Ex-post evaluation of the Programme for employment and social solidarity – PROGRESS 2007-2013 and recommendations for the successor programmes to PROGRESS 2014-2020

Synthesis Report

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Acronyms

AAR Annual Activity Reports

AMP Annual Management Plans

APMR Annual Performance Monitoring Reports

'Circus campaign' 'Do you know what social Europe can do for you?' campaign

DG EMPL Directorate General Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion

EaSI Programme for Employment and Social Innovation

EC European Commission

EEO European Employment Observatory

EES European Employment Strategy

EGGE Network of Experts on Employment and Gender Equality issues

EIC European Integration Consortium

ESCO European Skills, Competencies and Occupations taxonomy

ESF European Social Fund

EURES European Job Mobility Portal

EVM European Vacancy Monitor

EVRR European Vacancy and Recruitment Report

FDAD 'For Diversity Against Discrimination' campaign

GPG 'Gender Pay Gap' campaign

LGBTIQ Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender Intersex and Questioning

LLP Lifelong Learning Programme

MLP Mutual Learning Programme

NCP National Contact Points

NGO Non-governmental Organisation

OECD Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development

OMC Open Method of Coordination

PARES 'partnerships between employment services'

PCM Programme Committee Members

PES Public Employment Service

REC Rights, Equality and Citizenship programme

SPE Service Public Emploi

ToR Terms of Reference

SILC Statistics on Income and Living Conditions

SF Strategic Framework

WEESP Web Tool for Evaluated Employment Services Practices

YoM Youth on the Move Campaign

Executive Summary

This evaluation analysed the results of PROGRESS funded actions, its delivery processes and governance mechanisms. The assignment responded to evaluation questions concerning specific types of actions (analytical activities, action grants, awareness raising, sharing and learning) or elements of the process (participation, governance, transversal issues, etc.). The analysis covered the period 2007-2013, but paid greater attention to the period 2009-2013, since the mid-term evaluation took place. The primary data collection for the assignment was undertaken in 2013. The evaluation was informed by existing monitoring data, interviews with 213 persons involved in different aspects of the programme, a substantial document review and targeted studies concerning specific issues (such as the Youth on the Move campaign). The assignment primarily followed a qualitative and case study based research design. The cases analysed were chosen to represent a variety of types of activities/ outputs as well as to cover the different policy areas of PROGRESS.

This executive summary is structured according to the main evaluation questions.

What were the outcomes of actions funded by PROGRESS?

The activities funded by PROGRESS aim at producing a range of outcomes, depending on the type and the objectives of the action or output. The activities analysed in this assignment have largely proved to be relevant and worthwhile in the context of the EU agenda for employment and social policies and the state of play of those specific policy areas.

The **analytical activities** analysed each filled a knowledge gap at EU level in a specific thematic area. The primary emphasis of the PROGRESS analytical activities reviewed was on understanding the policy problems (knowing about the problem and factors associated with it) and on identifying 'what worked' (policies, strategies, and interventions). Less emphasis was given to understanding the 'know-how' (how to translate a theoretical policy solution into an effective practice), 'know-who' (the role of target groups and stakeholders) and 'know-why' (why an action is required in relation to certain values).

The impact of PROGRESS analytical activities was especially evident in changing the understanding of the policy issues addressed by PROGRESS. The analytical activities built the knowledge base amongst users (academics, NGOs [non-governmental organisations], policymakers and social partners) in the areas addressed. They were an important source of evidence in a number of EU level social policy documents reviewed.

The evaluation gathered evidence of the use of analytical activities by different audiences (policy makers, experts, researchers, NGOs). The extent to which they were used varied. The identification of clear policy recommendations, 'success factors' and costs and efficiency gains were identified as key factors influencing uptake and use of PROGRESS analytical activities.

PROGRESS funds different types of awareness raising activities (presidency events, seminars, campaigns) and this evaluation focused on the **awareness raining campaigns**. All the campaigns analysed were linked to a broader EU agenda. All four campaigns examined had an 'informative' element whereby they aimed to make EU citizens aware of their rights (e.g. not to be discriminated against) or of the possibilities available to them. In addition, several of the campaigns aimed to change certain attitudes and to influence behaviours or practices such as:

- Encouraging young people to be mobile;
- Making people more tolerant to diversity, reprehend and report discriminatory actions;
- Encouraging employers to practice 'equal pay' and shift people's attitudes to gender-based differences in remuneration.

While overall the campaigns succeeded in reaching their audience, unfortunately there is hardly any evidence on the extent to which the campaigns contributed to these broader objectives of behavioural change.

Other outcomes identified include:

- The campaigns addressed issues that were not sufficiently addressed at national level (in some countries at least);
- The EU wide campaigns informed national campaigns and national actors learnt from the experience of awareness raising in other countries;
- The campaigns' EU label gave local partner organisations improved visibility, credibility and access to information.

However, the evaluation also found that, considering the limited resources available to all the campaigns, it would have been useful to define the campaigns' objectives more specifically and to make sure they were achievable, so as to target and prioritise the actions. The extent to which the campaigns were informed by ex-ante research varied and consequently the fit between the campaign objectives and actions put in place was not always optimal.

The evaluation analysed the outcomes of the **sharing and learning activities** that are implemented through regular seminars/ exchanges organised at EU level. These include:

- The Mutual Learning Programme (MLP) in the field of employment;
- The PES to PES dialogue, also in the field of employment;
- The Peer Reviews on Social Protection and Social Inclusion;
- Good practice seminars in the field of gender equality; and
- Seminars in the field of non-discrimination.

Overall, the seminars are highly relevant with regard to the EU policy agenda. The planning of these events and the fact that they are discussed in cooperation with the policy committees ensures a good match with the annual priorities of the Commission. The events mostly attract participants who are involved with the issues discussed in their countries, though there are differences between the policy areas due to the level and type of institutionalisation of certain policy issues. For example, the structures dealing with employment issues and those dealing with gender equality or discrimination have different levels of similarities across the EU.

The evaluation found that the feedback received on these events is overall positive. Participants appreciate in particular the openness and quality of the debate. Where monitoring data were available, the number of satisfied or very satisfied participants was over 75 %. Participants reported having learnt about new aspects of a given

policy or practice. Some people also reported having achieved a better understanding of the EU level agenda in a given field, though many people who attend these events already have a good understanding of the EU agenda as they are also members of other EU groups. There is evidence that the development of contacts and networks led to follow-up exchanges that in turn have broader effects. Building on the findings of the evaluation of the Social Protection and Social Inclusion Peer Reviews, the evaluation also found that sharing and learning activities supported consensus-framing among participants.

The evaluation identified cases of sharing and learning events that informed discussions in participating institutions. Some examples of changes at national level or of events that triggered further cooperation between countries/ experts were also identified.

The extent to which the examples of policy and practice presented at events are able to trigger policy learning and transfer depends strongly on the similarities in context and structures, the participation of the right experts and access to information and documentation about the practice that can be referred to in further work at national level.

The diversity of the **action grants** analysed makes the discussion of their outcomes in a transversal and comparable manner a challenge. Each call (or series of calls) has specific policy objectives and its own logic, meaning that the success of all projects cannot be measured against a single set of criteria.

Nevertheless, the outcomes of action grants can be grouped into the following five categories:

- Awareness-raising;
- Production of knowledge and transmission of expertise;
- Strengthened cooperation among different stakeholders;
- Agenda setting; and
- Practice and/or policy evolution or change.

The first type of outcomes is the most frequently cited and identified type of result, while examples of policy evolution or change that can be attributed to action grants are less common.

Not all action grants have as an objective to directly inform national policy developments, but when this is the case, the following types of grants appear to be linked with stronger success (take up of results):

- Grants where a large share of the funding focuses on one country;
- Where the actions funded are sufficiently specifically defined to enable reaching tangible outcomes in the two years of project duration;
- Where the organisations that are expected to mainstream the findings are core partners in the project.

Another added value of the action grants was that they enabled the participant to focus on issues that are underfunded or not a priority at national level (e.g. several anti-discrimination calls). Though this work may not directly lead to policy change, it contributes to changing the understanding of the topic and can result in setting the agenda.

How have the results of the actions supported the developments of particular policy areas?

A key success factor of PROGRESS is the close articulation between the planning of activities and the EU-level policy agenda. The annual planning of the programme is closely linked to the annual policy planning. The relevance of PROGRESS funded activities to the EU agenda is consequently high in all five policy areas; PROGRESS was a key instrument enabling EU action.

The evaluation found examples of PROGRESS funded activities that enabled participants to take the policy agenda on the given topic a step forward in all five policy areas. A particular strength of the programme is that it enables the Commission to sequence the work on a specific issue combining different types of actions and outputs. Studies, campaigns, seminars and action grants deliver different results and hence need to be combined to inform policy for instance, about youth guarantees, restructuring, the gender pay gap, homelessness and discrimination based on sexual orientation.

However, the way these different actions coordinate and complement each other is not always articulated explicitly nor presented to the external stakeholders, and the synergies remain mostly within the Commission. This means that though a coherent picture of what is funded through PROGRESS in a given policy area exists, the interrelationships are not sufficiently apparent from the outside.

Were the access and participation of the different actors (including national, regional and local authorities, civil society and social partners) and the involvement of the participating countries in PROGRESS appropriate?

PROGRESS succeeded in reaching out to a very broad variety of organisations. It involved: public authorities including ministries, agencies, regional and local bodies; social partners and sectoral bodies; civil society organisations; research institutions and research companies. It involved organisations from the EU, national, regional and local levels. The programme succeeded in overcoming one of the shortcomings of previous programmes which was the distribution of funds to too many small scale activities and local organisations. Compared to the predecessor programmes, PROGRESS saw the strong involvement of national or regional organisations with the capacity to transfer the learning arising from the actions funded into national contexts. Overall the participation of different types of organisations in the programme was optimal; however, the following two types of organisations could have usefully been involved more frequently:

- The involvement of social partners was strong in the area of working conditions, but could be enhanced in the other strands, in particular in sharing and learning activities and action grants; and
- The involvement of private companies (other than research consultancies) as important players in ensuring some of the EU policy goals could be enhanced, in particular in action grants.

However, the participation of these types of organisations is not a key objective of PROGRESS.

The extent to which the participating countries were involved varied according to the activities. Analytical activities largely cover all EU countries. There were a significant number of studies that did not cover the candidate and pre-candidate countries taking part in PROGRESS (Croatia, FYROM, Serbia, Turkey). The participation in sharing and learning activities depends on the initiative of the countries themselves. Though the number of participants is restricted, it is rare that a country is refused participation. While some countries participate very frequently (e.g. NL, CZ, EL, CY, EE), others

rather rarely take advantage of the possibilities offered (e.g. LI, LU, SK, LT, HU). The award of action grants is based on quality criteria solely (no geographical criteria are used). Participants from some countries are more successful in winning PROGRESS grants than others. Organisations from Italy, France, Slovenia and the UK led a proportionately large share of the projects (35 % of all the projects). Associated partners are also frequently coming from Italy, UK, France and Spain.

Though in general organisations from EU-12 (+Croatia) countries (i.e. those that joined in 2004 and later) participate less frequently than EU-15 countries there are notable exceptions (e.g. SI in action grants or CZ in sharing and learning). This possibly indicates that the trend in participation is equalising.

The evaluation also analysed the process of participation of candidate and pre-candidate countries. It found that the differences in participation were not because the countries had an associate status, but rather due to the level of activity of organisations from these countries. The evaluation also found that the so called 'progressive approach' to participation (phasing-in) was not optimum and quite complex, therefore it was not implemented consistently.

Has the governance of the programme enabled a positive impact and if so how? What impact has the programme management had, since the focus was on the integrated programme?

The direct management of PROGRESS by the European Commission offers the already mentioned advantage of aligning the programme with the EU priorities. The fact that the Commission has a strong role in the governance process ensures that the design of activities and the specifications of calls for proposals are fit for the evolving EU policy agenda.

The PROGRESS Committee was the vehicle for bringing together the five policy areas of PROGRESS (employment, social inclusion and social protection, working conditions, anti-discrimination and gender equality) under one integrated forum. This on one hand, simplified the procedure (one committee instead of five), but on the other hand it meant that the members directly present in the committee cannot cover all policy areas and consultation prior to meetings is required. The Commission involves and informs the respective policy committees in the decisions on planning in a given policy area. At the national level, PROGRESS committee members mostly consult members of respective policy committees to discuss priorities, even though some policy committees appear to be more frequently contacted than others.

The survey of PROGRESS committee members and National Contact Points carried out for this evaluation showed mixed levels of satisfaction with the workings of the committee when it comes to programming, implementation and dissemination of PROGRESS. This is likely to be related to differences in expectations among the members of the committee. The area that a significant minority of committee members was not satisfied with was the level of engagement in dissemination and valorisation of PROGRESS outcomes.

How has the definition of the strategic framework supported the management of PROGRESS? Was the complementarity and coordination with other EU programmes in direct and shared management (particularly ESF) optimal?

The logic of PROGRESS, its objectives and expected effects are articulated in the so called Strategic Framework. This clarifies the contribution the programme is expected to make to the different processes to support governance at EU level. A key feature of the Strategic Framework is that it is not linked to specific policy priorities and aims, but it concerns the logic and conditions of EU level policy making processes. The

Strategic Framework identifies to which aspects of the policy making process PROGRESS is expected to contribute (e.g. evidence-based policy making, stakeholder engagement, etc.). The Strategic Framework defines commonalities between the policy areas in terms of the policy making process (that should be evidence-based, participatory, etc.), but it does not define the policy priorities towards which the actions funded contribute. The priorities are defined at a different level (policy initiatives). This has had some advantages:

- The programme is flexible and can be adjusted to evolving needs; and
- The objectives are achievable for a programme of this nature and size (for example, PROGRESS alone cannot realistically contribute to employment rates).

However, this also presents difficulty with identifying the concrete contribution of PROGRESS in each policy area, which is what many external stakeholders are interested in understanding (e.g. how does PROGRESS contribute to employment policies).

The following main usages of the Strategic Framework were identified:

- The Strategic Framework is used to communicate the logic of the programme;
- The Strategic Framework identifies the similarities in terms of EU actions between the five policy areas. This has the potential of improving the flow of lessons on aspects of activities that are common to different policy areas;
- The Strategic Framework has also helped to improve the monitoring of the programme through the definition of performance indicators and the annual monitoring report. This information is used within the Commission, but also externally. Nevertheless, the reports have not been optimum with respect to some reporting needs and in particular the need to understand the contribution of the programme to specific policy priorities was not clear.

Compared to the situation with predecessor programmes, the Strategic Framework and the coordinated governance were an improvement. The Strategic Framework did create greater clarity over what the programme is expected to achieve across the policy areas. The planning of and reporting on the programme were improved. The shortcomings of this approach were the lack of thematic reporting.

However, the management of the programme did not succeed in creating synergies with the European Social Fund (ESF). While several PROGRESS funded actions, for example the social experimentation action grants, have the potential to inform ESF spending at national level, the evaluation found no evidence of such developments.

How has the mainstreaming of cross-cutting issues on gender equality and non-discrimination been operationalised?

The 'transversal' or 'cross-cutting' issues in PROGRESS:

- Promoting gender equality;
- Ensuring non-discrimination; and,
- Fighting social exclusion.

The fact that several policy areas of PROGRESS correspond to some of these transversal issues creates a challenge for analysing the level of mainstreaming.
The evaluation looked at:

- On one hand, to what extent PROGRESS funded activities addressed these issues thematically (as a main focus or secondary focus); and

- On the other hand, to what extent these issues were taken into account in the execution of PROGRESS funded activities.

In terms of thematic coverage, outside activities funded through policy strands corresponding to these transversal issues (gender equality, anti-discrimination, but also social protection and inclusion), the evaluation found that:

- The employment strand frequently covered the topic of gender equality (e.g. gender issues being addressed in studies in the area of employment);
- The topic of anti-discrimination was less frequently covered;
- The thematic coverage of transversal issues in activities funded under working conditions was less clear.

Gender equality was also one of the aspects monitored when it comes to participation in PROGRESS funded activities. Many projects reported paying attention to gender equality in their project teams as well as in the delivery of activities. The other transversal topics were less frequently mentioned as being paid specific attention.

Were the valorisation and dissemination of results of the actions appropriate?

PROGRESS funds a number of activities that provide useful lessons for EU and national level policy making. However, greater use of these outcomes could be made if the dissemination and valorisation efforts were reinforced.

At the moment, most dissemination and valorisation activities take place at the level of individual activities. This means that the projects communicate their findings to their own audience, the studies are presented at separate seminars, the contractors for sharing and learning activities have dissemination tools about the seminars they organise, etc. However, as concluded earlier, one of the strengths of PROGRESS is that it contributes to building up knowledge and evidence around a policy area or issue through a series of different activities. The existing dissemination efforts do not enable the communication of lessons learnt in a thematic manner (cross-cutting the different types of actions).

The budget allocated specifically to transversal programme management including dissemination, monitoring and evaluation is between 0.55 % and 1.7 % of the programme expenditure per year. This is too low to allow for more substantial and strategic dissemination and communication activities. Many activities have built in a communication budget, but this does not meet the needs of transversal communication.

Recommendations

Building on the above findings and focusing on the shortcomings identified, the evaluation concluded with the following recommendations:

1. There should be dissemination and valorisation strategies for the successor programme(s) and its individual elements. Particular attention should be paid to thematic dissemination according to policy priorities.
2. Knowledge management of the results of the programme should be improved.
3. The effect of analytical activities funded by the programme should be further improved by strengthening the focus on identifying transferable lessons and better communication of results.

4. The effect of sharing and learning activities should be further enhanced by mainstreaming the well-established practices within some parts of PROGRESS into all sharing and learning seminars.

5. Action grants should focus on those areas where there is a need for policy innovation or reform at EU or at national level. The decision to fund transnational or national actions should continue to take into account the objectives of the call.

6. Careful planning should be undertaken and support given to ensure the success of social experimentation.

7. Awareness raising campaigns should better take into account the nature of the problem in the countries and should be underpinned by prior analysis on most appropriate communication tools to reach desired target groups.

8. More precision is required in specifying objectives concerning transversal issues in the new programmes.

9. An indicator tree should be developed for the programme building on the Strategic Framework and be utilised for the monitoring and evaluation of the programme.

Synthèse

Cette évaluation a permis d'analyser les résultats des actions financées par le programme PROGRESS, ses processus de mise en œuvre et ses mécanismes de gouvernance. La mission consistait à répondre à des questions d'évaluation concernant un certain type d'actions (activités analytiques, financement d'actions, sensibilisation, partage et apprentissage) ou un élément de la procédure (participation, gouvernance, questions transversales, etc.). L'analyse couvrait la période de 2007 à 2013, mais s'intéressait plus particulièrement à la période de 2009 à 2013, depuis l'évaluation à mi-parcours. La collecte primaire des données pour la mission a été réalisée en 2013. L'évaluation a été renseignée par les données de suivi existantes, des entretiens avec 213 personnes impliquées dans différents aspects du programme, une étude approfondie des documents et des études ciblées portant sur des questions spécifiques (telle que la campagne Jeunesse en mouvement). Principalement, la mission a suivi un modèle de recherche basé sur des études qualitatives et des études de cas. Les cas analysés ont été choisis de manière à représenter une diversité de types d'activités/ engagements, ainsi que pour couvrir les différents domaines politiques du programme PROGRESS.

La présente synthèse est structurée à partir des principales questions de l'évaluation.

Quelles ont été les résultats des actions financées par PROGRESS ?

Les activités financées par PROGRESS visaient à produire divers résultats, en fonction du type et des objectifs de l'action ou de l'engagement. L'analyse des activités, dans le cadre de cette mission, a largement prouvé qu'elles sont pertinentes et utiles dans le contexte de l'Agenda de l'UE pour les politiques de l'emploi et sociales et l'état d'avancement de ces domaines spécifiques.

Les **activités analytiques** analysées ont chacune comblé des lacunes de connaissances au niveau de l'UE dans un domaine thématique spécifique. L'étude des activités analytiques de PROGRESS s'est intéressée principalement à comprendre les problèmes politiques (connaître le problème et les facteurs qui s'y associent) et à identifier « ce qui fonctionnait » (politiques, stratégies et interventions). Elle s'est moins intéressée à comprendre le « savoir-faire » (comment traduire une solution politique théorique en pratique efficace), le « savoir qui » (le rôle des groupes ciblés et des parties prenantes) et le « savoir comment » (pourquoi une action est nécessaire par rapport à certaines valeurs).

L'impact des activités analytiques de PROGRESS a été particulièrement évident pour permettre de changer la compréhension des questions politiques prises en charge par PROGRESS. Les activités analytiques ont renforcé la base de connaissances parmi les utilisateurs (universitaires, O.N.G., décideurs et partenaires sociaux) dans les domaines traités. Elles ont été une importante source d'éléments de preuve dans un certain nombre de documents étudiés relevant de la politique sociale de l'UE.

L'évaluation a permis de recueillir des éléments de preuve sur l'utilisation des activités analytiques par différents publics (décideurs, experts, chercheurs, O.N.G.). La mesure dans laquelle elles étaient utilisées variait. Des recommandations politiques claires, des « facteurs de succès », des gains d'économie et d'efficacité ont été identifiés comme étant des facteurs clés qui influencent l'adoption et l'utilisation des activités analytiques du programme PROGRESS.

Le programme PROGRESS finance différents types d'activités de sensibilisation (évènements de présidence, séminaires, campagnes) ; cette évaluation s'est concentrée sur les **campagnes de sensibilisation**. Toutes les campagnes analysées

ont été associées à un agenda plus large de l'UE. Les quatre campagnes examinées comportaient un élément d'information, grâce auquel elles envisageaient d'informer les citoyens de l'UE de leurs droits (ex. pour éviter toute discrimination) ou des possibilités dont ils disposaient. En outre, plusieurs campagnes avaient pour objectif de modifier certaines attitudes et d'influencer les comportements ou les pratiques, telles que :

- Encourager les jeunes à la mobilité.
- Rendre les gens plus tolérants par rapport à la diversité, signaler et condamner les actions discriminatoires.
- Encourager les employeurs à pratiquer la parité salariale et à faire changer les attitudes par rapport aux différences de rémunération basées sur le genre.

Bien que globalement les campagnes soient parvenues à atteindre leur public, il n'existe malheureusement que très peu d'éléments de preuve sur la mesure dans laquelle les campagnes ont contribué à ces objectifs plus larges de changement des comportements.

D'autres résultats identifiés sont notamment :

- Les campagnes ont abordé des questions qui n'étaient pas suffisamment étudiées au niveau national (du moins dans certains pays).
- Les campagnes à l'échelle de l'UE ont renseigné des campagnes nationales et les intervenants nationaux ont tiré des acquis de l'expérience des campagnes de sensibilisation dans d'autres pays.
- L'étiquette UE des campagnes a permis aux organisations partenaires locales d'avoir une meilleure visibilité, une plus grande crédibilité et un meilleur accès à l'information.

Toutefois, l'évaluation a également permis de constater que, compte tenu des ressources limitées dont disposaient toutes les campagnes, il aurait été utile de définir les objectifs des campagnes de manière plus spécifique et de s'assurer qu'ils étaient réalisables, afin de cibler les actions et de les hiérarchiser par ordre prioritaire. La mesure dans laquelle les campagnes étaient renseignées par des recherches préliminaires variait et par conséquent, l'adéquation entre les objectifs de la campagne et les actions mises en œuvre n'était pas toujours optimale.

L'évaluation a permis d'analyser les résultats des **activités de partage et d'apprentissage** qui sont mises en œuvre grâce à des séminaires/échanges réguliers, organisés au niveau de l'UE. Il s'agit notamment :

- Du Programme d'apprentissage mutuel dans le domaine de l'emploi.
- Du dialogue SPE à SPE, également dans le domaine de l'emploi.
- Des évaluations par les pairs sur la protection sociale et l'inclusion.
- Des séminaires de bonnes pratiques dans le domaine de l'égalité hommes-femmes.
- Des séminaires dans le domaine de la lutte contre la discrimination.

Globalement, les séminaires sont extrêmement pertinents par rapport à l'agenda politique de l'UE. La planification de ces évènements et le fait qu'ils soient discutés en coopération avec les comités politiques garantissent une bonne adéquation avec les priorités annuelles de la Commission. Les évènements attirent principalement des participants concernés par les questions discutées dans leur pays, bien qu'il existe des différences entre les domaines politiques en raison du niveau et du type d'institutionnalisation de certaines questions politiques. Par exemple, les structures qui gèrent les questions d'emploi et celles qui traitent de l'égalité hommes-femmes ou de la discrimination ont différents niveaux de similitudes à travers l'UE.

L'évaluation a permis de constater que les retours à propos de ces évènements sont globalement positifs. Les participants apprécient particulièrement l'ouverture d'esprit et la qualité des débats. Dans les cas où des données de suivi étaient disponibles, le nombre de participants satisfaits ou très satisfaits était supérieur à 75 %. Les participants ont signalé qu'ils avaient pu être informés sur de nouveaux aspects d'une politique ou d'une pratique donnée. Certains ont également signalé que cela leur avait permis de mieux comprendre l'agenda au niveau de l'UE dans un domaine donné, bien que de nombreux participants à ces évènements possèdent déjà de bonnes connaissances de cet agenda, car ils sont également membres d'autres groupes de l'UE. On a constaté que le développement de contacts et de réseaux a permis des échanges ultérieurs, qui à leur tour ont eu des effets plus larges. En s'appuyant sur les résultats des évaluations par les pairs sur la protection sociale et l'inclusion sociale, on a pu constater que les activités de partage et d'apprentissage contribuaient à la mise en place d'un consensus parmi les participants.

L'évaluation a identifié des évènements de partage et d'apprentissage, qui ont renseigné des discussions dans les institutions participantes. On a également identifié des exemples de changement au niveau national ou d'évènements qui ont déclenché d'autres coopérations entre les pays/experts.

La mesure dans laquelle les exemples de politiques et de pratiques présentées aux évènements peuvent déclencher l'apprentissage et le transfert des politiques dépend fortement des similitudes de contexte et de structures, de la participation des experts appropriés, de l'accès à l'information et aux documents concernant les pratiques auxquelles on peut se rapporter pour des travaux complémentaires au niveau national.

La diversité des **financements d'actions** analysés rend difficile la discussion de leurs résultats d'une manière transversale et comparable. Chaque appel (série d'appels) a des objectifs politiques spécifiques et sa propre logique, autrement dit, le succès de tous les projets ne peut pas être mesuré en fonction d'un ensemble de critères uniques.

Cependant, les résultats des financements d'actions peuvent être regroupés dans les cinq catégories suivantes :

- Sensibilisation.
- Production de connaissances et transmission d'expertise.
- Renforcement de la coopération entre les différentes parties prenantes.
- Mise en place d'un agenda.
- Évolution ou changement des pratiques et/ou des politiques.

Le premier type de résultats est le plus fréquemment cité et identifié, alors que les exemples d'évolution ou de changement de politique pouvant être attribués au financement des actions sont moins courants.

Tous les financements d'actions n'ont pas pour objectif de renseigner directement des développements de politique nationale, et lorsque c'est le cas, les différents types de financement semblent être associés à une meilleure réussite (adoption des résultats) :

- Des financements dont une grosse partie cible un seul pays.
- Lorsque les actions subventionnées ont une définition suffisamment spécifique pour permettre d'atteindre des résultats tangibles pendant la durée de deux ans du projet.
- Lorsque les organisations prévues pour intégrer les résultats sont des partenaires principaux du projet.

Une autre valeur ajoutée des financements d'actions était qu'ils permettaient de se concentrer sur des questions qui étaient sous subventionnées ou qui n'étaient pas une priorité au niveau national (ex. plusieurs appels pour la lutte contre la discrimination). Bien que ces travaux n'entraînent pas nécessairement un changement de politique direct, ils contribuent à modifier la compréhension du sujet et peuvent permettre de fixer l'agenda.

Comment les résultats des actions ont-ils soutenu les développements dans des domaines politiques spécifiques ?

Un facteur clé de la réussite du programme PROGRESS est l'articulation étroite entre la planification des activités et l'agenda politique au niveau de l'UE. La planification annuelle du programme est étroitement liée à la planification politique annuelle. La pertinence des activités financées par le programme PROGRESS pour l'agenda de l'UE est par conséquent indéniable dans les cinq domaines politiques. PROGRESS a été un instrument clé contribuant à permettre l'action de l'UE.

L'évaluation a révélé des exemples d'activités financées par le programme PROGRESS qui ont permis de faire avancer l'agenda politique sur le sujet concerné d'une étape supplémentaire dans les cinq domaines politiques. Un atout particulier du programme est qu'il permet à la Commission d'établir un ordre séquentiel des travaux sur un sujet spécifique, en associant différents types d'actions et d'engagements. Les études, les campagnes, les séminaires et les financements d'action fournissent des résultats différents et par conséquent, ils doivent être associés pour renseigner la politique, par exemple en ce qui concerne les garanties pour la jeunesse, la restructuration, l'écart de rémunération hommes-femmes, le sans-abrisme et la discrimination basée sur l'orientation sexuelle.

Toutefois, la manière dont ces différentes actions sont coordonnées et se complètent n'est pas toujours articulée de manière explicite et elle n'est pas non plus présentée aux parties prenantes externes, les synergies demeurant principalement au sein de la Commission. Cela signifie que bien qu'il existe un tableau cohérent de ce qui est financé par le programme PROGRESS dans un domaine politique donné, les interrelations ne sont pas suffisamment apparentes depuis l'extérieur.

L'accès et la participation des différents acteurs (y compris les autorités nationales, régionales et locales, la société civile et les partenaires sociaux) et l'implication des pays participants au programme PROGRESS étaient-ils appropriés ?

Le programme PROGRESS est parvenu à atteindre une très grande variété d'organisations. Il s'agissait notamment des autorités publiques : ministères, agences, organismes régionaux et locaux, partenaires sociaux et instances sectorielles, organisations de la société civile, instituts de recherche et cabinets d'études. Il s'agissait également d'organisations de l'UE, ainsi qu'aux niveaux national, régional et local. Le programme est parvenu à surmonter l'un des écueils des programmes précédents, à savoir la distribution de fonds à un trop grand nombre d'activités à petite échelle et d'organisations locales. Par rapport aux programmes qui l'ont précédé, PROGRESS a permis une forte implication des organisations nationales ou régionales qui ont la capacité de transférer aux contextes nationaux les acquis tirés des actions financées.

Globalement, la participation des différents types d'organisations au programme a été optimale. Cependant, les deux types d'organisations suivants auraient pu être impliqués plus fréquemment de manière utile :

- L'implication des partenaires sociaux était forte dans les domaines des conditions de travail mais aurait pu être renforcée dans les autres volets, en particulier dans les activités de partage et d'apprentissage et dans le financement des actions.
- L'implication des sociétés privées (autres que les cabinets d'études) en tant qu'acteurs importants pour veiller à ce que certains des objectifs politiques de l'UE pourrait être améliorée, en particulier dans les financements d'actions.

Cependant, la participation de ces types d'organisation n'est pas un objectif clé du programme PROGRESS.

La mesure dans laquelle les pays participants étaient impliqués variait en fonction des activités. Les activités analytiques couvrent largement tous les pays de l'Union européenne. Il y avait un nombre important d'études qui ne couvraient pas les pays candidats et candidats potentiels à l'adhésion qui participaient au programme PROGRESS (Croatie, ARYM, Serbie, Turquie). La participation aux activités de partage et d'apprentissage dépend de l'initiative des pays proprement dits. Bien que le nombre de participants soit restreint, il est rare que la participation soit refusée à un pays. Alors que certains pays participent très fréquemment (ex. NL, CZ, EL, CY, EE), d'autres tirent plutôt rarement parti des possibilités proposées (ex. LI, LU, SK, LT, HU). L'attribution des financements d'action est basée exclusivement sur des critères de qualité (aucun critère géographique n'est utilisé). Les participants de certains pays réussissent mieux que d'autres à obtenir des subventions du programme PROGRESS. Des organisations italiennes, françaises, slovènes et britanniques formaient une part proportionnellement importante des projets (35 % de tous les projets). Les partenaires associés étaient aussi fréquemment originaires d'Italie, du Royaume-Uni, de la France et de l'Espagne.

Bien qu'en général, des organisations des pays de l'UE-12 (+ la Croatie) (c.-à-d. ceux qui ont adhéré en 2004 et plus tard) participent moins fréquemment que les pays de l'UE-15, on constate des exceptions notoires (ex. SI pour les financements d'actions ou CZ pour le partage et l'apprentissage). Cela indique peut-être que la tendance de participation est en train de s'équilibrer.

L'évaluation a également analysé le processus de participation des pays candidats et candidats potentiels à l'adhésion. Cela a permis de constater que les différences de participation ne provenaient pas du fait que les pays avaient un statut d'associé, mais étaient plutôt liées au niveau d'activité des organisations dans ces pays. L'évaluation a également révélé que la soi-disant « approche progressive » à la participation n'était pas optimale et était plutôt complexe et que par conséquent, elle n'était pas mise en œuvre de manière cohérente.

La gouvernance du programme a-t-elle produit un impact positif et dans ce cas, comment ? Quel impact la gestion du programme a-t-elle eu, puisque l'objectif ciblait le programme intégré ?

La gestion directe du programme PROGRESS par la Commission européenne procure l'avantage déjà mentionné d'aligner le programme sur les priorités de l'UE. Le fait que la Commission joue un rôle important dans le processus de gouvernance garantit que la conception des activités et le cahier des charges des appels à propositions soient adaptés à l'agenda politique en évolution constante de l'UE.

Le Comité du programme PROGRESS a permis de réunir les cinq domaines politiques de PROGRESS (emploi, intégration sociale des protections sociales, conditions de travail, lutte contre la discrimination et égalité hommes-femmes) en un seul forum intégré. Cela a permis d'une part de simplifier la procédure (un seul comité au lieu de cinq) mais d'autre part, cela signifie que les membres directement présents dans le

Comité ne peuvent pas couvrir tous les domaines politiques et qu'il est nécessaire de recourir à la consultation avant les réunions. La Commission implique les comités politiques respectifs et les informe des décisions concernant la planification dans un domaine politique donné. Au niveau national, les membres du comité PROGRESS consultent principalement les membres des comités politiques respectifs, afin de discuter des priorités, même si certains comités politiques semblent être contactés plus fréquemment que d'autres.

Le sondage réalisé dans le cadre de la présente évaluation auprès des membres du Comité PROGRESS et des Points de contacts nationaux a permis de constater des niveaux de satisfaction mixtes concernant le fonctionnement du Comité, en ce qui concerne la programmation, la mise en œuvre, et la diffusion de PROGRESS. Il est probable que cela soit lié aux différences d'attentes parmi les membres du Comité. Un domaine dans lequel une minorité importante de membres du Comité n'était pas satisfaite concernait le niveau d'engagement dans la diffusion et la valorisation des résultats du programme PROGRESS.

Comment la définition du cadre stratégique a-t-elle soutenu la gestion du programme PROGRESS ? Est-ce que la complémentarité et la coordination avec d'autres programmes de l'UE en gestion directe et partagée (en particulier FSE) étaient optimales?

La logique du programme PROGRESS, ses objectifs et les effets attendus sont articulés dans le Cadre stratégique. Cela permet d'expliquer clairement la contribution attendue du programme aux différents processus pour soutenir la gouvernance au niveau de l'UE. Un élément clé du Cadre stratégique est qu'il n'est pas lié à des priorités et objectifs politiques spécifiques, mais qu'il concerne la logique et les conditions des processus de prise de décision politique au niveau de l'UE. Le Cadre stratégique identifie les aspects de décisions politiques auxquels le programme PROGRESS est censé contribuer (ex. politiques élaborées sur des bases factuelles, engagement des parties prenantes, etc.). Le cadre stratégique définit les points communs entre les domaines politiques en termes de processus décisionnel (qui doit s'appuyer sur des bases factuelles, être participatif, etc.), mais il ne définit pas les priorités politiques auxquelles contribuent les actions financées. Les priorités sont définies à un niveau différent (initiative politique). Cela a présenté certains avantages :

- Le programme est souple et peut être adapté en fonction de l'évolution des besoins.
- Les objectifs sont réalisables pour un programme de cette nature et de cette taille (ex. PROGRESS seul ne peut pas contribuer, de manière réaliste, aux taux d'emploi).

Cependant, cela représente également une difficulté pour l'identification de la contribution concrète de PROGRESS dans chacun des domaines politiques, ce que de nombreux intervenants externes souhaitent comprendre (ex. comment PROGRESS contribue aux politiques d'emploi).

L'évaluation a permis d'identifier les principaux usages suivants du Cadre stratégique :

- Le Cadre stratégique est utilisé pour communiquer la logique du programme.
- Le Cadre stratégique identifie les similitudes en termes d'actions de l'UE entre les cinq domaines politiques. Cela présente le potentiel d'améliorer la circulation des acquis sur les aspects des activités qui sont communs aux différents domaines politiques.
- Le Cadre stratégique a également permis d'améliorer le suivi du programme grâce à la définition des indicateurs de performance et au rapport annuel d'activités. Ces informations sont utilisées au sein de la Commission, mais également à l'extérieur.

Néanmoins, les rapports n'ont pas été optimaux en ce qui concerne certains besoins d'information et en particulier, la nécessité de comprendre la contribution du programme à des priorités politiques spécifiques n'était pas claire.

Par rapport à la situation avec des programmes précédents, le Cadre stratégique et la gouvernance coordonnée ont constitué une amélioration. Le Cadre stratégique a créé une plus grande clarté sur les résultats attendus du programme dans les divers domaines politiques. La planification du programme et les rapports de mise en œuvre se sont améliorés. Les lacunes liées à cette approche étaient le manque de rapports thématiques.

Cependant, la gestion du programme n'est pas parvenue à créer des synergies avec le Fonds social européen. Alors que plusieurs actions financées par le programme PROGRESS, par exemple le financement des actions d'expérimentation sociale, ont le potentiel de renseigner des dépenses du FSE au niveau national, l'évaluation n'a constaté aucune preuve d'un tel développement.

Comment l'intégration des questions transversales sur l'égalité hommes-femmes et la lutte contre la discrimination a-t-elle été mise en œuvre ?

Les questions « transversales » dans le programme PROGRESS sont les suivantes :

- Promouvoir l'égalité hommes-femmes.
- Assurer la lutte contre la discrimination.
- Lutter contre l'exclusion sociale.

Le fait que plusieurs domaines politiques du programme PROGRESS correspondent à certaines de ces questions transversales crée un défi pour l'analyse du degré d'intégration.

L'évaluation a étudié :

- D'une part, dans quelle mesure les activités financées par PROGRESS ont abordé ces questions de manière thématique (comme priorité principale ou secondaire).
- D'autre part, dans quelle mesure ces questions ont été prises en compte dans l'exécution des activités financées par PROGRESS.

En termes de couverture thématique, en dehors des activités financées par des volets politiques correspondant à ces questions transversales (égalité hommes-femmes, lutte contre la discrimination mais aussi protection sociale et inclusion), l'évaluation a constaté que :

- Le volet emploi couvrait fréquemment le sujet de l'égalité hommes-femmes (ex. les questions de genre abordées dans les études dans le domaine de l'emploi).
- Le sujet de la lutte contre la discrimination était couvert moins souvent.
- La couverture thématique des questions transversales dans les activités financées dans le cadre des conditions de travail était moins claire.

L'égalité hommes-femmes était également l'un des aspects contrôlés en matière de participation aux activités financées par PROGRESS. De nombreux projets ont signalé qu'ils s'intéressaient à l'égalité hommes-femmes dans leurs équipes de projets, ainsi que dans la réalisation des activités. Les autres sujets transversaux étaient moins fréquemment cités comme recevant une attention spécifique.

Est-ce que la valorisation et la diffusion des résultats des actions ont été appropriées ?

Le programme PROGRESS finance un certain nombre d'activités qui procurent des leçons utiles pour les décideurs politiques de l'UE et au niveau des pays. Cependant, il serait possible de faire meilleur usage de ces résultats si les efforts de diffusion et de valorisation étaient renforcés.

Actuellement, la plupart des activités de diffusion et de valorisation ont lieu au niveau des activités individuelles. Par conséquent, les projets communiquent leurs constatations à leur propre public, les études sont présentées dans des séminaires séparés, les sous-traitants pour les activités de partage et d'apprentissage possèdent des outils de diffusion à propos des séminaires qu'ils organisent, etc. Cependant, comme nous l'avons conclu précédemment, l'un des atouts du programme PROGRESS est qu'il contribue à renforcer les connaissances et les éléments probants autour d'un domaine ou d'une question, au travers d'une série d'activités différentes. Les efforts actuels de diffusion ne permettent pas la communication des acquis de manière thématique (d'une manière qui soit transversale aux différents types d'actions).

Le budget attribué spécifiquement à la gestion transversale du programme, notamment la diffusion, le suivi et l'évaluation, est compris entre 0,55 % et 1,7 % des dépenses annuelles du programme. Ce chiffre est trop faible pour permettre des activités plus complètes et plus stratégiques de diffusion et de communication. De nombreuses activités ont intégré un budget de communication, qui toutefois ne répond pas aux besoins de la communication transversale.

Recommandations

D'après les conclusions précédentes et en se concentrant sur les lacunes identifiées, l'évaluation a conclu en faisant les recommandations suivantes :

1. Des stratégies de diffusion et de valorisation doivent être mises en place pour le(s) programme(s) suivant(s) et ses (leurs) éléments individuels. Il convient de prêter une attention toute particulière à la diffusion thématique en fonction des priorités politiques.
2. Il convient d'améliorer la gestion des connaissances relatives aux résultats du programme.
3. L'effet des activités analytiques financées par le programme doit être amélioré en renforçant le ciblage de l'identification d'acquis transférables et par une meilleure communication des résultats.
4. L'effet des activités de partage et d'apprentissage doit être encore valorisé en intégrant les pratiques bien établies de certaines parties du programme PROGRESS à tous les séminaires de partage et d'apprentissage.
5. Les financements d'actions doivent se concentrer sur les domaines où l'innovation ou la réforme politique est nécessaire au niveau de l'UE ou au niveau national. La décision de financer des actions transnationales ou nationales doit continuer à tenir compte des objectifs de l'appel.
6. Il faudra réaliser une planification minutieuse et apporter un soutien pour garantir la réussite de l'expérimentation sociale.
7. Les campagnes de sensibilisation devraient mieux tenir compte de la nature du problème dans les pays et être soutenues par l'analyse préalable des outils de communication les mieux appropriés pour atteindre les groupes cibles souhaités.
8. Il faudra davantage de précision dans la spécification des objectifs concernant les questions transversales dans les nouveaux programmes.

9. Il convient de développer une arborescence des indicateurs pour le programme, en s'appuyant sur le cadre stratégique et qui sera utilisée pour le suivi et l'évaluation du programme.

Zusammenfassung

Die vorliegende Evaluierung analysiert die Ergebnisse der im Rahmen von PROGRESS geförderten Maßnahmen sowie deren Umsetzung und Governance-Mechanismen. Die Aufgabe bestand darin, Antworten auf Evaluierungsfragen zu bestimmten Maßnahmenarten (analytische Maßnahmen, Finanzhilfe für Maßnahmen, Informationskampagnen, gegenseitiges Lernen) bzw. zu einzelnen Elementen des Verfahrens (Beteiligung, Governance, transversale Themen usw.) zu finden. Die Analyse bezieht sich auf die Zeit von 2007 bis 2013, wobei insbesondere die Jahre nach der Halbzeitbewertung (2009 bis 2013) ins Auge gefasst wurden. Die Primärdatensammlung für diesen Auftrag fand 2013 statt. Die Evaluierung basiert auf bereits bestehenden Überwachungsdaten, Gesprächen mit 213 an verschiedenen Aspekten des Programms beteiligten Personen, einer umfassenden Durchsicht von Dokumenten sowie auf gezielten Untersuchungen bestimmter Maßnahmen (wie beispielsweise der Leitinitiative „Jugend in Bewegung"). Der Auftrag wurde vornehmlich auf Grundlage von Fallstudien und qualitativer Forschung ausgeführt. Bei der Wahl der Fallbeispiele wurde darauf geachtet, dass sie unterschiedliche Maßnahmenarten und -ergebnisse repräsentieren und die verschiedenen PROGRESS-Politikfelder abdecken.

Im Folgenden werden die Antworten auf die wichtigsten Evaluierungsfragen der Reihe nach zusammengefasst.

Welche Ergebnisse wurden durch die von PROGRESS geförderten Maßnahmen erzielt?

Die von PROGRESS geförderten Maßnahmen sollen je nach Art und Zweck unterschiedliche Ergebnisse erzielen. Die im Rahmen dieses Auftrags analysierten Maßnahmen waren sowohl im Kontext der EU-Agenda für Beschäftigungs- und Sozialpolitik sowie im Hinblick auf den derzeitigen Stand der Dinge in diesen Politikfeldern relevant und lohnenswert.

Jede der **analytischen Maßnahmen,** die analysiert wurden, füllte eine auf europäischer Ebene bestehende Wissenslücke hinsichtlich einer bestimmten Thematik. Das vordergründige Ziel der im Rahmen von PROGRESS durchgeführten analytischen Maßnahmen, die evaluiert wurden, war das Verständnis der politischen Probleme (Erkennen des Problems und der damit in Zusammenhang stehenden Faktoren) sowie die Ermittlung dessen, „was funktioniert" (Maßnahmen, Strategien und Interventionen). Weniger wichtig war hierbei das Verständnis des „Know-how" (die effektive Umsetzung einer theoretischen Lösung in die Praxis), des „Know-who" (die Rolle der Zielgruppen und Interessenvertreter) und des „Know-why" (warum eine bestimmte Maßnahme im Hinblick auf bestimmte Werte erforderlich ist).

Den analytischen Maßnahmen war insbesondere ein neues Verständnis der von PROGRESS angegangenen politischen Themen zu verdanken. Sie konsolidierten die Wissensgrundlage der Benutzer (Akademiker, NRO, Entscheidungsträger und Sozialpartner) in den angesprochenen Bereichen und bildeten eine wichtige Informationsquelle für einige der untersuchten sozialpolitischen EU-Dokumente.

Im Verlauf der Evaluierung wurden Daten über die Inanspruchnahme der analytischen Maßnahmen durch unterschiedliche Gruppe (Entscheidungsträger, Experten, Forscher, NRO) gesammelt. Diese Inanspruchnahme erfolgte in unterschiedlich hohem Maße. Die wichtigsten Faktoren, die das Aufgreifen und die Inanspruchnahme der von PROGRESS durchgeführten analytischen Maßnahmen beeinflussten, waren klare politische Empfehlungen sowie die Identifizierung von Erfolgsfaktoren, Kosten und Effizienzgewinnen.

PROGRESS unterstützt verschiedene Arten von **Sensibilisierungsmaßnahmen** wie Präsidentschaftsveranstaltungen, Seminare und Kampagnen; die vorliegende Evaluierung legt den Schwerpunkt auf Informationskampagnen. Alle vier untersuchten Kampagnen standen in Zusammenhang mit der allgemeinen EU-Agenda und beinhalteten ein „informatives" Element, um EU-Bürger über ihre Rechte (z. B. nicht diskriminiert zu werden) oder über die ihnen zur Verfügung stehenden Möglichkeiten aufzuklären. Einige von ihnen zielten zudem auf die Änderung von Verhaltens- und Verfahrensweisen, um beispielsweise:

▪ die Mobilität junger Menschen zu fördern;
▪ die Toleranz gegenüber Vielfalt und die Verurteilung und Meldung diskriminierender Handlungen zu fördern;
▪ Arbeitgeber zur Zahlung von gleichem Lohn für gleiche Arbeit anzuhalten und die allgemeine Haltung zu geschlechtsbedingten Lohnunterschieden zu ändern.

Die Kampagnen erreichten zwar ihr Zielpublikum, doch gibt es kaum Belege für den Umfang, in dem sie zur angestrebten Haltungsänderung beitrugen.

Des Weiteren wurden folgende Ergebnisse ermittelt:

▪ Die Kampagnen behandelten Probleme, die (zumindest in einigen Ländern) nicht ausreichend auf nationaler Ebene thematisiert wurden.
▪ Die EU-weiten Kampagnen beeinflussten die nationalen Kampagnen, und die nationalen Akteure lernten aus den Sensibilisierungskampagnen in anderen Ländern.
▪ Die Schirmherrschaft der EU über diese Kampagnen verlieh den lokalen Partnerorganisationen mehr Sichtbarkeit, Glaubwürdigkeit und besseren Zugang zu Informationen.

Die Evaluierung ergab allerdings auch, dass es angesichts der begrenzten Mittel, die für die Kampagnen zur Verfügung stehen, nützlich gewesen wäre, die Ziele der Kampagnen etwas genauer zu spezifizieren und deren Durchführbarkeit sicherzustellen, um den Maßnahmen eine Richtung zu geben und Priorität zu verleihen. Bei Planung der Kampagnen wurden die Ergebnisse der Ex-ante-Forschung nicht immer in demselben Maße berücksichtigt, so dass die Ziele und die durchgeführten Aktionen nicht immer ganz übereinstimmten.

Des Weiteren wurden im Verlauf der Evaluierung die Ergebnisse der Maßnahmen im Bereich des **gegenseitigen Lernens** analysiert**,** die in Form von regelmäßigen Seminaren und Austauschtreffen auf EU-Ebene umgesetzt wurden. Diese Maßnahmen sind:

▪ das Programm für gegenseitiges Lernen im Bereich der Beschäftigung
▪ der Dialog zwischen den öffentlichen Arbeitsverwaltungen, ebenfalls im Bereich der Beschäftigung
▪ Die Peer-Review-Seminare über sozialen Schutz und soziale Eingliederung
▪ Seminare über bewährte Verfahren im Bereich der Geschlechtergleichstellung
▪ Seminare zum Thema Nichtdiskriminierung

Im Allgemeinen sind die Seminare äußerst relevant für die EU-Agenda. Die Planung der Veranstaltungen und die Tatsache, dass sie mit den zuständigen Ausschüssen besprochen werden, gewährleistet eine gute Übereinstimmung mit den jährlichen Prioritäten der Kommission. Die Teilnehmer der Veranstaltungen waren in erster Linie Personen, die sich auch in ihrem Herkunftsland mit den erörterten Fragen befassten; Art und Umfang der Institutionalisierung in einem bestimmten Bereich können jedoch von Land zu Land variieren. So weisen die in den verschiedenen EU-Ländern für

Beschäftigungsfragen zuständigen Strukturen und diejenigen, die sich mit Geschlechtergleichstellung oder Diskriminierung befassen, nicht immer dasselbe Maß an Gemeinsamkeiten auf.

Die Reaktionen auf diese Veranstaltungen waren insgesamt positiv. Die Teilnehmer schätzten insbesondere die Offenheit und Qualität der Debatten. Sofern entsprechende Daten vorlagen, lag der Prozentsatz derjenigen, die zufrieden oder sehr zufrieden waren, bei über 75 %. Die Teilnehmer gaben an, etwas Neues über eine bestimmte Politik oder bestimmte Verfahrensweisen gelernt zu haben. Einige von ihnen erklärten zudem, mehr über die EU-Agenda auf einem bestimmten Gebiet erfahren zu haben, obwohl viele der Veranstaltungsteilnehmer bereits ein gutes Verständnis der EU-Agenda besitzen, da sie auch Mitglied anderer EU-Gruppen sind. Es gibt Hinweise darauf, dass neu geknüpfte Kontakte und die Gründung von Netzwerken zu einem weiteren Austausch führen, der wiederum eine allgemeinere Wirkung hat. Die Evaluierung der Peer-Review-Seminare über sozialen Schutz und soziale Eingliederung ergab zudem, dass die Maßnahmen im Bereich des gegenseitigen Lernens den Konsens unter den Teilnehmern unterstützten.

Schließlich gab es Veranstaltungen für gegenseitiges Lernen, die sich auch auf die Diskussionen in den teilnehmenden Institutionen auswirkten, sowie einige Fälle, in denen Veranstaltungen oder auf nationaler Ebene vorgenommene Änderungen eine weitere Kooperation zwischen Ländern/Experten zur Folge hatten.

Der Umfang, in dem die auf einer Veranstaltung präsentierten Maßnahmen- und Praxisbeispiele zu politischen Lernprozessen und einem Erfahrungstransfer führen, hängt in hohem Maße von der Ähnlichkeit der Strukturen und Gegebenheiten der Länder ab sowie von der Teilnahme der richtigen Experten und dem Zugang zu Dokumenten und Informationen über das jeweilige Praxisbeispiel, auf die dann bei der Umsetzung auf nationaler Ebene zugegriffen werden kann.

Die transversale und vergleichende Diskussion der Ergebnisse, die von den analysierten **Finanzhilfen für Maßnahmen** erzielt wurden, stellt aufgrund deren Vielseitigkeit eine echte Herausforderung dar. Jede Aufforderung (oder Serie von Aufforderungen) hat ihre eigene Logik und verfolgt spezielle politische Ziele, so dass der Erfolg der verschiedenen Projekte nicht anhand derselben Kriterien gemessen werden kann.

Nichtsdestoweniger können die Ergebnisse der Finanzhilfen für Maßnahmen einer der folgenden fünf Kategorien zugeteilt werden:

- Sensibilisierung
- Wissensproduktion und Transfer von Fachkenntnis
- Intensivere Kooperation unter verschiedenen Interessenvertretern
- Festlegung einer Tagesordnung
- Gestaltung und/oder Änderung von Praktiken oder Maßnahmen

Die erste Ergebniskategorie wird am häufigsten genannt, während Beispiele für die Gestaltung oder Änderung von Praktiken oder Maßnahmen, die mit einer Finanzhilfe für Maßnahmen durchgeführt wurden, weniger häufig sind.

Nicht alle Finanzhilfen für Maßnahmen haben das Ziel, direkten Einfluss auf die nationale Politikgestaltung zu nehmen. Ist dies jedoch der Fall, scheinen die folgenden Finanzhilfearten höhere Erfolgsquoten (d. h. Anwendung der Ergebnisse) aufzuweisen:

- Finanzhilfen, die größtenteils für ein spezielles Land vorgesehen sind
- Finanzhilfen für Maßnahmen, die ausreichend genau definiert sind, um im Verlauf der zweijährigen Projektdauer greifbare Ergebnisse erzielen zu können

▪ Finanzhilfen, bei denen die für die Verbreitung der Ergebnisse verantwortlichen Organisationen auch Kernpartner des Projekts sind

Die Finanzhilfen für Maßnahmen hatten außerdem den Vorteil, sich auf Bereiche konzentrieren zu können, die unterfinanziert waren oder innerhalb des Landes nur wenig Beachtung finden (z. B. mehrere Aufrufe im Bereich der Antidiskriminierung). Obwohl dies nicht unbedingt zu direkten politischen Änderungen führt, trägt die Arbeit dennoch zu einem besseren Verständnis der Thematik bei und kann dazu führen, dass sie Einfluss auf die politische Tagesordnung nimmt.

Wie haben die Ergebnisse der Maßnahmen die Weiterentwicklung bestimmter Politikfelder unterstützt?

Ein wichtiger Erfolgsfaktor von PROGRESS ist die hohe Übereinstimmung zwischen der Planung der Tätigkeit und der EU-Agenda. Die jährliche Programmplanung ist eng an die Planung der jährlichen Agenda geknüpft. Die von PROGRESS geförderten Maßnahmen sind daher für alle fünf Politikbereiche der EU-Agenda äußerst relevant und PROGRESS spielte bei der Umsetzung der EU-Maßnahmen eine entscheidende Rolle.

Die Evaluierung fand in allen fünf Bereichen Beispiele für PROGRESS-Maßnahmen, die die politische Tagesordnung zum jeweiligen Thema noch einen Schritt weitergebracht haben. Eine besondere Stärke des Programms liegt darin, dass die Kommission die Arbeiten auf einem bestimmten Gebiet in einer bestimmten Reihenfolge ausführen und unterschiedliche Arten von Maßnahmen und Ergebnissen miteinander kombinieren kann. Studien, Kampagnen, Seminare und Finanzhilfen für Maßnahmen erzielen unterschiedliche Ergebnisse und müssen daher miteinander kombiniert werden, um auf die Politik – beispielweise in den Bereichen Jugendgarantien, Umstrukturierung, ungleicher Lohn, Obdachlosigkeit und Diskriminierung aufgrund von sexueller Orientierung – Einfluss zu nehmen.

Die Art und Weise, in der die unterschiedlichen Maßnahmen kombiniert werden und einander ergänzen, wird den externen Interessenvertretern jedoch nicht immer ausdrücklich mitgeteilt und die Synergien erfolgen hauptsächlich innerhalb der Kommission. So existiert zwar ein zusammenhängendes Bild der von PROGRESS unterstützten Maßnahmen in einem bestimmten Bereich, doch ihre Wechselbeziehung ist von außen nicht immer ausreichend klar zu erkennen.

Hatten die verschiedenen Akteure, wie nationale, regionale und lokale Behörden, die Zivilgesellschaft und die Sozialpartner, ausreichenden Zugang zu PROGRESS und haben sie und die teilnehmenden Länder sich hinreichend beteiligt?

PROGRESS ist es gelungen, eine ganze Bandbreite von Organisationen anzusprechen. Dazu gehörten öffentliche Organe wie Ministerien, Agenturen, regionale und lokale Behörden, Sozialpartner und sektorale Verbände, zivilgesellschaftliche Organisationen, Forschungsinstitute und Forschungsunternehmen. Dazu kommen Organisationen auf nationaler, regionaler, lokaler und auf EU-Ebene. Es wurde ein Nachteil früherer Programme beseitigt, der darin bestand, dass die Mittel auf zu viele kleine Maßnahmen und lokale Organisationen verteilt wurden. Im Vergleich zu den Vorläuferprogrammen konnte PROGRESS eine starke Beteiligung nationaler oder regionaler Organisationen verzeichnen, die über die Kapazität verfügten, die im Verlauf der Maßnahmen gewonnenen Erkenntnisse auf den nationalen Kontext zu übertragen.

Insgesamt nahm eine optimale Zahl unterschiedlicher Organisationen an dem Programm teil. Die beiden folgenden Arten von Organisationen hätten jedoch häufiger teilnehmen sollen:

- Sozialpartner – ihre Teilnahme war gut im Bereich der Arbeitsbedingungen, hätte in den anderen Bereichen, insbesondere Finanzhilfen für Maßnahmen und gegenseitiges Lernen, jedoch besser sein können
- Privatunternehmen (abgesehen von Forschungsunternehmen) – sie tragen in hohem Maße zur Verwirklichung einiger EU-Ziele bei, daher sollte ihre Teilnahme insbesondere im Bereich der Finanzhilfe für Maßnahmen stärker gefördert werden

Die Teilnahme dieser Organisationen ist jedoch kein vorrangiges Ziel von PROGRESS.

Die Teilnahme einzelner Länder variierte je nach Aktivität. Analytische Maßnahmen fanden in fast allen EU-Ländern statt. Es gab jedoch eine beträchtliche Zahl von Studien, die die an PROGRESS teilnehmenden Bewerber- und potenziellen Bewerberländer nicht einbezogen (Kroatien, EJRM, Serbien, Türkei). Die Teilnahme am gegenseitigen Lernen hängt von der Eigeninitiative der Länder ab. Die Teilnehmerzahlen sind zwar begrenzt, doch kommt es nur selten vor, dass einem Land die Teilnahme verwehrt wird. Einige Länder nehmen sehr häufig teil (z. B. NL, CZ, EL, CY, EE), während andere die gebotenen Möglichkeiten nur selten in Anspruch nehmen (z. B. LI, LU, SK, LT, HU). Die Finanzhilfen werden ausschließlich auf Grundlage von Qualitätskriterien (und nicht von geografischen Kriterien) gewährt. Die Teilnehmer einiger Länder sind erfolgreicher mit ihren Anträgen auf eine PROGRESS-Finanzhilfe als andere. Ein verhältnismäßig hoher Prozentsatz der Projekte (35 %) wurde von Organisationen aus Italien, Frankreich, Slowenien und dem Vereinigten Königreich geleitet. Auch Partnerorganisationen stammten häufig aus Italien, dem Vereinigten Königreich, Frankreich und Spanien.

Organisationen aus EU-12-Ländern (plus Kroatien), d. h., aus denjenigen Ländern, die der EU 2004 und später beigetreten sind, nehmen im Allgemeinen weniger häufig teil als diejenigen aus EU-15-Ländern, wobei es jedoch einige offensichtliche Ausnahmen gibt (z. B. SI bei maßnahmenbezogenen Finanzhilfen oder CZ bei gegenseitigem Lernen). Dies deutet möglicherweise darauf hin, dass sich der Trend zur Teilnahme allmählich ausgleicht.

Für die Evaluierung wurde außerdem die Teilnahme der Bewerber- und potenziellen Bewerberländer analysiert. Dabei wurde festgestellt, dass die Unterschiede nicht auf den Bewerberstatus der Länder, sondern vielmehr auf den Aktivitätsgrad ihrer Organisationen zurückzuführen waren, und dass der sogenannte „schrittweise Ansatz" zur Teilnahme recht komplex und nicht optimal war und daher nicht einheitlich eingeführt wurde.

Wurde durch die Governance des Programms eine positive Wirkung ermöglicht und wenn ja, auf welche Weise? Welche Wirkung wurde durch die Programmleitung erzielt, seit der Schwerpunkt auf ein integriertes Programm gelegt wurde?

Die Tatsache, dass PROGRESS direkt von der Europäischen Kommission geleitet wird, hat den bereits erwähnten Vorteil, dass das Programm auf die Prioritäten der EU abgestimmt werden kann. Da die Kommission eine maßgebliche Rolle im Bereich der Governance des Programms spielt, ist gewährleistet, dass die Aktivitäten und die Spezifikationen der Aufforderung zur Einreichung von Vorschlägen der aktuellen politischen EU-Agenda entsprechen.

Der PROGRESS-Programmausschuss hatte die Aufgabe sicherzustellen, dass die fünf PROGRESS-Politikbereiche (Beschäftigung, Sozialschutz und soziale Integration, Arbeitsbedingungen, Antidiskriminierung und Gleichstellung der Geschlechter) in einem Forum zusammengeführt wurden. Einerseits wurde das Verfahren hierdurch vereinfacht (nur ein Ausschuss anstelle von fünf), andererseits können die anwesenden Ausschussmitglieder nicht alle Politikfelder abdecken, so dass eine Konsultation vor den Treffen erforderlich ist. Die zuständigen politischen Ausschüsse werden von der Kommission bei der Planung im Bereich des jeweiligen Politikfelds konsultiert und informiert. Auf nationaler Ebene wenden sich die Mitglieder des PROGRESS-Programmausschusses meist an die Mitglieder der politischen Ausschüsse, um mit ihnen die Prioritäten zu besprechen. Allerdings werden einige politische Ausschüsse offenbar öfter als andere konsultiert.

Die Umfrage unter den Mitgliedern des PROGRESS-Programmausschusses und den Nationalen Kontaktstellen ergab ein unterschiedlich hohes Maß an Zufriedenheit mit der Funktion des Ausschusses im Hinblick auf Gestaltung und Umsetzung des Programms und die Verbreitung der von PROGRESS erzielten Ergebnisse. Grund hierfür dürften die unterschiedlichen Erwartungen der Ausschussmitglieder sein. Ein Aspekt, mit dem sich eine nicht zu vernachlässigende Minderheit der Ausschussmitglieder nicht zufrieden zeigte, war der Grad der Beteiligung an der Verbreitung und Umsetzung der von PROGRESS erzielten Ergebnisse.

Auf welche Weise wurde die Leitung des Programms durch die Definition des Strategischen Rahmens vereinfacht? Waren Komplementarität und Koordination mit anderen EU-Programmen unter einem direkten und geteilten Management (insbesondere in Bezug auf den ESF) optimal?

Logik, Ziele und die erhoffte Wirkung von PROGRESS sind in dem sogenannten Strategischen Rahmen festgehalten. Er verdeutlicht, welchen Beitrag das Programm zu den unterschiedlichen Verfahren zur Unterstützung der Governance auf EU-Ebene leisten soll. Ein wichtiges Merkmal des Strategischen Rahmens besteht darin, dass er nicht an bestimmte politische Ziele und Prioritäten geknüpft ist, sondern sich auf die Logik und die Bedingungen der politischen Prozesse auf EU-Ebene bezieht. Der Strategische Rahmen besagt, zu welchen Aspekten der Politikgestaltung PROGRESS einen Beitrag leisten soll (z. B. evidenzbasierte Entscheidungsfindung, Einbeziehung von Interessenvertretern usw.). Außerdem definiert er die Gemeinsamkeiten zwischen den Politikfeldern in Bezug auf das Politikgestaltungsverfahren (das evidenzbasiert, partizipatorisch usw. sein sollte), jedoch nicht die politischen Prioritäten, zu denen die geförderten Maßnahmen einen Beitrag leisten sollen. Die Prioritäten werden auf einer anderen Ebene definiert (politische Initiativen). Dies hat die folgenden Vorteile:

- Das Programm ist flexibel und kann sich ändernden Bedürfnissen angepasst werden
- Für ein Programm dieser Art und dieses Umfangs sind die Ziele realisierbar (beispielsweise könnte PROGRESS allein realistisch gesehen nicht zu den Beschäftigungsquoten beitragen)

Allerdings ist es dadurch auch schwieriger, den konkreten Beitrag von PROGRESS zu jedem Politikbereich zu ermitteln, und dies ist der Aspekt, für den sich viele externe Interessenvertreter interessieren (z. B. welchen Beitrag PROGRESS zur Beschäftigungspolitik leistet).

Der Strategische Rahmen hat einige wichtige Funktionen.

- Er wird dazu verwendet, die Logik des Programms zu kommunizieren.

- Er ermittelt die Ähnlichkeiten der EU-Maßnahmen in den fünf Politikfeldern. Dies könnte die Verbreitung von Erkenntnissen zu Aspekten verbessern, die auf verschiedene Politikfelder zutreffen.
- Durch den jährlichen Überwachungsbericht und die Definition von Leistungsindikatoren hat der Strategische Rahmen dazu beigetragen, die Überwachung des Programms zu verbessern. Diese Informationen werden sowohl innerhalb der Kommission als auch extern verwendet. Einige der Berichterstattungsanforderungen wurden durch die Berichte allerdings nicht ganz erfüllt; insbesondere die Notwendigkeit, den Beitrag des Programms zu bestimmten politischen Prioritäten verstehen zu müssen, war nicht klar formuliert.

Der Strategische Rahmen und die Governance-Koordination bildeten eine Verbesserung gegenüber den Vorgängerprogrammen. Der Strategische Rahmen erleichterte das Verständnis dessen, was das Programm in den verschiedenen Politikfeldern erreichen soll. Sowohl die Planung des Programms als auch die Berichterstattung wurden verbessert. Ein Nachteil, den dieser Ansatz allerdings hatte, war eine mangelnde thematische Berichterstattung.

Die Programmleitung schaffte es indessen nicht, Synergien mit dem Europäischen Sozialfonds zu schaffen. Obwohl mehrere der von PROGRESS geförderten Maßnahmen, wie beispielsweise die Finanzhilfen für sozialwissenschaftliche Experimente, das Potenzial haben, einige wichtige Erkenntnisse für die Verteilung der ESF-Mittel auf nationaler Ebene zu liefern, ergab die Evaluierung keine Hinweise auf einen solchen Erkenntnistransfer.

Wie wurde eine Berücksichtigung der Querschnittskriterien bezüglich Geschlechtergleichstellung und Nichtdiskriminierung in allen Politikfeldern erreicht?

Die Querschnitts- bzw. die transversalen Kriterien von PROGRESS sind:

- Förderung der Geschlechtergleichstellung
- Gewährleistung der Nichtdiskriminierung
- Bekämpfung der sozialen Ausgrenzung

Da sich mehrere PROGRESS-Politikfelder mit einigen dieser transversalen Kriterien decken, ist es schwierig, den Grad der allgemeinen Berücksichtigung zu analysieren. Im Rahmen der Evaluierung wurde untersucht, inwieweit diese Kriterien von den PROGRESS-Maßnahmen:

- (als primärer oder sekundärer Schwerpunkt) thematisiert bzw.
- in der Praxis berücksichtigt wurden.

Was die Thematisierung betrifft (außer durch Maßnahmen, die im Rahmen derjenigen Politikfelder gefördert wurden, die sich mit diesen transversalen Kriterien decken, d. h. Geschlechtergleichstellung, Nichtdiskriminierung aber auch Sozialschutz und soziale Eingliederung), so ergab die Evaluierung Folgendes:

- Der Bereich „Beschäftigung" deckte häufig auch das Kriterium „Geschlechtergleichstellung" ab (z. B. wurden Geschlechterfragen im Rahmen von Studien zur Beschäftigung aufgegriffen)
- Das Thema „Antidiskriminierung" wurde weniger häufig behandelt
- Im Bereich „Arbeitsbedingungen" war die Thematisierung von Querschnittskriterien durch die geförderten Maßnahmen weniger klar

Die Geschlechtergleichstellung war ebenfalls einer der Aspekte, die im Hinblick auf die Teilnahme an von PROGRESS geförderten Maßnahmen überwacht wurden, und bei

zahlreichen Projekten wurde sowohl bei Zusammenstellung der Projektteams als auch bei der Umsetzung der Maßnahmen auf eine Gleichstellung der Geschlechter geachtet. Den übrigen Querschnittskriterien wurde offenbar weniger Beachtung geschenkt.

Wurden die Maßnahmenergebnisse ausreichend verbreitet und genutzt?

PROGRESS fördert eine Reihe von Maßnahmen, die nützliche Erkenntnisse für die Entscheidungsfindung auf nationaler und auf EU-Ebene liefern. Diese Erkenntnisse könnten jedoch effektiver genutzt werden, wenn die Bemühungen zu ihrer Verbreitung und allgemeinen Anwendung verstärkt würden.

Derzeit erfolgen diese Bemühungen meist auf Ebene einzelner Maßnahmen, das heißt, die Projekte teilen ihre Erkenntnisse ihrem eigenen Zielpublikum mit, die Studien werden auf verschiedenen Seminaren präsentiert, die Auftragnehmer für Maßnahmen des gegenseitigen Lernens verfügen über Verbreitungsinstrumente für die Seminare, die sie organisieren, usw. Wie bereits weiter oben erwähnt, liegt aber eine der Stärken von PROGRESS darin, die Erkenntnis- und Wissensgrundlage zu einem bestimmten Bereich oder Thema anhand einer Serie verschiedener Maßnahmen zu erweitern. Die derzeitigen Bemühungen zur Verbreitung ermöglichen es jedoch nicht, die Erkenntnisse thematisch und maßnahmenübergreifend weiterzugeben.

Speziell für das transversale Programmmanagement, einschließlich Verbreitung, Überwachung und Evaluierung, wurde ein jährliches Budget in Höhe von 0,55 % bis 1,7 % der Programmausgaben bereitgestellt. Für eine substanzielle und strategische Informations- und Verbreitungstätigkeit ist dies zu wenig. Zahlreiche Tätigkeiten haben ein Kommunikationsbudget vorgesehen, das die Kosten der transversalen Kommunikation jedoch nicht deckt.

Empfehlungen

In Anbetracht der oben genannten Erkenntnisse und unter spezieller Berücksichtigung der ermittelten Mängel schloss die Evaluierung mit folgenden Empfehlungen:

1. Die Nachfolgeprogramme und deren einzelne Elemente sollten Strategien für die Verbreitung und Anwendung der Ergebnisse enthalten. Besondere Aufmerksamkeit sollte hierbei der thematischen Verbreitung gemäß den politischen Prioritäten geschenkt werden.

2. Das Wissensmanagement der Programmergebnisse ist verbesserungswürdig.

3. Die Wirkung der vom Programm geförderten analytischen Maßnahmen sollte noch verbessert werden, indem mehr Wert auf die Ermittlung übertragbarer Erkenntnisse und eine bessere Verbreitung der Ergebnisse gelegt wird.

4. Die in einigen Bereichen von PROGRESS etablierten Verfahren sollten auf allen Seminaren für gegenseitiges Lernen bekanntgemacht werden, um das Voneinanderlernen zu verbessern.

5. Finanzhilfen für Maßnahmen sollten sich auf Bereiche konzentrieren, in denen ein Reform- oder Innovationsbedarf auf EU- oder nationaler Ebene besteht. Bei der Entscheidung, ob transnationale oder nationale Maßnahmen gefördert werden oder nicht, sollten auch in Zukunft die Ziele der Aufforderung berücksichtigt werden.

6. Der Erfolg sozialwissenschaftlicher Experimente sollte durch eine sorgfältige Planung und Unterstützung sichergestellt werden.

7. Sensibilisierungskampagnen sollten die Art des jeweiligen Problems in einem Land stärker berücksichtigen. Eine im Vorfeld durchgeführte Analyse sollte ermitteln, welches Kommunikationsmittel für die Ansprache der Zielgruppe am geeignetsten ist.

8. Die Ziele für transversale Bereiche der neuen Programme sollten präziser formuliert werden.

9. Zu empfehlen ist ein Fließdiagramm, das auf den Strategischen Rahmen aufbaut und zur Überwachung und Evaluierung des Programms genutzt wird.

1 Introduction

This synthesis report was prepared by ICF GHK on behalf of DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion (DG EMPL) of the European Commission (EC). It provides analysis of the ex-post evaluation of PROGRESS 2007-2013.

1.1 Overview of PROGRESS

PROGRESS covers five policy areas: employment; social inclusion; working conditions; gender equality; and, anti-discrimination. The programme funds analytical activities, action grants, awareness raising and dissemination, sharing and learning actions as well as EU umbrella networks to respond to the EU priorities in the five areas above. The programme does not fund national interventions (these are funded through ESF or other funds). It is expected to inform EU and national policies through the dissemination of the findings of the different actions funded.

The intervention logic of PROGRESS is defined in a Strategic Framework (SF). Its outline is presented in Figure 1.1 (including modifications made since 2008). Figure 1.2 indicates the performance indicators linked to the defined immediate outcomes and Figure 1.3 indicates the performance indicators linked to the intermediate outcomes.

Figure 1.4 presents the key objectives of the Social Agenda, Europe 2020 Strategy and policy packages adopted from 2010, relevant to each of the five policy areas. Figure 1.5 provides a matrix that illustrates the manner in which developments in each of the five policy areas may contribute positively to the achievement of policy objectives of other areas. This interaction, together with combinations of the same types of activities being used in each policy area, provided the rationale for the architecture of the PROGRESS programme.

1.2 Objectives of the evaluation and evaluation questions

The assignment had two purposes:

- To provide evidence of the results achieved by the actions for the ex-post evaluation of PROGRESS; and
- To provide evidence and recommendations to support the launch of PROGRESS successor programmes: Programme for Employment and Social Innovation and the Rights, Equality and Citizenship programme.

The Terms of Reference for this assignment defined 10 evaluation questions which are presented in Table 1.1.

Table 1.1 Topics and evaluation questions

Main topic	Evaluation questions
The impact of different types of PROGRESS activities	What were the outcomes of the actions: awareness raising; awareness and dissemination activities and support for main actors?
	How have the results of the actions supported the development of particular policy areas (including for example, smart growth, sustainable growth, inclusive growth, increasing employment, reducing poverty and social exclusion and early school leavers)?
	Did the actions effectively use relevant tools available such as social policy experimentation?
The impact of PROGRESS delivery mechanisms and governance process	How have the definition of the objectives intervention logic causality factors and indicators supported the management of PROGRESS? How were these translated at the level of the implementation of the activities?
	Were the access and participation of the different actors (including national, regional and local authorities, civil society and social partners) and the involvement of the participating countries to PROGRESS appropriate?
	What impact has the programme management had, since the focus was on the integrated programme, the integration of the policy fields and synergies?
	How has the mainstreaming of cross-cutting issues on gender equality and non-discrimination been operationalised?
	Were the valorisation, capitalisation and dissemination of the results of the actions appropriate?
	Was the complementarity and coordination with other EU programmes in direct and shared management (particularly ESF) optimal?
	How has the governance of the programme (i.e. the functioning of the committee, policy coordination committees and partnership strategies) enabled a positive impact?

Source: Terms of Reference

1.2.1 Identifying the outcomes of PROGRESS and the underpinning factors

Following the Terms of Reference (ToR) the evaluation has provided evidence of the results achieved through the PROGRESS funded actions and assessed *why* and *how* these results occurred. The focus was on:

- Collecting evidence on the results, outcomes and impacts;
- Developing an understanding of how these were maximised or hindered by the ways in which the programme was designed and delivered; and,
- Understanding the contextual factors influencing the programme.

Achieving this has provided evidence on the results achieved by PROGRESS and an analysis of the impact of these results relative to the PROGRESS objectives. Particular emphasis has been given to the identification of European added value, the identification of direct effects, why things happened and how repercussions occurred.

A key expectation for this assignment was to deepen and complement the evidence available through the PROGRESS Annual Performance Monitoring Reports (APMR).

1.2.2 Evidence for the ex-post evaluation

The assignment focused on collecting evidence of PROGRESS immediate and other outcomes, identifying to what extent PROGRESS actions and implementation strategies:

- Promoted effective information and sharing of information/learning;
- Contributed to well-informed EU policies and legislation;
- Ensured better integration of cross-cutting issues;
- Ensured consistency of EU policies and legislation;

- Built capacity of national and pan-European networks; and
- Promoted high-quality participatory policy debate at EU and national level.

The five policy strands covered by PROGRESS were considered. Evidence of impacts observed in the assignment included:

- Changes in national policy practice informed by PROGRESS actions; and
- Capacity building and networking effects resulting from PROGRESS actions.

1.2.3 Providing evidence based recommendations pertinent to the PROGRESS successor programmes

In October 2011, the Commission adopted its proposal for the successor to PROGRESS, the EU Programme for Social Change and Innovation and the Rights and Citizenship Programme. They were subsequently renamed Employment and Social Innovation (EaSI) and Rights, Equality and Citizenship Programme (REC) respectively. EaSI, in addition to continuing PROGRESS like activities, will support to a greater extent social experimentation aiming to upscale successful activities via, in particular, the ESF. The REC programme will continue the support to the same types of activities as those supported under the Non-discrimination and Gender Equality strands of PROGRESS.

In order to ensure that the recommendations emerging from this assignment are both evidence based and pertinent to the PROGRESS successor programmes, the following steps were taken:

- The definition of the scope of the evaluation took account of and included activities that are 'close to' those envisaged for the future programmes (for example, social experimentation action grants and communications activities).
- The preparatory work for the two programmes was reviewed and the following identified: the key assumptions underpinning the intervention logics and the results anticipated; the anticipated delivery methods/activities; and, the organisational arrangements envisaged.
- Account was taken of the prospective new ESF Regulation and implementation guidance and the scope for up-scaling EaSI activities as well as the policy framework and interventions in the field of anti-discrimination and gender equality when framing recommendations on design, delivery mechanisms and organisational arrangements relevant to the new programmes.

1.3 Scope of assignment

Each evaluation question had a definition of its scope which informed the primary data collection activities. The assignment covered the period of PROGRESS implementation from 2007 until 2013. However, a number of issues focused on activities implemented in the period 2010-2012 (and even 2013 for some analysis).

The assignment covered all five policy areas of PROGRESS. For primary data collection, specific actions or sets of actions were selected so as to ensure good coverage of all strands across the assignment. However, greater emphasis was placed on some policy areas compared to others.

The geographical scope of the assignment covered all the participating countries (EU-27, EEA, candidate and pre-candidate countries – Croatia, FYROM, Serbia and Turkey).

Outcomes were, where appropriate, assessed at three organisational levels**:**

- EU level – to what extent PROGRESS contributed to better informed policy and practice at European level (i.e. EU legislation and policies) and informed debate at the European level.
- National level – to what extent outcomes occurred at the national level, and how PROGRESS contributed to changes in national policies, practices, capacity and debate. The outcomes at national level were analysed in general terms and not on a country by country basis, though reference is made to examples in particular countries.
- The analysis on awareness raising considered sub-national levels (regional and local). This was because the actions implemented in EU campaigns aim to have regional or

local impacts rather than national level impacts. This dimension was also taken into account in the evaluation on action grants.

▪ Institutional level – a number of analyses assessed the outcomes of participation in PROGRESS on the participating organisation and how the knowledge gained through PROGRESS was disseminated within the organisation.

1.4   Structure of the report

Section 2 briefly describes the method of approach. Section 3 summarises the findings of analysis that focused on the different activities funded by PROGRESS. They are presented by types of activity, type of outcome and policy area. Section 4 summarises the findings of the participation in PROGRESS. Findings are presented for the participation of different types of actors and by candidate and pre candidate countries. Section 5 considers governance and management issues, Section 6 transversal issues and Section 7 dissemination and valorisation. Section 8 provides conclusions and recommendations.

Figure 1.1   PROGRESS Logic Model and outline Strategic Framework

Note: Subsequent changes to the initial Strategic Framework as set out in May 2008 are presented in orange.
Source: ICF GHK based on the document 'Ensuring PROGRESS delivers results - Strategic Framework for the implementation of Progress, the EU programme for employment and social solidarity (2007-2013)', May 2008.
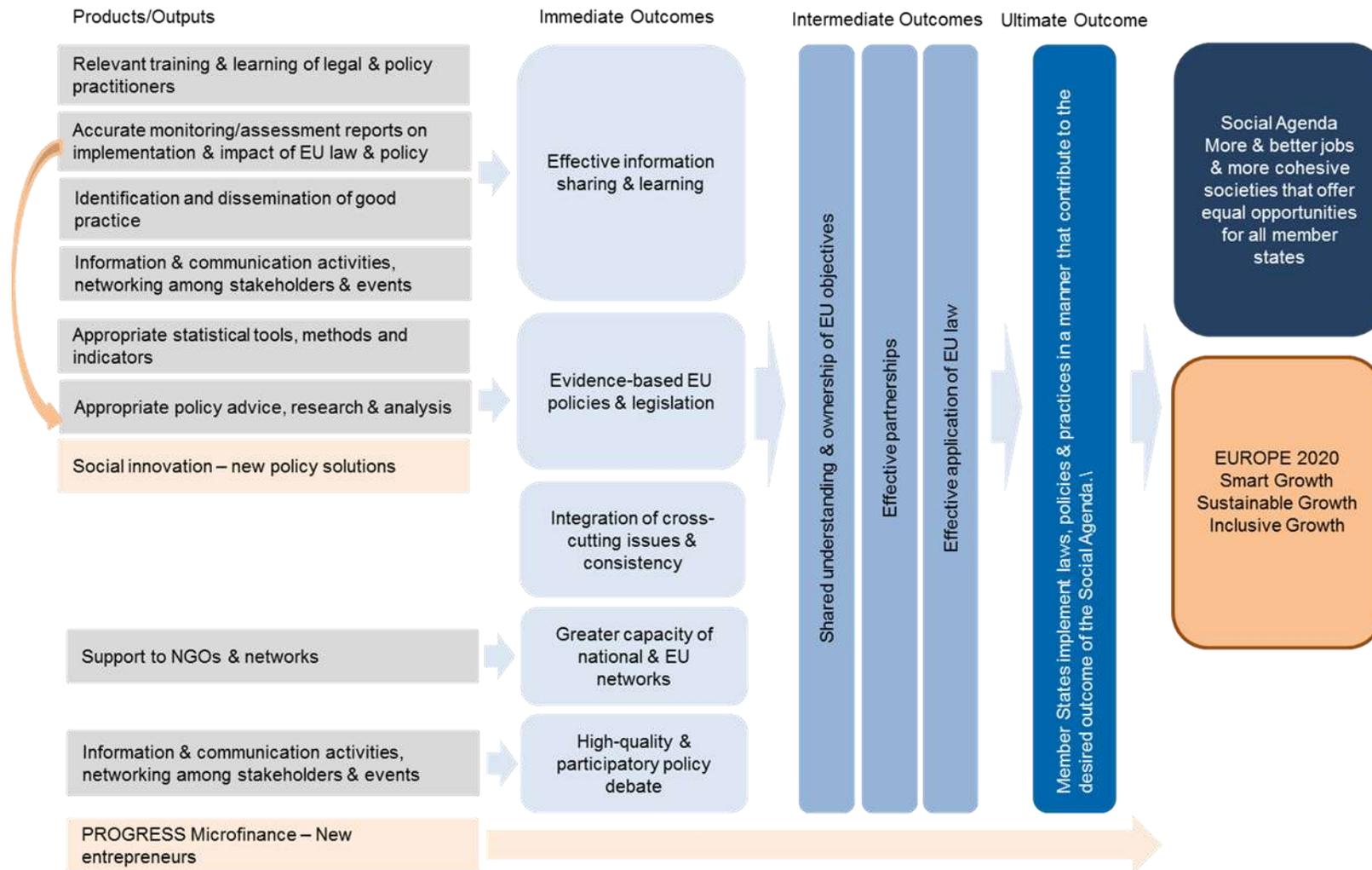
Figure 1.2   PROGRESS Performance Indicators – Immediate Outcomes

Performance indicators	Products/Outputs	Immediate Outcomes
• Number of individuals who received training or • Number of peer reviews or other mutual learning exercises • Satisfaction of participants with training • Extent to which training/peer reviews target qualified & relevant EU and national actors	Relevant training & learning of legal & policy practitioners	Effective information sharing & learning
• Number of monitoring & assessment reports • Timely, accurate & complete production of reports • User satisfaction with reports	Accurate monitoring/assessment reports on implementation & impact of EU law & policy	
• Number of publications on good practices, seminars & web based publications • Accessibility of good practices • Readership of publications, attendance at thematic seminars & downloads of web-based publications • Relevance & range of good practices identified	Identification and dissemination of good practice	
• Volume of participation at events + Number of events • Satisfaction with events • Number of visits to related websites	Information & communication activities, networking among stakeholders & events	
• Number of tools, methods & indicators developed • Satisfaction of users	Appropriate statistical tools, methods and indicators	Evidence-based EU policies & legislation
• Number of policy advice, research & analysis • Satisfaction with policy advice, research & analysis • Timely, clear and accurate policy advice, research & analysis	Appropriate policy advice, research & analysis	
• Share of funding devoted to supporting or undertaking cross-cutting issues • Whether cross-cutting issues are addressed in Progress policy sections • Whether EU rules display a common underlying logic of intervention • Extent to which Progress systematically promotes gender mainstreaming		Integration of cross-cutting issues & consistency
• Volume of funding provided to NGOs & networks + Outputs produced by EU networks (sharing & learning and evidence based activities) • Satisfaction of NGOs & networks with the relationship with the EU & national authorities	Support to NGOs & networks	Greater capacity of national & EU networks
• Volume of participation in events (Presidency conferences and other high level EU events) + Number of events (Presidency conferences and other high level EU events) • Satisfaction with events • Number of visits to related websites	Information & communication activities, networking among stakeholders & events	High-quality & participatory policy debate

Notes: Deleted indicators have not been monitored in APMR, indicators marked + have been added and measured after the document on the Strategic Framework was published in May 2008. Indicators marked blue present the measured frequency of the actions that were intended to lead to desired outputs.
Source: ICF GHK based on 'Ensuring PROGRESS delivers results - Strategic Framework for the implementation of Progress, the EU programme for employment and social solidarity (2007-2013)', May 2008 and reviews of APMR.

Figure 1.3   PROGRESS Performance Indicators – Intermediate Outcomes

Performance indicators	Intermediate Outcomes
• Transposition rate and effectiveness of application of EU law	Effective application of EU law
• Consensus on EU objectives and policies • Identification and involvement of key actors who can exert influence or change at EU or national levels • Effectiveness of partnerships	Effective partnerships
• Attitudes regarding EU objectives • How much national policy discourses or priorities reflect EU objectives	Shared understanding & ownership of EU objectives

Source: ICF GHK based on 'Ensuring PROGRESS delivers results - Strategic Framework for the implementation of Progress, the EU programme for employment and social solidarity (2007-2013)', May 2008.

Figure 1.4   Key objectives of the Social Agenda, Policy Packages and Europe 2020 Strategy relevant to each of the five PROGRESS policy areas

	Social Agenda[1]	Policy Package	Europe 2020 Strategy[2]
Employment	Achieving full employment - towards a European labour market. More and better jobs and the enhancement of skills: ▪ Modernisation of employment markets – flexicurity ▪ Initiative for the assessment of labour market and skills needs up to 2020 ▪ European Job Mobility Action Plan	**Employment package**[3] ▪ Supporting job creation: stepping up job creation across the economy, harnessing the potential of job-risk sectors, mobilising EU funds for job creation ▪ Restoring the dynamics of the labour markets: reforming the labour markets, investing in skills, moving towards a European labour market; ▪ Improving EU governance: reinforcing coordination and multilateral surveillance, effectively involving the social partners, strengthening the link between employment policies and relevant financial instruments	▪ Target: 75 % of the population aged 20-64 should be employed ▪ Flagship initiatives 'Agenda for new skills and jobs', 'Youth on the move'
Social inclusion	▪ Combating poverty and promoting social inclusion: ▪ A community initiative on minimum income schemes and the integration of people excluded from the labour market ▪ 2010, European Year of combating exclusion and poverty ▪ Focus on young people, the elderly, migrants, unemployed, and people with disabilities	**Social investment package**[4]**:** ▪ Ensuring that social protection systems respond to people's needs; ▪ Simplified and better targeted social policies, adequate and sustainable social protection systems. ▪ Upgrading active inclusion strategies in the Member States. Affordable quality childcare and education, prevention of early school leaving, training and job-search assistance, housing support and accessible health care	Inclusive growth: ▪ Focus on women, young people and older workers in terms of increasing employment and training opportunities ▪ Target: 20 million less people should be at risk of poverty ▪ Flagship initiatives: 'European platform against poverty and social exclusion'

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[1] Communication from the Commission on the Social Agenda, COM(2005) 33 Final & The renewed social agenda COM(2008)412.
[2] Europe 2020 Strategy Paper accessed at:
(http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2010:2020:FIN:EN:PDF).
[3] http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1039&langId=en
[4] http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=1044&newsId=1807&furtherNews=yes

	Social Agenda[1]	Policy Package	Europe 2020 Strategy[2]
Working condition	▪ The EU plays a role at international level in promoting high social standards protecting workers	**EU Strategy 2007-2012[5]:** 25% cut in accidents at work by 2012	

Gender equality	▪ The fight against discrimination:
	  - A new phase in promoting equality between men and women: a European gender institute
	  - Promotion of access by women to the labour market and equal pay between men and women
		Strategy for equality between women and men 2010-2015[6]:
		▪ promoting equality as part of the Europe 2020 strategy and through EU funding;
		▪ promoting female entrepreneurship and self-employment;
		▪ assessing workers' rights with regard to leave for family reasons;
		▪ assessing Member States' performance with regard to childcare facilities;
		▪ supporting gender equality in matters of immigration and the integration of migrants.
			Inclusive growth:
			▪ Policies to promote gender equality will be needed to increase labour force participation thus adding to growth and social cohesion

Anti-discrimination	▪ The fight against discrimination promoting diversity and non-discrimination:
	  - A strategic approach to combating discrimination (2005)
	  - 2007, European year of equal opportunities
	  - Fight against child poverty		

Source: ICF GHK analysis of key EU strategic documents

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[5] Accessed at (http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=151&langId=en).
[6] http://europa.eu/legislation_summaries/employment_and_social_policy/equality_between_men_and_women/em0037_en.htm

Figure 1.5   Key linkages between PROGRESS policy areas

	Employment	**Social inclusion and social protection**	**Working conditions**	**Anti-discrimination**	**Gender equality**
Employment	NA	Employment rates are low amongst those vulnerable to social exclusion	All policy and legislation affecting working conditions may affect employment	Much of discrimination potentially takes place within employment	There remain major issues of gender equality in employment (e.g. pay gap and glass ceilings)
Social inclusion and social protection	Employment policies can improve opportunities for those vulnerable to social exclusion	NA	Low paid and poor working conditions may affect the access to employment of those vulnerable to social exclusion	Discrimination is a contributing factor to social exclusion	Gender equality and related policies affect social protection
Working conditions	Employment policies need to be in concert with policies affecting working conditions	Social inclusion may be affected by working conditions	NA	Discrimination and working conditions affecting those with disabilities are especially important	Aspects of policy and legislation affecting working conditions affect female and male workers differently
Anti-discrimination	Diversity increases the quality of management of firms and can lead to gains in productivity	Social protection policies have impacts for discrimination	Working conditions policies should avoid discrimination	NA	Gender discrimination may compound other grounds for discrimination
Gender equality	Without increased participation of women in the labour market, the Europe 2020 Strategy target in employment will not be achieved	Social protection policies have impacts on gender equality	Working conditions policies should avoid exacerbating gender equality	Other grounds of discrimination may compound gender inequality	NA

Source: ICF GHK

2   Method of Approach

2.1   Introduction

The main evaluation questions for this assignment were already presented above. As explained, the focus of the evaluation was to:

- Identify outcomes of PROGRESS; and
- Analyse why and how these outcomes materialised or failed to materialise.

2.1.1 Assessing the outcomes of PROGRESS

The assessment of evidence on PROGRESS outcomes was considered in two ways:

- Using the outcomes defined in the SF and assessing the extent to which PROGRESS funded actions were delivering them; and
- Taking a step back from the PROGRESS logic model, and considering the different activities separately. In so doing, examining what the potential in terms of outcomes was and assessing to what extent this was delivered and only then comparing this with the PROGRESS SF.

2.1.2 Assessing why and how PROGRESS outcomes materialised or failed to materialise

One purpose of the assignment was to help the EC to gain an understanding of how and why the outcomes of PROGRESS materialised or failed to materialise.

To this end, a set of hypotheses or assumptions were formulated about what is likely to lead to success for a given activity realising the hoped for change. These assumptions were reflected in the specific questions asked and the data collected.

In order to understand the *why* and *how* behind the outcomes (or their absence) the evaluation did not focus purely on the outcomes, but also on the process of the implementation of the PROGRESS funded actions. Furthermore, several detailed analyses of specific cases were carried out. These examples helped the evaluation team understand the ways in which the process and context interacted with and led to the observed outcomes.

2.2   Overview of the methods

2.2.1 Combination of primary data collection and secondary data use

There was a range of information already available about PROGRESS funded actions. This included the PROGRESS monitoring data which is centrally compiled and data available at other levels concerning specific actions and activities. Evaluations of several PROGRESS funded actions or sub-programmes have been carried out. Final reports from action grants were available together with a range of monitoring information on dissemination activities.

While these data exist and were made available to the evaluation team, they needed to be systematically plotted into mapping tools. Therefore, most of the evaluation work began with a stage of document review.

In addition to data available from the above types of documents, the contractor for PROGRESS annual monitoring carries out annual surveys which provide data on participants' views on PROGRESS funded activities. The micro-data from these surveys were made available to ICF GHK and secondary analysis of the data took place for some analysis. The survey questionnaires changed over time and therefore it was in most cases not possible to make trend analysis using the responses. Nevertheless, the data provide useful sources of information on perceptions of PROGRESS's added value.

2.2.2 Combination of qualitative and quantitative data

The evaluation combined quantitative data (or quantified qualitative data) and qualitative data. The quantitative data mainly concerned aspects such as:

- Occurrence of types of actions and sub-types of actions in the funded activities;
- Distribution of types of actions (and sub-types) in each policy area;
- Funding information;
- Participation;
- Types of outputs and their distribution in each policy area;
- Reach of awareness raising/ dissemination activities;
- Frequency of participants' views and opinions (survey data).

The qualitative data concerned aspects such as:

- Descriptions of processes;
- Opinions about the fitness for purpose of the processes described;
- Narratives on how PROGRESS funded actions were used in national and institutional contexts;
- Observation notes from events;
- Qualitative judgements on outputs of PROGRESS funded actions; and
- Contextual information.

2.2.3 Overview of data collection efforts

Table 2.1 below gives an overview of the primary and secondary data collection efforts

Table 2.1   Summary of primary and secondary data collection efforts

	Interviews		Documentary review	Surveys	
Analytical activities	21 authors	5 users outside EC	41		
Awareness raising	6 EC + contractors	5 project partners	media analysis	on-the spot participants survey - 182	partners' events survey - 64
Sharing and learning	55 participants	4 EC and contractors	104 reports reviewed	review of existing evaluations - 2	participant satisfaction questionnaires
Action grants	56 interviews (16 projects)	10 EC staff	98 projects mapped 76 docs for case studies		
Participation	25 persons (+ above)		mapping of 247 AG[7]		
Participation of can and pre-can countries	25 persons (+ above)		mapping of 89 S&L [8]activities		
Strategic Framework	2 EC interviews	insights from other analysis			
Governance	3 committee members	(working group)		survey of committee members - 36 respondents	
Dissemination and valorisation	insights from other analysis		review of EU dissemination tools		
Transversal issues	insights from other analysis				
TOTAL	**217 persons interviewed**		**Over 300 documents reviewed**	**282 responses to surveys received**	

Note: 54 EU docs spans the Documentary review column from Analytical activities through Sharing and learning.

Source: ICF GHK

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[7] Action grants
[8] Sharing and learning

3   The outcomes of PROGRESS funded activities

3.1   Introduction

This section considers evidence from the evaluation on the outcomes of PROGRESS funded activities in the following ways:

- Outcomes from the different types of PROGRESS activities;
- 'Immediate outcomes' as defined in the Strategic Framework;
- 'Intermediate outcomes' as defined in the Strategic Framework;
- Outcomes in the five PROGRESS policy areas.

PROGRESS aimed to contribute to evidence-based policy development in the EU and Member States through the funding of a wide range of 'analytical activities' in the five policy strands. Analytical activities were broad in scope, covering the development of 'statistical tools and methods and common indicators', the production of 'analysis, studies and surveys' and the publication of 'guides, reports and educational materials'. A selection of 41 analytical activities undertaken over the period 2009-2012 was analysed.

PROGRESS also funded 'awareness raising' activities to inform stakeholders and the general public about EU-level policies in the five policy areas. The evaluation examined the four following communication campaigns:

- The Youth on the Move (YoM) campaign which aimed to promote the mobility of young people, be it for learning or work purposes. It sought to (1) motivate and inspire young people to be mobile; and (2) inform young people about the possibilities for support and their rights as mobile learners or workers;
- The For Diversity Against Discrimination (FDAD) campaign;
- The Gender Pay Gap (GPG) campaign;
- The 'Do you know what social Europe can do for you?' campaign ('Circus campaign').

The evaluation examined the effects of the 'sharing and learning' activities implemented through PROGRESS. The evaluation focused its analysis on the following:

- Good practice exchanges on gender equality;
- Seminars on good practices in anti-discrimination;
- Mutual Learning Programme (MLP) (concerning the field of employment policies);
- Peer Reviews on Social Protection and Social Inclusions; and,
- Public Employment Service (PES) to PES dialogue events.

Finally, PROGRESS financed action grants provided to Member States' public authorities and private stakeholders to develop actions in line with EU-level priorities in PROGRESS's five policy strands. The Commission published calls for proposals which defined types of actions eligible for funding, policy areas of intervention, target applicants and beneficiaries and so on. The evaluation analysed the outcomes of projects funded under seven calls for proposals:

- Three calls concerning social experimentation in the field of social inclusion and social protection (and also employment in the 2011 Call);
- Datasets and models for labour market and pension analysis;
- Gender mainstreaming;
- Combating discrimination; and
- Restructuring, well-being and financial participation.

Table 3.1 provides an overview of the components of the PROGRESS-funded activities examined, resources allocated to them, and their relevance to the programme's five policy areas.

The evaluation questions considered included*:*

What were the outcomes of the actions: awareness raising; awareness and dissemination activities and support for main actors?

Did the actions effectively use relevant tools available such as social policy experimentation?

Table 3.1   PROGRESS-funded activities examined, total resource allocation and the policy areas covered

PROGRESS-funded activities and components analysed	Resource allocation	Employment	SI-SP	Working conditions	Anti-discrimination	Gender equality
Analytical Activities – 41 analysed						
Review of 41 analytical activities over 2009-2012, incl. studies/reports, surveys, guides/educational materials, statistical tools	€ 77.5 million budget *foreseen* for AAs over 2010-2013	X	X	X	X	X
Awareness raising activities – four communication campaigns analysed						
2011-2013 Youth on the Move (YoM)	€7 million PROGRESS funded over 2011-2013 (out of total €12.8 million)	X				
2003-2013 For Diversity Against Discrimination (FDAD) (managed by DG JUST)	Total €12.3 million over 2008-2010 €1 million for a centralised advertising campaign over 2011-12					X
Gender Pay Gap (GPG) campaign (managed by DG JUST)	€1.7 million on spent on advertising and partnership building and online communication over March 2011 to March 2012					X
Do you know what social Europe can do for you? campaign ('Circus campaign')	Total €4.9 million over 2009-2010		X			
Sharing and learning activities analysed						
Good practice exchanges on gender equality	Approx. €800,000 per annum				X	X
Seminars on good practices in anti-discrimination	Not available (the seminars are part of a larger contract for the network of socio-economic experts – approx. €780,000 per annum)				X	X
Mutual Learning Programme (concerning the field of employment policies)	Approx. €800,000 per annum	X				
Peer Reviews on Social Protection and Social Inclusions	Approx. €800,000 per annum		X			
PES to PES dialogue events	Approx. €1m per annum	X				

PROGRESS-funded activities and components analysed	Resource allocation	Employment	SI-SP	Working conditions	Anti-discrimination	Gender equality
Action grants funded under the 7 calls for proposals analysed						
VP/2009/005 Transnational Actions on Social Experimentation	€ 3.5 million of total EU budget provided for 11 projects funded Average grant provided (as per team calculations): € 320 000		X			
VP/2010/007 Transnational Actions on Social Experimentation	€ 4.3 million of total EU budget provided for 17 projects funded Average grant provided (as per team calculations): € 250 000		X			
VP/2011/009 Social Experimentation	€ 5 million of total EU budget provided for 8 projects funded Average grant provided (as per team calculations): € 625 000	X	X			
VP/2009/006 Actions related to the development of administrative datasets and models for labour market and pension analysis	€ 2.2 million of total EU budget provided for 10 projects funded Average grant provided (as per team calculations): € 220 000	X	X		X	
VP/2010/008 Support to national activities aiming at the identification of good practices in combating discrimination and promoting equality	€ 5.5 million of total EU budget provided for 31 projects funded Average grant provided (as per team calculations): € 180 000				X	X
VP/2010/009 Improvement of gender mainstreaming in national policies and programmes	€ 2.3 million of total EU budget provided for 13 projects funded Average grant provided (as per team calculations): € 180 000				X	X
VP/2010/13 Restructuring, well-being at work and financial participation	€ 1.7 million of total EU budget provided for 14 projects funded Average grant provided (as per team calculations): €120 000	X	X	X		

Source: PROGRESS Annual work plans 2011-2013

3.2   Outcomes from different types of PROGRESS activities

3.2.1 Analytical activities

PROGRESS funded analytical activities with a view to improving evidence-based policy making. The decisions on which analytical activities should be funded were based on the policy priorities and related policy developments. The analytical activities funded by PROGRESS included:

- Work on statistics and indicators such as different Eurobarometer surveys, the European Vacancy monitor or the Statistics on Income and Living Conditions (SILC) dataset;
- Studies (comparative or country specific – the latter being rather rare and mainly in the area of working conditions);
- Evaluations and impact assessments related to EU legislation or policies; and to some extent;
- Development of good practice guides.

The evaluation examined a selection of 41 Analytical Activities.

The analytical activities examined focused on a range of pressing areas for policy action. The topics covered were directly relevant and linked to EU-level priorities and policy agendas. Box 3.1 presents examples of the topics tackled.

Box 3.1 Examples of topics covered by the PROGRESS analytical activities reviewed

- Facilitating smart growth and sustainable growth
- Fighting against discrimination (of Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender Intersex and Questioning [LGBTIQ] people in the labour market)
- Ensuring health and safety at work
- Securing and improving the competitiveness of the European labour market
- Promoting and fostering gender equality; improve the role of men in gender equality
- Fighting against the gender pay gap
- Supporting the reconciliation between work, private and family life
- Strengthening the EU mobility of citizens with disabilities and the portability of their benefits
- Providing transparent information on pension outcomes and pension policies

Source: ICF GHK review of PROGRESS analytical activities

Nutley et al. (2003) differentiate the following types of knowledge that is required for evidence-based practice:

- 'Knowing-about problems': for instance, policies to address social inclusion require substantial knowledge based on issues related to wealth and social inequality aspects;
- 'know-what-works': for instance what policies, strategies or interventions will bring about the desired outcomes;
- 'know-how to put into practice' as knowing what should be done is not the same as being able to do it effectively;
- 'know who to involve', taking into consideration the needs of target groups as well as information on key stakeholders necessary for potential solutions; and
- 'know-why', referring to knowledge about why an action is required in relation to certain values.

This analysis found that the primary emphasis of the PROGRESS analytical activities reviewed was on '*what worked*' (policies, strategies, and interventions) and on '*know about*' in relation to specific policy issues, and less so on 'know-how', 'know-who' and

'know-why'. For example, the work on statistics and indicators typically falls into the category of 'knowing about'. It helps identify the problems in order to prioritise actions. The European Vacancy Monitor for example, produces figures that are frequently used (though not always attributed to the Monitor) to highlight the mismatch between skills supply and demand in Europe. This is positive given the expectation that PROGRESS will support learning at EU level, including comparisons between participating countries. The 'know why' dimension, on the other hand, appears somewhat under analysed. Given the contextual and systemic differences between EU countries in the policy areas covered by PROGRESS, knowing why a certain measure has worked in a specific context is important for others to learn from it.

The evaluation identified that the extent to which analytical activities included policy relevant recommendations and the identification of success factors varied greatly. Box 3.2 presents examples of analytical activities which identified success factors and/or clear policy recommendations.

Box 3.2 Examples of activities that identified clear policy recommendations and/or success factors

- A report on policy solutions to foster inclusive labour markets and combat child poverty and social exclusion
- The synthesis report 2010 (Part I) on the situation of LGBTIQ groups in the labour market in European Member States
- The feasibility study on establishing a European platform for cooperation between labour inspectorates and other relevant monitoring and enforcement bodies to prevent and fight undeclared work
- Work on the naturalisation and integration of immigrants and their children: policy interactions in Belgium
- The European Employment Observatory Review on Self-Employment in Europe

Source: ICF GHK

The impact of PROGRESS analytical activities was especially evident in changing the understanding of the policy issues addressed in PROGRESS. The analytical activities built the knowledge base amongst users (academics, NGOs, policymakers and social partners) in the areas addressed. Analytical activities were an important source of evidence in a number of social policy documents reviewed. In addition, the analytical activities provided the general public (most of their findings are available online free of charge) and various social policy target groups with tools to improve their understanding of EU policy objectives.

The transition between general enlightenment and the direct influence on policy positions was dependent on the quality of the analytical activities, the clarity of its results and its perceived usefulness. The transition in policy change can also be a matter of time, through the effect of analytical activities on policy makers' cognitive frameworks and understanding of the policy area. Box 3.3 provides examples of a PROGRESS analytical activities which contributed to better understanding a policy issue and to building policy makers' capacity to understand policy issues.

Box 3.3 Examples of a PROGRESS analytical activities which contributed to better understanding a policy issue and to building policy makers' capacity to understand policy issues

The report, 'Naturalisation: a passport for the better integration of immigrants?' (studies, analyses and surveys, employment) is being used by 'liberal' countries to develop a better understanding of their approach to naturalisation. This report was also used to inform policymakers at national level about naturalisation.

The report, 'The measurement of extreme poverty In the EU' (studies, analyses and surveys, social inclusion and social protection) helped to inform thinking about the Europe 2020 Strategy poverty and social inclusion objectives. According to its author, it continues to be relevant to debates about poverty measurement in the EU and contributed to triggering a new interest in Minimum Income Standards.

Source: ICF GHK

There was more evidence of the use of analytical activities by NGOs and other civil society organisations, researchers and networks of experts (e.g. the Group of Experts on Gender, Social Inclusion and Employment), than by policymakers. Evidence of the latter was identified however, notably in terms of influence on agenda setting, triggering national policy initiatives, contribution to policy/legislative design, revision, implementation and evaluation, in the five policy areas covered by PROGRESS. Box 3.4 provides some examples of the links between PROGRESS analytical activities and policy making.

Box 3.4 Examples of PROGRESS analytical activities which fed into decision-making

The report 'Disability Benefits and Entitlements in European Countries: Mutual Recognition and Exportability of Benefits A synthesis of evidence provided by ANED country reports and additional sources' led, according to an interviewee, to the EC initiating the establishment of the EU wide disability ID based on the findings of this report.

The report 'International perspectives on positive action measures - A comparative analysis in the European Union, Canada, the United States and South Africa' was part of the significant legislative action at the EU level in the area of anti-discrimination and, as such, was used to prepare two directives in the area (43 EC / 2010 and 78 EC / 2010).
The Second Biennial report on social services of general interest (26/05/2011) was used to support an argument in two Commission Staff Working Documents on the Employment Package:

- The Commission Staff Working Document on an Action Plan for the EU Health Workforce, Accompanying the Communication from the Commission, Towards a job-rich recovery, SWD(2012) 93 of 18 April 2012, referenced the Biennial report to support and explain an argument about the difficulty in recruiting and retaining healthcare staff. The Biennial report links the turnover of healthcare staff to low pay, long working hours, stress or difficult work life balance. It is also used to explain why the overall wage levels in the health and social services sectors tend to be lower than in other sectors of the economy. The Biennial report links this to the high rate of female employment in the sector.
- the Biennial report was used to highlight the recruitment and retention challenges faced by the healthcare sector, including the fact that working conditions are demanding and that wages' growth is low and slow in the Commission Staff Working Document on labour market trends and challenges, Accompanying the Communication from the Commission, Towards a job-rich recovery, SWD (2012) 90 of 18 April 2012.

Source: ICF GHK

The European scale and comparative nature of PROGRESS funded analytical activities was reported by users as a key added value, where a topic or issue has been looked at

in a range, or all, EU Member States. The production of EU level evidence thus allowed mutual learning, benchmarking and the identification of good and best practices among EU countries. Duplication of efforts with national or other international analytical work was thus averted by the EU-wide scope of PROGRESS analytical activities.

The identification of clear policy recommendations, 'success factors' and cost and efficiency gains were identified as key factors for uptake and use of PROGRESS analytical activities.

3.2.2 Awareness raising

There are different awareness raising activities funded by PROGRESS, such as presidency conferences, seminars or campaigns. Several calls for proposals funded through action grants also focused on raising awareness. This analysis concerns only the campaigns funded by PROGRESS.

The evaluation analysed the outcomes of four PROGRESS funded campaigns, namely the YoM campaign, the 'For Diversity Against Discrimination' (FDAD) campaign, the 'Gender Pay Gap (GPG)' campaign and the 'Do you know what social Europe can do for you?' campaign ('Circus campaign'). Primary data collection was only done for the YoM campaign. The key features of these campaigns:

- The YoM campaign focused specifically on young people. It aimed to provide them with information on mobility opportunities and support available and hence encourage them to be mobile. It was mainly implemented through events;
- The FDAD campaign targeted the general public with some activities focusing more on employers. It used a range of implementation tools including advertisement in press and billboards, but also events;
- The GPG campaign was also targeted at the general public and through some activities, employers. It used similar channels to the FDAD campaign. The GPG campaign was only implemented in some Member States;
- The Circus campaign was aimed at the general public and was mainly implemented through events.

The YoM, FDAD and GPG campaigns were linked to a broader EU agenda while the Circus campaign informed about a range of EU policies and citizens' rights. All four campaign had an 'informative' element whereby they aimed to make EU citizens aware of their rights (e.g. not to be discriminated against). In addition, the GPG and FDAD campaigns, and to a certain extent also YoM, aimed to change certain attitudes and influence behaviours or practices by:

- Encouraging young people to be mobile;
- Making people more tolerant to diversity, reprehending and reporting discriminatory actions;
- Encouraging employers to practice 'equal pay' and shift people's attitude to gender-based differences in remuneration.

While overall the campaigns succeeded in reaching their audience, unfortunately there is hardly any data on the extent to which the campaign contributed to these broader objectives. Only for the FDAD campaign it was reported that in some countries the numbers of discriminatory acts reported grew in the period corresponding to the campaign. Within the FDAD campaign, 90 % of responding attendees of a Diversity Day (one aspect of this campaign) reported an increased knowledge of EU anti-discrimination legislation and that they were better equipped to address cases of discrimination.

The GPG evaluation described that visitors of GPG stands reported having learnt about the importance of closing the GPG and had increased their interest in the issue, but the extent to which this would lead to any changes in behaviour was not assessed. In addition, it triggered an interest from partner organisations in engaging further on this topic, including at EU level.

For the YoM campaign, while it succeeded in reaching young people, it seems that the events were in many cases not sufficiently targeted. The stands visited as part of this evaluation attracted many people who were just passing by which diminishes the likelihood that they will actually do something as a result of the information gained. Furthermore, only around half of YoM events attendees specifically looking for information on studies and training managed to find what they were looking for. The proportion was less for those looking for information on job opportunities. Improved targeting and promotion to attract those looking for information on mobility opportunities was recommended.

The campaigns, in particular YoM, FDAD and GPG, were implemented in countries where the problem or issue the campaign was addressing varied greatly and so did the context. For example, the rates of work-related or job-related mobility among young people differ greatly across countries. The reasons why young people report not being mobile also differ (e.g. the issue of funding is less of a problem in some countries than in others). However, there is little evidence that the design of the campaigns strategically reflected these issues by, for example, targeting those countries where mobility is lower. The distribution of YoM events reflects the engagement and pro-active attitude of local partners (who are key in implementing the events), rather than a strategic choice of countries or cities. Similar conclusions were made for the GPG campaign.

The campaigns provide data on their reach, some differentiate between the reach in general and the quality reach. It is not possible to use this data as benchmarks given the differences in methods and media used. Box 3.5 presents the reach data for some elements of the four campaigns.

Box 3.5 Reach of campaigns examined

Campaign	Components	Target groups	Reach identified
Youth on the Move (YoM)	Events website Facebook page	Young people (mainly in the 18-24 age brackets	575,000 people visited a YoM tent/area in the period covered by this evaluation. These were largely young people, people searching for information for others or multipliers; The website generates little traffic; The Facebook page use is moderate; People who were looking for some information mostly say that they received it; The events regularly generated media coverage that was mostly neutral to positive.
For Diversity Against Discrimination (FDAD)	Advertisement (both in press and public spaces) Media coverage (TV)	General public Employers and employees more specifically	The campaign generated 77.6 million contacts through print advertising (superficial reach) and 140.5 million contacts through outdoor advertising
The Gender Pay Gap (GPG)	Press and billboard advertisement Development and distribution of a toolkit for partner organisations	General public, but more specifically women, employers and gender equality bodies	Estimated to have reached 180 million persons (superficial) of which 32.5 million were reached more deeply
'Do you know what social Europe can do for you?' ('Circus campaign')	Events small scale advertisement videos	General public	No monitoring data on this for the Circus campaign.

Source: ICF GHK

Other outcomes were identified, including:

- The campaigns addressed issues that were not sufficiently addressed at national level (in some countries at least);
- The EU-wide campaigns informed national campaigns whereby national actors learnt from the experience of awareness raising in other countries;
- The campaigns' EU label gave local partner organisations greater visibility, credibility and access to information.

Focus on the YoM campaign

The main added value of the YoM campaign compared to the already existing information and dissemination channels of the Lifelong Learning Programme (LLP) and EURES was the coordinated approach. Instead of presenting young people with just one aspect of how the EU can support their mobility, the YoM campaign informed them about a range of opportunities.

YoM events' visitors were mostly interested in learning about concrete opportunities for studies, training, volunteering and work aboard. The showcasing at the YoM events of the Erasmus, Comenius and Youth in Action programmes as well as EURES was therefore relevant to their needs.

The way information and messages were delivered was also considered to be appropriate. The balance across YoM events, between information/communication-oriented activities and entertainment activities with an information component was good. The implementation approach of the campaign, using local partners, ensured the relevance of the specific topics addressed and that the language used was appropriate to the local audience. The use of local ambassadors also supported this.

The use of the YoM website, which was the second largest component of the YoM campaign, with the aim of being the one-stop-shop for all EU mobility-related information for young people, was sub-optimal. The website offers limited functionalities and its added value compared to existing websites is only that it serves as a hub to lead people to other sites. The reach through the YoM Facebook page was moderate.

The active involvement of Commission partners at the national and local level in the planning and delivery of the YoM events was central to their success.

3.2.3 Sharing and learning

PROGRESS funds sharing and learning activities (in the form of seminars) that are primarily aimed at policy makers. These events bring together a group of interested country representatives who are in most cases accompanied by a national independent expert. Usually the events focus on specific measures from one or two countries with other countries sharing their experience. Most events focus on analysing in-depth examples of 'good practice'. However, some of the events have a different format and focus on a specific issue that is analysed from the point of view of all participating countries, without a specific country focus.

The following strands of sharing and learning activities were analysed:

- Good practice exchanges in the field of gender equality;
- Seminars on anti-discrimination;
- MLP in the field of employment;
- PES to PES dialogue, also in the field of employment; and
- Peer Reviews on Social Protection and Social Inclusion.

There is in general, a direct link between the EU policy agenda and priorities in a given area and a given year and the planning of sharing and learning events. The policy units discuss the themes of events with the policy committees thus making sure there is a good fit. For example, one of the events on gender equality was dedicated to the issue of gender balance in decision making discussing examples of quotas, but also other practices. This was ongoing at the same time as the EC was considering an EU-level intervention in this area. Similarly, several events (PES to PES and MLP) were dedicated to the theme of youth guarantee, high on the EU agenda at the moment.

Overall the feedback received from these events is positive. In general, they enable good quality and open debate thanks to the fact that the participants are experts and persons directly working on given matters. Countries decide whether to participate and many countries that attend have ongoing developments that should enable them to learn from the debate.

As a result, the events meet high levels of participants' satisfaction as reported in evaluation forms and many interviewees identify concrete learning points. The individual learning taking place is therefore substantial. Participants reported having

learnt about new aspects on a given policy or practice. Where monitoring data were available, the number of satisfied or very satisfied participants was over 75 %. Some people also reported having achieved a better understanding of the EU-level agenda in a given field, though many people who attend these events also have a good understanding of the EU agenda as they are also members of other groups. There is some evidence that the development of contacts and networks led to follow-up exchanges that in turn have broader effects.

However, the sharing and learning activities have as an objective to reach out beyond the individuals directly taking part. Consequently, the evaluation also collected evidence of learning at institutional and system level. It found that:

- Many people taking part in the events report disseminating the information and documentation about the event to other colleagues and in some cases other institutions;
- There are examples of how these events influenced discussions in institutions taking part in the events (see Box 3.7 below);
- There are also examples, though these are infrequent, where the events led to a partial transfer or other forms of system-level learning (see Box 3.8 below).

Box 3.7 Examples of institutional and system level changes of sharing and learning actions

In Greece, the Planning, Development and Employment Directorate of General Secretariat for Gender Equality- Ministry of Interior developed three guidelines booklets on gender equality implementation, intended for ministries, decentralised authorities (prefectures) and municipalities. The examples from the seminar on Implementing Gender Mainstreaming (Belgium, 2011) greatly influenced these guidelines. This was possible also due to the existence of the National Programme for Substantive Gender Equality (2010-2013) which includes mainstreaming aspects.

In Slovenia, after participation in the seminar on Initiatives in public policies on combatting discrimination and fostering diversity in education, the Institute for Ethnic Studies used information from the seminar to prepare project proposals on anti-discrimination topics included in integration projects (e.g. a project they developed together with University of Florence, on the integration of minorities).

The Irish authorities that took part in the seminar on fighting violence against women launched a joint research project with the Norwegian participants on the effectiveness of measures targeting perpetrators.

Source: ICF GHK

Building on the findings of the evaluation of the Social Protection and Social Inclusion Peer Reviews, the evaluation also found that sharing and learning activities supported consensus-framing among participants on issues to address and on policy principles (for example, the monitoring and use of data on discrimination practices, the division of responsibilities between stakeholders (governance of measures) and broad principles of targeted versus universal approaches).

The level of transferability of policies and practices presented varied, depending on the existence or absence of certain preconditions. The evaluation identified the following pre-conditions for the *transfer of learning*:

- Similarities in context and policy structures;
- Participation of the right people, with the right skills to identify possible learning points and sufficient influence in their home institutions to initiate change;
- Access to information and documentation.

It also identified the following conditions necessary for sharing and learning activities to contribute to *shaping national policies and practices*:

- Existence of political support;
- Appropriate timing (for example, developments are already underway or at least planned);
- Follow-up exchanges are organised.

When those conditions had been met, ideas circulated in PROGRESS-funded sharing and learning activities contributed to practice and policy changes. Box 3.6 describes such examples.

> **Box 3.8 Examples of practice and policy change identified**
>
> Suggestions from a seminar hosted by Spain were reflected in the update of the Spanish strategy to fight violence against women.
>
> A seminar on combating discrimination and fostering diversity in education contributed to the awareness of Bulgarian NGOs on the need to address certain issues in schools. The arguments were used for advocacy and ultimately led to legislative changes adopted by the parliament.
>
> The MLP also supported some changes at national level, for example in Greece one of the alternatives considered for the short-time working scheme was inspired by a Peer Review.
>
> In the field of social protection and social inclusion, the discussions on the Bavarian quality management model for long term care facilities inspired some changes (staff training) in Austria.
>
> The PES to PES dialogue survey identified a relatively high number of reported changes that were linked to these events. These changes included the development of countries' profiling systems to support job seekers (changes reported by 12 countries) or the improvement of approaches to draw up individual action plans (changes reported by 16 countries).

Source: ICF GHK

3.2.4 Action grants

The action grants analysed in this assignment concerned very different activities:

- The social experimentation projects funded rigorous evaluations of a broad range of interventions (mentoring, use of speech therapy for offenders, providing housing to homeless, etc.);
- The datasets projects financed the development of administrative datasets and micro-simulation models to improve the forecasting of the impact of pension and labour market reforms on persons with different employment trajectories;
- The anti-discrimination projects focused on activities to raise awareness about EU and national legislation to combat discrimination and other measures to combat discrimination;
- One of the calls analysed focused on implementing gender mainstreaming in public administrations; and
- Finally, there was one call focused on the exchange of good practice in restructuring, addressing the health and well-being impacts of restructuring and employees' financial participation.

This diversity makes it challenging to discuss outcomes in a transversal manner; nevertheless, some commonalities have been identified. The outcomes of action grants can be grouped into the following five categories:

- Awareness-raising
- Production of knowledge and transmission of expertise

- Strengthened cooperation
- Agenda setting
- Practice and/or policy evolution or change

Though examples of changes in policy or practice as a result of action grants were identified (see below), the following limitations should be noted:

- This analysis did not identify examples of transfer or mainstreaming beyond the institutions involved. Where the action grants lead to policy change it always concerns the practices of organisations directly informed, thus highlighting the need to ensure the strategic partners are not just informed, but also involved in the project;
- Those projects that have led to outcomes that appear sustainable have focused on developing a concrete tool or solution (e.g. gender budgeting methodology, training on anti-discrimination for police officers or micro-simulation model) that is applicable to the specific situation addressed. Those projects on the other hand, that developed guides or checklists that were rather general (because aiming to embrace the context of several countries), do not seem to have generated sustainable follow-up.

Awareness-raising was the most commonly reported outcome across the projects analysed. Awareness-raising was in some cases the main objective of a call or project, (for example, the anti-discrimination call). However, in most cases 'raised awareness' was a 'by product' or the first-step towards another outcome (e.g. improved knowledge; practice change). Projects raised awareness among a variety of persons: policy makers; social partners; experts; civil society; and, the general public. The awareness concerned, for example, rights (anti-discrimination projects), tools and methods (gender mainstreaming and datasets), best practices and effective policies in a given area (all calls). Box 3.9 provides examples of raised awareness attributed to PROGRESS action grant funded projects.

Box 3.9 Examples of raised awareness attributed to a PROGRESS action grant funded projects

The MIA award[9] awarded by the Danish Institute of Human Rights rewards organisations (private companies, but also public authorities) for best practice in supporting diversity in the workplace. The award raised awareness through several channels. One channel was the application process itself. Companies have to benchmark themselves against a set of criteria and as noted by one of the representatives of a winning organisation, the most important thing about the award is the learning process around the application. Unsuccessful candidates received feedback and advice for improvement. Another channel is the broader public, as the event during which the award is announced is covered by media and it hosts speeches on the theme of anti-discrimination (see above). However, one of the shortcomings is the rather low number of applicants (11 in 2011), which was considered to be due to the resources needed to prepare the application form.

The Luxembourg project called MIDAL developed a platform that enables researchers or governments to design their own micro-simulation models. The toolbox attracted considerable interest from the international community and it succeeded in informing and raising awareness among experts in other countries. At the time when the project final report was written, the platform was used for model development in Belgium, Luxembourg and Italy and testing of feasibility was being undertaken in the UK, Hungary, Slovenia, South Korea and Japan.

Source: ICF GHK

Many action grant funded projects **produced analytical outputs**. For example, the social experimentation projects specifically aimed to produce rigorous evidence of the effects of the interventions tested. This evidence was expected to be a basis for the

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[9] http://www.miaaward.info/

measures to be taken up by decision-makers. The analytical outputs built the knowledge base within participating organisations involved. When these analytical outputs were appropriately disseminated they also contributed to building knowledge amongst the broader community. In some cases, there was evidence that they contributed to new interventions or to policy development. Examples are given in Box 3.10.

Box 3.10 Examples of projects which informed policy/practice through the analytical outputs they produced

The Slovenian datasets project developed a model which could predict the impact at the macro and micro level of different pension reform scenarios on future pension rights and redistribution of income levels among (future) pensioners. These models were used in negotiations between governments and labour unions that could test their proposals and see the outcomes. The developed interface enabled the communication of the findings to a broader audience than would be possible with the data files which are the direct output of the model.

In the UK, the transnational social experimentation project 'models of mentoring for inclusion and employment' (MOMIE) improved the body of knowledge on conditions for the optimal use of mentoring (peer and non-peer depending on issue to be addressed) and of its wide applicability to different target groups (offenders, Roma, minimal income benefit holders). In Portugal, mentoring as a form of support to disadvantaged people was new and knowledge on this, as well as understanding of the concept, was very low prior to the project.

Source: ICF GHK

The **cooperation amongst organisations** initiated in action grant-funded projects improved the organisations':

- access to appropriate expertise and capacity;
- outreach to target groups;
- circulation of knowledge and concepts.

Box 3.11 provides examples of new partnerships resulting from action grant funded projects.

Box 3.11 Examples of new partnerships

Establishment of European network of experts (stakeholders and practitioners) in the field of mentoring as a model for supporting disadvantaged and excluded groups into the labour market (social experimentation project);

Creation of local partnerships between foster homes and public authorities working with young people in foster care as well as NGOs (social experimentation);

First comprehensive exchange between local governments, NGOs and communes regarding discrimination in housing allocation (anti-discrimination);

Initiating a network of gender specialists in 15 national ministries, with a small group of 2-4 people being trained in each ministry (gender mainstreaming);

Establishment of a partnership between stakeholders and employers' representatives in the textile and clothing sectors (TC), footwear and leather (L) (restructuring).

Source: ICF GHK

There was also evidence of projects' **effects on agenda-setting**. Typically this involved attracting the attention of key organisations to a certain issue and setting the agenda for future developments in a given area. Topics otherwise not tackled at national level or new concepts were put on the agenda of key organisations. Box 3.12 provides examples of agenda setting attributed to PROGRESS action grant funded projects.

Box 3.12 Examples of agenda-setting attributed to PROGRESS action grant-funded projects

The usefulness of the reference authority position in stations, evidenced by the HOPE in stations project, moved the issue of the management of homeless people in stations up railway companies' agendas and has also been exploited by one participating railway company convincing other European railway companies to sign the European Charter for the development of social initiatives in stations. Similarly within the MOMIE project, the project results have added to the body of evidence which feeds an ongoing policy debate on the usefulness of mentoring offenders to reduce reoffending in the UK. This is more limited in Portugal, reportedly due to public finance constraints and to the hierarchical structure of the administration, although there is evidence of the interest in mentoring from private foundations working on social inclusion.

The project HIRES on health in restructuring analysed the health risks of restructuring. Subsequent projects worked on disseminating the findings and recommendations of this work. The health implications of restructuring practices and in particular of bad restructuring practices, were in general not considered as an issue for employment policies, but rather a health issue. However, the project showed that there is a clear relationship between the two and consequently employment and labour policy should also consider promoting good practice that diminishes negative health impacts. The project findings which were promoted and disseminated through subsequent projects helped to look at the issue of restructuring from a new angle.

Source: ICF GHK

Finally, examples of projects which contributed to **changes in practices or policy**, at national, regional, local or institutional level, were also identified. Several of the social experimentation action grants led to changed practices in the organisations involved. There is evidence that the labour reform models and datasets produced, and outputs produced in the anti-discrimination and gender equality projects were used within national administrations. Box 3.13 provides examples.

Box 3.13 Examples of changes in practices or policy attributed to a PROGRESS action grant funded project

The project Hope in stations succeeded in changing the behaviour and practices of trained staff in train stations. The key role of the person who acts as intermediary between different organisations and the homeless people in/around the station (so called 'referent person'), was maintained and there is evidence that it was transferred to other stations in Belgium and in France.

The Slovenian model developed was used intensively during the pension reform that took place in 2012. Subsequently the further development of the model into a fully-dynamic model was discussed and agreed between the Ministry of Labour and Ministry of Finance (though no concrete action in this direction has been taken at the time of undertaking the case study – August 2013). The inter linkage with the database of the yearly programme of statistical research ensures that the data in the model will be regularly updated.

The project 'United against discrimination of LGBTIQ people' had several influential strands. On the one hand, the training developed by the project was mainstreamed into the training in the policy academy and it is being continued. The project also suggested amendments to the Rules of procedure on hate crimes and these were discussed in a working group on this theme which resulted in amendments.

In Estonia, the Ministry of Finance inserted reference to the handbook developed by the project in its Guidelines on strategic planning in line ministries under the horizontal topic of equal opportunities. These guidelines are used for gender impact assessment (ex-ante) of government strategies.

Source: ICF GHK

3.2.5 Overall conclusions on the outcomes of different types of activities

Overall, the following can be said about the four types of activities analysed:

- The actions are in general well aligned with the EU level priorities and agendas. This is achieved thanks to the fact that decisions on PROGRESS programming are made directly by the policy units responsible for a given agenda;
- Where the data is available (mainly analytical activities and sharing and learning events), the perceived relevance of both the topics and the types of actions by participants or the target audience is good;
- The analysis identified examples of influential outputs that were used at EU-level as well as at national level. Some have informed changes in national policies or practices. Consequently, there are some 'champions' (i.e. very strong examples) among analytical activities, sharing and learning events and action grants. It is more difficult to make such a statement about the awareness raising campaigns in particular due to the absence of data on results;
- However, within each of the types of actions there are sub-strands where the effectiveness of PROGRESS funding could be enhanced. This could be achieved by learning from the more successful cases;
- Furthermore, the current monitoring system focuses on outputs and on participants' perceptions. More attention should be given to capturing examples of the use of PROGRESS funded outputs both at EU-level and at national level;
- The knowledge management of PROGRESS funded outputs at EU level remains rather poor. For analytical activities and sharing and learning actions the outputs are available online, but they are placed under the policy section of DG EMPL website; they are not clearly linked to PROGRESS and are on different sections of the site. When it comes to the action grants there is no repository of tools, studies or other outputs produced by action grants. For most action grants the only information publicly available is the list of action grants awarded. However, DG JUST published summaries of action grants' results concerning gender equality mainstreaming.

As said above, there is evidence that PROGRESS activities have had a direct influence over policy-making or implementation, when conditions for this existed. Those conditions are broadly the following:

- the quality and clarity of activities' outputs;
- the compatibility of the outputs' results with the receiver's general positions (policy-maker/civil servant, NGO, or individual (expert or general public);
- the perceived usefulness of the activities' outputs;
- the maturity of the context for take-up.

Transition between 'general enlightenment' into changes in behaviours, and ultimately, in influence over organisational decisions and/or policies or legislation, amongst target groups, is also a matter of time. Finally, policy learning is not a linear process, there are typically multiple contributions and sources of inspiration and these are not always 'credited' (or attributed), making the assessment of actions such as those analyses here, a challenge.

3.3   The 'immediate outcomes' of PROGRESS activities

3.3.1 Immediate outcome: Effective information sharing and learning

Effective information sharing and learning was highly relevant in the employment, social inclusion, gender equality and anti-discrimination strands of PROGRESS.

Effective information sharing and learning comprises both the dissemination of information (one-way communication) and mutual learning (two-way communication)[10].

It was evident in the employment, social inclusion, gender equality and anti-discrimination strands of the programme, but less evident in the working conditions strand.

PROGRESS was the main financial instrument for mutual learning and the exchange of good practices in employment and social solidarity through the European Employment Strategy (EES) and the Open Method of Coordination (OMC) on social inclusion and social protection. Between 2011 and 2012, 10 Peer Reviews were organised in employment policy and 12 Peer Reviews in social inclusion policy.

Organising exchanges on policies, good practice and innovative approaches and promoting mutual learning in the context of EES and social inclusion, OMC was specified in the Decision establishing PROGRESS. The Decision did not provide a framework for these activities in other strands of PROGRESS.

In the employment strand PROGRESS fostered mutual learning on pension reforms through the exchange of best practices with regard to private pension schemes. Innovation was supported by a call for proposals related to innovative projects supporting labour mobility in the EU.

In the social inclusion strand PROGRESS funded capacity building for social experimentation and fostered social innovation through social experimentation grants.

Exchange of good practices in the field of gender equality and anti-discrimination also aimed to reinforce mutual learning among PROGRESS participating countries. For instance, three good practice exchanges were supported in the gender equality strand (violence against women and girls, women in decision making, and gender training in education). Also in 2012, two good practice exchange seminars were supported on anti-discrimination policy (discrimination based on religion and discrimination in education).

In addition, several EU wide communication campaigns funded under PROGRESS were undertaken in the gender equality and anti-discrimination strands: Gender Pay Gap (GPG), Equal pay day and 'For diversity against discrimination'. The campaigns were to raise awareness of gender equality and anti-discrimination issues.

The working condition strand of the programme included less activity related to effective information sharing and learning. But PROGRESS activities enabled better understanding of the existing legislation on working conditions and health and safety at work through good practice guides on various EU Directives.

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[10] PROGRESS Annual Monitoring Report 2012.

The activities that led to these outcomes were the major expenditure item of the PROGRESS Programme (in 2012 they represented 43 % of the budget).

3.3.2 Immediate outcome: Evidence based EU policies and legislation

The PROGRESS intermediate outcome of evidence based EU policies and legislation is particularly relevant in four policy areas: employment, social inclusion, working conditions and gender equality.

Development of statistical tools, methods and indicators was relatively frequent in the social inclusion strand of the programme. Specific outcomes were also reported in the employment, and gender equality policies.

For instance in the employment strand, the evidence produced on job vacancy (statistical database and labour policy statistical database[11]) led to the European Vacancy and Recruitment Report (2012, EVRR). This represented a significant step towards the development of a systematic labour market monitoring system at the European level. Other examples of outputs leading to evidence based EU policy in the employment strand include: the European vacancy monitor; EU skills panorama database; studies on labour mobility within the EU; PES[12]-to-PES dialogue; Web Tool for Evaluated Employment Services Practices (WEESP); the European skills needs forecasting system[13] and the European Skills, Competencies and Occupations (ESCO) taxonomy.

In the gender equality strand new evidence was produced mainly to inform policy on women in decision making. PROGRESS supported activities resulted in a database on men and women in decision making covering 34 countries, Eurobarometer 376 'Women in decision-making positions' and the study 'Women in economic decision-making in the EU: progress report'. Evidence from outputs contributed to the preparation of the draft Directive on improving the gender balance among non-executive directors of companies listed on stock exchanges and related measures.

Studies in both the employment and social inclusion areas contributed to active ageing policies as part of the European Year for Active Ageing and Solidarity Between Generations. In the social inclusion area a special Eurobarometer aimed at identifying European citizens' views and attitudes towards older people and the contribution of older people in the workplace. The European Employment Observatory (EEO) review on employment policies to promote active ageing summarised key messages emerging from the experiences of 33 European countries in this policy field.

The monitoring of existing legislation and proposing of new law was mainly part of the working conditions, non-discrimination and gender equality strands.

In the area of working conditions, evidence based policy making was mainly achieved through the monitoring of existing and proposing new legislations. For instance, the report on the application of directive 91/383/EC on the health and safety at work of fixed-term and temporary workers, helped inform the final evaluation of the EU Strategy on health and safety at work. Also, the report on the application of the Working Time Directive funded through PROGRESS contributed to the review of the Working Time Directive. Another example is the preparatory study for an impact assessment concerning the possible revision of the legislative framework on the posting of workers in the context of the provision of services, to assess the legislative proposal aiming to improve the implementation of the Posting of Workers Directive.

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[11] Statistical tools sub delegated to Eurostat
[12] Public employment service
[13] Run by the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training - Cedefop

3.3.3 Immediate outcome: Integration of cross-cutting issues and consistency

Whereas cross cutting issues of gender equality were integrated into different strands of the programme, cross cutting issues on non-discrimination, disability matters and combating poverty/social inclusion were less evident.

For instance, outputs and activities related to gender equality were reported under the employment and social inclusion strand of the programme in the PROGRESS APMR.

As presented in the Figure 3.2, the SF as set out at the beginning envisaged performance indicators for the measurement of this immediate outcome: whether EU rules display a common underlying logic of intervention, whether cross-cutting issues are addressed in PROGRESS policy areas and the extent to which PROGRESS systematically applied gender mainstreaming.

Since gender equality was the only cross-cutting issue where mainstreaming was specifically monitored (it has a separate indicator), most of the evidence collected and reported in APMRs refers to gender equality.

Examples of the mainstreaming of transversal issues in the employment policy field:

- In 2011 the Network of Experts on Employment and Gender Equality issues (EGGE)[14] produced an analysis on the mismatch between preferences and actual working arrangements of women's and men's career interruptions and the impact of the pension systems on the situation of women and men;
- There was a study on the impact of the global economic crisis on decent work and decent work policies in key emerging economies, with a special emphasis on the situation of young people and women, and its repercussion on the EU labour markets in 2012.

The Polish Presidency strongly advocated the incorporation of gender equality goals in the Europe 2020 Strategy. PROGRESS funded the presidency conference entitled 'Mechanisms for reconciling professional and family roles for women and men as a chance to actively participate in the labour market'.

The social inclusion strand also addressed the issue of integration of gender equality. For example, reports on out-of-school care and the consequences of the crisis on gender equality were produced and there was a Peer Review on 'The effects of life courses on women's pensions' in 2011.

The existence of a single SF embracing five policy areas emphasises the consistency of approaches and the scope for cross cutting processes. It highlights that the underlying intervention logic of the working methods have similarities across the policy areas. However, since the SF is more concerned with outcomes related to the policy making process and conditions for success (stakeholder buy-in, evidence-base, etc.) than with policy-specific outcomes, the SF is less helpful in ensuring that relevant links between policy areas are captured.

3.3.4 Immediate outcome: Greater capacity of national and EU networks[15]

With regard to this intermediate outcome, PROGRESS promoted the involvement of civil society through financial support for the key EU-level NGOs networks. There are other activities funded under PROGRESS that also contribute to this objective (such as the action grants when they involve stakeholders), but these are not discussed here.

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[14] EGGE's activities mainly took place under the gender equality strand.
[15] This section is based on data presented in the 2012 Annual Monitoring Report. European Commission (2013) *PROGRESS annual performance monitoring report 2012. Monitoring of the Performance of the European Union Programme for Employment and Social Solidarity – Progress (2007-2013.)*

For social protection and social inclusion, NGO networks were a large spending item (55 % was spent on networks) which reflects the importance of the participation of stakeholders in this policy area[16]. For instance, NGO's networks were active in the area of prevention of and the fight against poverty and social exclusion and promoting active inclusion. Sixteen NGO networks were active in this policy area in 2012. Thirteen of these networks produced 170 reports aimed at providing policy advice, research and analysis; 55 reports aimed at the identification of good practices and 74 reports aimed at monitoring and assessment. One hundred and forty trainings, Peer Reviews and other mutual learning events were organised and 171 information and communication events.

EU level NGO networks were also enhanced by PROGRESS in the anti-discrimination and gender equality areas (integration of people with disabilities, the fight against discrimination on grounds of racial or ethnic origin, disability and age inclusion and defence of the rights of Roma people and promoting gender equality). In 2012, 14 EU level NGO networks were active in the area of anti-discrimination and one in the area of gender equality (European Women Lobby -EWL-):

- 334 of their reports aimed at producing policy advice, research and analysis;
- 76 aimed at identifying good practice, 240 of the reports aimed at monitoring/assessment;
- 73 training, Peer Review and other mutual learning events were organised;
- as well as 59 information and communication events.

The EWL produced 124 reports aiming at policy advice, research and analysis; 44 reports aiming at good practice identification; and 27 aiming at monitoring and assessment. Thirty trainings, Peer Reviews and other mutual learning events were organised and a relatively high number of information and communication events (423).

European NGO networks were not part of employment and working conditions strands of the programme. The Decision establishing PROGRESS did not foresee the development of the capacity of EU level NGO networks in these policy areas.

The outputs of these EU NGO networks were catalysts for other immediate outcomes, in particular evidence-based policy making (considering the high number of reports prepared), sharing and learning and participatory debate.

3.3.5 Immediate outcome: High-quality and participatory policy debate

PROGRESS aimed to create an environment for building a shared understanding and consensus among stakeholders to identify problems and policy options.

Activities to contribute to this outcome played a particularly important role in three policy areas: gender equality (which planned to spend around 33 % of its resources on activities promoting high-quality and participatory debate in 2012); employment; and, the anti-discrimination area (between 2009 and 2012 the anti-discrimination strand reported the highest total number of events).

Reported successful activities and outcomes include:

- In 2011, cooperation with the EU Presidencies in the policy area of employment resulted in the development of policies and actions to fight youth unemployment and raise youth employment rates. The 'Jobs for Europe' conference was well received;
- In 2012 PROGRESS supported EU wide seminars on EU gender equality law. Participants came from 34 different countries;

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[16] Idem p.55

- In the anti-discrimination area 'The Equality Summit' and biannual meetings of the Platform for Roma Inclusion took place;
- In social inclusion the annual European meeting, 'People experiencing poverty', took place.

The evidence of the extent to which the supported activities contributed to the high-quality and participatory debate is limited.

3.4 'Intermediate outcomes' of PROGRESS

3.4.1 Intermediate outcome: Shared understanding and ownership of EU objectives

Shared understanding and ownership of EU objectives is highly relevant and important in all strands. It may be especially challenging to achieve this in some policy areas. For example, shared understanding and ownership of EU objectives may be difficult in the field of working conditions. This is because legislation may add costs to economic activities and there may not be consensus on the value of the benefits. Also, for example, consensus with respect to the rights of LGBTIQ individuals in the non-discrimination field may not pertain. The economic crisis and the Commission's latest moves to drop some legislation may be pertinent. In some other policy areas the EU *objectives* are probably uncontroversial. Furthermore, awareness of EU objectives is more measurable than understanding.

3.4.2 Intermediate outcome: Effective application of EU law

The relevance of the intermediate outcome of 'effective application of EU law' is greater in the strands where EU law is more prevalent (especially working conditions, non-discrimination and gender equality). Whilst it is relatively straightforward to monitor the transposition of EU law and the PROGRESS activities include outputs geared towards sharing policy and practices that improve the implementation of EU law, it is difficult to judge the effectiveness of EU law. The concept of 'effective' would normally mean that the problem has reduced and that the underlying objectives of the EU law have been achieved. The sponsoring of surveys and studies by PROGRESS has helped provide a knowledge base for the measurement of effectiveness.

3.4.3 Intermediate outcome: Effective partnerships

The relevance of the intermediate outcome of 'effective partnerships' is especially high to PROGRESS. There are several dimensions to these partnerships: between EU and other national/regional/local levels; between government and civil society; and, transnational partnerships.

One important notion of partnership is that between government and social partners. This is especially important in the employment field. For instance, PROGRESS has fostered cross border partnerships between actors in the employment field through the call for proposals aimed at 'partnerships between employment services' (PARES) with the objective of encouraging new forms of collaboration between employment services at the EU level for the delivery of complementary services with a high standard of quality and efficiency.

The contribution of PROGRESS to strengthening partnerships between the Member States and their authorities was positively acknowledged by the respondents of the PROGRESS annual survey. Several initiatives played an important role in this such as PROGRESS-funded annual meetings of the heads of public employment services and of the Senior Labour Inspectors' Committee; occasional workshops of the European

Employment Observatory; and meetings organised by the Mutual Information System on Social Protection.

However, the varied nature of partnerships and the challenges of observing 'effectiveness' make this intermediate outcome difficult to measure.

3.5   The outcomes of PROGRESS activities in the five policy areas

PROGRESS was anticipated to provide the EC with a flexible framework to channel funding towards EU-level actions in line with the evolving policy agendas in the five policy areas. Its specificity was that it was a programme that served multiple agendas. Furthermore, though the programme followed the EU-level seven year programming period (2007-2013), the policy agenda's towards which it contributed had different periodicities. The EES, for example, follows a ten year cycle while the European Strategy for Equality between Women and Men, was designed for the period 2010-2015.

Given the nature of EU-level policy making and the division of competence between the EU and national level, the different policy agendas mainly rely on Member State action. EU-level action is always a contribution to national action, but real change can only be achieved at the national level. The role of PROGRESS in this context was to enable the EU-level to influence national level actions.

This section presents the contribution of PROGRESS towards the policy agendas in the five policy areas. It does so by looking at examples of how PROGRESS funded actions helped the EU agenda evolve.

While each of the policy agendas has a broad set of objectives including in some cases targets (such as the Europe 2020 Strategy employment target), the focus of the evaluation has been at the level of themes and types of measures promoted. At this level, the link between PROGRESS and the EU policy agenda is clear.

3.5.1 Employment

The main recent EU-level documents that defined EU-level actions in the field of employment are:

- The Employment Package; and
- The Youth Employment Package.

PROGRESS funded actions in line with the vision presented in these two packages.

Under the objective of 'restoring the dynamics of labour markets', the employment package urges investment in skills and in particular to address skills mismatches.

In this context the PROGRESS funded European Vacancy Monitor (EVM) is a tool that helps the EC and countries to get a better understanding of skills gaps so as to adjust education and training provision. The EVM data are frequently used in EU-level discussions to urge Member States and stakeholders to reform education and training systems. The February issue has been cited in five research/ academic articles, on topics such as the evolution of the labour market in Romania, the role of migration for sustainable economic development, the promotion of a Social Europe, measuring the impact of the Employment OMC and a publication on the EU social agenda. The monitor is also visible on EU websites and has received mentions in newspapers and magazines.

Contributing to the same objective, PROGRESS also co-funded the work of Cedefop on skills anticipation and analysis (EUR 4.2m were allocated from PROGRESS over the

period 2008-2012). According to the Cedefop 2012 annual report, these Cedefop outputs were in high demand and influential as judged by the level of citations[17].

Another set of activities that PROGRESS co-funds in this field of work is the work on the European Skills Competences Qualifications and Occupations (ESCO) terminology (over EUR 2.3m in the period 2010-2012). However, this work is still in progress and it is too early to identify its concrete outcomes.

Box 3.14 Examples of analytical activities which provided evidence for policy development and implementation

The PROGRESS European Employment Observatory report on 'Self-Employment in Europe 2010' (studies, analyses and surveys, employment) was cited in four different research articles and book chapters, on topics such as the effects of entrepreneurship on Eastern European Economies, wage inequality or new social risks for young people. Several networks, such as the European Microfinance Network, also featured information related to this report.

The report 'Naturalisation: a passport for the better integration of immigrants?'[18] (studies, analyses and surveys, employment) is being used by 'liberal' countries to develop a better understanding of their approach to naturalisation[19]. This report was also used to inform policymakers at national level about naturalisation[20].

The NIESR[21] report 'Labour mobility within the EU – the impact of enlargement and the functioning of the transitional arrangements' (2011) was used in a Commission staff working document on labour market trends and challenges (2012)[22] to provide secondary evidence that reinforced other evidence provided in the report to support argumentation about the fact that geographical labour mobility can have large economic benefits for the economies of both receiving and sending countries.

This study, as assessed in the desk research undertaken for this evaluation, effectively synthesised existing knowledge in this area, and contributed to methodological enhancement of previous work: A similar study had been commissioned under PROGRESS two years earlier ('Labour mobility within the EU in the context of enlargement and the functioning of the transitional arrangements'[23] - by the European Integration Consortium - EIC). This PROGRESS study revised the model used in the EIC report 2009.

Source: ICF GHK

The Youth Employment Package calls on countries to set up Youth Guarantees. The EU contributes to this effort by providing funding through the ESF on the one hand and by supporting the exchange of good practices on this topic. Already in 2011, the EC organised a Peer Review on the topic of Youth Guarantees as part of the PES to PES dialogue. According to the PES to PES survey, the countries taking part considered the documents prepared to be informative and there are examples of countries which report having used the experience of this event to shape their understanding of the Youth Guarantee concept. In 2013 another event on the Youth Guarantees was implemented through the MLP (the Youth Guarantee pilot projects were not however, financed by PROGRESS, but from another budget line).

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[17] http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/EN/Files/4127_en.pdf
[18] OECD (2011) *Naturalisation: a passport for the better integration of immigrants?* OECD publishing.
[19] Source: Interviewee
[20] Source: Interviewee
[21] National Institute of Economic and Social Research
[22] European Commission Staff Working Document (2012) *on labour market trends and challenges* – (http://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=7626&langId=en)
[23] contract VC/2007/0293

> **Box 3.15 Example of sharing and learning activities which led to policy learning and transfer of ideas**
>
> Learning within a Peer Review in Estonia, on 'Renewed procedures for employing migrant workers with the emphasis on favouring highly-qualified labour', contributed to the development of a migration-related policy being implemented in Malta.
>
> In Greece, an alternative proposal on a short-time working scheme was elaborated owing to the learning during the Peer Review in France on 'Employment measures to tackle the economic downturn: Short-time working arrangements'.[24]
>
> Civil servants from France intended to use material from Thematic Reviews[25] as input for the next round of discussions on active labour market policies. One participant explained that his organisation had intended to adapt more computerised services, but the TRS seminar on labour segmentation had reinforced the need for personal contact with youth. This influenced the decision to continue to provide personal services, even if processes became more computerised.[26]

Source: ICF GHK

Another aspect of the Employment Package concerns reforming labour markets by anticipating restructuring. In this field PROGRESS has contributed by funding:

- Sectoral analysis of future skills needs and emerging competences[27];
- Action grants related to exchange of good practice in managing restructuring; and
- Analytical work related to the regular Restructuring Forum.

The work on restructuring concerns both the employment and working conditions strands. It is mentioned here because of the relationship with the Employment Package.

3.5.2 Social protection and social inclusion

There is an OMC in this area. PROGRESS funded activities have contributed to the Social Investment Package.

There has been work on measuring poverty at the EU level where there was a need to have comparable information on the situation to urge countries to take action. Several PROGRESS funded activities have been undertaken in this respect: use of SILC data for indicators on material deprivation; the Eurobarometer on perceptions of poverty; and, a study on approaches to measure extreme poverty.

PROGRESS also contributed to work on homelessness and housing issues. This includes: 2010 Year of fighting poverty; the FEANTSA network; and events. Further evidence from the evaluation on PROGRESS sharing and learning activities, analytical activities and action grants in this strand is given below.

Sharing and learning activities: PROGRESS has funded Peer Reviews in this field. These have taken place since 2004. Their objectives were to improve understanding of Member States' policies and their impact, in the areas of social inclusion, pensions, healthcare and long term care. The policies are indicated in the National Reports on Strategies for Social Protection and Social Inclusion. The Peer Reviews were designed to enable learning from other Member States' experiences, and ultimately to lead to transfers of key components of policies or of institutional arrangements, which have proved effective. Box 3.16 provides an example of sharing and learning outcomes in this strand.

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[24] Ibid., p. 41.
[25] Ref
[26] Ecorys (2013), pp. 28-9.
[27] http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=784&langId=en

Box 3.16 Example of sharing and learning activities which led to of policy learning and transfer of ideas

The discussions on the Bavarian quality management model for long term care facilities inspired some changes (staff training) in Austria.

Source: ICF GHK,

PROGRESS analytical activities provided evidence for policy-implementation/development in the area of social protection and social inclusion, as exemplified by the use of them and of their referencing in other policy documents. Box 3.17 provides examples of how analytical activities were used to support a policy argument or option in this strand.

Box 3.17 Examples of analytical activities which provided evidence for policy development and implementation

The 'Assessment of the implementation of the European Commission recommendation on active inclusion' was used in the 'Social Package (SWD) Active Inclusion of People Excluded from the Labour Market' as evidence to support the argument that only a small number of Member States had taken steps to improve services essential to support active social and economic inclusion policies since 2008. The report was used in the same document to classify EU countries in relation to their degree of development of integrated strategies for active inclusion.

The 'Study on Housing Exclusion: Welfare Policies, Housing Provision and Labour Markets' was mentioned up to four times either as main or supporting evidence for different arguments in the 'Social Investment Package, Commission Staff Working Document, Confronting Homelessness in the European Union, Accompanying the Communication from the Commission, Towards Social Investment for Growth and Cohesion – including implementing the European Social Fund 2014-2020, SWD (2013) 42 of 20 February 2013'. It was used as evidence that: there was a link between the level of expenditure of welfare regimes and outcomes for homeless people; means-tested, targeted housing allowances are useful instruments for improving housing outcomes; and, locally available employment services, the provision of specialised and individualised support and reconciliation measures such as affordable childcare or public transport can help greatly in enabling homeless persons to find employment. It was used as evidence supporting an existing argument that differences in protection exist between certain categories of beneficiaries (e.g. people struggling with mortgage arrears).

Source: ICF GHK

Through PROGRESS funded action grants, social experimentation produced evidence of results and the potential for the replication of the various interventions tested. Box 3.18 provides examples of the use made of the body of evidence beyond the organisations involved in the project.

Box 3.18 Examples of policy lessons emerging from PROGRESS action grants

The usefulness of the Reference authority position in stations, evidenced by the HOPE in stations project, moved the issue of the management of homeless people in stations up railway companies' agendas and has also been exploited by one participating railway company convincing other European railway companies to sign the European Charter for the development of social initiatives in stations.
The results of the MOMIE project have added to the body of evidence which feeds an ongoing policy debate on the usefulness of mentoring offenders to reduce reoffending in the UK. This is more limited in Portugal reportedly due to public finance constraints and to the hierarchical structure of the administration, although there is evidence of the interest in mentoring from private foundations working on social inclusion.

Source: ICF GHK

Projects funded under the PROGRESS call for proposals on datasets for pension and labour market reform fed into policy development or implementation. The pension

reform models and datasets supported by the actions grants were used within national administrations. The Call was part of the wider EU policy agenda and within the aegis of the Ageing Working Group under the auspice of the European Social Policy Committee where discussions on pension modelling and reform culminate in the publication of 'Ageing reports' every three years. The report included information by Member State on the distribution of costs and benefits of different pension reform scenarios.

Discussions within the Ageing Working Group revealed differences in stages that Member States were in forecasting the effects of pension reform on the distribution of income and on public finances. The 'administrative datasets and models for labour market and pension analysis' call was designed to encourage Member States' administrations to address pension reform and base it on precise calculations, with respect for the sustainability of public finances. The projects funded through the call succeeded in developing new micro-simulation models that are being used to support calculations of the impacts of pension reforms. Box 3.19 provides further examples of PROGRESS funded action grants informing policy making in the area of pension reform.

Box 3.19 Examples of PROGRESS action grant funded projects which fed into decision-making on pension reform

The Slovenian model was used intensively during the pension reform that took place in 2012. Subsequently, the further development of the model into a fully-dynamic model was discussed and agreed between the Ministry of Labour and Ministry of Finance (though no concrete action in this direction has been taken at the time of undertaking the case study – August 2013). The interlinkage with the database of the yearly programme of statistical research ensures that the data in the model will be regularly updated.

The Luxembourg project (LIAM) developed a free access toolbox for the development of micro-simulation models. According to the final report and the interviewees, this platform has been used in a range of countries: Belgium, Luxembourg, Hungary, the UK, New Zealand, the Netherlands, France, Japan and Italy. In Luxemburg the project also validated the tool on a dataset of 300,000 individuals that was used in the context of reforms in the country.

Source: ICF GHK

PROGRESS also funded cooperation between the Commission and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) on pensions related to the anticipation of the effects of reforms and indicators.

3.5.3 Working conditions

PROGRESS has contributed to the effective development and implementation of EU legislation in this policy strand. Amongst the five PROGRESS policy strands, EU legislation is the most prominent policy instrument in the Working Conditions strand. EU legislation in this field has a strong single market rationale. Technological change and the evolution of work organisation contribute to the need for new and reformed EU legislation affecting health and safety and other aspects of working conditions. Such legislation has important implementation challenges. PROGRESS has contributed to this through funding a number of studies for example, a study on the possible amendment of five EU occupational safety and health directives in line with the UN Global Harmonised System for the classification and labelling of chemicals; and a study on workers' exposure to reprotoxic chemicals. PROGRESS also funds the Labour Inspectors Network.

Also as mentioned in Section 3.3.2, the report on the application of Directive 91/383/EC on health and safety at work for fixed-term and temporary workers helped inform the final evaluation of the EU Strategy on health and safety at work. The report on the application of the Working Time Directive funded through PROGRESS

contributed to the review of Working Time Directive. The preparatory study for an impact assessment concerning the possible revision of the legislative framework on the posting of workers in the context of the provision of services assessed the legislative proposals in this area.

Some action grants were relevant to the working condition as well as employment strands. In particular, the action grants restructuring call was funded following the publication of the Commission Communication on 'Restructuring and Employment – anticipating and accompanying restructuring in order to develop employment: the role of the EU'. The call did not aim to influence policy as such[28]. The projects financed enabled the collection of evidence at the sectoral level (defence, textiles, automotive) as to the effects of restructuring in these sectors. A comprehensive typology of these practices was then established. Findings were directly used for the development of the European Framework for Restructuring as proposed by the Commission in December 2013. Part of the projects financed enabled the development of new skills anticipation methodologies facilitating and driving forward the work of the European Skills Councils.

3.5.4 Anti-discrimination

PROGRESS activities contributed to the non-discrimination strand through improving the evidence base on the incidence of discrimination (including using the Eurobarometer to measure discrimination) and the effectiveness of measures to combat discrimination (including measures to implement existing legislation). It also funded awareness raising campaigns, structures and processes to stimulate sharing and learning, and individual projects that had policy and practice impacts in this strand. The awareness raising campaign and the projects often focused on making sure the legislation was known.

Box 3.20 provides examples of studies, analyses and surveys funded by PROGRESS which fed into decision-making in the area of anti-discrimination.

Box 3.20 Examples of PROGRESS funded analytical activities in the anti-discrimination strand which fed into decision-making

The EC initiated the establishment of the EU wide disability ID based in part on the findings of the report 'Disability Benefits and Entitlements in European Countries: Mutual Recognition and Exportability of Benefits A synthesis of evidence provided by ANED country reports and additional sources'.

The report 'International perspectives on positive action measures - A comparative analysis in the European Union, Canada, the United States and South Africa' contributed to legislative action at the EU level in the area of anti-discrimination, in particular the preparation of two Directives in the area published the same year (43 EC / 2010 and 78 EC / 2010).

Source: ICF GHK

The evaluation of the PROGRESS funded awareness raising activity in this strand, the FDAD campaign, identified an increase in the number of complaints to anti-discrimination bodies submitted during the campaign period in countries where the FDAD campaign was running: though this increase cannot be clearly attributed to the campaign.

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[28] The call had three sub-objectives: improve expertise in restructuring at a sectoral level; better understand the impacts of restructuring on health and well-being; better understand the impact of restructuring on public administration structures; promote financial participation of workers.

PROGRESS sharing and learning activity sponsored anti-discrimination seminars where the following policy themes were covered:

- Non-discrimination mainstreaming;
- Public policies combating discrimination against and promoting equality for LGBTIQ people;
- Public policies combating discrimination based on racial or ethnic origin in accessing and progressing in employment;
- Public policies combating discrimination based on age in accessing and progressing in employment;
- How to overcome barriers to public policy making and policy implementation on the ground of sexual orientation and gender identity;
- Public policies on combating discrimination and fostering diversity in education;
- Public policies combating discrimination on the ground of religion or belief.

Participants were representatives of the Government Expert Group (GEG) in the field of non-discrimination and the promotion of equality, set up by the European Commission in 2008.

As an example of transfer, the evaluation identified that the seminar on combating discrimination and fostering diversity in education contributed to the awareness of Bulgarian NGOs on the need to address certain issues in schools. The arguments were used for advocacy and ultimately led to legislative changes adopted by the national parliament.

The evaluation identified that the action grant funded project 'United against discrimination of Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender Intersex and Questioning (LGBTIQ) people' suggested amendments to the rules of procedure on hate crimes and these were discussed in a working group on this theme which resulted in amendments. Similarly, the project 'Path to Equality' in Iceland developed training which was continued through financing from the Ministry of Welfare. The project 'Equality in housing' resulted in a modification of quotas for granting accommodation and the prohibition of language tests.

3.5.5 Gender equality

The main policy objectives for activities in this strand are defined in the strategy for equality between women and men. PROGRESS has funded work on the measurement of gender equality including the Eurobarometer survey in 2009 covering: the pay gap; decision making, gender-based violence; and, work and family life; that informed policy. It also supported awareness raising, work on indicators, Peer Reviews and studies.

Box 3.21 provides examples of studies, analyses and surveys funded by PROGRESS used to reinforce a particular policy or orientation in the area of gender equality.

Box 3.21 Examples of PROGRESS funded analytical activities which fed into decision-making

The report 'Ethnic minority and Roma women in Europe. A case for gender equality?', of the Expert group on gender equality, social inclusion, health and long-term care (EGGSI), was mentioned in two Commission Staff Working Documents:

▪ Commission Staff Working Document, Background document, Accompanying the Communication from the Commission, Strategy for Equality between Women and Men 2010-2015, SEC (2010) 1080 of 21 September 2010. - The study was used to illustrate why Roma women are in many ways more disadvantaged than Roma men and members of other ethnic minority groups. The study emphasised that the 'gender roles' that persist in the Roma community are one reason why women in this community are disadvantaged. Commission Staff Working Document, Roma in Europe: The Implementation of European Union Instruments and Policies for Roma Inclusion – Progress Report 2008-2010, SEC (2012) 400 of 7 April 2012. In this document, the study is mentioned on several occasions. It is first mentioned as part of the work that has been launched by the Commission to 'complete the knowledge about the situation of Roma women'. The policy document then summarised the main findings of the study: 'ethnic minority and especially Roma women are the most vulnerable to multiple discriminations and face higher risks of social exclusion and poverty than the women of the native population and minority men'. The policy document also lists reasons that explain this finding (e.g. low educational attainment of Roma girls, the lack of quality employment, bad housing and living conditions) and how these lead to poor health status and discrimination from both the society and traditional Roma communities.

The report 'The gender pay gap — Origins and policy responses (2010)' from the group of experts on Gender, Social Inclusion and Employment was used in a 2010 Commission Staff Working Document – 'Strategy for Equality between Women and Men' as the main evidence to support the argumentation. A section of the staff working document is dedicated to the findings of this analytical activity. The analysis note (good practice and other guidelines) in the gender equality policy area identified five groups of policies that have been considered as good practices in fighting against the gender pay gap in Europe. It also analysed the definition of gender pay gap, its measurement and data collection and comparison. It relied on existing data, complemented by case studies. The analytical note reviewed sources on the gender pay gap and collected good practice examples of policies to reduce it. It identified the importance of tackling the problem at different levels (European, national, sectorial and organisational/workplace), and provided concrete policy recommendations. The evaluation concluded that the study effectively synthesised existing knowledge in the area and could contribute to policy change in improving the way policies are designed in relation to reducing the gender gap. The study's main target group was policy makers at EU and national level.

Source: ICF GHK

The programme of exchange of good practice seminars on gender equality (sharing and learning activity) was intended to focus on the key priority areas of the Women's Charter and of the Strategy for equality between women and men 2010-2015. They were of institutional and, in some cases, system level learning. Box 3.22 provides examples.

Box 3.22 Examples of PROGRESS sharing and learning activities which led to policy or practice transfer

Greece used guidelines on gender equality for public services presented in one of the seminars when developing its own guidelines.

Suggestions from a seminar hosted by Spain were reflected in the update of the Spanish strategy to fight violence against women.

Source: ICF GHK

Box 3.23 provides examples of outcomes from projects funded by action grants, including the take up of the methodologies that were developed.

Box 3.23 Examples of PROGRESS activities which led to policy or practice transfer

A Maltese project resulted in the issuing of a circular that stipulates the commitments and responsibilities of civil servants regarding gender mainstreaming.

In Estonia, the Ministry of Finance inserted reference to the Handbook developed by the project in its guidelines on strategic planning in line ministries under the horizontal topic of equal opportunities. These guidelines are used for gender impact assessment (ex-ante) of government strategies.

Source: ICF GHK

4   Participation in PROGRESS

4.1   Introduction

This section considers the evaluation question:

Were the access and participation of the different actors (national, regional and local authorities, civil society and social partners) and the involvement of the participating countries (including candidate and pre candidate countries) in PROGRESS appropriate?

The evaluation found that the programme brings together a broad variety of organisations with expertise and competence in tackling the policy issues concerned. This variety is a key strength of the programme as PROGRESS outcomes are consequently informed by varied experience, expertise and opinions.

The current programme overcame one of the reported weaknesses of the previous programmes, which was the relatively high involvement of local and regional organisations in action grants resulting in little policy-level effects. In the current programme the participation is more balanced and while some projects remain regional in scope, there is a significant level of activities with EU and some national focus.

The analysis of participation patterns per type of organisation shows a well-balanced and appropriate distribution overall.

This varied stakeholder involvement contributes to the PROGRESS results because:

- The involvement of thematic and methodological experts, as well as the involvement of practitioners and national policy makers, enables the identification of 'good practice' policy solutions. This contributes to a better choice of policies promoted at EU level as a result of stakeholder involvement;
- The broad involvement of persons in discussions and projects related to EU priorities helps to shape consensus and raise awareness of the EU agenda. As a result of the broad participation in PROGRESS, there is a large number of organisations of different types that get the opportunity to learn about, discuss and work on EU priorities in the given policy area;
- The involvement of relevant stakeholders also supports the credibility of the EU agenda. PROGRESS outputs are used to inform the EU developments and these outputs were produced using appropriate expertise;
- As many PROGRESS funded activities are part of the open method of coordination in the given policy areas, the participation of actors with the appropriate competences and powers also supports the legitimacy of EU developments that are informed by PROGRESS outputs.

Overall, the current pattern of participation is optimal.

Looking at the different roles that the participants in PROGRESS can have, the following trends were identified:

- The participation of organisations in a position of 'learners' is very good. Organisations in the programme take part because they are interested in what others are doing, they are willing to work on a common project or to learn from other practices;
- The involvement of those organisations that are willing to share their good practice is also appropriate. In a few cases interviewees noted difficulties in engaging promoters of best practice as these organisations considered they had little to learn from taking part.

4.2   Participation in PROGRESS activities by different types of actors

4.2.1 The Participation of public authorities

The participation of public authorities is relevant and appropriate in all PROGRESS strands. PROGRESS is expected to influence national policies and practices, therefore a high involvement of public authorities was anticipated.

The analysis of the participation of ministries, government agencies and other public authorities in PROGRESS funded activities showed that public authorities were a core group of participants in the programme.

The PROGRESS funded action grants examined mobilised a broad range of public authorities. Different ministries, agencies as well as regional and local authorities participated. The projects very often engaged those public authorities which have competence (or at least partly) in the area being tackled. The engagement of public authorities was stronger in those calls for proposals where the call specifications require such involvement. Box 4.1 below gives examples of the public authorities taking part per policy area.

Box 4.1 Examples of public authorities participating per policy area

Employment:
- ministries of employment and social affairs
- ministry of economy and enterprise
- public employment services

Social protection and social inclusion
- ministries of health, social affairs and social security
- local/regional departments of public authorities (e.g. municipal social services)

Working conditions
- ministries of employment and social affairs
- labour inspectorates
- public employment services

Anti-discrimination
- equality and anti-discrimination ombudsman
- office for equal opportunities

Gender equality
- national office/commission for gender equality
- ministries of labour and social affairs
- ministry of gender equality

Source: ICF GHK

Table 4.1 outlines the participation rates of public authorities in different PROGRESS funded activities.

Table 4.1   Participation rates of public authorities by type of action and policy area

		Employment	Working Conditions	Social Inclusion and Social Protection	Gender equality	Anti-discrimination	Total Average
Action grants	Leading	28%	4%	44%	(100%)	66%	39%
	Partner	40%	6%	30%	-	43%	26%
Sharing and learning activities							43%
Awareness raising (participation at the events*)							34%

Notes:
() 11 action grants, calls restricted to Ministries or Equality Bodies
*Numbers based on 2010, 2011 and 2012 presidency events, seminars, conferences.
Source: ICF GHK

As indicated in Table 4.1, more than one third of the action grants examined were led by public authorities. Public authorities frequently led projects in the following areas: employment; social protection and social inclusion; gender equality (calls were exclusively designed for public authorities); and anti-discrimination (calls were designed for bodies designated as anti-discrimination contact points; if these bodies were not the leader, they needed to mandate another organisation).

Examples of the involvement of public authorities in PROGRESS projects are given in Box 4.2.

Box 4.2 Examples of relevant public authorities involved in PROGRESS projects:
- In a project on the development of a micro-simulation pension model in Slovenia, the leading partner was a research institute with the technical expertise, but the main future users of the model, i.e. the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Labour and Social affairs, were closely involved;
- A project on gender mainstreaming in Estonia was led by the Ministry of Social Affairs and worked on developing tools for gender budgeting. To ensure that the outcomes of this project are sustained, the Ministry of Finance was involved from the beginning and eventually used the guidance developed as part of its performance based budgeting methodology.

Source: ICF GHK

In sharing and learning activities, the most participation in the activities was on an 'invitation only basis' and was open to a small number of participants. Participants were mainly public authorities at national level with activities bringing together ministries or relevant agencies.

Involvement of regional authorities was low. The only case when these types of authorities were involved was when a host country, which had room for inviting additional participants, decided to invite certain representatives of regions. Such examples were identified in some gender equality seminars or the Mutual Learning Programme.

Given the purpose of sharing and learning activities, the involvement of regional as well as national authorities was appropriate. However, federal countries with different

practices and policies applied in different regions may have found it difficult to share or learn with just one regional representative.

It was noted that practitioners were often more knowledgeable about a technical topic than policy actors. Government officials sometimes attended sharing and learning events to represent and give a positive image of their Ministry, but they did not always share the results adequately within their organisation.

4.2.2 The participation of social partners

PROGRESS anticipated the participation of social partners to be complementary to the EU funding provided at EU level to support the EU social dialogue and transnational projects carried out by social partners through the social dialogue budget lines. Their involvement was mainly observed in actions grant funded activities, specifically in the working conditions strand of the programme. Box 4.3 gives examples of social partner organisations taking part in PROGRESS.

Box 4.3 Examples of social partners participating per policy area

Employment
- European confederation of workers/executives
- Business and employers confederations
- Chambers of commerce

Social protection and social inclusion
- Chambers of commerce/trade

Working conditions
- European confederation of workers
- National trade union federations
- Chambers of commerce
- Cooperatives
- Industry associations/ business associations

Source: ICF GHK

Table 4.2 outlines the rates of participation of social partners in the different PROGRESS activities.

Table 4.2   Participation rates of social partners by type of action

	Action Grants	Sharing and learning activities	Awareness raising (participation at the events)	EU Networks/EU-level NGO networks
Share of participants	Leading 17% Partner 25%	Low*	2%	n/a

Note:
* Sharing and learning activities are mainly aimed at representatives of public authorities
n/a Participation in EU Networks is reserved to independent experts, mainly academic experts. Members in EU-level NGO networks are mainly civil society organisations
Source: ICF GHK

Employer representatives and representatives of a sector or trade unions were the main types of social partners involved in action grants. Most of them were EU level organisations.

The vast majority of projects led by social partners or labour market representatives were in the policy area of working conditions, particularly projects focusing on restructuring.

Social partners were not able to lead projects in the fields of gender equality and anti-discrimination due to the restrictions on project applicants. Their participation as project partners in those policy areas was very rare.

Examples of the involvement of public authorities in PROGRESS projects are given in Box 4.4

Box 4.4 The relevance of social partners involved in PROGRESS projects:

Social partners who participated in PROGRESS action grants, both as leaders and associated partners, were often key social partner organisations – both at national and European levels*.*

Their involvement in PROGRESS was linked with the breadth and quality of their network at the transnational level, as well as their capacity to liaise with and bring together a variety of organisations throughout Europe.

For instance, *Diesis* (leader of a project promoting social cooperatives in Europe) is one of the main European organisations promoting the social economy, while the *European Metalworkers' Federation* (leader of a project promoting the social interests of workers at EU level) is an influential actor with regard to employment policies. In general, interviewees were satisfied with the composition of the partnerships and relevance of participating social partners.

Source: ICF GHK

The sharing and learning activities were mainly aimed at representatives of public authorities. However, given that two of the five main activities in this field concerned employment (MLP and PES to PES dialogue), the involvement of social partners or labour market representatives was appropriate in many cases.

The evaluation of the MLP confirmed that social partners engage sporadically in the thematic seminars of the MLP and that the participants consider this as a weakness. The evaluation recommended systematically encouraging their participation[29].

Overall, social partners were not very involved in PROGRESS events. They represented less than 2 % of all participants in these events (131 out of 6538), over the years 2010, 2011 and 2012.

4.2.3 The participation of civil society organisations

PROGRESS anticipated the participation of civil society mainly through the participation of projects funded through action grants and contributions to the operating costs of the EU-level NGO networks. Their participation was particularly important in three policy areas: social inclusion and social protection; anti-discrimination; and, employment. Box 4.5 presents examples of civil society organisations taking part in PROGRESS funded actions.

Box 4.5 Examples of civil society organisations participating per policy area
Employment:
  ▪ Associations representing citizens or specific groups
  ▪ Foundations

Social protection and social inclusion
  ▪ Anti-poverty networks/forum
  ▪ Family, child and youth associations
  ▪ Foundations

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[29] ECORYS (2013) *Evaluation of the Mutual Learning Programme within the European Employment Strategy.*

Working conditions
- Vocational training associations
- Associations for social innovations

Anti-discrimination
- Human rights centres/associations
- Associations representing vulnerable groups (e.g. Roma)
- LGBTIQ associations

Gender equality
- Women's lobby/organisations
- Gender research foundations

Source: ICF GHK

Table 4.3 outlines the level of participation of civil society in different PROGRESS activities.

Table 4.3   Participation rates of civil society by type of action

	Action Grants	**Sharing and learning activities**	**Awareness raising (participation at the events)**	**EU expert Networks/EU-level NGO networks**
Share of participants	Medium (33%)*	Low^	Low (7%)	High**

Policy areas

Employment	41%
Working conditions	16%
SP/SI	43%
Anti-discrimination	30%
Gender equality	n/a

*Note: *Share of civil society organisations leading the projects*
^ In total, 18 civil society organisations participated in MLP events (2008-2012), 45 EU-level civil society organisations participated in Social Protection/Social Inclusion peer-reviews,
**Civil society organisations are the main type of organisations eligible to participate in EU-level networks.
Source: ICF GHK

Civil society organisations composed one third of the leading partners of projects funded by action grants. Participation was strong in particular in the field of social inclusion and social protection, but also anti-discrimination and employment.

This was because projects often dealt with the inclusion of target groups at risk of exclusion. Civil society organisations frequently deliver services to these persons and are hence suitable leaders or partners for projects in this area.

There is a broad range of types of civil society organisations taking part: charities; issue-based interest groups; philanthropic organisations; etc.

Civil society organisations were usually engaged in projects because of their specific expertise, having the capacity to reach out to certain groups or as organisations delivering a service that was the focus of the project.

Examples of the involvement of civil society in PROGRESS projects are given in Box 4.6.

Box 4.6 The relevance of civil society actors involved in PROGRESS projects:

In action grants civil society actors typically fulfil the role of:

- Providing specific expertise or know how; and
- Acting as mediators between other project partners and a specific target group/ audience.

Depending on the aims of the call for proposals, civil society organisations took part in PROGRESS to:

- Innovate the social services they offer (for example, the case of projects led by organisations such as the Red Cross and Oxfam). This was for example, the rationale for their involvement in certain social experimentation projects;
- Provide expertise on a specific target group or group of actors to a project which aimed to influence national policy;
- Carry out analysis using their networks and to disseminate analytical findings among their members and people they work with;
- Communicate with the general public about specific issues they are working on (for example, amongst those taking part in projects under the anti-discrimination call);
- Raise awareness about the specific issues on which they are working.

Source: ICF GHK

The participation of civil society was not foreseen in the sharing and learning activities. However, EU-level civil society organisations were frequently present in Peer Reviews on social inclusion and social protection. Anti-discrimination and gender equality sharing and learning activities would also benefit from higher participation of civil society actors.

Civil society organisations did not participate much in PROGRESS events. In total, they represented less than 7 % of all organisations participating in these events.

In addition, civil society organisations are supported by PROGRESS funding through the funding of operating costs of EU-level NGOs (see Section 3.3.4.).

4.2.4 The participation of other types of actors

In addition to the main actors discussed above, PROGRESS also involved in its activities universities/higher education institutions and private companies.

Their participation in the programme is indicated in Table 4.4.

Table 4.4   Participation rates of other actors by type of action

	Action Grants	Sharing and learning activities	Awareness raising (Participation at events)	EU Networks/EU-level NGO networks	Analytical activities
Private actors	Leading 4%	5%	n/a	n/a	Medium
	Partner 8%				
Universities and Higher Education Institutions	Leading 6%	Medium^	n/a	High*	Medium
	Partner 9%				

Notes:
^ In MLP peer-review activities, participating countries are represented by a national government official, along with an independent expert appointed by the MLP support team. In more than one third of the cases, this independent expert was a member of a University/HEI specialised in the topic at stake.
* University experts are main membership of the EU expert networks funded by PROGRESS
Source: ICF GHK

▪ Private companies

Most private organisations involved in projects funded by action grants as partners or leaders were private research centres or centres of expertise. These organisations were involved either for methodological aspects of certain projects with a research component or for certain thematic expertise.

Individual experts from private companies (e.g. consultancy companies) can be invited to participate in sharing and learning activities (MLP Peer Reviews), alongside a representative from a ministry. They consisted of mainly experts recruited from private consultancies and private research companies to participate in pairs with national government representatives. The selection of experts depended on the topics of the Peer Reviews and on the expertise of the experts.

A few interviewees noted that the involvement of private companies (other than research firms) should be more strongly promoted and encouraged. This was seen as a way to ensure greater efficiency in projects and the applicability of their results to the private sector – in particular, in fields of employment or working conditions.

Private research companies participate in analytical activities as around one third of these activities were undertaken by consulting firms. They often compete with universities and higher education institutions in public procurement for the analytical activities contracts.

▪ Universities and higher education institutions

Universities and higher education Institutions were involved in projects funded by action grants and were generally well-known and recognised as key stakeholders. Their involvement is perceived as relevant when strong expertise on a specific domain or methodology is needed, for example social experimentation projects that required rigorous evaluations and in-depth knowledge of specific methods.

Experts from universities and higher education institutions are included in sharing and learning activities (MLP) and EU networks. A high proportion of analytical activities were also undertaken by these actors.

4.3   An assessment of the participation of different types of actors

Table 4.5 provides a summary assessment of the participation of different actors in PROGRESS.

Table 4.5   Assessment of the participation of different types of actors

Type of participant	Optimum30 appropriate participation for PROGRESS to achieve ultimate outcomes	Participation observed in the evaluation
Public authorities (of ministries, government agencies and other public authorities)	Senior policy actors should be involved in PROGRESS activities: action grants, dissemination of analytical activities, and directly involved in sharing and learning activities.	PROGRESS action grants were targeted to national policy makers (for instance, some calls for proposals are dedicated to public authorities only). Sharing and learning activities mainly include policy actors at national level.
Social partners and other labour market representatives	It was anticipated that the participation of social partners would be mainly found in action grants when the policy solutions tested relate to the remit of these organisations. Involvement of sharing and learning activities in the field of employment could also be expected.	Social partners are involved in action grants, particularly in the working conditions strand of the programme and on topics concerning restructuring in the employment field. Some ad hoc engagement in employment (MLP) sharing and learning activities – however, this information is not systematically monitored.
Civil society organisations	Wherever civil society organisations can bring knowledge and interest in issues and/or act as a conduit for policy and practice messages	Civil society actors participated in action grants mainly in the social inclusion and social protection strand of the programme as well as employment, and anti-discrimination. Frequently present in sharing and learning activities (Peer Reviews) on social inclusion and social protection. The main target group for PROGRESS funding to EU-level NGO networks.
Other actors (universities/HEIs and private partners)	HEIs -wherever expert know-how can benefit the activities	Involved in action grants for methodological aspects or thematic expertise. Involved as experts in sharing and learning activities (MLP) . Involved as experts in EU level experts' networks such as the European Employment Observatory.

Source: ICF GHK

Based on the assessment illustrated in Table 4.5, the type of actors participating in PROGRESS, the extent of their involvement and the topics in which they are involved were appropriate.

All types of participants were relevant and contributed positively to PROGRESS. However, some were more relevant than others for a specific activity or topic. The participation of private companies (other than research companies) was generally low. More involvement on their side would have been welcomed by other types of participants.

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[30] This optimum is defined by the evaluator

For sharing and learning activities, the combination of participants – ministry representatives and experts – was widely considered as beneficial by participants.

In general for action grants, the diversity in the composition of the partnerships (both at geographical and organisational level) was highly valued by participants.

Box 4.7 identifies factors influencing the participation of different organisations.

Box 4.7 Factors influencing the participation of different organisations

Several factors influence the participation in PROGRESS activities:

- Thematic alignment between the priorities of the programme and priorities of the organisations targeted;
- The dissemination of information about the programme and the opportunities it offers (this was by far the most commonly reported obstacle for stakeholders who do not have access to this information);
- Administrative requirements linked to the management of EU funds and the availability of experienced project managers in the organisations targeted;
- Constraints such as: time to apply for action grants; time to receive grants; issues related to co-financing; and language skills.

Source: ICF GHK

4.4 The participation of candidate and pre-candidate countries

PROGRESS was designed to help potential accession countries align their policies with the EU agenda concerned and become familiar with the European EU laws and acquis.

Four countries started to take part in PROGRESS in 2007 after signing Memoranda of Understanding with the Commission (Croatia, FYROM, Serbia, Turkey). The Memorandum specified the conditions for participation, including the amounts to be paid by these countries to the EU budget and the so called 'progressive approach'. The participation of candidate and pre-candidate countries in PROGRESS follows a phasing-in process, following the so-called 'progressive approach' (see Box 4.8 below).

Box 4.8 The 'progressive approach'

The PROGRESS programme was not fully open to candidate and pre-candidate countries from the beginning. The phasing-in was divided into three phases, each corresponding to a set of types of actions the countries could engage in.

The assumption behind the progressive approach was that candidate and pre-candidate countries were at different stages of policy development with regard to the five areas covered by PROGRESS compared with EU Member States. To fully benefit from some of the PROGRESS activities it was expected that they should achieve a certain level of policy development first. That is why the aspects of the programme such as 'working groups monitoring the implementation of EU law' or 'carrying out evaluations and impact assessments' were open to these countries at a later stage than other aspects of the programme.

However, the progressive approach to PROGRESS was not consistently implemented. For instance since 2011, all the candidate and pre-candidate countries except Serbia were eligible to full participation in the programme. Yet, the work plans[31] show no distinction between Serbia and the other countries. The 2013 work plan sometimes shows a different treatment for Croatia[32], acceding to the EU in July 2013.

Source: ICF GHK

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[31] Participation in PROGRESS is planned annually in the PROGRESS 'Annual Work Plans'.
[32] Croatia is included in some activities that do not cover the remaining three countries.

The majority of PROGRESS funded activities in the period 2011-2013 was open to candidate and pre-candidate countries, however around one third of activities were not open. In 2013, of the 100 activities funded, 31 were not open to all candidate and pre-candidate countries; in 2012 the ratio was 26 for 112 and in 2011 it was 30 for 111.

The level of participation differed greatly with Croatia participating very actively and Turkey little:

- In action grant funded activities, Croatia participated most followed by Serbia. Turkey and FYROM participated little. The participation of Croatia was similar to that of other countries that acceded to the EU after 2004. The participation of Turkey, in particular given the country size, was particularly low.
- In sharing and learning activities Serbia had the highest participation followed by Croatia. The participation of FYROM and Turkey was low in these activities.
- All four countries participate little in the networks funded via PROGRESS.
- While Croatia was systematically covered in the EU expert networks (which can be explained by its accession to the EU in 2013), the coverage of the remaining countries varied and was not systematic.
- Not all analytical activities funded by PROGRESS covered candidate and pre-candidate countries. The majority of those 88 PROGRESS funded activities that were not open to these countries were studies or evaluations. Analytical activities mostly either covered all the four countries or none. The exception being Croatia, which from the beginning of 2013 was treated as other Member States and systematically covered by all activities funded.

Candidate and pre-candidate countries were engaged in activities in the fields of employment and social protection. PROGRESS also enabled organisations to work on topics that were not well funded at the national level – in particular in the field of *anti-discrimination.*

Activities in the field of working conditions were mostly not open to candidate and pre candidate countries, including activities such as expert meetings. This was because most of these activities concerned the implementation of EU legislation which is not yet implemented in those countries.

Croatia and Serbia participated in a broad range of activities showing that the possible obstacles to participation these countries face can be overcome. Public authorities and civil society representatives from these countries engaged actively in PROGRESS funded actions.

Differences in participation could be explained by differences in financial contributions - candidate and pre-candidate countries contribute financially to their involvement in PROGRESS. However, as indicated in Table 4.6, there was no direct link between financial contribution and participation in the programme.

Table 4.6   Summary of findings related to the contribution/participation balance in candidate and pre-candidate countries

Country	Financial contribution (total figure)	Country size (population)	Participation in action grants	Participation in sharing and learning activities	Evidence of outcomes*	Perceived balance participation /contribution**
Croatia	Medium	Small	Medium	Low	Some system-level outcomes identified	Positive
FYROM	Medium	Small	Low	Low	Anecdotal evidence of system-level outcomes	Negative
Serbia	Low	Small	Low	Medium	Some system-level outcomes identified	Positive
Turkey	High	Large	Low	Low	Anecdotal evidence of system-level outcomes	Negative

based on findings concerning outcomes;

**based on interviewees opinions, mostly reflected on the added value of the programme to them by judging on their perception of the results of action grants and sharing and learning activities, Sources: CIA World Factbook, European Union, ICF GHK*

Turkey was the largest contributor among the four candidate and pre-candidate countries taking part in PROGRESS, with a total contribution of EUR 1,680,000[33]. Even though Turkey contributed the most to PROGRESS in terms of funding, it is the country that participated the least in both action grant funded projects and sharing and learning activities.

Several interviewees in Turkey reported that the participation of Turkey in PROGRESS was not balanced, in light of the amounts contributed compared to the level of participation.

Similarly, FYROM's participation was rather low and evidence of outcomes and impacts appears scarce. Given the country's contribution to the programme – EUR 1,380,000, which made it the highest contributor amongst candidate and pre-candidate countries relatively to its size, it was also perceived among interviewees that FYROM benefited less from the programme than it contributed to it.

Box 4.9 indicates the main factors influencing the participation in PROGRESS from candidate and pre-candidate countries.

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[33] Turkey's contribution represented 33 % of the amount paid by candidate and pre-candidate countries.

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Box 4.9 Factors influencing the participation of candidate and pre-candidate countries

- Differences in the success rates of action grant proposals (organisations from Croatia had a much higher success rate [19%] than those from Turkey [4%]). This variation reflects differences in the capacity of organisations to submit and lead successful projects;
- Dissemination of the programme opportunities to the right organisations (some countries followed opportunities for sharing and learning more systematically than others);
- The extent to which the organisations in these countries are networked with organisations from the EU (for example, most action grants with participants from (pre-)candidate countries were led by organisations that have geographical or cultural proximity with these countries);
- The capacity of organisations to participate in meeting (human resources available) or to manage EU projects (both administrative and management capacity);
- Commitment of resources to larger and more systemic projects funded through IPA;
- The level of participation itself (the less the country participates, the less the programme is known and so the participation does not increase); and
- Active preparation for accession to the EU: the active participation of Croatia in PROGRESS was linked to Croatia's preparation for accession to the EU (the country joined the EU on 1 July 2013). This was also a finding of the evaluation of the Mutual Learning Programme34. As a consequence, Croatia was better prepared and institutionally equipped to fully benefit from PROGRESS.

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Source: ICF GHK

In terms of processes affecting the participation of these countries, the following aspects could be simplified:

- The progressive approach was not systematically applied in practice and not supported with guidelines on how it should be applied. The reason for the non-application of this approach is probably its complexity;
- The differences in contributions paid by these countries are based on country population. However, there is no evidence that the level of participation of candidate and pre-candidate countries was related to country size.

4.5 Conclusions on participation

For PROGRESS activities to contribute effectively to the programme objectives, there is a need for high level participants and a cadre of 'smart communicators', to help identify lessons from analogous and transferable transnational experience. Activities are less likely to be successful if participants at any level are passive and have narrow competences.

The analysis of participation patterns per type of organisation shows a well-balanced and appropriate distribution overall. The programme activities do bring together a broad range of organisations from public authorities, through social partners and civil society to higher education institutions and to a certain extent also private companies (though these are mainly research firms).

Thanks to coordination with the five policy committees, the programme reaches the relevant public authorities.

The reach to civil society organisations and social partners is ensured through different mailing lists of the DG, but also because these organisations monitor opportunities for participation in action grants.

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[34] ECORYS (2013)

Though there are some returning participants in action grants, this does not appear to be disproportionate compared to the target groups of the programme.

Regarding country coverage of the PROGRESS funded action grants and sharing and learning activities:

- Organisations from Italy, France, Slovenia and the UK led a significant share of the action grant projects analysed (35 % of all the projects). Italy was by far the strongest represented country. On the other hand, organisations from some countries participate relatively little: Cyprus, Denmark, Iceland, Malta, Norway and Slovakia.
- EU-12 countries are also less frequently participating in sharing and learning activities funded by PROGRESS and they are much less frequently hosting events. However, there are exceptions to this trend such as the Czech Republic or Cyprus (but also Serbia and Croatia), which participate rather frequently.

The country coverage of analytical activities is balanced.

5 Governance and management of PROGRESS

5.1 Introduction

The evaluation of the governance and management of PROGRESS considered the following evaluation questions:

- How has the governance of the programme (i.e. the functioning of the committee, policy coordination committees and partnership strategies) enabled a positive impact?
- How have the definition of objectives, intervention logic, causality factors and indicators supported the management of PROGRESS? How were these translated at the level of the implementation of the activities?
- What impact has the programme management had, since the focus was on the integrated programme, on the integration of the policy fields and synergies?
- Was the complementarity and coordination with other EU programmes in direct and shared management (particularly ESF) optimal?

It was informed by responses from 36 Programme Committee Members (PCM) and National Contact Points (NCP) in different policy areas to the e-mail survey or telephone interviews. Evidence was also drawn from: a specially convened working group on governance chaired by the Commission and involving PCM, NGOs and social partners; interviews with Commission officials; records of attendance at the PROGRESS Committee; and, observations from attending and presenting at the two PROGRESS Committee meetings during 2013.

5.2 Programme governance

PROGRESS brought together a number of pre-existing programmes and policy areas under one programme. The PROGRESS Committee was comprised of members nominated by Member States with the Commission providing the chair and secretariat. Programme Committee Members (PCM) are assisted by National Policy Contacts (NCPs), who are representatives of national administrations in the policy areas covered by PROGRESS.

PROGRESS Committee meetings were typically attended by 40 or more individuals including government officials, social attaches and Commission officials. Most of the countries were represented by high level government officials.

Since September 2010 representatives from 34 countries have been involved. Twelve countries have attended all meetings during this period with 22 to 28 countries represented in each meeting.

Many countries are represented by the appropriate level of policy actors (senior level officials). There has been a high turnover of PROGRESS Committee members, although the survey results indicated that a group of members have been involved since or near the start. The turnover was in part due to the time between Committee meetings and changes at the national level in terms of the roles and responsibilities of civil servants. It does mean that at any one meeting there are likely to be a few participants new to the process – and possibly new to PROGRESS.

The flow of new blood may be accelerated by pressures on national administrations in several Member States (e.g. ongoing reforms and restructuring, often to reduce costs). This can be a positive for EaSI, but there is a responsibility on national governments to ensure new members or alternates are fully briefed. The Commission can also assist this process by providing briefing materials.

The candidate and pre-candidate countries are invited to attend PROGRESS Committee meetings as observers. Their participation at the meeting varied. Serbia participated in all Committee meetings while Croatia took part in most (four). FYROM and Turkey have both participated in two meetings since 2010. In the case of Turkey, no representative has been sent to any of the last three PROGRESS committee meetings. When asked why, an official from Turkey explained that government staff had been too busy managing IPA funds to participate in PROGRESS Committee meetings.

Experts were also invited to make presentations on, for example, the results of PROGRESS projects and the Annual Performance Monitoring Plan (APMP). More recently (since 2012), presentations of projects were also organised.

The Committee has usually met bi-annually fitting a cycle of planning in one meeting (the discussion of the Annual Work Plan) and consideration of the results in the other. However, additional meetings were organised in particular when the programme was launched.

When assessing the coordination at the national level, it was found that there were frequent contacts between PCM and NCPs (the main link between the PROGRESS Committee and national governments). In a few cases PCM and NCPs worked in the same offices and had daily contact, whilst a few PCM had previously acted as NCPs and vice versa. PCM generally had strong contacts and working relationships with NGOs, social partners and local/regional administrations.

The direct management of PROGRESS by the European Commission offers the advantage of ensuring proximity to the EU policy agenda and strong influence over the design of activities and the specifications of calls for proposals.

The governance structures for PROGRESS – and also for EaSI – make provisions for the involvement of EU policy committees through the sharing of information. Practice varied between policy committees on the extent to which PROGRESS priorities were debated and the extent to which policy perspectives – from the committees – were developed in the context of PROGRESS.

There was no clear pattern of national co-ordination beyond the work of the PCM and NCPs. Some countries had inter-departmental bodies (e.g. Slovenia had the Working Group for the Monitoring of the PROGRESS Programme which met twice a year following the PROGRESS Committee) whereas in other countries (such as France) ad hoc meetings were called to discuss and act on the results of PROGRESS.

5.3 The impact of the governance of PROGRESS on its results

The governance structures of PROGRESS have had a positive impact, although the evidence, and the perceptions of those surveyed, suggests that the impact might have been greater.

The PROGRESS Committee was the vehicle for bringing together the five policy areas of PROGRESS (employment, social inclusion and social protection, working conditions, anti-discrimination and gender equality) under one integrated forum. It operated under the Comitology Regulation which restricts the decision making powers of the Committee.

The SF and monitoring frameworks were presented for scrutiny to the Committee and countries were able to make their points during the debates. This process is likely to have had a positive impact.

Those surveyed as part of the evaluation on governance felt that the Committee could play a stronger role in the dissemination of PROGRESS funded activities. The introduction of expert presentations on the results of specific activities was considered

a positive step and had helped to raise awareness amongst Committee participants. Specific meetings, such as the validation seminar for the mid-term evaluation, allowed for more in depth discussion by a smaller group. There is a provision for meetings of this type in the EaSI Regulation.

The evidence of the impact of the governance of PROGRESS on EU policy making is mixed. DG EMPL and DG JUST officials used PROGRESS activities to add to the policy knowledge and evidence base. The governance structures for PROGRESS (as for EaSI) make provisions for the involvement of EU policy committees through the sharing of information. Practice varied between committees on the extent to which PROGRESS activities were debated and the extent to which policy perspectives, from the committees, were developed in the context of PROGRESS. Those consulted believed that there was scope to improve the policy relevance of PROGRESS, and now EaSI, through more interactions with ESF programmes. PROGRESS provided the 'incubation space' for innovative thinking and social experimentation. This role could be further enhanced under EaSI.

The overall impact of PROGRESS depended on the work of PCM (and NCPs) away from the committee meetings and especially on the quality of national level coordination. There are examples of inter-departmental groups set up to learn from the results of PROGRESS and specific good practice that can be exploited at the country level. The evaluation indicated that linkages at the country level and the involvement of regional and local authorities, NGOs and social partners, helped the dissemination process. The impact of PROGRESS has been increased by national level dissemination (through events, websites, reports in libraries, etc.) and encouraged and steered at governmental level.

5.4 Management and use of the Strategic Framework

There are several ways in which the SF, presented in Section 1, supported the implementation of PROGRESS. The following are considered in turn below: communicating the programme's logic; contributing to efficiencies; a basis for reporting on programme implementation within the EC; a basis for reporting to European Parliament and external stakeholders; as an enhancement of the mechanics of the programme; and, enhancing the design of actions.

5.4.1 Communicating the programme's logic

The SF has helped communicate the programme (its rationale, aims, components etc.). In particular, it articulates the broader purposes of the actions when undertaken in concert. The SF helps embed the key notions underpinning the process of progressing EU objectives in partnership between the EU and MS and through the application of a variety of tools including laws. The SF has been less effective in communicating PROGRESS to external stakeholders. This is because the programme is complex and stakeholders tend to be concerned with specific aspects and strands of the programme rather than PROGRESS as a whole.

The SF was used to communicate the programme as part of the action grants (see Box 5.1 following). Each call launched under PROGRESS specifies that the programme is subject to results-based management and the aim of the Strategic Framework and performance measurement. This has helped to show to applicants the programme logic and the objectives to which the project should contribute to. It has also provided a framework for the collection of data and other performance measures.

Box 5.1 – Text included in all calls for proposals under PROGRESS

PROGRESS is implemented through results-based management (RBM). The Strategic Framework, developed in collaboration with the Member States, social partners and civil society organisations, sets out the intervention logic for PROGRESS-related expenditure and defines PROGRESS' mandate and its long-term and immediate outcomes. It is supplemented by performance measures which serve to determine the extent to which PROGRESS has delivered the expected results.

The Commission regularly monitors the effect of PROGRESS-supported or commissioned initiatives and considers how they contribute to PROGRESS outcomes as defined in the Strategic Framework. In this context, the Contractor will be asked to dedicatedly work in close cooperation with the Commission and/or persons authorised by it to define the expected contribution and the set of performance measures which this contribution will be assessed against.

The Contractor will be asked to collect and report on its own performance to the Commission and/or persons authorised by it against a template which will be annexed to the contract/service order. In addition, the Contractor 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.

Source: ICF GHK

5.4.2 Contributing to efficiencies

One rationale for the design of PROGRESS, in addition to generating more interactions between policy areas and reducing the tendency to work 'in silos' (and, combining several predecessor programmes into one), was to generate economies of scale and efficiencies in some aspects of implementation.

The SF emphasises that similar actions are undertaken in different policy areas. There was clearly scope for using the experience gained in, for example 'calls for proposals' and the 'identification and dissemination of good practice' in one policy area in other areas within PROGRESS. Indeed, there are both similarities in processes used in the different policy areas and similarities in the way in which these processes should be reinforcing. Thus the design of the programme, reflected in the SF, provided the potential to generate and sustain good communication and mutual learning amongst a cadre of EC officials involved with programme management. The SF has the potential of improving the flow of lessons on aspects of activities that are common to different policy areas. One such common aspect of action grants is social experimentation (which could be applied in most of the policy areas) and there is evidence of learning and improvements in practice in the light of the experience of subsequent call for proposals. The analytical activities, which are undertaken for and owned by the EC can also contribute to more than one policy area.

5.4.3 A basis for reporting on programme implementation within the EC

The SF has, through the adoption of performance indicators linked to the immediate and intermediate outputs, contributed to and helped structure the reporting on programme implementation.

The Annual Performance Monitoring Reports is built on the logic model outlined in the SF. They present the contribution of PROGRESS to immediate and intermediate outputs of the programme together with financial information. The reports also give recommendations on actions to enhance the programme's efficiency and effectiveness. However, the structure of the APMR has evolved. The first APMR was introduced in 2008. By September 2013, five reports had been issued.

Since 2009, the reports began to give a qualitative account of how PROGRESS funded activities had contributed to the achievements of EU policy goals. Since then, the reports have highlighted some of the most successful actions that had an influence on policy makers. The relationship between the immediate outcomes and the performance measure indicators that have been the basis of APMRs is illustrated in Figure 1.2. The evolution of the indicators is also indicated. In recent years the APMR have given greater emphasis to outputs. Aspects of participation have also been reported. For example, the 2012 report includes not only the details on the number of grants awarded through social experimentation calls, but also on beneficiary countries (listing the lead and partner countries).

Nevertheless, the reports have not been optimum with respect to some reporting needs. The structure of the reports stemming from the SF does reflect the objectives and components of the programme, but not to the wider policy goals such as the Europe 2020 Strategy. However, the programme activities are also designed to contribute to the initiatives and priorities of the Europe 2020 Strategy, but normally in concert with other EU and national actions. The rationale for choice of actions funded and their prioritisation is both linked to the SF and to policy developments in the fields covered by the programme and related policy initiatives. This creates a tension between reporting according to the programme objectives set in the SF (transversal and process-focused) and the reporting according to policy objectives of the Europe 2020 Strategy and its initiatives. Those outside the programme tend to be interested in these policy objectives.

The feedback collected from the survey on governance gives a mixed picture of the usefulness of the SF and the monitoring reports with many respondents not being aware of the SF and another third considering them partially useful[35]. Among those respondents who provided more specific comments several underlined that the reporting is somewhat technical or too focused on outputs.

At the same time, there is a rationale for monitoring according to the SF indicators. Given that the policy priorities cannot be achieved through EU action alone and rely largely on actions of MS, PROGRESS can only make a small contribution that would be hard to measure. Consequently, it was considered more appropriate to have indicators linked closely to the programme activities.

The SF was also used for management and reporting of DG EMPL. The SF informed the Annual Management Plans (AMP) and the Annual Activity Reports (AAR) of DG EMPL.

5.4.4 A basis for reporting to European Parliament and external stakeholders

The APMR are, as stressed above, linked to the SF. They have been the main source of information on the programme implementation. The use of the SF is helpful insofar as it provides the opportunity to emphasise the important links between policy areas (so that readers/users of the reports can see 'the bigger picture') and the commonalities and lessons from applying similar methods/products in different policy areas (e.g. the principles underpinning the success of a mutual learning activity in one strand are likely to be the same in another). However, whilst they are comprehensive, because of the scale and diversity of the programme and because the interests of individual external stakeholders may be confined to particular strands, the reports may not have been the most effective means of communicating with stakeholders. As said above, the share of NCPs and PCMs indicating that they were not aware of the SF was relatively high and critical remarks on content were received.

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[35] 36 % of respondents considered the APMRs fully useful, 36 % partially useful, 5 % not sufficiently useful and 25 % did not know it or did not comment; 32 % thought the SF fully facilitated monitoring, 21 % thought it facilitated it partially, 8 % not sufficiently and 39 % did not know or did not respond.

The 2012 APMR noted the need to further develop the monitoring tools. The current monitoring framework strongly focuses on inputs and outputs in combination with perceptions of stakeholders. In particular the important evidence based policy lessons emerging from PROGRESS funded actions are not sufficiently monitored and communicated. Considering the nature of the results of some of the PROGRESS funded actions, it is important to capture them on an ongoing basis as with several months or years delay, the recall of participants is likely to be insufficient. Information on PROGRESS policy specific results needs to be collected and its dissemination well targeted at those in a position to influence policy and practice. Though the current monitoring and indicators used satisfy the accountability purpose, it does not sufficiently support the harvesting of lessons learnt under the programme and their subsequent dissemination. While it is unlikely to have a unified indicator framework for the results of all types of actions in all policy areas, a common set of indicators could be developed at the level of the programme, which would be then used as a tool-box at the level of different types of actions. As shown in box 5.2 below, some sharing and learning activities already use such result indicators.

Box 5.2 – Results indicators used in certain actions funded by PROGRESS (examples)

The contractor for the gender equality seminars systematically collects information from events' participants about:

- Knowledge gained by the participants;
- Application of information gained at work;
- Dissemination of outcomes after the event.

The contractor for PES to PES dialogue monitored the changes made to national practices as a result of different seminars. The number of changes reported was collected, but also the focus of the change (what type of PES service/ measure was concerned).

Source: ICF GHK

5.4.5 An enhancement of the mechanics of the programme

The SF does highlight the anticipated linkages between actions, immediate, intermediate and ultimate outcomes. However, these links are mainly expressing processes. There would be benefit in the articulation of case histories illustrating where, in particular, the combination of activities within the programme, (say a network, two to three action grants, a mutual learning activity and the availability of new comparative data) had combined to lead to a positive shift in policy that furthered ultimate outcomes. The APMR provides examples of how a combination of different activities and different outputs, supports policy/ practice changes and how a combination of research, peer-learning, projects and a conference enabled the EC to present a policy initiative, however it could be further developed.

The logic of the PROGRESS SF is that it refers to outputs and outcomes that relate to the processes, such as sharing and learning, provision of evidence or information, communication and awareness raising. Due to its aims, it does not however, capture all these tools. It does not make reference to the reporting and implementation obligations of the MS. Whilst, insofar as MS are obliged to report on progress in some policy fields (e.g. employment) and to transpose and implement EU legislation, this activity is not funded by PROGRESS. Reporting requirements and the extent to which MS need to respond to recommendations made (which vary between OMCs in different areas) are important policy tools. The learning activities are also relevant to the effective implementation of EU legislation. However, the differences between the PROGRESS policy areas mean that including references to activities associated with these obligations (e.g. the independent assessment of MS responses to recommendations) would be out of the scope of the programme and increase the complexity of the SF.

5.4.6 Enhancing the design of actions

The SF strengthens the commonalities of actions in different policy areas and the potential reinforcement through the use of combinations of actions. Thus the SF has the potential to help ensure that similar actions in different strands benefit from the collective experience and are well designed and executed. However, more could be made of the interactions between and reinforcing aspects of actions mobilised in concert. This is likely to be most practical at the stand/policy area level where the SF could more explicitly express the 'theory of change' of the combination of activities supported and the assumed manner in which they are mutually reinforced.

5.5 Integration across policy areas and coordination with other programmes

5.5.1 Governance, programme management and the integration between policy areas

There are important linkages between the policy areas. These linkages were one of the rationales for the creation of PROGRESS. Some of the linkages are described in Figure 1.5. There were however, other factors supporting these linkages such as the potential economies.

The governance structures have not contributed markedly to the integration between policy areas within PROGRESS and the realisation of synergies. It may be unrealistic for committee participants to be conversant with or specialist in several or all policy areas and hence able to contribute to the integration and realisation of synergies.

At the level of programme management the PROGRESS structure and processes have enabled cross-learning between the policy areas. This happens at the EU as well as national level. At EU level, the requirement to develop a joint work programme and to have a common monitoring, reporting and evaluation framework required exchanges between the policy areas. At the national level, the majority of respondents to the governance survey involved other members of the different policy committees regarding PROGRESS related items. In the same survey, 50 % of committee members stated that PROGRESS results were discussed within the policy committees at EU level.

However, cross-policy area actions funded by PROGRESS were rare. One example of such action was the calls for proposals for social experimentation that concerned social protection and inclusion and employment.

However, there was still a tendency for the policy areas to be considered separately by those outside the programme. This tendency was acerbated by the responsibility for the management of two of strands moving to DG JUST.

5.5.2 Synergies with other programmes (particularly ESF)

The direct management of PROGRESS by the EC enabled its implementation to be informed by the development of the relevant EU policy agenda, to take account of the changing economic context and to foster the integration of between PROGRESS activities and policy areas. The analytical activities needed to be closely coordinated and specified by the EC so that the results could fill gaps in knowledge and understanding of the policy areas. Similarly, the specifications of the calls for proposals for action grants and the selection of projects needed to be tightly managed and attuned to the overall objectives of the programme. The sharing and learning activities benefitted from 'hands on' inputs of the EC. The awareness raising activities also required close management by the EC. In each area the EC made judicious use of external contractors.

Whilst there was complementarity with other programmes managed by the EC, there was not close coordination, notably with the ESF. The potential linkages between PROGRESS and the ESF (where the management is shared between the EC and the MS) were not exploited. Such linkages might have included:

- Successful innovative projects, policies and practices developed with action grants being 'mainstreamed' in the ESF.
- Examples of ESF funded projects being cited more often in sharing and learning activities.
- Analytical activities informing changes in guidelines, priorities and resource allocations of the ESF particularly at the level of and within the operational programmes.
- Methods developed under PROGRESS, such as social experimentation, being applied to assess the contributions of ESF interventions.

There are several contributory factors, which have constrained such coordination and linkages between PROGRESS and the ESF. Firstly, the planning cycles and actors involved in the management of ESF are different from those of PROGRESS. Secondly, the findings from the experimental and 'good practice identification' work of PROGRESS take time to emerge and are not organised through knowledge management mechanisms so that they are readily available to inform those managing the ESF. Thirdly, PROGRESS is 'Europe wide', and whilst the ESF is present in all EU Member States, its relative importance in terms of contribution to active labour market and other measures varies markedly between countries.

Despite these constraints, there is scope for improving the coordination between the successor programmes and the ESF.

6 Transversal issues: gender equality, non-discrimination and the fight against social exclusion

6.1 Introduction

The 'transversal' or 'cross-cutting' issues in PROGRESS are the policy goals and objectives that were to be addressed by PROGRESS funded activities under all five thematic policy areas/strands. They were:

- Promoting gender equality;
- Ensuring non-discrimination; and,
- Fighting social exclusion.

The extent to which these transversal issues were integrated and mainstreamed in PROGRESS activities was one element of the PROGRESS monitoring framework.[36]

The objectives of the evaluation on transversal issues were:

- To identify: to what extent PROGRESS succeeded in mainstreaming the transversal issues (and policy objectives) of gender equality, non-discrimination, and the fight against social exclusion in different activities undertaken with PROGRESS support;
- To identify how the mainstreaming of these issues varied between the different types of PROGRESS actions and tools; and,
- To identify how mainstreaming was implemented and which approaches proved most effective.

6.2 The ways in which transversal issues were addressed through different types of activities

The focus on transversal issues was analysed from two angles:

- On the one hand, the evaluation looked at how topics concerning transversal issues were embedded in each of the policy areas; and
- On the other hand, the evaluation looked at how the transversal issues were addressed, even in those activities that did not specifically focus on any of the transversal topics.

Thematically, transversal issues were covered in each type of PROGRESS action:

- Analytical activities – PROGRESS funded a number of studies and analyses concerning issues of gender equality, anti-discrimination, social inclusion and the fight against poverty;
- Action grants were used to fund projects concerning gender mainstreaming, promoting anti-discrimination and equality, and increasing social inclusion. Action grants also frequently addressed the needs of disadvantaged groups;
- Sharing and learning activities – in addition to the dedicated Peer Reviews on gender equality and seminars on anti-discrimination, seminars in the fields of employment, social protection and social inclusion tackled gender issues and to a lesser extent, the needs of disadvantaged groups;
- Awareness raising activities – PROGRESS funded campaigns in the areas of gender equality and anti-discrimination;

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[36] European Commission (2008), Developing and implementing a monitoring framework for PROGRESS, (http://ec.europa.eu/social/keyDocuments.jsp?type=0&policyArea=86&subCategory=987&country=0&year =0&advSearchKey=PerformanceMonitoringDocuments&mode=advancedSubmit&langId=en), p6.

- Expert networks and European networks of organisations were funded through PROGRESS concerning the three transversal issues.

6.3   Transversal issues in the five policy strands of PROGRESS

The transversal issues were present in each of the five policy areas/strands of PROGRESS. The gender equality and anti-discrimination strands were of course congruent with two of the three transversal issues. The social inclusion and social protection strand also had a strong focus on the transversal issues and in particular, the risks of poverty and social exclusion were addressed, particularly for those with disadvantages.

The employment strand of PROGRESS frequently covered topics that link employment and gender equality and less frequently, employment and various forms of discrimination.

The coverage of transversal issues was less apparent amongst the activities funded under the working conditions strand. However, some analyses of working conditions did consider the treatment/conditions of women and of people with disabilities.

6.4   Transversal issues in the implementation of the PROGRESS programme and activities

The template to gather the information on PROGRESS activities which involved the participation of individuals (such as events, conferences or training) enabled the monitoring of the participation of women/men. It would not be feasible to regularly monitor the participation of individuals that may suffer other grounds for discrimination, such as people with disabilities or ethnic minorities, due in part to data protection and ethical issues.

Analytical activities frequently address the issue of gender equality in the different strands and themes analysed. Other transversal issues were less commonly addressed when they were not the core topic of study. This was due in part to the lack of available data, or the relevance of specifically addressing these issues.

The common conditions for the calls launched under PROGRESS also mention the gender and non-discrimination issues. In their final reports, the projects are systematically required to reflect on how their project addressed the issue of equality. More exactly, the project report template provides this guidance:

How did you make sure that equality considerations were taken into account in your work? These can relate to ensuring an appropriate mix of people in your team, ensuring that all activities were accessible to all, making sure that all dimensions, in particular the gender dimension, were taken into account in your work.

Of the 78 projects which we completed at the time of the analysis and for which final reports were available, the vast majority – 73 – gave some indications of such considerations. In eleven cases, the considerations provided in the report were rather superficially or vaguely tackled however, the majority of the reports provided at least some information on how the principle of equality was ensured. An analysis of these parts of the project reports shows that:

- The vast majority of projects pay some attention to gender issues – considerations related to gender were present in 66 reports;
- Roughly a third of the projects note having taken into consideration disability (25 reports);
- Ethnicity or migration background is mentioned much less frequently (11 projects), a few projects (five) paid attention to age diversity and only six mentioned religion.

Action grant projects often reported on efforts to ensure gender balance in the project team and among participants/ beneficiaries. Access to events to people with disabilities was also mentioned. Attention to other sources of discrimination was less frequently taken into account in the execution of projects, with the exception of projects in the field of non-discrimination.

Peer Reviews conducted under PROGRESS varied in the extent to which they included and mainstreamed transversal issues. While in SPSI Peer Reviews, the range of social policies and practices integrating transversal issues was very wide, the inclusion of transversal issues in MLP Peer Reviews was infrequent, and in PES to PES Peer Reviews it was rare.

Awareness raising activities under PROGRESS did not address transversal issues unless the information events and campaigns were specifically concerned with one of the transversal issues. The targeting of groups such as the socially vulnerable, migrants and ethnic minorities by awareness raising activities did not take place.

6.5 The weight of emphasis on each transversal issue

The PROGRESS programme architecture was complex insofar as two of the transversal issues (gender equality and non-discrimination) were also policy areas/strands and the third transversal issue (social inclusion) was closely related to another policy area. This created difficulties in defining what is meant by the mainstreaming of transversal issues in PROGRESS.

The transversal issues were covered to varying extents:

- The transversal issue that was most frequently addressed in PROGRESS funded actions was gender equality. This was apparent in the coverage by different activities and strands as well as the ways in which actions under PROGRESS were designed, implemented and monitored.
- The fight against social exclusion was a commonly addressed issue under PROGRESS, but was less apparent in the ways in which projects and studies were executed.
- The emphasis on anti-discrimination varied according the potential targets of discrimination: disability was considered as a factor and analysed in different themes and strands and when organising funded activities; age was sometimes analysed in activities related to employment and social inclusion; and, issues such as ethnicity, religion or sexual orientation were primarily addressed in those activities funded under the anti-discrimination strand of PROGRESS. Their presence in other parts of the programme was rare.

7 Dissemination and valorisation

7.1 Introduction

The evaluation assessed whether the dissemination and valorisation activities undertaken by the EC and the organisations participating in PROGRESS were effective relative to the results expected and the extent to which they reached target groups.

The evaluation on valorisation and dissemination reviewed:

- The dissemination activities that have taken place as part of the different actions (action grants, sharing and learning and analytical activities);and
- The efforts that were made at the European, national (and regional/local) level(s) to build on and exploit the results of PROGRESS funded actions.

The evaluation considered the following aspects:

- Objectives for dissemination and expected effects;
- Scale, scope and channels of dissemination;
- Target audiences and reach;
- Adequacy and effectiveness, given the objectives defined; and
- Conclusions, lessons learned and aspects to be considered for future programming.

The evaluation covered both national and EU level dissemination.

The key evaluation question was*: Were the valorisation, capitalisation and dissemination of the results of the actions appropriate?*

7.2 The adequacy and effectiveness of dissemination at activity level

Dissemination took place at several levels within PROGRESS. When considering action grants, sharing and learning and analytical activities, a distinction was made between:

- Dissemination at 'activity' level;
- Dissemination within a strand or policy area;
- Thematic dissemination considering a transversal or cross cutting issue.

As most of the dissemination work which takes place is implemented at the activity level, the main type of activities (action grants, sharing and learning and analytical activities) are considered in turn.

7.2.1 Action grants

Ensuring adequate dissemination is an important objective for projects supported by action grants. The importance of the dissemination of project results was recognised at all levels.

The calls launched under PROGRESS specify the obligation to build a communication strategy and publicise the EU funding[37].

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[37] The ToRs were very often included a specific task linked to the dissemination of the result of the activity. It was specified that the **communication strategy** should be in line and comply with the overall Commission communication strategy. In view of the importance of effectively disseminating the lessons learned in the context of the activities to a wide audience, both at European and national level, the contractor should identify:
- Tools, products and channels for promotion and dissemination of results to all relevant stakeholders, giving visibility to the outcomes of the activities and allowing them to be fully used in policy design;

There was abundant evidence of dissemination efforts by grant holders at project level. Dissemination efforts tended to be concentrated within the territory of the projects. While examples of effective transnational dissemination were found within the projects reviewed, they were infrequent.

While some activities are implemented at EC level to support dissemination among grant holders successful in calls for proposals, this activity was not organised within the framework of a discernable strategy. Judged by the low awareness of action grant project holders and the partners of other projects operating in their areas, EU level dissemination efforts were inadequate.

Project holders and partners indicated that they rarely found information about other projects' results and interviewees found it difficult to obtain information on other projects. A majority of those interviewed indicated that they were not aware of any EC activity related to the dissemination of project results. Where information was found on projects, it stemmed from their organisations' networks and to a small extent from DG EMPL's website and newsletters. Project leaders indicated that the dissemination of results were not optimal and that knowledge stemming from projects was not effectively shared.

EC officials recognised that the dissemination of results at EU or thematic level was a weakness. This was identified in the framework of the mid-term evaluation[38]. While some activities were undertaken to publish executive summaries of the results of the projects supported through action grants, their scope was modest. Furthermore, few EC policy documents contain references to project results. The difference between the 'stated objectives' in the calls as regards EU level dissemination and actual dissemination efforts may be explained by EC expectations regarding how projects may impact on policy making within the EU. This was exemplified by the action grants for social experimentation. Whilst the calls for proposals for action grants on social experimentation referred to EU level dissemination, EC interviewees mainly pointed toward 'valorisation' expectations at the national level. When asked to comment on the potential impact of projects, officials referred to the adoption of policy measures at a 'national scale', as opposed to transnational learning.

7.2.2 Sharing and learning

Sharing and learning activities are, by nature, dissemination activities aiming at ensuring valorisation of policy and practice experience. As with action grants, valorisation of sharing and learning results was considered important by all actors engaged in these activities.

Dissemination through sharing and learning activities took place at several levels. Often contractors to the EC support the dissemination of the results of individual

▪ Alternative means of dissemination of information (e.g. online working / professional groups, social media, etc.), to be developed during the contract, to reach and motivate target groups to feed in and use the outcomes of the activities;
▪ Main target groups (e.g. relevant authorities at European and national level in the MS and participating countries, stakeholders, etc.) for the dissemination of information on the activities;
▪ Relevant content providers / sources of information and establish a workflow for content production / supply;
▪ Ways to evaluate feedback after events and activities.

Decisions about the communication and dissemination activities will be taken in agreement with the Commission. High quality of drafting and presentation of information and documents will be ensured.

Also the contractors and beneficiaries were under the obligation to acknowledge that their activity has received funding from the EU in all documents and media produced, in particular final delivered outputs, related reports, brochures, press releases, videos, software, etc., including at conferences or seminars.
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http://ec.europa.eu/social/keyDocuments.jsp?type=0&policyArea=86&subCategory=987&country=0&year=0&advSearchKey=progressevaluation&mode=advancedSubmit&langId=en

sharing and learning events though the publication of reports and other documentation. Participants engage in dissemination through their networks. Dissemination is also supported by activities covering each of the sharing and learning programmes.

Most participants report sharing the outputs from these events with colleagues and beyond. However, EU level dissemination efforts are currently insufficient to effectively optimise learning and dissemination beyond those directly engaged in sharing and learning activities. The current focus is on the organisation and implementation of sharing and learning events with few proactive efforts for follow-up dissemination. In some sharing and learning activities the contractors have a key role in identifying transferable practices and communicating these (see Box 7.1).

Box 7.1 Example – the Mutual Learning Programme

The elements mentioned in the main text are present in the following features of the MLP:

- The transferability of each example discussed is assessed by the independent experts; features that could be applied in each country are identified;
- Shortly after each event participants are provided with a summary that they can disseminate further;
- Since recently, dissemination seminars have been organised on annual basis taking stock of all activities of the past year; and
- A database of labour market practices is available online.

Source: ICF GHK

The limitations of dissemination have been highlighted by several past evaluations. They are illustrated, for example, by the infrequent references to sharing and learning meetings in key OMC documents, despite the relevance of the topics covered[39].

Few resources are devoted to dissemination at EU level. Although dissemination is perceived as a priority, few activities are currently in place at EU level to support dissemination. Participants at events could be better supported in the dissemination of relevant information to their own organisations (tools, summaries, advice, and follow-up support). Likewise, more proactive approaches could be put in place to disseminate documents and other materials.

The development of dissemination/communication strategies has become a requirement for some contractors within PROGRESS, a development which reflects the EC recognition and priority for dissemination at EU level. In some cases, new activities have been added, such as in the MLP, where the previously piloted 'learning exchanges' have been integrated into the programme and the past MLP newsletter has been discontinued. Participants and contractors highlighted these changes as valuable for learning and valorisation.

7.2.3 Analytical activities

Analytical activities are, to a large extent, 'owned' by the EC. The findings of analytical activities are publicly available on the Commission's website for access and use. This provides a useful basis for dissemination.

Analytical activities are frequently referred to in EC policy papers. Around one fifth of the 54 EU documents from DG EMPL and DG JUST reviewed contained references to the PROGRESS analytical activities case studies. Around half of the EU documents contained a reference to analytical activities funded under PROGRESS. References in EU documents to analytical activities are much more frequent than references to sharing and learning activities or to projects co-funded under action grants.

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[39] See ESO and PPMI (2012) Evaluation of the Peer Review in Social protection and social Inclusion programme.

Furthermore, survey results from the PROGRESS Annual Monitoring Survey 2010-2011[40] indicated that analytical activities, with different types of outputs, have been highly useful or useful for respondents (officials of national, regional or local government institutions, researchers and NGOs). Few respondents failed to comment on the usefulness, suggesting that overall the awareness and usefulness of the analytical activities is high.

Likewise, interviews with the commissioners of PROGRESS analytical activities suggest that other stakeholders, such as NGOs, researchers and networks of experts are using the results of these activities. Half of the interviewees reported that stakeholders are using the results of the analytical activities they have produced. The other half of respondents were not aware of such use, but this does not necessary indicate a lack of awareness or use.

This suggests that the mechanisms though which stakeholders are made aware of analytical activities are effective and adequate to reach potential users. However, the contractors consulted considered that the outcomes of analytical activities were inadequately disseminated and that greater efforts should be put on the dissemination of results to a wider audience and through more targeted dissemination methods in order to increase the impact of analytical activities, beyond the use made by the EC.

7.3   Dissemination activities within policy areas/strands

Whilst there are examples of links between activities of the same type and links between the activities within the five strands /policy areas of PROGRESS, there was no evidence of a concerted EU level strategy to support and optimise dissemination activities within the policy areas. Some stakeholders highlighted that dissemination efforts were mainly taking place at the level of activities. As a consequence there is currently inadequate 'spill over' and learning from one activity to another within the strands/policy areas.

7.4   Dissemination at the PROGRESS programme level

Dissemination at the programme level is the combined responsibility of the EC and the members of the PROGRESS Committee (including the National Contact Points).

7.4.1 Dissemination by the EC: the visibility of PROGRESS

The EC is involved in various dissemination activities, including:

- The PROGRESS website[41]
- News items on DG EMPL and DG JUST websites
- Features in DG EMPL and DG JUST newsletters (stemming from the news features)

Data was not collected as part of this evaluation on web statistics or newsletter subscriptions and the reach of these activities is not known.

Of the 292 news features published by DG EMPL in 2013, only 6 specifically mention PROGRESS. Activities funded under the programme are mentioned more frequently. A review of the 2013 DG EMPL events features suggest that some 30 references (out of 170 articles) can be found to PROGRESS related activities. Of these, five mentioned PROGRESS learning and sharing activities. Only a few features mentioned action grants.

DG JUST dissemination efforts similarly provided only modest visibility of PROGRESS.

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[40] As reported in the Progress Annual Performance Monitoring Report 2011.
[41] http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=327

The current budget for PROGRESS dissemination, monitoring and evaluation represents less than 1.5 % of the total expenditure (see Table 7.1 below). Considering the nature of the programme outputs and expected outcomes, a greater share of the budget should be allocated to dissemination and valorisation of results.

Table 7.1   Dissemination and evaluation budget of PROGRESS

Year	Planned – absolute figure	Planned – percentage of total	Used – absolute figure	Used – percentage of total expenditure
2013	1,230,000	1.25%		
2012	1,389,204	1.46%	1,389,204	1.69%
2011	1,387,249	1.51%	1,194,000	1.4%
2010	1,790,000	1.65%	1,785,623.50	1.76%
2009	1,792,000	1.76%	540,901.60	0.55%

Sources: 2009-2012 Implementation of annual work plan, 2013 annual work plan

7.4.2 Dissemination by the EU Policy Committee and the national contact points

The majority of national PROGRESS actors (members of the PROGRESS Committee and the National Contact Points (NCPs) have acted to disseminate the results of the programme with the purpose of valorisation.

More than half of these actors engage in dissemination activities (60 % of the survey respondents of EU Policy Committee and 69 % of the NCPs indicated that they engage in dissemination at programme level).

However, there was uneven engagement in dissemination. Around two in five PROGRESS Committee respondents did not engage in any activity and only 25 % of PROGRESS Committee and the NCPs surveyed expressed full satisfaction with the PROGRESS Committee dissemination efforts. Thirty percent expressed dissatisfaction or that they were not aware of any dissemination efforts. Also, 44 % of the NCPs surveyed indicated that they were not aware of the PROGRESS Committee dissemination efforts.

Similar results were found when dissemination by 'others' is considered. Only 35 % of the PROGRESS committee members surveyed and 56 % of the NCPs indicated that they were aware of dissemination activities related to the programme beyond their own activities.

7.5   Main conclusions regarding dissemination activities

Dissemination has gained importance throughout PROGRESS during the period of implementation. The effectiveness of dissemination has also improved. This is illustrated by an increase in the number of dissemination events supported by action grants and new requirements for contractors implementing the 'second generation' of sharing and learning activities. Events organised in Brussels were perceived as good ways to share information[42]. However, the events currently organised are limited in scale and participation and additional activities are needed to inform and reach interested organisations. However, the evaluation found that there is scope for improvement of dissemination activities under PROGRESS.

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[42] Albeit not all dissemination activities are reported to be efficient. Notably meetings with starting projects, as previously organised by DG JUST, were not reported as effective as presentations only focused on the idea of the project and not on the results.

There is currently a significant amount of dissemination at the level of specific activities funded. For example, each project communicates about its own outcomes to its target group. Little is going on to communicate in a more comprehensive manner about thematic results or results in a given policy area. Decisions about the use of PROGRESS funding are driven by the policy agenda and the policy priorities. However, there is no communication of what were the results of PROGRESS according to these policy priorities. It is common that DG EMPL funds series of different types of activities related to a single policy agenda (for example, youth guarantees, pension reforms, gender pay gap). The activities constitute different pieces of the puzzle and at the moment the communication activities are around each one piece of puzzle rather than around the whole picture.

As a result of this lack of communication strategy the visibility of PROGRESS as a programme is negatively affected and, more importantly, the learning and the knowledge created within the programme at the action level is not lifted up and further used.

8   Conclusions and Recommendations

The assignment was both:

- a study to gather evidences for the ex-post evaluation of PROGRESS; and
- designed to draw out concrete lessons pertinent to the successor programme(s).

The assignment was comprised of 10 key evaluation areas and questions. Recommendations have been developed based on the findings and conclusions in view of the follow-up programmes, in particular the PROGRESS axis of EaSI, for the period 2014-2020 and the REC. EaSI will notably include the support of 'PROGRESS-like' activities regarding employment, social inclusion social protection and working conditions' including social experimentation, with the aim of 'up scaling' successful experiments via the ESF. The REC programme aims to ensure that rights are better known and more consistently applied and will continue the types of activities supported through the non-discrimination and gender stands of PROGRESS 2007-2013.

The key conclusions and recommendations are structured as follows:

- Overall characteristics and strengths and weaknesses of PROGRESS
- Main recommendations.

8.1   Key characteristics of PROGRESS

PROGRESS is a multifaceted programme covering five policy areas, different types of activities and involving many stakeholders in different ways. It is also a relatively small programme in resource terms focusing on EU level activities. The elements of the programme have functioned as planned and the types of outcomes envisaged have occurred.

The scope and content of PROGRESS was influenced by the 'corporate' logic of including in one programme activities related to the main DG EMPL policy areas. This logic was somewhat undermined by the subsequent split of policy areas between DG EMPL and DG JUST. In practice some key activities funded by PROGRESS, such as the YoM campaign, were 'wider' in scope than the remit of DG EMPL.

PROGRESS does not have a strategic *policy* framework or agenda. The programming of PROGRESS is done annually to reflect the EU policy developments in the policy areas of the programme and these have changed during the period of implementation. This allows the programme to adapt, but it limits the extent to which it can be evaluated against concrete and tangible policy goals.

There is not a strong motivation, nor the range of competences and tools required, for stakeholders to maximise the potential leverage over policy and practice at national and regional and local levels. Hence the 'theory of change' implicit in the SF is only realised in part. Most stakeholders also have other priorities. Commission officials are primarily concerned with furthering the EU policy agenda in their policy area. MS representatives may be reluctant to acknowledge the influence on them from 'transnational' policy lessons and they do not normally have a vested interest in 'exporting' their 'best practices'. Project promoters and participants tend to focus on their own activities and are not necessarily well placed to judge the transferability of their results to other national contexts. There are no programme actors primarily concerned with the valorisation, communication and implementation of policy and practice results wherever in the EU they would be likely to prove fertile. This capacity to identify and communicate successful transferable examples and messages should be strengthened in the successor programme.

The complexity of the programme poses challenges for its governance, participation, monitoring and evaluation and ensuring a clear public perception of the programme.

8.2   Key strengths

The PROGRESS programme has been a flexible and adaptable financial instrument. It has funded and enabled the use of different processes (analytical activities, action grants, sharing and learning work, networking, awareness raising campaigns, etc.) within the five policy areas in the field of employment, social affairs and equality.

The actions and outputs funded through PROGRESS are relevant to the EU as well as the national policy agendas in the five policy areas. Given that the DGs concerned plan the use of PROGRESS funding according to the policy priorities of the year, strong relevance to the EU agenda is ensured. The persons interviewed during this assignment, as well as existing monitoring data, show the perceived relevance of the programme to the national level.

The outcomes of PROGRESS funded actions vary greatly depending on the nature of the activity and its purpose. The outcomes identified stem from more softer ones, such as 'new evidence/ new knowledge' or 'greater awareness' to more tangible results that can be characterised as a change in policy or practice. In nearly all instances the examples of the different types of activities examined in this evaluation assignment have each been worthwhile and of benefit. The evaluation identified some examples of relatively strong effects at national and EU level.

The programme has reached out to a varied group of persons and organisations. It involved a range of public authorities, social partners, civil society organisations as well a research institutions and experts. The programme activities have contributed to shaping the opinions of key persons and organisations at EU and national (and sometimes sub-national) levels.

The programme has benefitted from centralised management, close internal coordination and some economies of scale. Given the programme's scope and complexity and the centrality of the EU policy agenda, the direct management of the programme by the Commission is appropriate.

The five policy areas of PROGRESS utilise the OMC or legislative processes to a greater or lesser extent. Results and impacts on policy and legislation at MS level are the ultimate outcomes of PROGRESS. Each of the tools of OMC has been enhanced by PROGRESS and there are many examples where the processes have worked very well and achieved the expected outcomes.

8.3   Key weaknesses

As illustrated in Figure 1.1, the 'ultimate outcome' of PROGRESS was to make Member States contribute to the social agenda. Subsequent developments of the policy agenda (see Figure 1.4) have put emphasis on influencing change at MS level. However, this evaluation shows that while the programme actions help identify good practice, these lessons learnt are not disseminated and used optimally. There is not sufficient interconnection between the results of actions funded by PROGRESS and the broader policy-making context. The PROGRESS results could be used more strategically to provide inspiration to developing specific policy issues at EU level.

The inter-linkages between activities funded as envisaged in the SF and the dissemination and valorisation of the results have been non-optimal. It is likely that valuable lessons learnt have not been translated into policy and practice. There is some danger of the legacy of the programme being lost. While the programme produced a great deal of valuable evidence and outputs, these are not lifted up to a

higher level where broader lessons learnt would be identified and communicated. The ways the successful results could be repeated at a larger scale, notably though the European Social Fund, are not considered.

The following recommendations build on these two main weaknesses of PROGRESS. They are also reflecting the key findings from other sections of this report.

8.4   European added value

PROGRESS has contributed European added value through reinforcing European and EU level initiatives and by applying processes that, through being undertaken at the supra national level provide insights and economies of scale. In particular:

▪ PROGRESS has contributed to both the Lisbon strategy and its successor Europe 2020, including the furthering of flagship initiatives. In particular, three of the seven flagships; Youth on the Move; An Agenda for new skills and jobs; and the European Platform against Poverty.

▪ PROGRESS has enabled both the better implementation and the development of EU legislation. The former has been achieved through the provision of guidance, exchange of experience and evaluation. The latter has included research and the funding of Impact Assessment studies. Much of the EU legislation has had an internal market rationale along with objectives to improve working conditions. PROGRESS has been active in encouraging the free movement of individuals within the EU, through the YoM campaign and the provision of information.

▪ PROGRESS has made a contribution to the enlargement process through the active participation of candidate and pre candidate countries. The PROGRESS funded activities have helped to align the policies and practices of these countries with EU Member States. This has been most relevant to countries close to accession.

▪ PROGRESS has been a catalyst for sharing and learning amongst policy makers and practitioners. The models and techniques applied in the sharing and learning activities through being focussed and well implemented, have been successful in ensuring that relevant and transferable lessons are identified and that they are likely to be taken on board in new contexts. The evaluation identified the following pre-conditions for the transfer of learning: similarities in context and policy structures; participation of the right people, with the right skills to identify possible learning points and sufficient influence in their home institutions to initiate change; and access to information and documentation. The evaluation also identified the following conditions for sharing and learning activities to contribute to shaping national policies and practices: existence of political support; appropriate timing (for example, developments are already underway or at least planned); and, when follow-up exchanges are organised. With these conditions in place European added value was maximised.

▪ PROGRESS has funded a wide range of analytical activities that involved comparative analysis between Member States, where the comparisons have led to new insights and improved the knowledge base available to policy makers and practitioners. Much of the analytical work concerning forecasting could be applied more widely. The European scale and comparative nature of PROGRESS funded analytical activities was reported by users as an added value, where a topic or issue has been looked at in a range, or all, EU Member States. The production of EU level evidence allowed mutual learning, benchmarking and the identification of good and best practices among EU countries. Duplication of efforts with national or other international analytical work was averted by the EU-wide scope of PROGRESS analytical activities

▪ PROGRESS has helped maintain EU and European level networks that have both contributed to the implementation of PROGRESS activities and acted as sustained conduits for the findings of PROGRESS funded activities.

▪ A wide variety of persons and organisations have been involved in PROGRESS. This has helped ensure that EU level messages have reached a wider audience than would otherwise be the case. For example the EU level conferences are often used as an opportunity to spell out EU policy developments. At the same time the participation provides a basis for feedback and sounding out the climate and likely responses to EU led initiatives and policies.

Achieving European added value in awareness raising campaigns is challenging because of the variety of contexts and pre-existing level of awareness. Nevertheless, some such added value was observed, including: in some countries the campaigns that were evaluated addressed issues that were not sufficiently addressed at national level; the EU-wide campaigns informed national campaigns when national actors learnt from the experience of awareness raising in other countries; and, the EU label gave local partner organisations visibility, credibility and access to information.

The assembly of the variety of PROGRESS activities, covering five policy areas and including several transversal issues within a single programme with associated Governance and management structures has helped ensure that the possibilities of added value through the *combination of activities* accrue.

Whilst these are positive achievements and European added value has been generated, PROGRESS has been implemented during an extremely challenging period. There has been little, no or negative progress on many relevant socio economic indicators in many Member States. The trust in the EU has declined and the limitations of the EU initiatives policy to 'make a difference' in achieving social progress in such difficult economic conditions have been evident. Certainly, the potential European added value would have been greater had the programme been backed by a more favourable economic wind. Fundamentally, PROGRESS as its name suggests, is concerned with advancing social and employment conditions and combatting inequities (e.g. gender pay gap) and discrimination. Such aims are easier to achieve when overall socio economic conditions are improving.

8.5 Main Recommendations

Recommendation 1 – There should be dissemination and valorisation strategies for the successor programme(s) and its individual elements. Particular attention should be paid to thematic dissemination according to policy priorities. (Section 7)

The dissemination of PROGRESS results should address different audiences and notably be targeted to specific policy priorities. PROGRESS has supported several activities of different types around one priority and this is often decided based on a vision of existing needs at EU level. Thematic dissemination should aim at assembling the results of different types of activities (studies, sharing and learning, action grants, expert networks, etc.) around a priority (for example, youth guarantee or pension reform). While the Programme does not attempt to solve problems in a given priority area (other actions are needed to do so), the results of actions funded help inform national and EU activities. Putting these results together in a thematic report/ review would enable drawing out broader lessons learnt (for example, not just from one action grant but from a series). This would result in highlights from programmes and other thematic publications that could be disseminated to the audience engaged in dealing with that issue.

Below the thematic level, the dissemination strategy should also include:

▪ For action grants, where outcomes are expected to support policy and practice, valorisation of results should be organised at the level of calls for proposals or potentially, a group of calls. This would entail carrying out comparative and validation work at the level of a thematic group of projects with a view to identify transferable lessons learnt about the thematic area, driven by a question such as what does this group of project teach us about X (for example, gender mainstreaming, restructuring, etc.) . This would also involve an approach to identify, validate and assess the transferability of good policy and practice43 and a dissemination tool such as a database where the results of successful projects would be available. EU level events /conferences where experts from several European countries are invited to present and share the results of their projects would be organised and further EC level dissemination support would be provided (such as the production of short videos[44]).

▪ For sharing and learning activities, the following should be developed: at the moment the contractors ensure dissemination of findings for the whole set of events; more targeted dissemination about specific thematic issues could be envisaged, in particular in those series of sharing and learning actions that cover a diversity of themes (such as SPSI Peer Reviews). The contractors can also help participants in their dissemination efforts by identifying and presenting key messages and short summaries ready for dissemination (as it is already happening in some of the cases). The transferability of findings can be ensured via independent reviews of the examples presented, as described in Box 7.1. This type of material helps sustain learning across Member States.

▪ For analytical activities, beyond the traditional executive summaries, resources should be dedicated to the use of communication tools such as info-graphics and short videos presenting key findings. While this may not be necessary for all analytical outputs, there is space for improving the communication of the main messages through alternative ways, other than written summaries. The resources for this need to be either integrated into budgets or provided separately by the EC.

For programme level dissemination (see also recommendation number 2) there would be benefit in identifying the expected role of the different actors (committee members, programme level management and those responsible for the activities) and drawing their attention to their role to provide adequate support and tools to help national actors implement their dissemination activities.

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[43] This identification should take into account the context of different countries and the features of the system in a given policy area. The persons in charge of identifying the transferable messages would need a good understanding not only of the policy issue to address but also the challenges in different types of systems. The work should be done in cooperation and be validated by the projects themselves to ensure buy in.
[44] Not on individual projects, but a combination of project findings

Recommendation 2 - **Knowledge management of the results of the programme should be improved. (notably Section 7)**

There is a need for a strategy and systematic approach to knowledge management to ensure that the results and lessons are identified and communicated and that policy and practice changes result. The annual budget allocated to dissemination, monitoring and evaluation of PROGRESS varied between 0.55 % and 1.76 % of total expenditure (however, this included some activities related to the YoM campaign that cannot be considered as knowledge management). A proportion of the programme budget should be earmarked for this activity than hitherto. The practical steps that should be considered in designing knowledge management include:

▪ The establishment of a 'knowledge bank' within which documentation, materials and up to date information on relevant and validated policy and practice examples would be maintained. Using this knowledge bank one should be able to identify the programmes' funded outputs related to a given policy priority or a theme. At the moment, the information about outputs funded by PROGRESS is dispersed in different parts of the DG EMPL website and not all information is accessible. For example, the policy pages of DG EMPL do not guide users to the work of projects related to the given theme (though they do guide to the studies). The key information should be easily accessible via a web portal. Materials accessed should be both 'user friendly' (e.g. activities funded under the programmes could be illustrated in short videos) and of sufficient rigor to address the concerns of a sceptical readership from a national context other than that in which the activity took place.

▪ The establishment of a cadre of 'communication staff' (either in house within the EC, via an executive agency or via a specialist contractor if feasible). The key competences of such staff would be the abilities to: get 'up to speed' in policy areas new to them; identify lessons from analytical and activities; assess transferability to different national contexts; and, express and communicate lessons. These skills, that are needed for being a catalyst for transnational communication of what are often complex policy lessons, are rare, although evident in some PROGRESS activities. These persons would have for a mandate to work as knowledge brokers not only within the DG but also externally, towards Member States and stakeholders. The PROGRESS programme involved robust: programme managers, academics, researchers, evaluators, project implementers, policy actors and committee members, but they do not necessarily have these competences.

▪ An improved repertoire of communication tools to support the cadre of communication staff and programme participants. This should include: a portal website; video clips; brochures; event planning resources; email lists; 'road shows'; and the improved use of social media.

▪ Stronger and clear communication and dissemination obligations on programme participants, especially contractors and grantees. Guidance and training on how to fulfil such obligations should be provided. While the Committee fulfils a different role in relation to the programme, its members could also be useful dissemination channels, provided that they are given readymade outputs that are suitable for dissemination.

Recommendation 3 - The effect of analytical activities sponsored by the programme should be further improved by strengthening the focus on identifying transferable lessons and better communication of results. (Section 3)

The evaluation of analytical activities found that much analytical work funded by PROGRESS focused on identifying what is the problem and what works. However, understanding why a policy solution is effective and how it is being implemented is necessary to support evidence-based policy learning.

The differences in contexts and models of action present across the countries should also be reflected in study recommendations. Depending on contextual differences or the models for action, the required policy approaches may be different. There can be different recommendations for instance, for well performing countries and those exhibiting poor performance, or those with very different institutional contexts. This should be reflected in the recommendations.

Given that the analytical activities are mainly commissioned through tenders, this requirement to take account of different contexts should be integrated on a case by case basis into the tender specifications.

Furthermore, PROGRESS funded analytical activities would have benefitted from improvements in the coordination with analytical work on similar or related topics across DGs, in-house knowledge management and the introduction of mechanisms to that effect, as well as more efforts, or resources, for the external dissemination of the evidence produced.

This recommendation may be achieved by:

- Greater emphasis being placed on analytical activities undertaken within robust comparative research frameworks so that the transferability of lessons (between national contexts) can be assessed. Such frameworks also help in identifying 'what works where and why?'
- Greater emphasis being placed on analytical activities that identify systematically the critical conditions for the successful implementation of policy and practice, and the means by which these conditions can be achieved.
- The target audiences for the use of analytical activities being identified at an early stage and the findings and potential uses of analytical activities expressed in a manner accessible to these target groups. Written products, including executive summaries, should be combined with opportunities for seminars, discussion and wider dissemination.
- The key results should be communicated in a visually attractive manner. Social media should be used to support their dissemination. This is in particular relevant to those analytical activities that have some 'headline data' to communicate (for example, key indicators).
- The outputs of analytical activities being incorporated into the proposed knowledge management system. This will require the systematic categorisation of aspects of the work and the identification of the links to the policy choices the work might inform. Commission managers should be required to assess the completed analytical activities in terms of quality, use and impact as part of this knowledge management system.
- Recommendations and other outputs from analytical activities taking account of and reflecting the diversity of institutional and geographic contexts that might apply.

Recommendation 4 - **The effect of sharing and learning activities should be further enhanced by mainstreaming the well-established practices within some parts of PROGRESS into all sharing and learning seminars. (Section 3)**

The seminar model will continue to be useful, providing the 'conditions for success' are in place. Key aspects of successful sharing and learning events include:

- Events should focus in depth on a small number of evidenced good practice examples.
- Discussion should consider the key contextual factors (socio economic, cultural and institutional) that influence success.
- Participants from different countries should include policy actors and be selected on the basis of having some commonalities and a strong potential to learn.
- Examples discussed should include 'work in progress' so that events may have immediate policy learning effects.
- Follow up interaction between participants should be facilitated.
- Events should involve independent experts familiar with several Member State contexts and able to assist in the identification of the transferability of lessons.

There should be better and wider dissemination of the robust and transferable examples beyond seminars. It would be useful to maintain a portfolio of good examples in the proposed knowledge management system and to review these periodically to ensure that evidence on effectiveness was up to date.

Recommendation 5 - **Action grants should focus on those areas where there is a need for innovation or where some countries are lagging behind. The decision to fund transnational or national actions should be take into account the objectives of the call. (Section 3)**

Action grants should continue to be used both to further the implementation of the EU policy agenda and as a means of supporting the trialling of innovative policy and practices.

The calls for proposals for action grants should be used within successor programme(s) particularly where:

- They advance the EU agenda in MS which are 'lagging behind';
- There is a need for innovative solutions.

In all cases the calls for proposals processes should ensure that the numbers of proposals received are proportionate to the resources available. Prior to issuing the call the Commission should anticipate the likely demand from the side of potential grantees. If it is likely that the demand will be high, the requirements in the call should be made more stringent and restrictive to ensure that only those organisations and ideas which can meet high quality criteria are encouraged to submit an offer.

Consideration should be given to what is expected from the transnational partnerships in the projects. The projects that have the clearest effects at national level tend to concentrate on one country. The transnational learning in these projects is ensured through peer-advice or the use of experts from other countries. Those projects that have large transnational partnerships tend to have less direct results in terms of policy or practice change/ evolution. Instead they rather focus on the circulation of

knowledge and expertise. Frequently the set-up of transnational partnerships is ad-hoc and not strategic, constraining the potential added value of transnational projects. When deciding whether a call should require transnational partnerships the Commission should reflect on the objectives of the call – is it about national implementation or experimentation or rather about transnational learning?

Recommendation 6 - **Careful planning should be undertaken and support given to ensure the success of social policy experimentation**

In order to ensure that the social experimentation projects are a good basis for generating policy and practice lessons applicable beyond the immediate context in which they are implemented, consideration should be given to, for example:

- Requiring the establishment of 'scientific committees' to ensure that the methods adopted to assess results and impacts are as robust as possible.
- Providing 'technical assistance' that would help to ensure that the lessons learnt are communicated and received in other relevant contexts.
- Specifying at the outset the anticipated use (including influence over ESF resource allocation within established Operational Programmes as well as longer term changes in Regulations) and dissemination of findings.
- Incorporating the follow up findings and impacts of action grants in the proposed knowledge management system.
- Strengthening the communities of expertise/ practice among social experimentation projects. Bringing the projects together for structured discussions on issues that the projects are working on would improve the work of individual projects as well as the communication between projects and the EC.
- Ensuring that the time scales and methods allow for genuine social experimentation that provides evidence for policy choices concerning the ESF and analogous national level interventions.
- The coordination with ESF managing authorities that are responsible for the evaluation of ESF interventions and increasingly being encouraged to carry out counter-factual evaluations, should be strengthened.

Recommendation 7 – **Awareness raising campaigns should better take into account the nature of the problem in the countries and should be underpinned by prior analysis on the most appropriate communication tools to reach the desired target groups**

As a general lesson from the previous PROGRESS funded campaigns, EU campaigns should reflect the existing country specific information and awareness levels and differences in the local perceptions about the scale and the nature of a problem to be addressed. These considerations should be assessed before beginning any future campaigns.

Furthermore, in the context of any future campaigns, it is important to undertake prior research on the communication tools which are most suitable to reach the intended target audiences with the intended messages. This would ensure that the tools chosen efficiently contribute to the campaign's objectives. Furthermore, a coherent strategy outlining the use of the combination of these tools could be developed. It should seek to establish continuity in the communication effort, considering what can be best achieved with each communication tool at each particular stage of a campaign.

The following elements of the YoM campaign could be further improved:

- Showcase more job mobility experiences, e.g. by involving EURES and including relevant local ESF projects.
- Improve the content and functionality of the current YoM website (if maintained), paying attention to adding value to already-available information on mobility opportunities on the Europa portal and other sources.
- At design stage and throughout the duration of campaign action (including in ex-post evaluation) define and monitor the 'steps towards action'. These are the (expected) changes triggered by the campaign on understandings amongst target groups of the topic at hand, of behaviours, practices, and, where relevant, in policy.

Support for future awareness raising campaigns should take account of the experiences of earlier PROGRESS funded campaigns. The key lessons include:

- In the case of YoM, the links with the Europe 2020 Strategy galvanised leadership and inter DG cooperation.
- Awareness raising is more effective when linked with other EU developments, including EU legislation.
- The design of awareness campaigns should take account of the variations
- in baseline conditions between MS.
- Partnerships at the local level are crucial for the successful implementation of campaigns.
- More and better use should be made of the Internet and social media.
- Targets with respect to both those whose awareness it is intended to influence and indicators of awareness and related behaviour, should be defined and closely monitored.

Recommendation 8 – More precision is required in specifying objectives concerning transversal issues in the new programmes. (Section 6)

Mainstreaming of transversal themes is a shared responsibility between all the organisations involved in the implementation of activities. The extent to which a specific transversal issue is relevant varies from one activity to another. The persons (policy officers in charge of studies, action grants, contracts for sharing and learning, etc.) with the capacity to influence mainstreaming should be made aware of the importance of ensuring mainstreaming and the possible practical implications. Policy officers should encourage activities under their responsibility to ensure mainstreaming as appropriate.

Whilst gender issues are taken into account in those parts of PROGRESS that fall outside the gender equality policy area, this is less the case for other grounds of discrimination. There is a risk that, as the non-discrimination policy area will not be within EaSI, these topics will not be sufficiently mainstreamed.

Therefore, further precision is required regarding how the programme is expected to mainstream grounds for discrimination other than gender. Such precision would be furthered by:

- Clarifying the programme expectations in terms of mainstreaming to DG EMPL/JUST policy officers in charge of actions funded. Encouraging them to ensure that the activities they manage tackle transversal issues.
- Where relevant, more systematic consultation to define/ fine-tune the activities at project level with groups at risk of social exclusion and discrimination. This would

encourage greater participation of groups at risk of exclusion and should ultimately lead to better results.

- Guidance on transversal issues being provided for study authors, including examples of successful coverage of transversal issues by previous analytical activities and action grants. This guidance may be reinforced by clauses in contracts to ensure that those receiving grants or contractors pay attention to the impact of given measures on gender, and those at risk of social exclusion and other forms of discrimination (disability, age, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, etc.). This would include when relevant, ensure that studies and action grants consider the impacts of interventions analysed on groups at risk of discrimination and exclusion.
- Concerning sharing and learning activities, the consideration of transversal issues should be strengthened in MLP Peer Reviews and particularly in PES to PES Peer Reviews. This could be achieved through reviewing, at the programming stage the anticipated emphasis to be given to these transversal themes. These judgements however need to be made on a case by case basis depending on the theme of the event.
- The improved inclusion and mainstreaming of transversal issues other than gender equality in calls for proposals not dedicated specifically to one of the transversal issues.
- The improved targeting of awareness raising activities and in particular campaigns on groups at risk of discrimination and social exclusion. For example, in the case of Youth on the Move events, some events could be organised in areas where young people are at greater risk of exclusion (e.g. suburbs or more remote areas of countries).
- The programme monitoring framework(s) should take account of the extent to which issues concerning groups at risk of discrimination and social exclusion are addressed in programme activities. This could be facilitated through improved knowledge management and in particular the 'tagging' of programme activities according to the extent and manner in which such issues are considered.

Furthermore, the reinforcement and embedding of transversal issues should be strengthened through improved knowledge management so a comprehensive record of relevant programme funded activities is held and through increasing the resources available at EU level to advise the managers of programme activities, projects and events on how best to take account of and further these issues.

Recommendation 9 – An indicator tree should be developed for the programme building on the strategic framework and being used for the monitoring and evaluation of the programme. (Section 5)

There is a need for the definition of objectives, indicators and targets that identify advances of the EU policy agenda that could reasonably be anticipated. This would provide a basis for monitoring and evaluation and would help to promote and implement change.

Considering the diversity of actions funded by the programme, a series of indicators should be developed that would reflect data on the main outputs and results. There could be general indicators for the overall programme and specific indicators for the different types of actions. The data should be collected on a regular basis by contractors and some results could be collected through surveys of beneficiaries after project completion, for example. There are examples of such data collection activities in the Programme and these could be mainstreamed when feasible into the

Programme. Other results and impact data (for example, the nature of change resulting from project completion) would be collected through evaluations.

Currently the annual monitoring report relies on the opinions of stakeholders as gathered through the annual survey. In addition, questions that require respondents to provide examples of changes or influence could be incorporated. While still relying on self-reported data, such questions would require responders to cite evidence of change.

This data on outcomes should be collected through the monitoring system and also analysed for the evaluations. Availability of such systematic data on outcomes would enable the evaluations to also rely on quantitative trend data.

Furthermore, considering the experience of the previous programme, a baseline situation regarding certain indicators is available. The future programmes could consequently be based on clearer targets building on achievements of PROGRESS.

PROGRESS covered a range of policy areas and the PROGRESS SF indicated how funded activities and processes would bring about results. EaSI and the REC Programmes are even more wide ranging than PROGRESS. In these circumstances a SF for these programmes that similarly specified the anticipated links between the programme activities and the (generic) effects on policy aims would be useful for programme evaluation.

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