2014 supports all operations related to project application and implementation** (progress reports, modification requests, payment claims and management verifications / on-the-spot checks);



**Functionalities:** Support for all required functionalities, including interactive forms.

- **EUREGES2014 supports all functionalities associated with user-friendliness** (interactive forms, automatic calculations, checks for incorrect/missing data, system-generated alerts, online status tracking validity of e-signature and availability of previous data).
- **Most beneficiary respondents aware of the functionalities provided by EUREGES2014 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 EUREGES2014 has resulted in **moderate improvements and simplification**;
- Most 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;
- **EUREGES2014 has moderately improved information exchanges between authorities and beneficiaries** – more than half of respondents report that its use has reduced repeated transmission of the same information.



### Efficiency – benefits vs costs

- **The benefits of using EUREGES2014 compared to its costs are moderate** across beneficiaries' key processes;
- More than half of 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

- **Beneficiaries using EUREGES2014 report moderate levels of user-friendliness** – more than half of beneficiaries perceive the system as easy to navigate and operate but most respondents do not consider it as clear and self-explanatory;
- An 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 EUREGES2014, nearly all beneficiary respondents feel that the **system's functionalities and its overall functioning are not being continuously improved**.

