

EN
ANNEX

2021 annual work programme for grants and procurement in the framework of the European Social Fund Plus (ESF+) and in particular its Employment and Social Innovation (EaSI) strand

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Part I – General Overview

1. Overall socio-economic context

The 2021 annual work programme of the EaSI strand of ESF+ takes shape in the context of the **ongoing health crisis, a severe economic downturn and high uncertainty, resulting from the COVID-19 outbreak**. The European Union and the world at large face the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic resulting in the largest economic shock since World War II, and breaking a six-year positive trend in employment in the EU.

At the same time, as the pandemic and containment measures linger, it is essential for Europe to ensure that a health and economic crisis does not develop into a social crisis. While continuing to put efforts into managing the crisis, **there is also a need to work on making Europe healthier, fairer and more prosperous**, while accelerating its long-term transformation into a **greener economy, fit for the digital age**.

The draft Joint Employment Report (JER)¹ and the Employment and Social Development in Europe (ESDE) reviews² describe the **sudden slump on most social and employment related trends in 2020** based on weakened economic performance and stalling growth, or a downturn, in many cases. In addition to the immense challenges brought by the COVID-19 pandemic, there are additional risks and challenges from the previous years, including persistently low productivity growth despite accelerating technological change. Active labour market policies and education systems are mostly considered to be underperforming, while social exclusion of marginalised groups, including Roma and migrants, remains an ever-pressing issue.

Social and employment issues are the primary concern of Europeans, and an area where more support and action is expected from the Union. The ESDE 2020 report highlighted that right before the COVID-19 outbreak hit Europe, the beginning of 2020 had shown a positive trend in key employment benchmarks. Even though the overall growth of the economy was slower in 2019 than 2018, the EU had already reached the highest employment levels (73.1%, on track to reach the Europe 2020 target of 75% employment rate) and recorded the lowest unemployment (6.5%) in history³. Beyond that, the living standards of most Europeans had been improving, while Member States had managed to ensure a sustainable track for their public finances.

This extraordinary health crisis in 2020 has forced EU governments to launch **strict national lockdowns**, requiring most of retail and service sectors to shut down entirely or severely limit their activities. This and other impacts of the pandemic rapidly **changed the course of the labour market outcomes and the positive employment trend of the last six years**. Total employment in the EU Member States has rapidly decreased in the first half of 2020: going down by more than 6 million workers from 209.3 million in Q4-2019 to 203.1 million in Q2

¹ To be adopted by the EPSCO Council on 15-16 March 2021

² Employment and Social Developments in Europe 2020

<https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=738&langId=en&pubId=8342&furtherPubs=yes>

³ Ibid

2020. From March 2020 to December 2020, the monthly unemployment rate rose by 1 percentage point to 7.5%⁴, leaving 16 million unemployed in the EU. There were almost 2 million more unemployed people in the EU in December 2020 than nine months before.⁵

The rise in unemployment was significant in some Member States, in particular among the youth (from 14.8% in December 2019 to 17.8% in December 2020)⁶, but has so far been lower than initially forecasted thanks to job retention measures, notably short-time work schemes. All Member States applied these measures, mostly supported by EU funds. Nevertheless, it also reflects a lower participation rate in the job market and the statistical measurement methodology⁷ leading to a pervasive decline in hours worked mostly due to the restrictions imposed by the lockdown measures.

In addition, **substantial disparities in employment rates across the EU Member States** and different age, gender or other groups show that further improvements are necessary even if the negative impact of the pandemic is outweighed. A **persistent gender unemployment gap** (in November 2020 it had not shown any improvement since 2014) and **increased inequality** have direct impacts on the wellbeing of Europeans. It increases the risk to further compromise economic growth, social and territorial cohesion and worsen the impact of the ongoing pandemic. ESDE 2020 has signalled that income inequality has not been sufficiently tackled and in-work poverty (9% in 2019 across EU) has seen a rise in most Member States.⁸

The future of employment requires new skills and sufficient training of the workforce to reflect the needs of a fast changing economy. Emerging sectors not only involve new types of employment, but also a high demand for reskilling of workers that are shifting from traditional sectors of the economy.

Accelerated automation in various sectors of the economy in the medium term brings a potential to increase productivity and wages of Europeans in addition to speeding up the shift towards green and digital technologies. At the same time, it **will require a significant reskilling and upskilling of the workforce**. European workers that have been displaced

⁴ Unemployment rates EU-27 and EA-19, seasonally adjusted (%)

https://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/show.do?dataset=une_rt_m&lang=en

⁵ Draft Joint Employment Report (JER) 2020 by the European Commission and the Council. Total employment figures come from National Accounts (domestic concept), other figures from Labour Force Survey data

⁶ Youth unemployment rates, EU-27 and EA-19, seasonally adjusted

https://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/show.do?dataset=une_rt_m&lang=en

⁷ Eurostat's estimates of unemployment are based on the globally used International Labour Organisation standard definition of unemployment, which counts as unemployed people without a job who have been actively seeking work in the last four weeks and are available to start work within the next two weeks. The COVID-19 confinement measures applied since March 2020 have triggered a sharp increase in the number of claims for unemployment benefits across the EU. At the same time, a significant part of those who had registered in unemployment agencies were no longer actively looking for a job, e.g. limited by the confinement measures or no longer available for work, for instance, if they had to take care of their children during the lockdown. This leads to discrepancies in the number of registered unemployed and those measured as unemployed according to the ILO definition.

⁸ In-work at-risk-of-poverty rate by age and sex - EU-SILC survey

https://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/show.do?dataset=ilc_iw01&lang=en

because of the pandemic and its subsequent impact will face difficulties in the job market if their skills are not transferrable to growing sectors or jobs.

Significant gaps remain in terms of digital skills with only 1 percentage point improvement from 2018 to 2019: more than 40% of adults in the EU still do not have basic digital skills, with peaks of almost 70% persisting in some Member States⁹. This implies that a significant part of the population cannot access a large variety of services, with negative impacts on inclusion and productivity if these are not properly addressed.

Skills will continue to depreciate and become outdated quicker and create mismatches in the labour market, thus increasing structural unemployment. As there is a visible gap in access to technology between low- and high-income groups, income inequality may further expand. The pandemic already had the most negative impact on vulnerable workers, and changes in the economy will most probably exacerbate this effect. Therefore, the Commission aims to protect groups in vulnerable situations by mitigating the distributional effects of these structural changes and accompanying the shift of workers towards growing sectors.

Intra-EU labour mobility is at the heart of the single market and fair mobility is essential to manage the economic recovery and the upcoming transitions. The latest report on intra-EU mobility published in January 2021 shows that labour mobility was growing until the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, however, at a slower pace than in previous years. The Single Market was severely affected by the uncoordinated closure of national borders not only at the beginning of the crisis, but also in 2021, as Member States seek to curb the spread of the coronavirus. These measures had a significant impact on EU mobile citizens, such as cross border, frontier, posted and seasonal workers, preventing them from traveling or requiring quarantine.

The ESDE 2020 report highlights that **the COVID-19 health crisis has increased socio-economic risks for groups in vulnerable situations**, such as single parents, children and the elderly, persons with disabilities, migrants, minorities, precarious workers (including certain categories of self-employed, platform and informal workers) and people living in areas and households with limited or no digital connectivity. It has become obvious that low- and middle-income groups face a significantly higher risk of decreased or lost income, due to increasing unemployment and lower telework possibilities.

According to the Labour Market and Wage Developments in Europe 2020 report published in December 2020, **workers in high physical contact** and tasks that cannot be completed remotely account for 45% of employment, **most of whom are women, youth and those with low education attainment**. Furthermore, 73% of these vulnerable occupations are classified as low wage earners, while young workers are at particular risk as they represent a disproportionately large group in temporary contracts¹⁰.

⁹ Individuals who have basic or above basic overall digital skills by sex
http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/show.do?dataset=tepsr_sp410&lang=en

¹⁰ Labour Market and Wage Developments in Europe 2020
<https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=89&furtherNews=yes&newsId=9873>

The risk of poverty or social exclusion is becoming a bigger challenge in face of the COVID-19 crisis, particularly for children, persons with disabilities and with a migrant background, in some rural areas, as well as an increasing number of homeless people in some Member States. This would reverse a positive trend as, over the past years, Member States progressed in decreasing the risk of poverty or social exclusion: in 2019, those experiencing this risk amounted to 20.9%, the lowest figure in a decade¹¹. This change was driven mainly by decreasing numbers of people living in (quasi-)jobless households and/or in households experiencing severe material deprivation, showing great improvement since the last crisis. Currently, over 90 million Europeans are still at risk of poverty or social exclusion.

In addition to the COVID-19 pandemic, **climate change remains one of the biggest challenges** of our times. Ecological crises increase social inequality, since not all groups are affected to the same extent by their negative effects. Therefore, it is equally important not to lose sight of the Green Deal's proposed aim of a socially just, solidary and inclusive transition to a climate-neutral economy and to leave no one behind.

2. Overall priorities for the EaSI strand in 2021

Overall political priorities for social Europe

With the present economic and social shock, it will be necessary to ensure that the **recovery benefits all citizens and countries equally**.

The European Pillar of Social Rights will be the compass of Europe's recovery and our best tool to ensuring no one is left behind. Proclaimed jointly by the European Parliament, the Council and the European Commission at the Social Summit in Gothenburg in November 2017, the Pillar and its 20 principles support fair and well-functioning labour markets and welfare systems focusing on:

- 1) Equal opportunities and access to the labour market;
- 2) Fair working conditions and
- 3) Social protection and inclusion.

On 4 March 2021, the Commission put forward an ambitious action plan to ensure its full implementation. Delivering on the Pillar is a shared political commitment and responsibility of the EU institutions, national, regional and local authorities, social partners and civil society. The **action plan will be the key instrument to contribute to socio-economic recovery and resilience** in the medium and long-term, with a view **to enhancing the social fairness of the digital and green transitions**. It constitutes the Commission's contribution to the Social Summit in May 2021 that will gather EU leaders, institutions, social partners and civil society to discuss how to reinvigorate the European social model and shape a vision for 2030.

¹¹ People at risk of poverty or social exclusion by age and sex
http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/show.do?dataset=ilc_peps01&lang=en

ESF+

As part of the 2021-2027 Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF), **the new European Social Fund Plus (ESF+) will be a key financial instrument to implement the European Pillar of Social Rights**, to support jobs and create a just and socially inclusive society. Politically agreed by the European Parliament and the Council on 28 January 2021, it will provide much needed resources to Member States for the recovery of our societies and economies after the crisis.

The programme merges the European Social Fund (ESF), the Fund for European Aid for the Most Deprived (FEAD), the Youth Employment Initiative (YEI) and the Employment and Social Innovation (EaSI) programme. By **establishing a clear link between shared and direct management tools**, it will streamline and simplify financial processes and enable synergies.

Through **its new Employment and Social Innovation (EaSI) strand**, ESF+ will support innovative approaches and actions to create **employment and promote social inclusion, social innovation, social entrepreneurship and labour mobility**. The EaSI strand builds on the former EaSI programme 2014-2020, maintaining the focus on evidence-based policy-making and social experimentation, support to job mobility and the non-financial instrument activities related to the former Microfinance and Social Entrepreneurship axis. It will contribute to elaborating social and employment standards at European and international level, setting-up of partnerships and transnational cooperation involving various stakeholders, developing integrated labour markets and coordinated social protection systems. Eligible actions include analytical activities, policy implementation, mutual learning, capacity building, and communication and dissemination activities.

Priorities of the EaSI strand in 2021

For 2021, **the overall political priority underpinning EaSI is the implementation of the European Pillar of Social Rights** and its action plan, contributing to the headline ambition of an economy that works for people, in line with President von der Leyen's political guidelines. The overall budget for the EaSI strand in 2021 is set at almost 100 million EUR. EaSI will support socially innovative projects in order to address the social challenges ahead of us.

More concretely, in 2021 the EaSI strand of ESF + will:

1. Strengthen employment and skills:

- Continue to support **public employment services** through capacity building, networking and mutual learning;
- Advise and assist **microfinance and social enterprise finance providers**, improve the quality of their operations to scale up and become sustainable, boost the capacity and facilitate the access to the EU level financial instruments under InvestEU; support the preparation and roll out of the **Action Plan for the social economy**;

- Support **multilingual classification of European skills**, competences, qualifications and occupations, help Europeans to present their skills and achievements in a clear and unified way using the **Europass**²;
- Prepare for the realities of the **new world of work** and support relevant activities (such as in relation to platform work or digitisation);
- Analyse employment and social developments to **support evidence-based decision-making**.

2. *Help improve social protection and inclusion:*

- Support **networks in the area of social inclusion**, notably to increase the number and quality of outreach activities, mutual learning among members, research activities and input for policy design;
- Help institutions across the EU **exchange information on social security electronically** through Electronic Exchange of Social Security Information (EESSI) system, faster, more accurately and securely;
- Analyse issues related to **access to social protection**, facilitate networking and information sharing in this field, support Member States' work on social policy reforms;
- Through peer reviews, provide the Member States with an opportunity to contribute to **upward social convergence** and the implementation of the European Pillar of Social rights, via exchange of information and benchmarking among the Member States;
- Continue to further develop the **involvement of social partners and civil society** in the implementation of the Commission's priorities;
- Monitor, collect data and analyse various cross-sections in the field of **social protection and inclusion**, for instance through microsimulations to support the European Semester process.

3. *Improve labour markets and labour mobility:*

- Support **fair mobility** in cross-border regions, in particular via EURES cross-border partnerships with full involvement of regional social partners;
- Develop an **integrated EU labour market** with the help of the EURES Targeted Mobility Scheme to facilitate the filling of difficult-to-fill vacancies and a focus on special target groups, covering the provision of direct services to jobseekers and employers;
- Support national authorities and social partners in developing initiatives to better enforce EU and national law in the area of **undeclared work**;
- Analyse the **protection of posted workers, frontier workers, seasonal workers and other EU mobile workers** and ensure their access to information, thereby facilitating capacity building with the social partners' organisations and report on the achievements under cross-border partnerships and targeted mobility schemes.

4. *Foster safe and fair working conditions:*

- Analyse the risk and **impact of COVID-19** on the health and safety of workers;
- Focus on **health and safety at work**, maintain the network of Senior Labour Inspectors Committee to promote effective and equivalent enforcement of EU-OSH directives;
- Collect data through surveys to carry out analysis on **occupational disease statistics and labour standards**;
- Prepare studies to support **legislation on working conditions**.

Multiple cross-cutting activities will help achieve the priorities of the EaSI strand. **Communication and dissemination** will be crucial for the visibility of EaSI, notably mutual learning through exchange of practices, innovative approaches, peer reviews and benchmarking. The 2021 work programme will also continue to put a strong emphasis on events (virtual in the context of the pandemic), guides, reports, informative material and media coverage.

With this 2021 annual work programme, the Commission will establish **National Contact Points** operating on behalf or within the national, regional and/or local authorities to promote the EaSI strand and its results in the Member States and other participating countries. This will help increase the participation in the EaSI strand and assist in **upscaling, replication and/or mainstreaming** of results achieved by EaSI projects.

Part 2 – Grants, Procurements, Indirect Management and other actions

1. Introduction

On the basis of the objectives in the future Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the European Social Fund Plus (ESF+), this work programme contains the actions to be financed and the budget breakdown for year 2021 as follows:

1.1. Budget breakdown

Budget Line	Amount
07.020100.05 - ESF+ shared management strand - Operational expenditure (Transnational cooperation)	EUR 26 530 200
07.020400- ESF+ - Employment and Social Innovation strand	EUR 99 982 373
TOTAL	EUR 126 512 573

LEGAL BASIS

The future Regulation (EU) of the European Parliament and of the Council of establishing the European Social Fund Plus (ESF+), repealing Regulation (EU) No 1296/2013

1.2. Type of actions to be financed

- for grants (implemented under direct management) (point 2): EUR 47 552 000
- for prizes (implemented under direct management) (point 3): N/A
- for procurement (implemented under direct management) (point 4): EUR 46 841 373
- for actions implemented under indirect management (point 5): EUR 27 495 200
- for contributions to trust funds (point 6): N/A
- for financial instruments (point 7): N/A
- for contributions to blending facilities (point 8): N/A
- for other actions or expenditure (point 9): EUR 4 624 000

2. Grants

The indicative global budgetary envelope reserved for grants under this work programme amounts to EUR 47 552 000.

Budget line 07.020100.05: N/A

Budget line 07.020400: EUR 47 552 000

BUDGET LINE

07.020400- ESF+ - Employment and Social Innovation strand

2.1. Direct grants

2.1.1. Events organised by the Presidency of the Council of the EU (2021)

Priorities of the year, objectives pursued and expected results

The EaSI strand will support the deepening of the EU employment and social agenda during the two terms of the rotating Presidency of the Council of the EU with a series of events to be organised by presidencies. The topic and expected results are defined by the Presidency in agreement with the Commission.

Description of the activities to be funded

The Commission will co-fund conferences to provide a platform for Member States and relevant stakeholders to exchange information and good practice notably in the field of occupational safety and health (OSH); Public Employment Services (PES) network board meetings to support the implementation of the EU Presidencies priorities and general support to the implementation of the EU strategy; meetings of the Mutual Information System on Social Protection (MISSOC) network to provide citizens and professional users with up-to-date, consistent and user-friendly information about social protection legislation in EU and EFTA countries.

Types of applicants targeted by the direct award of the grant

These events will fall in two main categories: a) Presidency conferences and b) meetings of permanent EU networks and Committees under the Presidency auspices. The Member State holding the Council Presidency is the beneficiary of the grant to be awarded without a call for proposals on the basis of Article 195(c) of Financial Regulation. These events, which are highly political in nature and which need representation at the highest level both from national authorities and European representatives, are to be organised exclusively by the Member State holding the Presidency. Given the unique role of the Presidency in the framework of EU activities, the Member State responsible for the organisation of the event is considered as a de jure monopoly.

Implementation

Directly by DG EMPL throughout the year

2.1.2. Direct Grant to the International Commission on Non-Ionizing Radiation Protection (ICNIRP)

Priorities of the year, objectives pursued and expected results

The objective of this action is to provide information and updated scientific information to maintain Directive 2013/35/EU adapted to the scientific developments. The ICNIRP, an independent research organization, provides a unique scientific advice and guidance on the health effects of non-ionizing radiation (NIR) to protect people, including workers, from detrimental NIR exposure. The work and independency of ICNIRP are recognised worldwide

and meet the criteria of expertise expected from them within the limits of available scientific knowledge and evidence. The action proposed by ICNIRP will contribute to keeping scientific knowledge and evidence-base in the area of NIR up-to-date and, consequently, to underpinning policy developments in this field.

Description of the activities to be funded

Dissemination of information and advice on the potential health hazards of exposure to non-ionising radiation.

Types of applicants targeted by the direct award of the grant

According to Article 195(f) of the Financial Regulation, grants may be awarded without a call for proposals for actions with specific characteristics that require a particular type of body on account of its technical competence, its high degree of specialisation or its administrative power, on condition that the actions concerned do not fall within the scope of a call for proposals. ICNIRP is an independent organisation consisting of high-level internationally recognised multinational experts. ICNIRP has a unique expertise and it gives recommendations on limiting exposure for the frequencies in the different non-ionising radiation (NIR) subgroups. It develops and publishes Guidelines, Statements, and reviews which are used by national and international bodies, such as the European Commission (for Electromagnetic Fields Directive 2013/35/EU, for example) and the World Health Organization.

Implementation

Directly by DG EMPL

2.1.3. Direct grant to the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) Monographs Programme

Priorities of the year, objectives pursued and expected results

Support the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) in order to continue to provide authoritative, up-to-date evaluations of environmental and occupational exposures that may present carcinogenic hazards to human beings, and to disseminate the results world-wide as printed books and in electronic form by online internet access.

Description of the activities to be funded

Provide and distribute authoritative, up-to-date evaluations of environmental and occupational exposure that may present hazards to human health, and to disseminate the results world-wide as printed books and in electronic form by online internet access. The IARC Monographs are of high value to the work of the Commission and its associated scientific committees, by providing updated and reliable scientific evaluations on risks derived from exposure to carcinogenic substances. The scientific committees then produce recommendations and opinions on limit values for chemicals based on IARC Monographs (among other relevant literature). Those recommendations are further used by the Commission to propose European objectives in the form of indicative or binding occupational exposure limit values for the protection of workers from chemical risk.

Types of applicants targeted by the direct award of the grant

According to Article 195 (f) of the Financial Regulation, grants may be awarded without a

call for proposals for actions with specific characteristics that require a particular type of body on account of its technical competence, its high degree of specialisation or its administrative power, on condition that the actions concerned do not fall within the scope of a call for proposals. The International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) is a unique specialized cancer agency of the World Health Organization. The agency provides advice to the Commission underpinning EU OSH legislation in the area of chemical agents, in particular related to carcinogens and mutagens.

Implementation

Directly by DG EMPL

2.1.4. Direct grant to OECD: Monitoring inequalities for inclusive policy responses to the COVID-19 crisis

Priorities of the year, objectives pursued and expected results

Deepen and enhance the analysis of major trends, drivers and impacts of inequalities along selected key dimensions, to support the design and implementation of inclusive and sustainable policy responses to the COVID-19 crisis, with a focus on two work strands:

(i) Work Package I: “Geographic inequalities in incomes and earnings - Phase II”. The project aims at enhancing comparability and securing access to administrative household income data, as a basis for sound analysis of trends and persistence in geographic disparities in income levels, income inequality and poverty (at the sub-national or even local, city-wide levels)

(ii) Work Package II: “Dimensions of economic insecurity and income instability”. The project aims at analysing economic insecurity and income instability making use of innovative data and methods. The study will go beyond the standard annual income perspective, review the gaps in current analyses and explore data and methods to address them. The focus will be on the following research questions:

1. How economically insecure are households in EU and OECD countries?
2. Is income instability on the rise? Evidence from infra-annual income data
3. Can new data sources and analytical methods contribute to the analysis of economic insecurity?

Description of the activities to be funded

The main output for Work Package I will be:

- A publication (research paper/report) with analyses of geographic income inequalities. It will focus on geographic income disparities and inequality at subnational level with country-specific thematic spotlights.
- A policy brief
- An EU/OECD technical workshop with stakeholders to discuss conceptual challenges and findings from Work Package I.

The main output for Work Package II will be:

- A publication (research paper/report) containing analyses on economic insecurity and income instability across EU countries. It will discuss new data sources and methods to measure economic insecurity and income instability as well as their relation between with other indicators of living conditions.

- A policy brief
- An EU/OECD technical workshop with stakeholders to discuss conceptual challenges and findings from Work Package I.
- A series of Open Webinars where experts on economic security and income instability will present their recent research to EU/OECD staff and the research community

Types of applicants targeted by the direct award of the grant

According to Article 195(f) of the Financial Regulation, grants may be awarded without a call for proposals for activities with specific characteristics that require a particular type of body, in this case the OECD, on account of its technical competence, its high degree of specialisation or its administrative power, on condition that the activities concerned do not fall within the scope of a call for proposals. The direct award will be duly substantiated in the individual award decision which will be adopted at a later stage.

Implementation

Directly by DG EMPL

2.1.5. Labour Force Survey (LFS)

Priorities of the year, objectives pursued and expected results

European statistics are needed for the programming and implementation of EU policies in the area of employment, skills, social affairs and labour mobility. The priorities in 2021 will include to further develop the analytical capacity of the DG's priorities for quality statistics allowing monitoring of developments and trends in the EU in the following areas: employment and labour markets. In this context, timeliness of the data, as well as availability of data on dynamic aspects of labour markets is of particular importance. The data collected provide input to the European Semester and the work of the Employment Committee (EMCO) and the Social Protection Committee (SPC), and the collection of labour market policy statistics and expansion of the data collection cover new arising needs.

Description of the activities to be funded

The Labour Force Survey (LFS) is an important source of information on the situation and trends in the EU labour market. The project will support LFS by financing grants to the Member States for projects aiming at implementing pilot studies, in particular on digital platform employment.

The EU-LFS (EU Labour Force Survey) will be complemented in 2022 with a pilot study module on digital platform employment. It requires preparatory work in Member States, e.g., drafting and testing the questionnaires, to start as of 01/04/2021. For proposals under this action, exceptionally costs incurred as from 01/04/2021 are eligible and may be declared even if the related activities have been implemented prior to proposal submission.

Types of applicants targeted by the direct award of the grant

To be eligible, applicants must:

- be National Statistical Institutes (NSI) and other National Authorities identified in the list referred to in Article 5 of Regulation (EC) No 223/2009 and responsible for the development, production and dissemination of European statistics; and

- be properly constituted and registered in one of the EU Member States or EFTA countries.

According to Article 195(f) of the Financial Regulation, grants may be awarded without a call for proposals for activities with specific characteristics that require a particular type of body on account of its technical competence, its high degree of specialisation or its administrative power, on condition that the actions concerned do not fall within the scope of a call for proposals. Authorities identified in the list above-mentioned fulfill this condition. The individual award decisions substantiating the specific characteristics of the activities and the particular technical competence, high degree of specialisation or administrative power of the beneficiaries will be adopted at a later stage by ESTAT.

Implementation

Through a co-delegation to ESTAT

2.1.6. European Occupational Diseases Statistics (EODS) pilot

Priorities of the year, objectives pursued and expected results

The activity supports the development of the administrative data collection on European Occupational Diseases Statistics (EODS). The data is necessary to address the need to provide solid evidence basis for the analysis of performance of Member States and the EU in effectively preventing major workplace risks.

Description of the activities to be funded

Data collection on European occupational disease statistics in all Member States.

Types of applicants targeted by the direct award of the grant

To be eligible, applicants must:

- be National Statistical Institutes (NSI) and other National Authorities identified in the list referred to in Article 5 of Regulation (EC) No 223/2009 and responsible for the development, production and dissemination of European statistics; and
- be properly constituted and registered in one of the EU Member States or EEA countries.

According to Article 195(f) of the Financial Regulation, grants may be awarded without a call for proposals for activities with specific characteristics that require a particular type of body on account of its technical competence, its high degree of specialisation or its administrative power, on condition that the actions concerned do not fall within the scope of a call for proposals. Authorities identified in the list above-mentioned fulfill this condition.

The individual award decisions substantiating the specific characteristics of the activities and the particular technical competence, high degree of specialisation or administrative power of the beneficiaries will be adopted at a later stage by ESTAT.

Implementation

Through a co-delegation to ESTAT

2.1.7. European System of integrated Social Protection Statistics (ESSPROS)

Priorities of the year, objectives pursued and expected results

The aim of the ESSPROS (European system of integrated social protection statistics) is to produce better data for the monitoring of social protection policies in the Member States, as well as the effectiveness and efficiency of social protection systems. Such information is particularly relevant for the European Semester.

Grants will be awarded to Member States and EFTA countries to help them:

- improve the timeliness and quality of ESSPROS statistics (delivery of ESSPROS data, including early estimates, by the agreed voluntary deadlines and benefitting from links with National Accounts); and
- extend data on beneficiaries beyond pensioners.

Description of the activities to be funded

The activity supports the development of the ESSPROS (European system of integrated social protection statistics) data collection with a focus on 1) improvements in timeliness and in the links between ESSPROS and National Accounts; and 2) the collection of data on beneficiaries of benefits other than pensions.

Types of applicants targeted by the direct award of the grant

To be eligible, applicants must:

- be National Statistical Institutes (NSI) and other National Authorities identified in the list referred to in Article 5 of Regulation (EC) No 223/2009 and responsible for the development, production and dissemination of European statistics, and
- be properly constituted and registered in one of the EU Member States or EFTA countries.

According to article 195 (f) of Financial Regulation, grants may be awarded without a call for proposals to particular bodies for activities with specific characteristics that require a particular type of body on account of its technical competence its high degree of specialisation or its administrative power, on condition that the activities concerned do not fall within the scope of a call for proposals. Authorities identified in the list above-mentioned fulfill this condition.

The individual award decisions substantiating the specific characteristics of the activities and the particular technical competence, high degree of specialisation or administrative power of the beneficiary will be adopted at a later stage by ESTAT.

Implementation

Through a co-delegation to ESTAT

2.1.8. Integrated European Social Statistics (IESS) Regulation

Priorities of the year, objectives pursued and expected results

European statistics are needed for the programming and implementation of EU policies in the area of employment, skills, social affairs and labour mobility. The priorities in 2021 will include the continued cooperation with ESTAT to further develop the analytical capacity of the DG's priorities for quality statistics allowing monitoring of developments and trends in the

EU in the following areas: employment and labour markets, poverty and social exclusion, health and disability, efficiency and effectiveness of the welfare state, skills and training. In this context, timeliness of the data, as well as availability of data on dynamic aspects of labour markets and poverty is of particular importance. The data collected provide input to the European Semester and the work of EMCO and SPC, and the collection of labour market policy statistics and expansion of the data collection cover new arising needs.

The project will support, through grants, the national statistical institutes of the Member States in the general implementation of the IESS regulation. It will lead to more comparable information on employment and unemployment, income and living conditions, quality of life and improved timeliness of the data.

Description of the activities to be funded

Support full implementation of the IESS Regulation¹² including to strengthen comparability, timeliness and coverage of data (regional and income data in the EU Statistics on Income and Living Conditions (EU-SILC), etc.), as well as implementation of LFS and SILC modules on specific detailed topics and *ad hoc* subjects concerning the labour market and income and living conditions by adding each year a set of variables to supplement the core EU-LFS and EU-SILC.

The EU-LFS (EU Labour Force Survey) and the EU-SILC (EU Statistics on Income and living Conditions) are being modernised with the implementation from 2021 of the IESS Regulation establishing a common framework for European statistics relating to persons and households.

The associated actions to be implemented in 2022 (including the 2022 modules and ad hoc subject) would require preparatory work to start as of 01/04/2021. For proposals under this action, exceptionally costs incurred as from 01/04/2021 are eligible and may be declared even if the related activities have been implemented prior to proposal submission.

Types of applicants targeted by the direct award of the grant

To be eligible, applicants must:

- be National Statistical Institutes (NSI) and other National Authorities identified in the list referred to in Article 5 of Regulation (EC) No 223/2009 and responsible for the development, production and dissemination of European statistics, and
- be properly constituted and registered in one of the EU Member States or EFTA countries.

According to Article 195(f) of the Financial Regulation, grants may be awarded without a call for proposals for activities with specific characteristics that require a particular type of body on account of its technical competence, its high degree of specialisation or its administrative power, on condition that the actions concerned do not fall within the scope of a call for proposals. Authorities identified in the list above-mentioned fulfill this condition.

The individual award decisions substantiating the specific characteristics of the activities and the particular technical competence, high degree of specialisation or administrative power of the beneficiaries will be adopted at a later stage by ESTAT.

Implementation

¹² Regulation (EU) 1700/2019 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 10 October 2019 establishing a common framework for European statistics relating to persons and households, based on data at individual level collected from samples, OJ L 261I , 14.10.2019, p. 1.

Through a co-delegation to ESTAT

2.1.9. Euronews Real Economy Magazine

Priorities of the year, objectives pursued and expected results

Three episodes on EMPL-related topics to be broadcasted on TV and disseminated via web and social media. The objective is to raise awareness among the general public on DG EMPL related activities and topics via the established TV magazine "Real Economy", which is distributed on air, online and via social media. Euronews is specialised in reporting on EU affairs from a European perspective on a multilingual basis and contributes to a sense of European identity. Its magazine Real Economy is specialised in economic, social and employment related matters and is targeted at an interested audience in this area. The action will allow to reach out to new audiences strengthening the visibility of the measures undertaken to implement the European Pillar of Social Rights. In 2020 Real Economy reached around 10.2 million individuals on TV and had 484,000 page views. Its content pieces were posted on social media, generating together 12.4 million impressions, close to 6,200 comments and 111,400 interactions.

Description of the activities to be funded

Direct grant to Euronews for reporting on employment and social affairs related issues via Real Economy Magazine.

The planning of the episodes to be broadcasted will be done in close cooperation with Euronews and DG ECFIN who is also contributing to finance the magazine "Real Economy".

Types of applicants targeted by the direct award of the grant

A direct grant will be awarded to Euronews, in accordance with Article 195(f) of the Financial Regulation, to cover the production of episodes for the "Real Economy" magazine. Those episodes will illustrate a series of topical issues and the impact of EU policies and funding on employment and social affairs. The justification for selecting Euronews, in view of its technical competence and high degree of specialisation in relation to the objective pursued, will be further elaborated in the award decision.

Implementation

Through a co-delegation to ECFIN

2.2. Calls for proposals

2.2.1. Framework partnership agreements and annual operating grants to support EU level Social NGO Networks

Priorities of the year, objectives pursued and expected results

EU level Social NGO Networks active in the areas of social inclusion and poverty reduction are instrumental in the implementation of many of the principles expressed in the European Pillar of Social Rights. They particularly focus on those aiming at ensuring access to adequate social protection throughout the life cycle – from tackling child poverty, to active age population, and rights for adequate old age income support (Principles 11 to 16) – and tackling barriers to social inclusion of certain particularly disadvantaged groups such as the

inclusion of people with disabilities (Principle 17), and housing and assistance for the homeless (Principle 19). NGO networks are also involved in DG EMPL's files related to education, gender equality, equal opportunities, work life balance, social protection, long-term care etc. and thus to the related principles of the European Pillar of Social Rights.

This partnership will enhance the capacities of these networks to contribute actively to the development and implementation of the EU policies in this area.

The Commission expects:

- to benefit from the networks' expertise as regards the challenges (and ways to tackle them) that vulnerable groups of citizens face in the various Member States; and
- to be supported in its outreach activities at EU, national and local levels with the aim of ensuring awareness, contribution to and implementation of EU level policies and initiatives in the areas of the promotion of social inclusion and poverty reduction.

Description of the activities to be funded

The call aims at setting up 4-year Framework Partnership Agreements (FPA) with networks active in the area of social inclusion for the period 2022-2025 and awarding the first annual operating grants for 2022. The activities to be funded include, among others, outreach activities, mutual learning among members, research activities and input for policy design.

Types of applicants targeted by the call

Only single applicants are eligible.

Applicant organisations, established as formal networks, must be European-level organisations which are:

- a) legal entities properly established and registered in one of the eligible countries participating in the programme;
- b) non-governmental, non-profit-making, and independent of industry, commercial and business or other conflicting interests;
- c) whose mission falls under the objectives and scope of the relevant priorities of this call for proposals;
- d) which have national member organisations in at least fourteen (14) Member States of the European Union;
- e) whose members are mainly non-profit organisations; and
- f) which are mandated by their members, through a Management Board or other administrative forum, to represent these members at the EU level and to be responsible for the activities of the network.

Implementation

Directly by DG EMPL

2.2.2. Framework partnership agreements and annual operating grants to support networks active in the areas of social enterprise and microfinance support

Priorities of the year, objectives pursued and expected results

Social enterprises and microenterprises are instrumental in the implementation of many of the principles expressed in the European Pillar for Social Rights. In particular, they play a key

role in delivering the following principles of the Pillar: equal opportunities (principle 3), active support to employment (principle 4), secure and adaptable employment (principle 5), inclusion of people with disabilities (principle 17), long-term care (principle 18) and access to essential services (principle 20). To support the development in this field, the Commission cooperates with EU level networks in its outreach activities at EU, national and local levels. EU level networks are also key partners in the consultation and implementation of the upcoming Action Plan for Social Economy, as well as on a number of other policy files such as long-term care, green transition and social innovation.

This partnership will enhance the capacities of these networks to contribute actively to the development and implementation of the EU policies in this area.

The Commission expects:

- to benefit from the networks' expertise as regards the challenges (and ways to tackle them) that social enterprises, micro-enterprises and their support organisations/intermediaries face in the various Member States;
- and to be supported in its outreach activities at EU, national and local levels with the aim of ensuring awareness, contribution to and implementation of EU level policies and initiatives in the areas of social enterprise and microfinance support.

Description of the activities to be funded

The call aims at setting up 4-year Framework Partnership Agreements with networks active in the areas of microfinance and social enterprise support, for the period 2022-2025 and awarding the first annual operating grants for 2022. The activities to be funded include, among others, outreach activities, mutual learning among members, research activities and input for policy design.

Types of applicants targeted by the call

Only single applicants are eligible.

Applicant organisations established as formal networks must be European-level organisations:

- (a) which are legal entities properly established and registered in one of the eligible countries participating in the Programme;
- (b) which are non-governmental, non-profit-making, and independent of industry, commercial and business or other conflicting interests;
- (c) whose mission falls under the objectives and scope of the priorities established under each relevant section of the call for proposals;
- (d) which have national member organisations in at least fourteen (14) Member States of the European Union;
- (e) which are mandated by their members, through a Management Board or other administrative forum, to represent these members at the EU level and to be responsible for the activities of the network.

Implementation

Directly by DG EMPL

2.2.3. Activities to tackle undeclared work

Priorities of the year, objectives pursued and expected results

The priority for this call is to co-finance actions fostering joint activities and cross-border projects of enforcement authorities improving their technical capacity in the field of preventing and deterrence of undeclared work in line with the Platform's vision of transforming undeclared into declared work by using a holistic approach, where national governments join up strategy and operations and cooperate with social partners and other stakeholders to employ the full range of direct and indirect policy measures. This will further enhance on-going cooperation between Member States enforcement authorities.

Cooperation may cover the following areas:

1. Common training courses for staff involved in enforcement activities;
2. Joint actions and exchange of staff of enforcement authorities;
3. Provision of technical assistance and/or support to implementation of measures/practice as identified by the European Platform tackling undeclared work (UDW).
4. Setting up information exchange systems;
5. Collaborative work in form of sharing of information and mutual learning between enforcement authorities.

The main objective of this call for proposals is to develop and fund initiatives, which shall contribute to enhancing the implementation, application, knowledge and better enforcement of EU and national law in the area of undeclared work, thus contributing to the reduction of undeclared work and to the transition into formal jobs. The knowledge gained from these projects should also help building up evidence-based knowledge for better policy design.

The expected results are the improved transnational cooperation between Member States' different authorities to prevent and deter undeclared work, increased mutual trust among the stakeholders and the increased public awareness on the urgency of action and encouraging Member States to step up their efforts in dealing with undeclared work.

Description of the activities to be funded

Following the key principles "Secure and adaptable employment" and "Social protection" of the European Pillar of Social Rights, the main objective of this call for proposals is to complement and add value to the activities indicated in the work programme 2021- 2022 of the European Platform tackling undeclared work, to be integrated into the European Labour Authority in 2021.

The call for proposals will support relevant actors in the field of undeclared work such as ministries, enforcement authorities, social partners, etc. to develop and fund innovative initiatives which shall contribute to enhancing the implementation, application, knowledge and better enforcement of EU and national law in the area of undeclared work, including through cross-border cooperation, thus supporting the transformation of undeclared work into declared work.

Types of applicants targeted by the call

Actions may involve consortia.

To be eligible, single or lead applicants must be legal entities properly constituted and registered in EU Member States and EEA Countries, according to Article 29 of the ESF+ Regulation.

Legal entities established in EU Member States, EEA Countries, candidate countries and potential candidates can take part as co-applicants according to Article 29 of ESF+ Regulation.

Organisations of social partners without legal personality under the applicable national law are also eligible provided that the conditions of the Financial Regulation related thereto are

met (Article 197(2)(c) of the Financial Regulation);

Eligible applicants must:

- fall into one of the following categories:

1. Public enforcement authorities such as labour inspectorates, social security inspectorates, tax authorities, customs authorities, migration bodies, ministries in charge of tackling undeclared work, the police and the public prosecutor's office, or

2. Social partners. Social partners which are entitled by law or institutional agreement to carry out enforcement tasks can be lead-applicant. Other social partners can be co-applicants.

- be non-profit organisations (private or public).

Single or lead applicants who are not officially appointed by Member States/EEA countries to the European Platform tackling undeclared work must present a letter of endorsement issued by the respective representative in the Platform.

Affiliated entities can take part in the consortium, and they must satisfy the eligibility criteria as all applicants.

When necessary for the achievement of the action's objectives, legal entities established in non-associated countries may exceptionally participate, in principle without being financed by the Union. Therefore legal entities established in Switzerland can take part on a no cost basis in accordance with Article 27(1)(a)(iii) of the ESF+ Regulation.

Implementation

Directly by DG EMPL

2.2.4. Posting of workers: enhancing administrative cooperation and access to information

Priorities of the year, objectives pursued and expected results

The European Pillar of Social Rights has set out key principles and rights for a renewed process of upward convergence towards i.e. fair working conditions in particular in the areas of secure and adaptable employment, wages, information about employment conditions and protection in case of dismissals, social dialogue and involvement of workers, etc. The general objective of this call for proposals is therefore contributing to the implementation of the key principles of the pillar in the area of posting of workers. The specific objectives of this call are the following: a) To promote transnational cooperation among public authorities and stakeholders, including the promotion of the use of Internal Market Information system (IMI) run by DG GROW and sharing experiences and best practices in this respect; b) To increase the accessibility, transparency and quality of the information concerning the terms and conditions of employment to be respected and the existing practices in the Member States to monitor and enforce the provisions of the Posting of Workers Directive; c) To promote the evidence basis through the collection and evaluation of original data, and the analysis specific to the posting process and posted workers' working conditions, including through the collaboration between universities across various disciplines, research centres and institutes and stakeholders, in particular social partners.

Description of the activities to be funded

The call supports the implementation, application and enforcement of the Directive 96/71/EC and Directive (EU) 2018/957 concerning the posting of workers in the framework of provision of services and its Enforcement Directive 2014/67/EU.

The call for proposals will fund transnational cooperation initiatives aiming at developing initiatives by relevant stakeholders involved in the context of posting with a significant and lasting impact on workers, companies and administrations.

Activities aim at supporting competent authorities in Member States and social partners in administrative cooperation, in increasing access to essential information for posted workers, to promote the evidence basis through the collection and evaluation of original data and analysis.

Types of applicants targeted by the call

Applicants must be properly constituted and registered legal entities, having their registered office established in one of the following:

- EU Member States
- EEA Countries, candidate countries and potential candidates ((P)CC) in accordance with the Article 29 of the ESF+ Regulation.

Only consortia are eligible. They must be composed of a minimum of three entities established and registered in at least three different EU Member States.

Lead applicants and co-applicants must be established in EU Member States and EEA countries, according to Article 29 of the ESF+ Regulation.

Co-applicants can also be established in (P)CC, in accordance with Article 29 of the ESF+ Regulation.

When necessary for the achievement of the action's objectives, legal entities established in non-associated countries may exceptionally participate, in principle without being financed by the Union. Therefore legal entities established in Switzerland can take part on a no cost basis in accordance with Article 27(1)(a)(iii) of the ESF+ Regulation.

Affiliated entities can take part in the consortium. They must satisfy the eligibility criteria as all applicants.

Lead applicants, co-applicants and affiliated entities must fall in one of the following categories:

- public authorities;
- international organisations (with registered headquarter both inside and outside of eligible countries of the call);
- non-profit organisations (private or public);
- research centres/institutes;
- higher education establishments;
- civil society organisations; or
- social partner organisations at European, national or regional level (in application of Article 197(2)(c) of the Financial Regulation, social partner organisations without legal personality are also eligible provided that the conditions of the Financial Regulation related thereto are met).

Implementation

Directly by DG EMPL

2.2.5. EURES Cross-border partnerships and support to EURES cooperation on intra-EU mobility for EEA countries and social partners

Priorities of the year, objectives pursued and expected results

Support fair mobility for frontier workers in the cross-border regions. The activities will provide concrete data on obstacles to mobility in the cross-border region as well as improve the cross-border labour market. The activities will contribute to the national work plan of the National Coordination Offices (NCOs) of the countries involved and their result will be part of the annual activity report of the NCOs involved.

Description of the activities to be funded

Following the key principle “Active support to employment” of the European Pillar of Social Rights, the overall objectives of the call are to promote workers' intra-EU labour mobility, to boost employment opportunities as well as to support the implementation of the EURES Regulation.

The call for projects of two-year duration consists of three strands:

1. The first strand supports fair mobility for frontier workers in cross-border regions, in particular cross-border partnerships offering comprehensive EURES services.
2. The second strand targets both EEA countries, that are part of EURES, to offer comprehensive EURES services in EEA countries or specific EURES services for workers or employers. Following the key principle "Equal opportunities and access to the labour market" of the European Pillar of Social Rights, the action aims at reaching jobseekers in EEA countries.
3. The third strand targets EU-level social partner organisations. It will support the coordination of activities of the European social partners in the EURES network.

Only for strand 1: Eligibility: when necessary for the achievement of the action's objectives, legal entities established in non-associated countries may exceptionally participate, in principle without being financed by the Union. Therefore legal entities established in Switzerland can take part on a no cost basis in accordance with Article 27(1)(a)(iii) of the ESF+ Regulation.

Types of applicants targeted by the call

Legal entities properly established and registered in the following countries are eligible as lead applicant and/or co-applicants:

- EU Member States;
- EEA countries in accordance with Article 29 of the ESF+ Regulation.

For strands 1 and 3, organisations of social partners without legal personality under the applicable national law of above-mentioned countries are also eligible, provided that the conditions of the Financial Regulation related thereto are met (Article 197(2)(c) of the Financial Regulation).

Types of entities - strand 1

Only consortia are eligible.

To be eligible, lead applicants must be:

- the relevant National EURES Coordination Office(s) as designated in accordance with Regulation (EU) 2016/58925; or
- the EURES member(s) or partner(s) of the regions involved with the endorsement of its National Coordination Office

To be eligible, co-applicants must fall under one of the categories listed below:

- EURES members or partners
- social partner organisations at European, national or regional level
- public or private employment services
- third sector organisations
- other relevant actors active on the EU/EEA labour market, including European Groupings of Territorial Cooperation

When necessary for the achievement of the action's objectives, legal entities established in non-associated countries may exceptionally participate, in principle without being financed by the Union. Therefore legal entities established in Switzerland can take part on a no cost basis in accordance with Article 27(1)(a)(iii) of the ESF+ Regulation.

Types of entities – strand 2

Consortia are not eligible.

To be eligible, single applicants must be the National EURES Coordination Offices of EEA-non EU countries, in accordance with Article 29 of the ESF+ Regulation.

Type of entities – strand 3

Actions may involve consortia.

Applicants (single or lead and co-applicants) must be social partners, established at European level and represented in the Advisory Committee on Free Movement of Workers, i.e.:

- the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC)
- the Confederation of European Business (BUSINESSEUROPE)
- European Association of Craft, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEUnited)
- European Centre of Employers and Enterprises providing Public Services and Services of general interest (CEEP)

In strands 1 and 3, affiliated entities can take part in the consortium, and they must satisfy the eligibility criteria as all applicants.

Implementation

Directly by DG EMPL

2.2.6. EURES Targeted Mobility Scheme

Priorities of the year, objectives pursued and expected results

In accordance with the European Pillar of Social Rights, which sets out key principles and rights essential for fair and well-functioning labour markets, this action contributes to building a more inclusive and sustainable growth model, with a view to stimulating investments, creating jobs, fostering social cohesion and fairer labour mobility. The action contributes to “Active support to employment” (principle 4) and aims to fulfil people’s needs, supporting and promoting the implementation of tailor-made employment services and innovative forms of work, that ensure quality working conditions, to foster the placement and integration of mobile workers in the host country(ies), combined with financial incentives.

Building on the aim of the Pillar to serve as a guide towards efficient employment and social outcomes, the activities will be results-driven, i.e. the expected outcome must be quantified in terms of expected placement/integration numbers and difficult-to-fill vacancies involved. The overall objective is to ensure around 4,000 placements over the duration of the action in economic sectors with difficult-to-fill vacancies. The action being strongly result-oriented, shall contribute to: a) enhancing the service catalogue of the EURES organisations and further integration of the EURES network; b) fostering public-private partnerships and, c) addressing labour market needs in line with the objectives of the EURES reform.

Description of the activities to be funded

Following the key principle “Equal opportunities and access to the labour market” of the European Pillar of Social Rights, the action aims at reaching jobseekers in the EU and EEA countries.

The action targets the filling of difficult-to-fill vacancies as identified in national/EU labour market studies or other data sources. The call targets at least 4,000 placements, in particular of young people. The activities will cover the provision of direct services to jobseekers and employers, notably:

- information, recruitment, matching and placement;
- pre- and post-placement support to customers (e.g. profiling and pre-selection of candidates, language training or other training needs, mentoring support for trainees and apprentices); and
- direct financial support to candidates and SMEs (interview and relocation trip costs, language trainings, recognition of qualifications, induction training programmes by SMEs).

Types of applicants targeted by the call

Only consortia are eligible. They must be composed of a minimum of two EURES Member/Partner organisations established in at least two different EU Member States.

The consortium must demonstrate that the proposed activities are fully carried out in at least five EU Member States or EEA countries, in accordance with Article 29 of the ESF+ Regulation.

Lead applicants must be legal entities properly constituted and registered in EU Member States. Co-applicants must be legal entities properly constituted and registered in EU Member State or EEA countries, in accordance with Article 29 of the ESF+ Regulation.

To be eligible, lead applicants must be:

- EURES National Coordination Offices (NCOs), EURES members or EURES partners which are placed in organisations whose main mission is to ensure the provision of employment and placement services to jobseekers, job changers, trainee/apprentice candidates and employers covering jobs and/or work-based trainings. Those services must include information, recruitment, matching and pre- and post-placement support.

To be eligible, co-applicants must fall under one of the categories listed below:

- EURES member organisations (i.e. NCOs, EURES Members and Partners);
- Public or private labour market actors (including the third sector) providing the same services as lead applicants and/or complementary customer-oriented services in other expertise fields such as information, training, education, career guidance, mentoring, legal advice, integration support or other equivalent.

Affiliated entities can take part in the consortium, and they must satisfy the eligibility criteria as all applicants.

When necessary for the achievement of the action's objectives, legal entities established in non-associated countries may exceptionally participate, in principle without being financed by the Union. Therefore legal entities established in Switzerland can take part on a no cost basis in accordance with Article 27(1)(a)(iii) of the ESF+ Regulation.

Implementation

Directly by DG EMPL

2.2.7. National Contact Points EaSI

Priorities of the year, objectives pursued and expected results

Creation and operation of National Contact Points in EaSI participating countries to promote the EaSI strand under ESF+ and its projects/results and support applicants.

Description of the activities to be funded

Support to the creation and operation of contact points within the EU Member States to:

- a) provide information material;
- b) assist in sharing EaSI results;
- c) promote results for upscaling/mainstreaming;
- d) provide first line assistance to applicants;
- e) forward complex questions to the Commission, translate and forward the Commission replies to stakeholders;
- f) create/update national EaSI webpage; and
- g) run and take part in information sessions/ workshops/ conferences.

They may also run or take part in jobshadowing activities and translations.

Types of applicants targeted by the call

Public Authority of an EaSI participating country or entity endorsed to act as National Contact Point.

Implementation

Directly by DG EMPL

3. Prizes

N/A

4. Procurement

The indicative global budgetary envelope reserved for procurement contracts under this work programme amounts to EUR 46 841 373.

Budget line 07.020100.05: N/A

Budget line 07.020400: EUR 46 841 373

The Commission intends to launch an open procedure for one Framework Contract (FWC) for the provision of services related to the application of core labour standards and working conditions in countries covered by the General Schemes of Preferences (GSP+) and by Free Trade and Investment Agreements, for a duration of four years (EUR 4 000 000).

Subject matter of the contracts envisaged

In 2021, the Commission intends to undertake actions through contracts following public procurement (call for tenders and framework contracts) or administrative arrangements in the following policy areas:

4.1. Employment and skills

The actions in this policy area have as objective to support analytical activities, mutual-learning, exchange of good practices, evaluation of policy initiatives, advisory services and technical assistance, meetings, awareness raising on employment policy related issues, IT, communication, dissemination and capacity-building activities in relation with the implementation of the employment and skills related objectives outlined in the European Pillar of Social Rights Action Plan.

The actions will cover notably the areas of youth employment, long-term unemployment, undeclared work, platform work, job creation, entrepreneurship, microfinance and social enterprise finance, social economy, future of work, skills (such as European Skills, Competences, Qualifications and Occupations (ESCO) or Europass²) and their development, including mutual recognition and transparency of competences, occupations and qualifications expert networks, Public Employment Services. Activities are expected to provide data, information, statistics and reports to strengthen and better target employment policies.

Type of contracts

Service

Implementation

Directly by DG EMPL and co-delegation to DIGIT

4.2. Social protection and inclusion

Actions in this policy area aim to support analytical activities (research, policy advice), mutual learning, exchange of good practices (such as European Social Policy Network – ESPN), promoting dialogue with civil society and stakeholders, exchange of social security information, IT, awareness raising, meetings and events, dissemination and capacity-building activities, in relation with the social protection and inclusion objectives in the European Pillar

of Social Rights Action Plan. It will notably cover the social aspects of the green and digital transitions, income distribution and returns from social budgeting, inclusive employment and growth, alleviation of poverty and social impact monitoring, modernisation and reforms of social protection systems including pension (adequacy and sustainability of pensions) and long-term care systems.

The expected results include an improvement and alignment of the social protection and pension systems responding to challenges of the new forms of works in Member States and the implementation of the European Pillar on Social Rights as regards social inclusion.

Type of contracts

Service

Implementation

Directly by DG EMPL

4.3. Labour markets and labour mobility

The actions in this policy area have the objective to support analytical activities (including performance monitoring), mutual-learning, communication, exchange of good practices between competent authorities, meetings and conferences, technical assistance, data collection and availability, IT in the area of labour markets and labour mobility (including posting of workers and seasonal workers).

The expected results include the availability of data, development and maintenance of the EURES portal (including translations), contribution to improved labour markets and labour mobility and improving legislation on working conditions in the Member States.

Type of contracts

Service

Implementation

Directly by DG EMPL and co-delegation to DIGIT

4.4. Safe and fair working conditions

The actions in this policy area have the objective to support analytical activities (including evaluation, statistics and surveys), mutual-learning, exchange of good practices between competent authorities, data collection and availability, as well as meetings, dissemination and capacity-building activities in relation to safe and fair working conditions (including occupational diseases), Senior Labour Inspectors Committee (SLIC) and international labour standards.

The expected results include the availability of data, statistics, contribution to better working conditions in the EU and refining and improving legislation on working conditions in the Member States.

Type of contracts

Service

Implementation

Directly by DG EMPL and co-delegation to ESTAT

4.5. Cross-cutting issues

The actions in this section have the objective to support cooperation with key international partners (such as ILO), analytical activities mutual-learning, exchange of good practices with third countries, cross-cutting analysis, DG EMPL's communication activities, horizontal and cross-cutting IT, audits, contribution to corporate IT and communication.

The expected results include improved cooperation with partner countries, international organisations and stakeholders, enhanced IT processes, better regulation and wider and high-quality outreach to the European citizens and beyond.

Type of contracts

Service

Implementation

Directly by DG EMPL, co-delegations to DIGIT and COMM

5. *Actions implemented under indirect management*

The overall budgetary allocation reserved for actions implemented under indirect management in 2021 amounts to EUR 27 495 200.

Budget line 07.020100.05: EUR 26 530 200

Budget line 07.020400: EUR 965 000

BUDGET LINE

07.020100.05 - ESF+ shared management strand - Operational expenditure (Transnational cooperation)

5.1. Entrusting the implementation of transnational cooperation activities

Implementing entity

The tasks will be entrusted to a public law body involved formally in the implementation of the European Social Fund under shared management.

The entrusted body will implement actions financed by the ESF shared management budget. This requires deep knowledge on the ESF+ programme, its objectives, involved stakeholders, target groups and management specificities. Limiting the eligibility to bodies which are/have been formally involved in implementing the ESF provides a large pool of organisations possessing exactly the required experience and knowledge. This type of bodies exist in all EU Member States.

According to Article 154(1) of the Financial Regulation, the selection of the entities to be entrusted with the implementation of Union funds pursuant to point (c) of the first subparagraph of Article 62(1) shall be transparent, justified by the nature of the action and shall not give rise to conflict of interest.

AS regards financial capacity, the entrusted body is requested to have passed the pillar assessment (art. 154.3 and 4 of the Financial Regulation) or equivalent certification -which can be combined with supervisory measures in case of a partial equivalence of the certification – before the contribution agreement can be concluded with the Commission.

As regards operational capacity, it will need to demonstrate:

- Experience in managing calls for proposals for transnational activities under the ESF shared management during the period 2014-20.
- Experience in promoting social innovation in the territory, for which the body is involved in the ESF shared management during the period 2014-20.

Objectives pursued and expected results

The transitions to a low-carbon and digital economy, demographic changes, the COVID-19 crisis and its consequences and migration related issues are transforming the world of work, education, training and social services. In this context, social innovation is becoming crucial, because it opens up new inclusive and participatory ways of facing the challenges in the interest and for the benefit of European citizens.

Description of the activities to be funded

The purpose of this activity is to establish and start a new transnational initiative for supporting, disseminating and upscaling of social innovations in the EU, in complementarity to Member States' activities under the ESF+ in shared management and other upscaling activities implemented under the EaSI strand. The selected entity will be entrusted to implement the following implementation tasks during the 2021-2027 programming period:

- prepare and implement EU wide transnational calls for proposals projects related to social innovation and/or social policy experimentation;
- support the capacity building of stakeholders, in cooperation with the forthcoming National competence centres for social innovation and EaSI National contact points, notably through sharing of good practices identified across funding sources;
- validate and display innovative solutions, including through the EU social innovation database, across funding sources; and
- continue the EU level thematic cooperation and mutual learning between the ESF managing authorities.

BUDGET LINE

07.020400- ESF+ - Employment and Social Innovation strand

5.2. Contribution agreement with the International Labour Organization (ILO). Decent work and informality: impacts of COVID-19 and a recovery bringing about decent and sustainable employment

Implementing entity

The International Labour Organisation (ILO) has a devoted work stream dedicated to the impacts of COVID-19 and the recovery from the crisis. For this project in particular, with a focus on Latin America, the ILO has an extensive network in the Region and the necessary capacity to collect and process reliable information, which is complementary to the capacity

of EU Delegations. Next to this, the ILO is instrumental in linking with other relevant UN Institutions related to Sustainable Development Goals.

Objectives pursued and expected results

The project focuses on promoting decent work in its links of addressing informality, on impacts of COVID-19 and aims at recovery which creates decent and sustainable employment, including in selected country cases and supported by an outreach event with relevant stakeholders to be determined depending on the impact of the pandemic and its effects on labour and social conditions.

Description of the activities to be funded

The project intends to set up formalisation strategies, as a cornerstone to lead to a decent work agenda globally. With this project, the ILO offers its support to analyse and understand the prevalent forms of informality and the prevalent drivers of informality and formalization (diagnosis phase). A second phase will contribute, by developing and implementing specific tools, to strengthening the strategies and good practices that ILO has developed in recent years regarding formalisation initiatives in the different sectors such as domestic work, groups of workers, or enterprises such as micro- and small enterprises, and in the key policy areas such as the extension of social protection to informal economy workers or strengthening compliance mechanisms.

5.3. Contribution agreement with the International Labour Organization (ILO): Project to combat violence and harassment in the world of work

Implementing entity

Through executing a number of projects and initiatives, the ILO has accumulated invaluable expertise in working on violence and harassment at the workplace around the world. Many of these projects and initiatives, such as Safe and Fair and Spotlight are supported by the EU, since they further the EU's objectives in working towards non-discrimination and healthy and safe working conditions. Furthermore, the project at hand concerns ILO instruments directly, and so the ILO is uniquely placed to further the understanding of the issues surrounding violence and harassment in the world of work, which will provide valuable input for shaping the EU's external relations as well.

Description of the activities to be funded

Project entrusted to the ILO focusing on combating Violence and Harassment in the world of work in the EU after the proposal for a Council Decision allowing Member States to take forward the process of ratifying at national level the ILO Convention on the Elimination of Violence and Harassment in the World of Work.

Objectives pursued and expected results

To improve the understanding of the nature and extent of violence and harassment around the world, with a special focus on Europe, in order to inform better policy-making. Highlighting existing tools, as well as new ones needed, with the support of the social partners, would give impetus to laws and policies, and ensure that those most closely impacted by them are

involved in their implementation. Ultimately, the objective is to prevent and address violence and harassment in the world of work in the target countries.

5.4. Contribution agreement with the World Health Organisation (WHO) – International Programme on Chemical Safety

Implementing entity

The tasks will be entrusted to the World Health Organization (WHO). Through its International Programme on Chemical Safety, the WHO makes a valuable contribution by providing updated and reliable scientific evaluations on risks derived from exposure to chemicals. These evaluations are used by the Commission to propose European objectives in the form of indicative occupational exposure limit values for the protection of workers from chemical risks.

Objectives pursued and expected results

Support the International Chemical Safety Programme of the WHO in order to continue to provide authoritative, up-to-date evaluations of environmental and occupational exposures to hazardous chemicals, and to disseminate the results world-wide. These may be used as appropriate by the Commission for developing evidence based policy in the field of workers' health protection against chemical risks. This initiative supports the goals set out in the EU-OSH strategy (COM(2014)332). This initiative develops and updates information relevant to prevent occupational exposure to hazardous chemicals.

Description of the activities to be funded

Development of authoritative risk assessment documents, in particular:

- International Chemical Safety Cards (IPCS)
- Concise International Chemical Assessment Documents (CICADs)
- Running the WHO Chemical Risk Assessment Network

6. Contributions to trust funds

N/A

7. Financial instruments

N/A

8. Contributions to blending facilities

N/A

9. Other actions or expenditure

The indicative global budgetary envelope reserved for other actions or expenditure under this work programme amounts to EUR 4 624 000.

Budget line 07.020100.05: N/A

Budget line 07.020400: EUR 4 624 000

BUDGET LINE

07.020400- ESF+ - Employment and Social Innovation strand

9.1. Various meetings of standing, ad-hoc committees and other events

Amount

EUR 880 000

Description and objective of the implementing measure

To support events and meetings organised by DG EMPL in particular in the field of safety and health at work, labours inspections, labour mobility, labour law, long-term care, pensions and public employment services.

Implementation

Co-delegation to PMO

9.2 Scientific support for evaluation of chemicals at work

Amount

EUR 600 000

Description and objective of the implementing measure

Opinions to prepare future updates of Directives 98/24/EC and 2004/37/EC, to provide the appropriate administrative, technical and scientific support by the Risk Assessment Committee (RAC) which carries out the evaluations of the occupational exposure limits for hazardous chemicals with the intent to develop proposals to establish the appropriate Occupational Exposure Limits (OEL) at European Union level.

Implementation

Service level agreements with ECHA

9.3. Support for data collection and management, analysis, studies and evaluations

Amount

EUR 2 874 000

Description and objective of the implementing measure

The actions will include the support for data collection and maintenance of the EUROMOD model, which is a microsimulation tool that is used by various Commission services to assess the impact of tax-benefit reforms, notably in the context of the European Semester, and for

obtaining more timely data on income distribution and poverty thanks to flash estimates produced by ESTAT.

DG EMPL will also support cross-country analyses and evaluation studies to evaluate the effectiveness and impacts of labour market and social policy measures using (sub) national administrative data, in the frame of the COVID-19 mitigation, exit and recovery measures.

Implementation

Service level agreements with JRC

9.4. Europe Direct Contact Centres / Europass user support service

Amount

EUR 150 000

Description and objective of the implementing measure

This action will provide support to the Europe Direct Contact Centre for Europass as a first point of contact for queries of Europass users and first line support.

Implementation

Service level agreement with DG COMM

9.5. Communication activities

Amount

EUR 120 000

Description and objective of the implementing measure

Co-delegation to the Publications Office for the conception, printing, storage and distribution of DG EMPL publications.

Implementation

Co-delegation to OP