Performance Monitoring Report
of the European Union Programme for Employment and Social Innovation (EaSI) 2015-2016

Executive Summary
EASI PERFORMANCE IN 2015-2016
Executive summary of the EaSI Performance Monitoring Report 2015-2016

The European Union Programme for Employment and Social Innovation (EaSI) provides financial support to promote a high level of quality and sustainable employment, guarantee adequate and decent social protection, combat social exclusion and poverty and improve working conditions across the EU. It is structured into three axes:

- **Progress axis** focuses on providing support to the policy-making and implementation process through production of policy evidence, organisation of information sharing and mutual learning activities, funding social policy experimentation projects and providing capacity-building support to EU and national organisations;
- **EURES axis** aims to improve geographical labour mobility in the EU through making information on placements more transparent and accessible as well as funding the actual services for jobseekers and employers;
- **Microfinance and social entrepreneurship axis** aims to improve access to finance for vulnerable people, micro- and social enterprises by providing funding for financial intermediaries and capacity building of relevant actors.

A very important horizontal aim of the EaSI programme is to foster social policy innovations. This aim is mainstreamed through all of its axes and activities. In addition, a significant amount of EaSI funding is devoted to this objective in particular through the calls for proposals to support social policy innovation and experimentation projects.

This executive summary presents the key takeaways from the second EaSI monitoring report covering the years 2015 and 2016. The report incorporates stakeholders’ views on the EaSI operations in 2015 and 2016.

**EaSI PERFORMANCE IN 2015-2016**

**FINANCIAL IMPLEMENTATION**

In 2015 and 2016, the Commission has committed more than EUR 246 million for the implementation of all programme’s activities. Table 1 shows the detailed distribution of financial commitments per EaSI axes in 2015 and 2016.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Progress</th>
<th>EURES</th>
<th>MF/SE</th>
<th>Overall</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total commitments in 2015</td>
<td>€ 69 580 318</td>
<td>€ 23 094 474</td>
<td>€ 31 436 141</td>
<td>€ 124 110 933</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total commitments in 2016</td>
<td>€ 71 598 651</td>
<td>€ 22 864 342</td>
<td>€ 27 744 070</td>
<td>€ 122 207 063</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total commitments in 2015 and 2016</td>
<td>€ 141 178 969</td>
<td>€ 45 958 816</td>
<td>€ 59 180 211</td>
<td>€ 246 317 996</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The implementation of EaSI Work Programmes in 2015 and 2016 was well in line with the EaSI Regulation. As shown in Figure 1, the Commission has generally respected the shares of funding per axis (minimum amounts) established in the EaSI Regulation. In 2015 and 2016, a slightly higher share of funding than initially foreseen was committed for the Microfinance and Social Entrepreneurship axis (23-25% instead of 21%), while a somewhat lower share than planned was committed for Progress (56-57% instead of 61%). However, according to the EaSI Regulation, the foreseen minimum amounts can be reached by the Commission by the end of the programme implementation. It is not necessary to reach the minimum funding targets every year.

Compared to the EURES and MF/SE axes, there is a slight tendency under the Progress axis to commit somewhat less funding than planned, which might result in the situation when some unused funding has to be returned to the EU budget. However, this situation is justifiable, since the Progress axis includes many smaller and diverse activities (such as studies and
events) compared to the other two axes, and therefore it takes more time and effort to commit funding to each of the planned items.

**Figure 1. Share of total commitments of EaSI in 2015 and 2016 compared to EaSI Regulation**

Below the executive summary continues with a review of the key achievements under each axis.

**PROGRESS AXIS**

Figure 2 shows the share of funding committed in 2015-2016 to achieving the specific objectives of EaSI related to the Progress axis.

**Figure 2. Share of PROGRESS commitments per specific objective in 2015 and 2016**

In 2015-2016, EaSI continued to support the development and dissemination of high-quality comparative analytical knowledge in order to ensure that EU policies in the field of employment and social affairs are based on sound evidence and are relevant to the needs, challenges and conditions in individual Member States and other countries participating in the programme.

- Evidence generated by EaSI contributed to the key EU policy objectives and initiatives

In the area of employment, the largest effort in 2015-2016 was put into improving anticipation of skills needs, analysis of skills supply and labour market needs. Under this thematic section, the largest amount of funding was committed to developing the Classification of European Skills, Competences, Qualifications and Occupations (ESCO). Throughout the period of 2015-2016, EaSI financed ESCO hosting, reimbursement of experts and technical assistance.

In the policy area of social protection and social inclusion, notable supported analytical activities were the EUROMOD model and the Social Situation Monitor.

**EUROMOD** is a microsimulation model covering the tax-benefit systems of all EU Member States and allowing the evaluation of impacts of policy changes on income distribution and poverty as well as on public finances. It is a key tool to enhance the European Commission’s capacity for quantitative policy
Under the thematic section of **working conditions**, EaSI continued to support, among other things, the development of European Statistics on Occupational Diseases and the monographs programme of the International Commission on Non-Ionizing Radiation Protection managed by the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC). In this way, EaSI strengthened the knowledge base in the area of occupational health and safety.

**Much of EaSI funded evidence fed directly into the key EU policy processes** such as the European Semester, including its Annual Growth Survey, country-specific recommendations, employment guidelines and joint employment reports.

In the area of social protection and social inclusion, EaSI-funded policy evidence contributed to a proposed package of measures to support Member States in getting people, especially the longer-term unemployed and younger people, into work and developing a skilled workforce. It also further supported the implementation of the Social Investment Package and the White Paper on Pensions.

In the policy area of working conditions, EaSI-funded evidence has directly contributed to the establishment of the European Platform on undeclared work in 2016.

- **EaSI-funded analytical outputs were deemed relevant (and used) for policy-making and advocacy purposes by national, regional and local policy-makers as well as other stakeholders**

In 2017, **as many as 89% of the surveyed EaSI stakeholders saw the EU/Commission as a source of useful and reliable information.** Somewhat fewer stakeholders (78%) considered that the EU employment and social policy and legislation was actually based on strong evidence. The major increase in the share of stakeholders, who think that the EU policy in their field was grounded in strong evidence, happened in the area of Microfinance and Social Entrepreneurship (69% -> 81%). This might be related to the increasing attention that the EU is paying to this policy field.

**The most useful outputs were those that were publicly available, allowed cross-country comparison, and provided examples of real-life situations.** The following are examples of outputs that were indicated as the most useful by the stakeholders:

- EURES Job Mobility Portal (92% stakeholders deemed as useful);
- Labour Market Policy database (88%);
- Reports on projects/organisations (82%);
- Labour Force Survey (81%);
- ESDE reports (81%);
- EUROSTAT accidents at work statistics (79%).

**In 2015-2016, EaSI facilitated effective and inclusive information sharing, mutual learning and dialogue** on EU and national policies

In this area, EaSI funded five main types of activities: (1) exchanges of good practice, peer reviews, mutual learning and training; (2) Council Presidency events, conferences and seminars; (3) guides, reports and educational material; (4) information and communication activities; and (5) information systems to exchange and disseminate information.

In the policy area of **employment**, the major share of funding was committed to ongoing support for the Network of European Public Employment Services (PES). Its activities include bench-learning and mutual learning intended to support PES modernisation and improve PES performance. A significant share of funding in this area was also committed to continue the
operations of the European Employment Policy Observatory (EEPO) and the Mutual Learning Programme (MLP).

In the policy area of social protection and social inclusion, the major share of expenditure in 2015-2016 was committed to monitoring, development and deployment of Electronic Exchange of Social Security Information (EESSI) and its IT project. EESSI is an IT system that will help social security bodies across the EU exchange information more rapidly and securely. EaSI also notably supported the continued operations of the European Social Policy Network (ESPN), development of the European Platform against Poverty (EPAP) and the Social Policy Peer Review Programme.

In the policy area of working conditions, EaSI has funded recurrent information sharing and learning activities, such as thematic days-plenary meetings of the Committee Senior Labour Inspectors (SLIC), occupational safety and health conferences, meetings of the Group of Directors General for Industrial Relations, high-level meetings between the European Commission and the International Labour Organization (ILO) and annual legal seminars. A new development in the policy area of working conditions was the European Platform on Undeclared Work. The platform is a European centre of expertise in the field of labour law, employment and labour market policies.

- The appreciation of EaSI-funded events remained very high among the participants

More than 87% of surveyed participants in EaSI-funded events in 2015-2017 claimed to have gained a better understanding of EU policies and objectives as a result of participating in EaSI-funded event (93% in 2013; 91% in 2015). Somewhat fewer stakeholders said that they intended to actually use the results of the events, which they participated in. Same as in 2013 and 2015, around 85% of stakeholders in 2015-2017 said that they have used or intended to use the information learned in EaSI-funded events.

- EaSI-supported debate on EU employment and social policy and law aimed to include all relevant stakeholders and to meet other minimum standards for consultation

The most active groups of participants in EaSI-funded events remained similar to the previous years:
- Officials from national, regional or local government institutions: around 35% of all participants;
- Representatives of civil society and social partners: around 24%;
- Researchers, university teachers and independent experts: around 16%;
- Officials of EU institutions: around 6%.

As shown in the Figure 3, participants in EaSI-funded events tended to agree that all major standards of an effective consultation were adequately met in these events. The assessment of dissemination of EaSI outputs keeps improving significantly. While in 2013 only 60% of the surveyed EaSI stakeholders were of the opinion that EaSI outputs were effectively disseminated, this share has increased to 79% in 2015 and to 87% in 2017.

Figure 3. Share of participants in events acknowledging that the following principles were followed during an event
EaSI provided financial support to test social and labour market policy innovations and contributed to building up the main actors’ capacity to design and implement social policy experimentations, and to make the relevant knowledge and expertise available.

In this area, a call for proposals was launched to fund social policy innovations supporting reforms in social services. It aimed to foster policy innovation in the organisation and delivery of social services aiming at the integration of service users in the labour market.

While EaSI stakeholders were found to be generally aware of the Commission’s goal to support social policy innovations (SPI) (82% of stakeholders reported this), they were much less aware of the specific social policy innovations supported by the European Union (56.5%). Furthermore, only 49% of stakeholders said that they have personally used or intend to use EU-funded SPI for policy development or implementation. Stakeholders in the area of working conditions were found to be significantly least familiar (only 31%) and planning to use the SPI (34%).

In 2015-2016, EaSI provided EU and national organisations with financial support to increase their capacity to develop, promote and support the implementation of EU policies and law in the area of employment and social affairs.

In 2015-2016, EaSI continued to fund the operating costs of the key EU-level NGO networks active in the promotion of social inclusion, poverty reduction and access to finance. The most well-known of these networks were Caritas Europa (55% of stakeholders were aware of this network), European Social Network (53%), Eurocities (42%), Eurochild and European Anti-Poverty Network (both 31%).

The appreciation of the work done by these organisations remained stable. The share of stakeholders acknowledging the key EU-level NGO networks supported via operating grants as a useful source of information on EU employment and social policy was 68% (68% in 2015; 84% in 2013 – the latter data from PROGRESS). The decrease from 2013 might be related to the fact that gender equality and non-discrimination NGOs supported by the predecessor programme PROGRESS were very much appreciated, while the new NGOs in the area of MF/SE are still gaining trust among the stakeholders.

**EURES axis**

As shown in the Figure 4, the distribution of EURES commitments per specific objective was very similar in 2015 and 2016.
In 2015-2016, Effort aimed to ensure that job vacancies and applications and corresponding information and advice, as well as any related information such as concerning living and working conditions, are made transparent for potential applicants and employers.

The following key actions were funded by Effort in this area:
- A new multilingual digital EURES Job Mobility Platform for the clearance of job vacancies and applications has been launched in late 2014 featuring new and improved search engine and key-word based skills database;
- Information and communication activities to raise awareness of the benefits of geographical and occupational mobility in general and of the activities and services provided by EURES;
- Mutual learning among EURES actors and training of EURES advisors, including EURES cross-border partnerships advisors.

The use of the main EURES on-line tool – the Job Mobility Portal – kept expanding in 2015-2016. According to the latest data, the EURES on-line platform attracts 1.76 million of users each month. This has increased from 0.85 million monthly users in 2013 and 1.2 million users in 2014. The structure of the registered jobseekers remained largely unchanged with most of the jobseekers coming from Italy and Spain, while the highest number of potential employers resided in Germany. Currently, around 58.6% of all national vacancies are being shared on EURES Job Mobility Platform.

In 2015-2016, Effort continued to support the provision of services for recruitment and placing of workers in quality and sustainable employment through the clearance of job vacancies and applications.

EURES has already established itself as a tool not only for dissemination, but also for recruitment and placing of workers. Since 2012, the EURES advisers’ network implemented quite a stable number of personal contacts with jobseekers and employers each year (around 900 thousand – 1 million contacts per year). There were 902 529 of personal contacts implemented in 2016. The average EURES adviser had 847 individual personal contacts with jobseekers and 130 contacts with employers. As a general rule, around 90% of all contacts were with job-seekers and around 10% with employers. In 2016, there were 52 282 placements resulting from the consultations with jobseekers, i.e. around 6 % of personal contacts resulted in an actual placement (increased twice compared to 2014).

**Microfinance and Social Entrepreneurship axis**

Figure 5 shows the share of commitments under MF/SE axis devoted in 2015 and 2016 to its two main specific objectives.
2015-2016 marked a strong start for the Microfinance and Social Entrepreneurship axis

By the end of September 2016, 33 contracts were signed with the microfinance intermediaries for 50.3 million EUR, which resulted in 13,021 microloans for the total of EUR 152,288 million (the leverage of 3 times was achieved).

The majority of funding went to enterprises operating in the area of wholesale and retail trade, repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles (around 32% of the overall funding).

The highest amounts of funding were disbursed to the final beneficiaries in France (27.5%), Spain (20.6%) and the Netherlands (15.6%).

In addition to supporting the microcredit sector, in 2015-2016 EaSI has also released the first funding for social enterprises (first 7 contracts with Financial Intermediaries for 9 million EUR).

In 2015-2016, EaSI made a strong step forward in building up the institutional capacity of Microfinance Intermediaries

In December 2016, the Commission has launched the EaSI Capacity Building Investments Window with an aim to build up the institutional capacity of selected financial intermediaries that have not yet reached sustainability or are in need of risk capital to sustain their growth and development.

Another tool developed to support the capacity of the EaSI-funded Financial Intermediaries is the so-called fi-compass, a scheme to implement EaSI Technical Assistance (provision of advice and assessments regarding the European Code of Good Conduct for Microcredit Provision).

EaSI focused on supporting persons who are in a disadvantaged position to access the conventional credit market. Such vulnerable persons included women, unemployed, those with no or only primary education, young and older people.

Enterprises, supported by the MF/SE axis of EaSI, employed 22,328 employees: 1,168 of them were employed in the social enterprises, while the remaining ones – in micro enterprises supported under the Microfinance Window. Among the natural persons supported through the Microfinance Window, 19% (1,121, in total) were unemployed or inactive before receiving the microloan.

MAINSTREAMING HORIZONTAL ISSUES

The integration of all EaSI horizontal issues has increased since 2014. Paying particular attention to vulnerable groups, such as young people was seen as the best mainstreamed issue by EaSI stakeholders. Gender equality and non-discrimination also remained well-integrated. The analysis has also indicated a strong increase in mainstreaming disability and accessibility matter. The share of stakeholders thinking that the latter issue is taken into account has increased from 46% in 2015 to 67% in 2017.
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