



Performance Monitoring Report of the European Union Programme for Employment and Social Innovation (EaSI) 2019-2020

Written by PPMI
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PPMi

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Performance Monitoring Report of the European Union Programme for Employment and Social Innovation (EaSI) 2019-2020

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ABSTRACT

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.

With a view to the regular monitoring of the programme, the EaSI Regulation foresees that ‘the Commission shall draw up an initial qualitative and quantitative monitoring reports covering consecutive two-year periods. This is the fourth EaSI Performance Monitoring Report presenting the results achieved by the programme in 2019-2020. It focuses on the products (outputs) delivered by the programme and the benefits they brought in 2019-2020.

Over the period 2019 and 2020, the Commission committed more than EUR 255 million towards implementation of the programme’s activities.

The following positive developments were noted in 2019-2020:

- EaSI-funded policy evidence is increasingly seen as sound and highly useful from the stakeholder’s perspective.
- EaSI-funded events continued providing much-appreciated platforms for effective and inclusive information sharing, mutual learning and dialogue in relevant policy fields.
- The involvement of both policymakers and decision-makers in the debate on EU employment and social policy and legislation is steadily increasing indicating the growing inclusiveness of all relevant stakeholders.
- EU-funded support for social policy innovations gained more visibility.
- Even though the COVID-19 pandemic significantly disrupted the activities of the EURES network, the EURES Job Mobility Portal remained visible and useful among jobseekers and employers.
- 2019-2020 marked a strong period for the Microfinance and Social Entrepreneurship axis. Altogether 34 contracts worth more than EUR 74 million were signed with microfinance intermediaries; at the end of 2020 these contracts accounted for 97 271 microloans worth EUR 1.27 billion (the leverage of 5.3 was achieved).
- EaSI support for social enterprises has increased significantly. In total, 3 337 social enterprises received funding through the EaSI Social Entrepreneurship Window by the end of 2020. The amount of funding provided accounted for more than EUR 490 million, averaging out at EUR 147 135 per enterprise.

KURZFASSUNG

Das Programm für Beschäftigung und soziale Innovation (EaSI) der Europäischen Union stellt Fördermittel für die Schaffung hochwertiger und nachhaltiger Arbeitsplätze, die Gewährleistung eines angemessenen und menschenwürdigen Sozialschutzes, den Kampf gegen soziale Ausgrenzung und Armut sowie die Verbesserung der Arbeitsbedingungen in ganze Europa bereit.

Gemäß der EaSI-Verordnung „erstellt die Kommission qualitative und quantitative Monitoringberichte, die zwei aufeinanderfolgende Zeiträume von zwei Jahren abdecken“, um das Programm laufend zu überwachen. Dies ist der vierte EaSI-Monitoringbericht, in dem die Ergebnisse vorgestellt werden, die das Programm 2019-2020 erzielt hat. Der Bericht konzentriert sich dabei auf die Produkte des Programms und deren Nutzen im Berichtszeitraum.

In den Jahren 2019 und 2020 hat die Kommission für die Umsetzung sämtlicher durch das Programm geförderten Maßnahmen über 255 Millionen Euro bereitgestellt.

Für den Berichtszeitraum 2019-2020 wurden die folgenden positiven Entwicklungen festgestellt:

- Mehr beteiligte Akteure als je zuvor schätzen die mit EaSI-Förderung gewonnenen Daten als zuverlässig und sehr nützlich ein.
- Die vom EaSI geförderten Veranstaltungen bieten weiterhin effiziente und allen Beteiligten zugängliche Plattformen für den Informationsaustausch, wechselseitiges Lernen und Gespräche über relevante Politikbereiche.
- An der Debatte über die Beschäftigungs- und Sozialpolitik der EU und die entsprechende Gesetzgebung nehmen immer mehr Politiker*innen und Entscheidungsträger*innen teil, d. h. es gelingt immer besser, alle relevanten Interessenträger einzubeziehen.
- Die Bekanntheit der EU-Förderprogramme für sozialpolitische Innovationen hat sich verbessert.
- Obwohl die Coronapandemie die Arbeit des Netzwerks EURES stark beeinträchtigt hat, blieb das EURES-Portal zur beruflichen Mobilität ein häufig genutztes und hilfreiches Instrument für Arbeitssuchende und Arbeitgeber.
- Auch für die Achse Mikrofinanzierung und Soziales Unternehmertum waren 2019 und 2020 zwei starke Jahre. Insgesamt wurden 34 Verträge mit einem Wert von 74 Mio. Euro mit Mikrokreditanbietern geschlossen, die bis Ende 2020 zu 97 271 Mikrokrediten in einer Gesamthöhe von 1.27 Mrd. Euro führten (was der angestrebten Hebelwirkung von 5,3 entspricht).
- Die Förderung des sozialen Unternehmertums durch EaSI hat stark zugenommen. Bis Ende 2020 wurden 3337 Sozialunternehmen über den Themenbereich soziales Unternehmertum des Programms EaSI gefördert. Insgesamt wurden dabei über

490 Mio. Euro Fördermittel vergeben, was im Mittel 147 135 Euro pro Unternehmen entspricht.

Résumé

Le programme pour l'emploi et l'innovation sociale (EaSI) apporte un soutien financier pour encourager un haut niveau d'emplois durables et de qualité, garantir une protection sociale décente et adaptée, lutter contre l'exclusion sociale et la pauvreté, et améliorer les conditions de travail au sein de l'UE.

Pour assurer le suivi régulier du programme, la réglementation EaSI prévoit que « la Commission rédige un rapport préliminaire de suivi qualitatif et quantitatif couvrant des périodes successives de deux ans. » Il s'agit ici du quatrième rapport de suivi du programme EaSI, qui présente les résultats obtenus par le programme en 2019-2020. Il se concentre sur les produits (réalisations) du programme et les bénéficiaires qu'ils ont générés en 2019-2020.

Sur la période allant de 2019 à 2020, la Commission a engagé plus de 255 millions d'euros dans la mise en œuvre des activités du programme.

Les évolutions positives suivantes sont à noter pour la période 2019-2020 :

- Les parties prenantes perçoivent de plus en plus les éléments probants financés par le programme EaSI comme solides et très utiles.
- Les événements financés par le programme EaSI restent des plateformes très appréciées pour un partage efficace et inclusif des informations, pour l'apprentissage mutuel et pour le dialogue dans les domaines politiques concernés.
- L'implication des responsables politiques et des décideurs dans le débat sur les politiques et législations européennes sociales et d'emploi augmente de manière régulière, ce qui témoigne de l'inclusion croissante de l'ensemble des parties prenantes concernées.
- Le soutien financier de l'UE aux innovations en matière de politique sociale a gagné en visibilité.
- Même si la pandémie de COVID-19 a fortement perturbé les activités du réseau EURES, le portail sur la mobilité de l'emploi EURES est resté visible et utile pour les chercheurs d'emploi et les employeurs.
- 2019-2020 a été une période forte pour l'axe du microfinancement et de l'entrepreneuriat social. Au global, 34 contrats d'une valeur dépassant les 74 millions ont été signés avec des intermédiaires de microfinancement ; à fin 2020, ces contrats représentaient 97 271 microprêts pour une valeur de 1,27 milliard d'euros (le cap de 5,3 a été franchi).
- Le soutien du programme EaSI aux entreprises sociales s'est considérablement développé. En tout à fin 2020, 3337 entreprises sociales avaient reçu des financements par le biais de la fenêtre Entrepreneuriat social du programme EaSI. Le montant des financements fournis représentait plus de 490 millions, soit en moyenne 147 135 euros par entreprise.

1. Introduction

1.1. EaSI Programme and its policy context

The EU Programme for Employment and Social Innovation (EaSI) is one of four EU financing instruments in the area of employment and social affairs for the period 2014-2020, together with the European Social Fund (ESF), the Fund for European Aid for the Most Deprived (FEAD) and the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund (EGF). The EaSI Programme, which was established under Regulation (EU) No 1296/2013, has contributed to the implementation of the Europe 2020 strategy by providing financial support to promote high-quality and sustainable employment, adequate and decent social protection, social inclusion, poverty reduction and prevention, and fair working conditions.

Building on the EU economic governance processes, the programme has contributed substantially to the EU in the areas of employment, social affairs and inclusion. EaSI has built its work in alignment with the Political Guidelines established by the EU Commission's President Juncker (2014-2019) and President von der Leyen (2019-2024). The Political Guidelines of both presidents set a strong and continuous commitment towards strengthening the social dimension of the EU. The European Pillar of Social Rights – the EU Commission's initiative launched in November 2017 to further address the key social challenges and issues we face today – solidified the EaSI Programme's importance. As of 2018, the implementation of the European Pillar of Social Rights became the overall political priority underpinning the EaSI activities for the years to come. Against this backdrop, the EaSI Programme provides the means to achieve better functioning labour markets and sustainable welfare systems. Following the political agreement reached on 28 January 2021 between the European Parliament and the Council, the EaSI Programme will become an integrated strand of the European Social Fund Plus (ESF+). The incorporation and continuation of EaSI yet again confirm the positive social impact the programme brings.

The **EaSI Programme is managed directly by the European Commission**, Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion. It is structured into three axes:

- **Progress axis focuses on providing support to the policymaking 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 by 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. The financial instruments are implemented **indirectly** through the European Investment Fund (EIF).

The programme aims to act **as a catalyst for innovative solutions through social policy experimentation** to assist the Member States in improving their policies in employment and social affairs that respond to social needs and challenges. Another important goal of the programme is to **foster transnational partnerships and networking between public, private and third-sector actors** and support their involvement in designing and implementing new approaches to cope with pressing social and economic trends. **EaSI is also expected to achieve synergies with other EU financing instruments**, particularly the European Social Fund.

With a view to the **regular monitoring of the programme**, the EaSI Regulation foresees that ‘the Commission shall draw up an initial qualitative and quantitative monitoring report covering the first year, followed by three reports covering consecutive two-year periods’¹. This is the fourth EaSI monitoring report covering the year 2019 and 2020. It presents all EaSI-funded activities that were implemented in 2019-2020, mainly focusing on those that were completed during this time.

1.2. EaSi Work Programmes 2019-2020

EaSI is implemented based on the work programmes adopted every year². The preparation of the EaSI Work Programmes 2019 and 2020 considered significant social and employment developments in the EU. A steady increase in the employment rate since 2013 and a substantially reduced number of people at risk of poverty or social exclusion confirmed the ongoing positive labour market trend and improved social situation in 2019. Despite the progress made in tackling the consequences of the economic and financial crisis of 2007-2009, challenges in terms of equal opportunities, access to the labour market, working conditions, and social protection and inclusion are to be further addressed.

Notably, youth unemployment and long-term unemployment have continued to be sizeable in some Member States. For instance, in 2020, in ten EU Member States, the long-term unemployment rate was 30 % and more. In parallel, more than 30 % of youth were unemployed in Spain, Italy and Greece. The unemployment rate of persons with disabilities has reflected a considerable portion of untapped potential, further indicating the need for a more inclusive labour market. Undeclared work has persisted in posing a credible threat to workers’ rights and fair competition, therefore calling for closer cooperation and joint action. The negative social ramifications caused by the economic and financial crisis have been especially visible amongst marginalised groups, notably refugees, vulnerable migrants, homeless and Roma communities. In addition, although income inequality in the EU is decreasing slightly, the disparities in income are disproportionately benefiting high earners. In this context, securing equal opportunities in access to education, training, and social protection remains a high priority.

Continuous support to Member States’ policies in the fields of employment, social inclusion, and social protection is crucial in light of the ongoing transformations in the world of work, technological innovation, demographic changes, and globalisation. There is a clear

¹ Article 12 of the EaSI Regulation (EU) No 1296/2013.

² Details of the EaSI Work Programme can be found in the dedicated Europa.eu website: <http://ec.europa.eu/social/keyDocuments.jsp?advSearchKey=EaSIannualworkprogramme&mode=advancedSubmit&langId=en&policyArea=&type=0>

need to adapt to evolving forms of employment and increased labour mobility. Against this backdrop, the current COVID-19 pandemic brings great uncertainty about the future, posing significant challenges to the resilience and stability of the EU.

In 2019, the EaSI Work Programme gave a new stimulus to promoting the EU integrated market for labour mobility by building knowledge on workers' free movement and strengthening social security coordination in Europe. Likewise, a new incentive was given to modernise public employment service delivery by stronger cooperation and mutual exchange of evidence-based good practices. The Work Programme further assessed the EU employment strategy, focusing on efficient active labour market policies, long-term unemployment, youth unemployment, and support to the Member States in achieving a better work-life balance. In parallel, resources were mobilised to promote social innovation, tackle poverty and social exclusion, and provide adequate social protection.

The EaSI Work Programme 2020 further implemented the social protection and inclusion dimension of the Pillar including the promotion of social investment. Significant attention was given to integrate vulnerable and disadvantaged people in society and the labour market as well as to incentivise inclusive and social entrepreneurship through incubators. The Work Programme also prioritised the aim to improve access to finance for micro-entrepreneurs and social enterprises by supporting the microfinance sector and the building of a social enterprise finance market. Likewise, special attention was paid to addressing the repercussions of changing realities and patterns of work – specifically – implications of undeclared work, transformations of the labour market, employment, social and distributional impacts on EU policies.

The EaSI Work Programme was quick to adjust its activities in the light of the COVID-19 pandemic, addressing questions about the resilience of social inclusion and social protection policy frameworks. Specific attention was given to new COVID-19 support measures targeted at micro and social enterprises, and individual micro borrowers hit by socio-economic consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic.

1.3. EaSI Committee

In the management of the EaSI Programme, the Commission is assisted by the EaSI Committee. The committee is composed of representatives from the Member States as well as Norway, Iceland and the Candidate and Potential Candidate Countries who all join as observers. In 2019-2020, the EaSI Committee has discussed a series of issues, including EaSI-funded activities, the preparation of the next long-term EU budget 2021-2027 and its implications for the EaSI Programme, the new EaSI strand in the ESF+, the evaluation of EaSI, and EaSI performance monitoring reports.

1.4. Promotion and dissemination

In 2019-2020, the European Commission continued to pay particular attention to communicating the programme outputs and their contribution to the policy process. **Disseminating the information on the projects and organisations funded by EaSI remained high on agenda.** By January 2021, 11 reports monitoring the projects and organisations supported by EaSI and predecessor programmes Progress and EURES have

been drawn up. All these reports are available to stakeholders and the general public on the Europa.eu website³. The EaSI-related web pages on Europa.eu continued to provide the most up-to-date information.

2. EASI PERFORMANCE MONITORING SYSTEM

PPMI was appointed as a contractor to assist the Commission in delivering this monitoring report. This involved updating a logical framework for the EaSI Programme and establishing the system to measure EaSI performance, including qualitative and quantitative performance indicators, as well as a continuous description and revision of the updated baseline situation. The main aim of the monitoring exercise is to continuously compare the outcomes of the programme to the baseline situation (in terms of values of the key performance indicators). The baseline situation was described for the first time in a baseline report drafted shortly after the launch of the EaSI Programme in 2014. The updated baseline situation was presented in three subsequent reports in 2016, 2019 and 2021.

The **EaSI performance monitoring system** consists of:

- **The logical framework of the programme.** The logical framework explains how EaSI is expected to achieve the objectives of the programme by laying out in detail the whole process from inputs, through outputs, to specific and general objectives (see Annex 1).
- **Performance expectations**, i.e. a detailed explanation of the impact expected from the programme under each of its objectives. During the performance monitoring, performance expectations are specifically used as a tool to define measurable performance indicators (refer to Annex 3).
- **A set of performance indicators** (a complete list is provided in Annex 2), consisting of:
 - Outcome indicators, measuring the achievements of specific and general objectives of the programme;
 - Output indicators;
 - Input indicators;
- **A system to gather and store information**, presented in Annex 2;
- **A methodology to analyse and disseminate information about the projects and organisations funded by EaSI** (including potential good practices).

Among other methods, the **collection of information for this report involved two surveys:**

³<https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?advSearchKey=monitoring+good+practices&mode=advancedSubmit&catId=22&policyArea=0&policyAreaSub=0&country=0&year=0>

1. **The Stakeholder Survey 2021** aimed to collect the overall opinions of EaSI stakeholders (including EU and national policy and decision-makers, civil society, independent experts and other relevant groups) on the operation of the programme and the usefulness of its outputs. The survey reached out to 8 849 selected stakeholders and received 885 responses, thus a 10 % response rate.
2. **A survey of participants in EaSI-supported events 2019-2020** aimed to assess the value of the events and the usability of their results. Two waves of the survey were implemented from the beginning of 2019 until the beginning of 2021. Overall, 5 633 invitations were sent to participate in the survey; there were 922 respondents, thus giving a response rate of around 18 %.

The EaSI Stakeholder Survey 2021 aimed to provide a representative picture of the opinions of stakeholders benefitting from the programme (i.e., it aimed to target a wide variety of persons involved in one or another way in EU policy in the area of employment and social affairs). Separate questionnaires were developed for each axis and thematic section: Progress (thematic sections: employment, social protection and social inclusion, working conditions), EURES, and Microfinance and Social Entrepreneurship.

As a result of the specific features of the population⁴ affected by the programme (the entire population is not known), a non-probability sampling strategy was used. When using this strategy, units are intentionally selected to represent particular aspects of groups within the general sampled population. In this strategy, samples are not meant to be statistically representative; the characteristics of the population are used as the basis of candidate selection.

Keeping in mind that the purpose of the survey was to gather data and information that reflect opinions of the wider population rather than to find consistencies for making statistical generalisations, application of a well-designed non-probability, criteria-based (or purposive) sampling strategy was highly appropriate and feasible to implement. As required by the Terms of Reference of this assignment, the survey gathered the opinions of a representative sample of different types of stakeholders at EU and national level, including 1) policy and decision-makers; 2) civil society organisations, including social partner organisations; and 3) other relevant participants and stakeholders involved in the programme implementation. Each of the three groups constituted a separate stratum, i.e. a separate group or sub-group of the population from which it was attempted to receive a sufficient number of survey responses. The policy area of a stakeholder was added as an additional criterion for the selection of a representative sample of respondents. This criterion introduced five more categories/strata to the sampling strategy, including a) employment; b) social protection and social inclusion; c) working conditions; d) labour mobility (EURES), and e) microfinance and social entrepreneurship. Please refer to Annex 5 for a detailed presentation of the survey methodology and results.

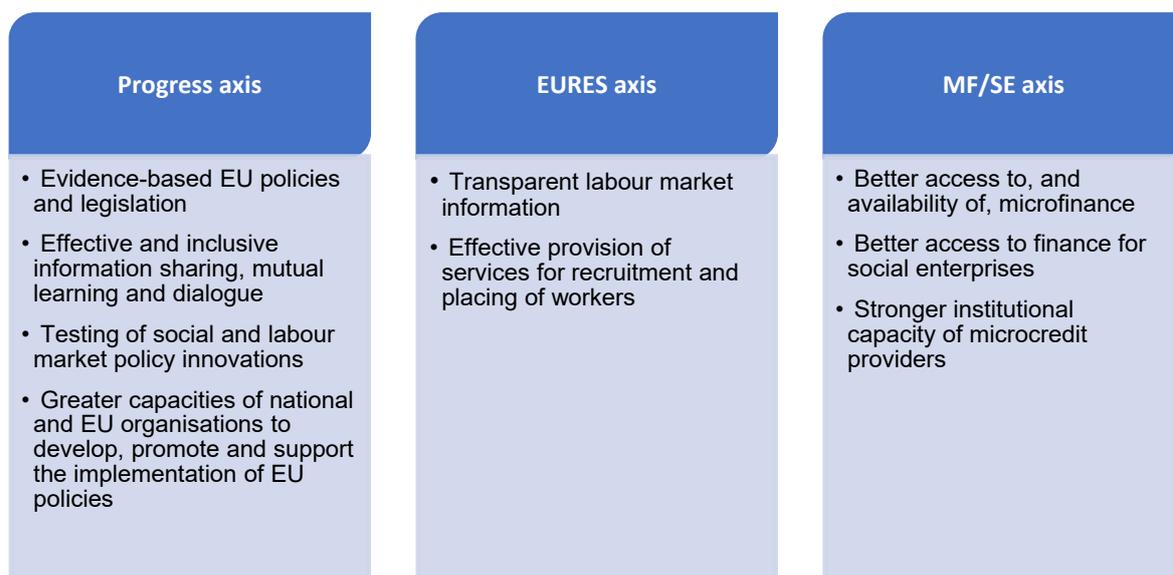
The reconstruction of the **EaSI logical framework** (see

⁴ The pool of individuals from which a **statistical** sample is drawn for a study.

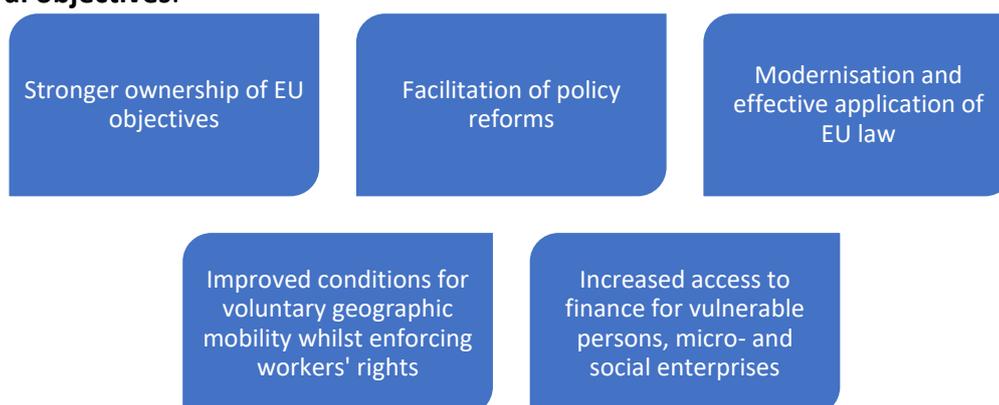
Figure 1) was based on the interpretation of legal and policy documents regulating the programme as well as regular discussions with the policy officers managing the programme at the European Commission. The logical framework aimed to operationalise the ways in which the programme contributes to the achievement of its general policy goals⁵.

EaSI aims to both **improve the policymaking process** in the fields of employment, social protection (SP) and social inclusion (SI) and working conditions (WC), as well as to **make a direct impact** in the areas of geographical labour mobility and microfinance/social entrepreneurship (MF/SE).

In line with the logical framework, the EaSI Programme aims to achieve the following **nine EaSI specific objectives**:



These immediate outcomes are expected to contribute to the achievements of **five EaSI general objectives**:



In pursuing these objectives, in all its axes and actions, EaSI also aims to take into account the following **horizontal objectives**:

- Eight of the EaSI performance in pay particular attention to vulnerable groups, such as young people;

⁵ Regulation 1296/2013, Article 4.

- promote equality between women and men;
- combat discrimination based on sex, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability or sexual orientation;
- promote a high level of quality and sustainable employment, guarantee adequate and decent social protection, combat long-term unemployment and fight against poverty and social exclusion.

Eight of the EaSI performance indicators are included in the **broader performance framework monitoring the objectives set by the Commission's Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion (DG EMPL)** (See Table 1) for their full definition and source). For these indicators, DG EMPL regularly sets milestones and targets to track the progress on the delivery of the Commission's priorities. The latest data for these indicators and corresponding milestones and targets are presented in this report (sections 4.1. and 4.2.).

Table 1. EaSI performance indicators included in the performance framework of the DG EMPL

Indicator	Full definition and source
Declared gain of better understanding of EU policies and legislation	Share of participants in the events declaring that they have gained a better understanding of EU policies and objectives as a result of an EaSI-funded activity (EaSI survey of participants in EaSI-supported events).
Active collaboration and partnership between government institutions of the EU and Member States	Share of officials working in national, regional and local government institutions indicating that they collaborate actively with the institutions of the EU (EaSI Stakeholder Survey).
Declared use of social and labour market policy innovation in the implementation of social CSRs and the results of social policy experimentation for policymaking	Share of EaSI stakeholders who declare that they have used or will use social and labour market policy innovations developed at the EU level for policymaking (EaSI Stakeholder Survey).
Number of visits of the EURES platform (monthly average in million)	This indicator measures the number of unique visitors to the EURES Portal and provides an indication of the appropriateness of the online service tools available on the EURES Portal (EURES Performance Measurement System).
Number of youth job placements achieved or supported under the Preparatory Action Your First EURES Job (YfEJ) as well as under Targeted Mobility Schemes (cumulative figures)	This indicator reflects the contribution of the EURES axis in terms of job placements and serves as a key performance indicator and reflects the results of EMPL's support and guidance activities (EURES Performance Measurement System).
Number of individual personal contacts of EURES advisers with workers and employers (partially)	The indicator estimates the total number of personal contacts of EURES advisers with workers and employers. It measures the volume of customer interaction and provides an indication of the intensity of the interaction between staff of EURES Members and Partners and workers and employers. The EaSI performance monitoring framework captures only a segment of this total: the number of individual contacts with employers and workers that were made under the scope of cross-border partnerships and targeted

	mobility schemes (EURES Performance Measurement System).
Number of businesses created or consolidated that have benefitted from EU support (cumulative figures)	Lack of access to finance is often a difficult obstacle for a micro-enterprise or a social enterprise to face when being created or consolidated. The Commission considers the provision of microloans and social enterprise investments an important factor in achieving the specific objectives of increasing the access to, and the availability of, microfinance for micro-enterprises and facilitating the access to finance for social enterprises (European Commission Progress Microfinance implementation reports).
Proportion of beneficiaries that have created or further developed a business with EU microfinance that are unemployed or belonging to disadvantaged groups	Vulnerable persons, such as unemployed or members of a disadvantaged group often find it more difficult to access to the conventional credit market. The provision of microloans to these groups helps to increase their access to microfinance and their ability to start up or develop their own micro-enterprise (Annual reports for the EaSI Financial Instruments).

Source: Compiled by PPMI.

This EaSI Performance Monitoring Report presents the results achieved by the programme in 2019-2020. It focuses on the delivered products (outputs) and their benefits in 2019-2020, i.e. on the achievements of the specific (Chapter 3) and general (Chapter 4) objectives. Chapter 5 provides concluding remarks on the implementation of the EaSI Programme in 2019-2020 and the main comparisons to the performance during the previous years, including to the baseline situation. Chapter 6 provides consolidated information on financial inputs (indicative and individual commitments) per EaSI axes and thematic sections.

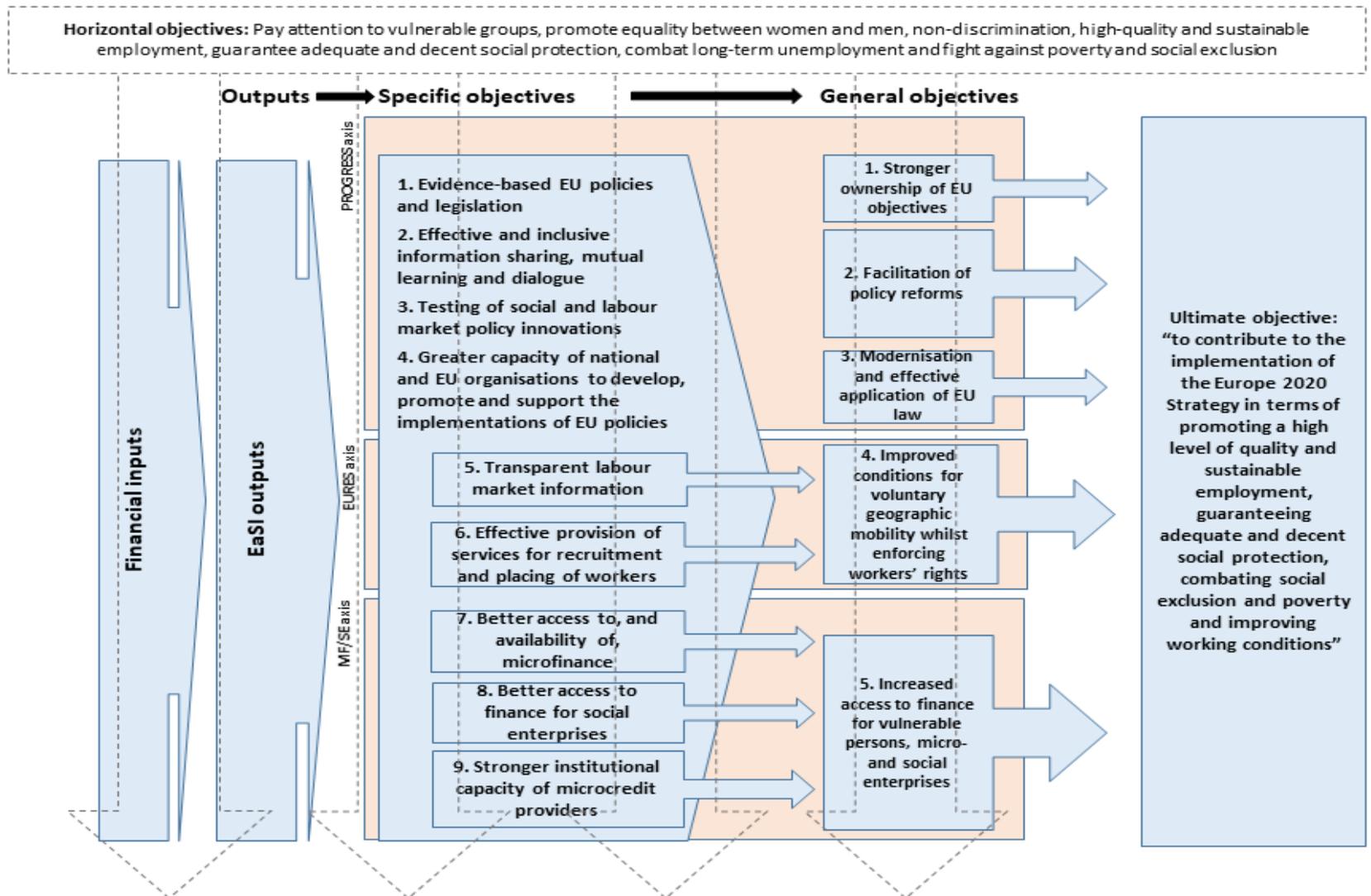
This 2019-2020 EaSI Performance Monitoring Report is the fourth and the last report feeding into the EaSI Programme's life cycle. The report focuses not only on activities completed in 2019-2020, but it also reports on the ongoing activities launched in each of the two-year periods.

Likewise, the report attempts to compare the situation to the previous reporting periods, i.e., 2014, 2015-2016, 2017-2018 and the baseline situation defined in 2014.

The following annexes are provided in addition to the main text of the report:

- Annex 1: presents the detailed EaSI Logical Framework;
- Annex 2: provides the EaSI Performance Monitoring Framework, including a complete list of input, output and outcome indicators and the methodology used to gather and store the monitoring information;
- Annex 3: describes performance expectations for the EaSI Programme;
- Annex 4: provides the catalogue of outputs delivered in 2019-2020 under each axis of the EaSI Programme;
- Annex 5: presents the results of the EaSI Stakeholder Survey 2021 for each axis;
- Annex 6: presents the results of the surveys of participants in EaSI-funded events that took place in 2019-2021.

Figure 1. Simplified visual presentation of the EaSI logical framework



3. PERFORMANCE OF THE PROGRAMME

This section of the report is structured around the three axes of EaSI and nine specific objectives, to which the EaSI Programme is aiming to contribute. Whenever possible, it seeks to compare the EaSI Work Programme funding priorities for 2019-2020 with the actual implementation. Each sub-chapter begins with a review of the political rationale for each axis as well as the indicative and individual commitments under three EaSI axes. It presents detailed information on activities and outputs delivered by the programme. They also provide an overview of the programme's performance against the predefined key performance indicators (see Annex 2).

3.1. Progress axis

On 18 July 2018, the Omnibus Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2018/1046 on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union article 270 provided that the allocation of funding in the EaSI Regulation is to be seen as indicative percentages that apply on average over the whole period of the programme to the axes. This is in order to swiftly provide adequate resources to support changing political priorities. Overall, an indicative percentage of at least 55 % shall be dedicated to support actions under the Progress axis.

The progress axis shall support actions in three thematic sections. The Omnibus Regulation also provided the indicative breakdown of the overall allocation for Progress axis between the different thematic sections and the minimum percentages for thematic sections that shall be respected⁶ :

- **employment**, in particular to fight youth unemployment: 20 %;
- **social protection, social inclusion** and the reduction and prevention of poverty: 45 %;
- **working conditions**: 7 %.

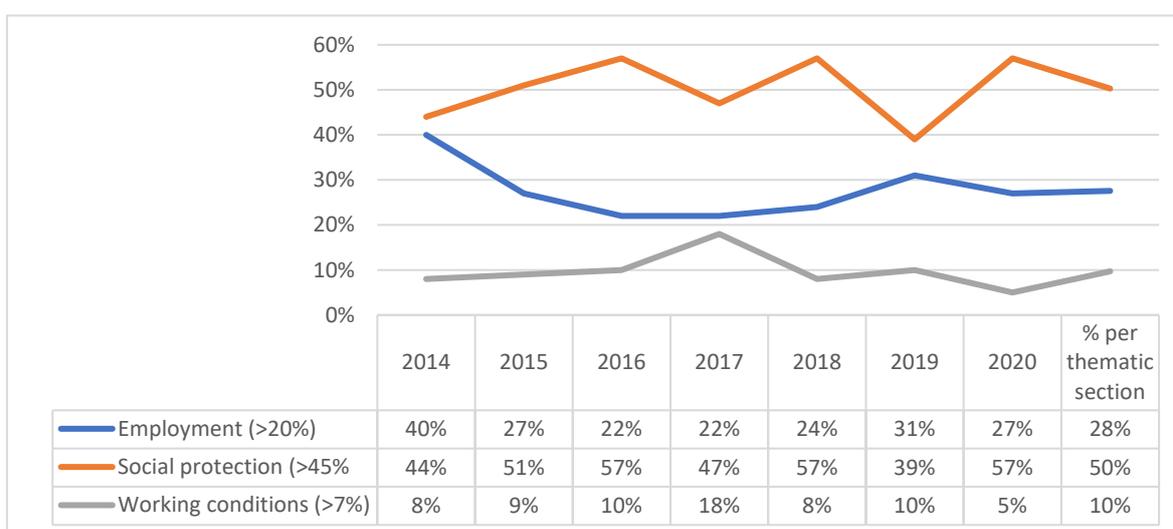
In what follows, we provide an overview of key performance indicators assessing EaSI Programme performance in delivering on four specific objectives related to the Progress axis. These specific objectives make the core structure of this section. Please note that the indicative targets were defined for the whole period 2014-2020 and that percentage of funding per axis and thematic sections may fluctuate from year to year.

⁶ Any remainder shall be allocated to one or more of the thematic sections referred to above or to a combination of them (cross-cutting issues).

3.1.1. Financial implementation

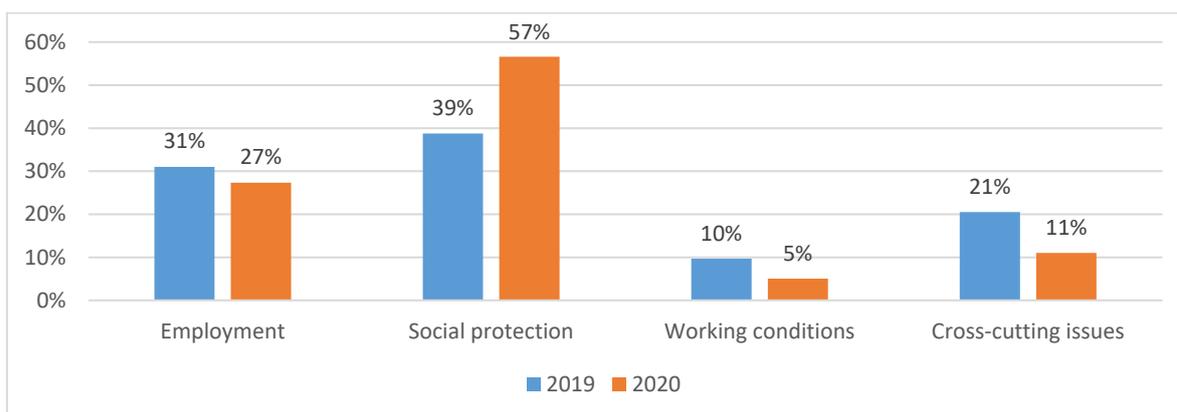
The commitments made under the Progress axis over the whole period of the programme accounted for 56 % of the total budget and exceeded the indicative percentage (>55 %) set in the EaSi legal basis. The thematic section of social protection received the largest share of funding (50 %), whereas thematic section of employment accounted for 28 %. The thematic section of working conditions received the smallest share of funding per axis (10 %). The shares of funding for the three thematic sections under Progress axis exceeded the minimum shares of financial commitments foreseen in the Omnibus Regulation (see Figure 2).

Figure 2. Annual and overall shares of funding per thematic section of the Progress axis



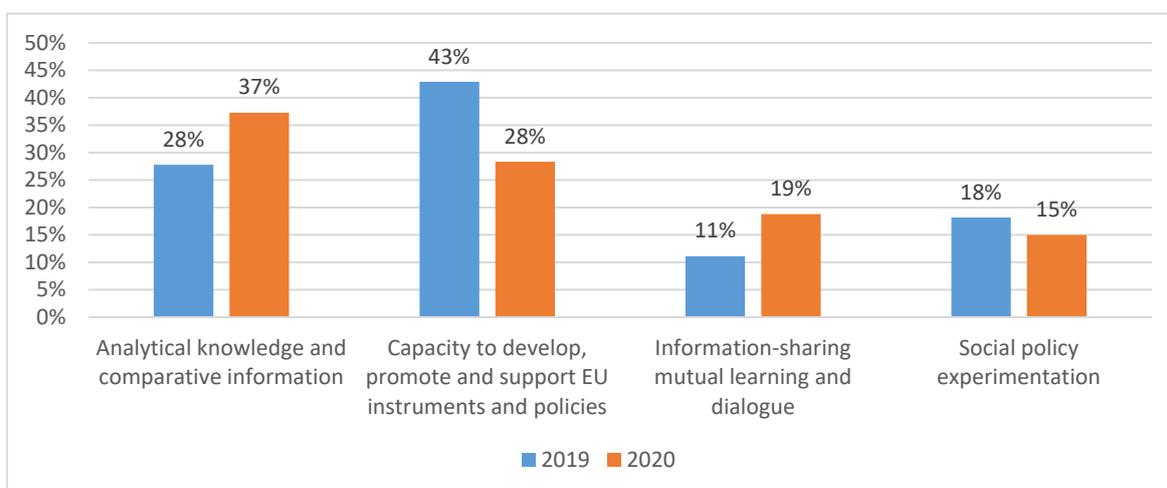
Source: DG EMPL.

In 2019, **EUR 80 750 408,00** were planned and **EUR 80 728 270,45** were actually disbursed. The biggest share of funding was foreseen for actions under the social protection thematic section (39 %) while the foreseen share of funding for the thematic section of employment was equal to 31 %. The thematic section of working conditions received 10 % of the budget foreseen. In 2020, **EUR 79 777 390,00** were planned and **EUR 79 172 352,10** were actually disbursed. The social protection thematic section accounted for 57 % of the budget foreseen. The thematic section of employment received 27 % while the share of funding for the thematic section of working conditions was equal to 5 % of the budget.

Figure 3. Share of Progress commitments per thematic section in 2019 and 2020

Source: DG EMPL Finance Unit.

Figure 4 shows the financial implementation of the Progress axis in terms of specific objectives of the EaSI Programme. In 2019 and 2020 the biggest share of funding was allocated to analytical knowledge and comparative information as well as the capacity to develop EU instruments and policies. Share of the budget for activities related to information sharing, mutual learning and dialogue was equal to 11 % in 2019 and 19 % in 2020. Similarly, activities related to social policy experimentation received 18 % of the total budget foreseen in 2019 and 15 % in 2020.

Figure 4. Share of Progress commitments per specific objective in 2019 and 2020

Source: DG EMPL Finance Unit.

3.1.2. Evidence-based EU policies and legislation

The first specific objective of the Progress axis is to develop and disseminate high-quality comparative analytical knowledge. This to ensure that the EU policies and legislation in the target fields are based on sound evidence and are relevant to the needs, challenges and conditions in the individual Member States and other countries participating in the Programme⁷.

⁷ Regulation (EU) No 1296/2013, Article 15 (a).

EaSI-funded evidence helps both European and national policymakers to make sound decisions on employment and social issues, with special attention to the impact of crises with potentially adverse social effects. Such evidence adds value to the national action by providing not only the EU dimension but also the possibility for comparison between countries. EaSI funding also helps to develop statistical tools, methods and common indicators to obtain a complete(r) picture of the situation in the fields of employment, social policy and working conditions across the EU. It also ensures high-quality evaluation of the efficiency and effectiveness of programmes and policies with a view among other things to reaching the targets of Europe 2020, the Commission's priorities and the European Pillar of Social Rights.

3.1.2.1. Outputs

EaSI maintains and develops an evidence base necessary for the EU employment, social and equality policies and legislation by financing five specific types of activities:

- (i) qualitative and quantitative databases;
- (ii) methodologies, classifications, micro-simulations, indicators and benchmarks;
- (iii) surveys, studies, analyses and reports;
- (iv) monitoring and assessment reports on the transposition and application of EU law; and
- (v) evaluations and impact assessments.

For a comprehensive list of outputs produced in 2019-2020, please refer to Annex 4.

EaSI analytical outputs have a **primary purpose to respond directly to the evidence needs of the Commission** in the fields of employment, social protection and social inclusion (SPSI) and working conditions (WC). Such evidence is either contracted directly by the Commission (procurement), funded through grants notably with international organisations researching in the relevant fields (such as the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and the International Labour Organization (ILO)), or developed by the networks of independent experts (such as the European Employment Policy Observatory and the European Social Policy Network).

Below the report provides an overview of the financially and content-wise most important analytical outputs funded in each of the thematic sections under the Progress axis in 2019-2020.

Employment

In the area of **employment**, the major analytical activity supported by EaSI in both 2019 and 2020 (as in 2017-2018) was the Classification of European Skills, Competences, Qualifications and Occupations (ESCO).

The European Skills, Competences and Qualifications (ESCO)

Database works like a dictionary, describing, identifying and classifying professional occupations, skills, and qualifications relevant for the EU labour market and education and training. Relationships between them can then be “understood” by electronic systems thereby allowing different online platforms to use ESCO for more tailored services like matching jobseekers to jobs based on their skills, suggesting training to people who want to reskill or upskill.

ESCO currently provides descriptions of 2 942 occupations and 13 485 skills linked to these occupations, translated into 27 languages (all official EU languages plus Icelandic, Norwegian and Arabic). Over time, it will also display the qualifications awarded in the education and training systems from the Member States, as well as qualifications issued by private awarding bodies.

ESCO aims to support job mobility across Europe and therefore a more integrated and efficient labour market, by offering a “common language” on occupations and skills that can be used by different stakeholders on employment and education and training topics.

In both 2019 and 2020, the European Commission has continued to support the work of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), namely:

- Programme for International Assessment of Adult Competences (PIAAC);
- Analysis of Labour Market Policies (LMP);
- Analysis of tax wedge and effective tax rates on labour.

The Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC)

PIAAC is a cyclical, large-scale study that was developed under the auspices of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). Adults were surveyed in 23 participating countries in 2012, 9 additional countries in 2014, and 5 additional countries in 2017.

The goal of PIAAC is to assess and compare the basic skills and the broad range of competencies of adults around the world. The assessment focuses on cognitive and workplace skills needed for successful participation in 21st-century society and the global economy.

PIAAC is a complex assessment: the data collection has been conducted in multiple languages, in numerous countries with diverse populations, cultures, education and life experiences. All participating countries follow the quality assurance guidelines set by the OECD consortium and closely follow all the agreed-upon standards set for survey design, implementation of the assessment, and the reporting of results.

In the years 2019 and 2020, the Commission cooperated with the OECD on inclusive and social entrepreneurship policies to improve the evidence base at the EU level and provide policy guidance to the Member States on enabling framework conditions in this field. With support from the European Commission, the OECD published 25 Country Assessment Notes on inclusive entrepreneurship policies and three in-depth policy reviews on social entrepreneurship in 2019 and 2020. In 2020, the OECD and the EU jointly released a policy brief on youth entrepreneurship. The OECD and the Commission also cooperate on **The Better Entrepreneurship Policy tool** to further support youth, women, migrants and the unemployed in business creation, self-employment and the development of social enterprises.

In 2020, the EaSI Programme focused on strengthening the evidence base on the effectiveness and impact of the labour market and social policies in the EU Member States. The programme supported the OECD work in providing **effective solutions for linking administrative and survey data** in the Member States through a series of pilot studies.

In 2019 and 2020, the EaSI Programme has also continued its support for the **EU Labour Force Survey (LFS)**. The EU LFS is an important source of information about the situation and trends in the EU labour market. It is the largest European household sample survey providing quarterly and annual results on labour market participation. The following modules of the Labour Force Survey were supported in the current period:

- Ad hoc module on accidents at work and work-related health problems 2020;
- Ad hoc module on Labour market situation of migrants and their immediate descendants 2021.

The EaSI Programme has also continued its support for the analytical outputs produced by the European Employment Policy Observatory (EEPO) and the European Network of Public Employment Services (PES Network).

EEPO aims to improve European and national policymaking by providing information, analysis and insights on the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies. In developing its research, the EEPO brings together a network of experts from across the EU. They specialise in a range of topics relating to the labour market and employment, such as unemployment, work-life balance, education systems, skills supply, and wages. The EEPO produces a wide range of research, including regular country-specific research on the progress made towards the European employment strategy and Europe 2020, thematic EU-level monitoring, contributing to the day-to-day activities of the European Commission, and the analysis of employment services.

In their studies, the **PES Network** has tackled many issues on the top of the agenda for the European PES. These included outreach to inactive populations, helping the unemployed to create their workplace, supporting refugees and asylum seekers, future of work, integration of the long-term unemployed into the labour market, implementation of the Youth Guarantee, cooperation between PES and the education sector for better school-to-work transition, career guidance and lifelong learning, better cooperation among PES, combining active and passive labour market measures, among other topics.

The EaSI Programme has also continued its support for well-known periodical analytical outputs, such as **Employment and Social Developments in Europe**, **Euronews Real Economy magazine**, and **Labour Market and Wage Developments in Europe**.

In 2019-2020, the European Commission has also provided assistance to the two following important studies:

- **Study assessing the coordination of social security systems.** To protect the social security rights of persons moving within Europe, common rules were established at the EU level to coordinate the different national systems of social security. In 2019, a series of statistical reports assessed the functioning of the social security coordination rules during the reference year 2018. Reports covered unemployment, family, maternity and equivalent paternity benefits; fraud and error; cross-border old age, survivors' and invalidity pensions. The main findings and results of these reports were summarised in a separate report and published in 2020.

- **Mapping study on social enterprises and their ecosystems in Europe.** The study aimed to deepen the understanding of the current size, scope and development dynamics of social enterprises and their ecosystems. It is the third follow-up study to the European Commission's Communication on the Social Business Initiative (SBI). The study delivered 28 updated country reports for EU Member States, 7 baseline country fiches for neighbouring countries participating in the EaSI Programme (Albania, Iceland, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Norway, Serbia and Turkey).

Social protection and social inclusion (SPSI)

In the area of **social protection and social inclusion (SPSI)**, over 2019-2020 the EaSI Programme has continued financing some long-standing major EU-level analytical activities:

- **EUROMOD** – a microsimulation model covering the tax-benefit systems of all EU Member States and which allows the impacts of policy changes on income distribution and poverty as well as on public finances to be evaluated. It is a key tool to enhance the European Commission's capacity for quantitative policy evaluation, notably in the contexts of Europe 2020, the European Semester and the work of the Social Protection Committee.
- **Mutual Information System on Social Protection (MISSOC)** – a database for public authorities, professional users and European citizens, providing up-to-date information on social protection legislation, benefits and conditions in all participating countries.
- **European system of integrated social protection statistics (ESSPROS)** – representing a common framework developed in the late 1970s by Eurostat and the European Union (EU) Member States which provides a coherent comparison of social benefits to households and their financing between European countries, thus allowing an international comparison of national administrative data on social protection.
- **European Platform for Investing in Children (EPIC)** – an evidence-based online platform that provides information about policies that can help children and their families face the challenges that exist in the current economic climate in Europe. The EPIC platform continued to focus on recent trends and developments in child and family policy. The EPIC also looked at anti-bullying practices, mechanisms supporting single parents, and children's rights promotion in policy and decision-making.
- **European Social Policy Network (ESPN)** – provides high-quality and timely independent information, advice, analysis and expertise on social policy issues in the EU, in neighbouring countries and in third countries. In particular, ESPN supports the Commission in monitoring progress towards the EU social protection and social inclusion objectives set out in the Europe 2020 strategy, including the European Pillar of Social Rights, and in the European Semester. In 2019-2020, ESPN provided analytical reports on a variety of issues: in-work poverty, fighting

homelessness and housing exclusion, long-term care quality assurance. Likewise, ESPN published a study covering the Member States' national policies on social protection expenditure and its financing.

Throughout 2019-2020 the EaSI Programme has also carried on supporting key periodicals in the area of social protection: **Social Agenda, the Social Situation Monitor**. The EaSI Programme has also contributed to many awareness-raising activities about the European Pillar of Social Rights.

Furthermore, the EaSI Programme supported the creation of the OECD **Affordable Housing Database (AHD)** with an aim to help countries monitor access to good quality affordable housing and strengthen the knowledge base for policy evaluation. It brings together cross-national information from OECD countries and EU Member States.

Working conditions

In the field of **working conditions (WC)**, in 2019-2020 the EaSI Programme has continued to provide grants to fund some of the well-known and long-standing analytical databases, studies and other activities in the field of occupational safety and health:

- **International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) Monographs Programme**, which helps to identify environmental factors that are carcinogenic hazards to humans. These include chemicals, complex mixtures, occupational exposures, physical agents, biological agents, and lifestyle factors. National health agencies can use this information as scientific support for their actions to prevent exposure to potential carcinogens. In the 2019-2020 period, IARC produced 7 Monographs on the identification of carcinogenic hazards to humans.
- **International Commission on Non-Ionizing Radiation Protection (ICNIRP)** provides scientific advice and guidance on the health and environmental effects of non-ionizing radiation (NIR) to protect people and the environment from detrimental NIR exposure.
- **Eurostat's pilot project on European Occupational Diseases Statistics (EODS) and on supporting European Statistics on Accidents at Work (ESAW)**, of which EODS aims to establish the collection of administrative data on officially recognised cases of occupational diseases in all Member States. The experimental nature of EODS is mainly related to the existence of different legal systems and procedures for recognising occupational diseases in Europe.
- **ILO's Vision Zero Fund (VZF) on Occupational Safety and Health (OSH)**, which was initiated by G7 and aims to prevent work-related deaths, injuries and diseases in global supply chains.

Furthermore, the Commission gives considerable attention to tackling the various forms of undeclared work. Therefore, the EaSI Programme continued to provide funding throughout 2019-2020 to support activities of the **European Platform tackling undeclared work**. In the year 2019 and 2020, the platform focused on the development of more efficient approaches through risk assessment, data mining and data exchange, and tools for effective information sharing. With the support from the EaSI Programme, the platform has

built an increased knowledge base on all aspects of undeclared work by producing evidence-based publications, reports and studies as well as practitioner toolkits. The platform was also quick to adjust its working methods by highlighting more and focusing on the implications of the COVID-19 pandemic on undeclared workers and their overall situation⁸.

In addition to its continued funding of these significant knowledge providers listed above, the EaSI Programme has also supported the following **ad hoc studies and guides**, in 2019 and 2020:

- Studies to gather the information necessary to further amend Directive 2004/37/EC on the protection of workers from the risks related to exposure to carcinogens or mutagens at work;
- Study to gather evidence on the working conditions of platform workers;
- Undeclared Work in the European Union – Special Eurobarometer 498;
- Information tools and approaches to reach out to workers and companies in the fight against undeclared work;
- Communicating effectively: A guide to disseminating knowledge from the European Platform tackling undeclared work;
- Working Safely with Manufacture Nanomaterials.

Cross-cutting issues

As concerns **cross-cutting issues**, the EaSI Programme supported many initiatives crucial for technically sustaining various other activities such as monitoring of the programme, hosting news on the Europa.eu website, reimbursements of various experts, communication activities, seminars about EaSI for journalists.

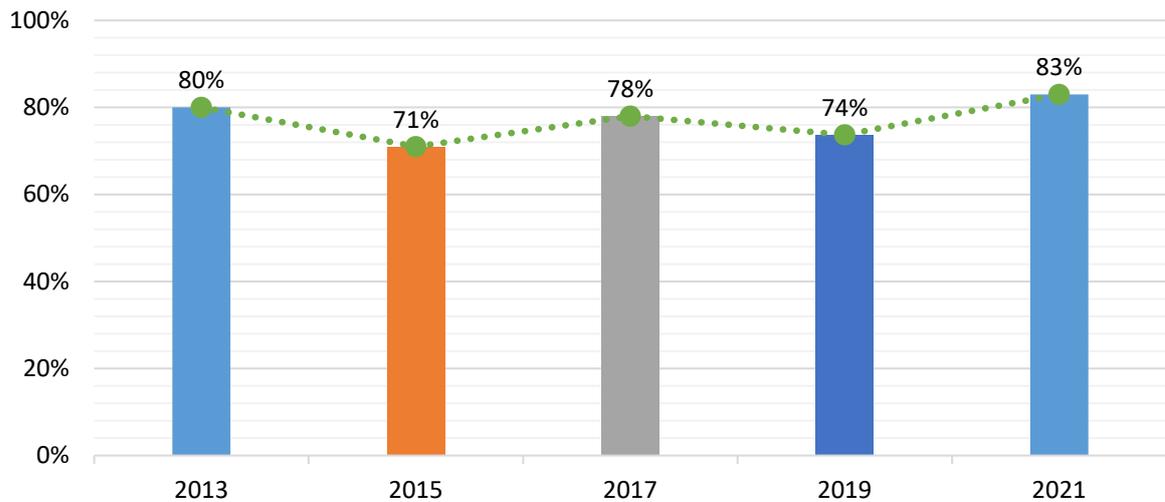
3.1.2.2. Outcome indicators

Headline indicator 1. *Share of stakeholders acknowledging that EU employment and social policy and legislation are based on evidence*

In total, as measured in the first quarter of 2021, a strong majority of stakeholders (**83 %**) **agree that EU employment and social policy and legislation are based on evidence**. This share increased by almost 9 % in comparison with the previous year (74 % in 2019). Figure 5 provides a snapshot of the development of the values for this indicator over time. In the last 8 years, there was a general tendency for the value of this indicator to fluctuate around 70-80 %.

⁸ For a full list of outputs produced by the European Platform tackling undeclared work please refer to Annex 4 attached to the Performance Monitoring Report.

Figure 5. Share of stakeholders acknowledging that EU employment and social policy is evidence based (% , 2013, 2015, 2017, 2019, 2021)

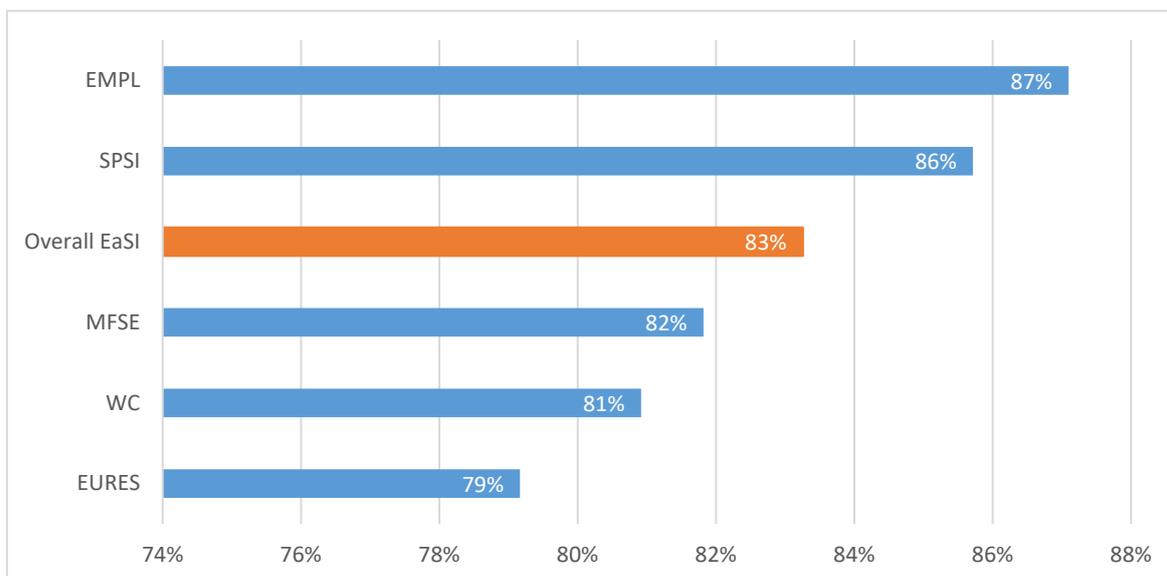


Source: *The Progress Annual Survey 2013 and the EaSI Stakeholder Survey 2015, 2017, 2019 and 2021*⁹.

The biggest share of stakeholders who agree with the statement works in or is the most familiar with the policy area of employment (87 %). The share increased by almost 6 % from 2019 when 81 % of stakeholders in the area of employment agreed with the statement. The biggest increase in the share of stakeholders who acknowledge that EU employment and social policy is evidence based is noted within the areas of social protection and social inclusion (grew by 16 % since 2019) and microfinance and social entrepreneurship (grew by 12 % since 2019).

See Figure 6 below for a comparison of 2021 values by policy area: Employment (EMPL), EURES, Working Conditions (WC), Microfinance and Social Entrepreneurship (MF/SE) and Social Protection and Social Inclusion (SPSI).

⁹ The responses of all the respondents who have 'strongly agreed', 'agreed' and 'rather agreed' with the statement were used to calculate these values.

Figure 6. Share of stakeholders acknowledging that EU employment and social policy and legislation is based on evidence in 2021 (by policy area)

Source: EaSI Stakeholder Survey 2021¹⁰.

Complementary indicator 1.1. Examples of policy initiatives informed by evidence generated by the EaSI Programme

The first complementary indicator monitoring progress towards evidence-based EU policies and legislation concerns the actual examples of how studies, surveys, statistics and other types of evidence produced by the programme feed directly into the policymaking process at the EU level.

Analytical outputs funded through EaSI are instrumental for the Commission to provide policy guidance for Member States, so that they reflect and support EU priorities. In general, EaSI-supported evidence contributed to the programming and implementation of the EU 2020 Strategy and the European Pillar of Social Rights. It also supported the implementation of the EU Presidencies' priorities.

In the policy area of **employment**, the evidence generated by the programme contributed to the Annual Growth Survey, the Communication on European Semester and country-specific recommendations (CSRs), the annual reviews of Employment and Social Developments in Europe (ESDE), Labour Market Developments in Europe reports and Joint Employment reports.

In addition, the evidence contributed to the implementation of the EU Council's recommendations on the integration of long-term unemployed (LTU) into the labour market; Youth Guarantee; Youth Employment Initiative, European Skills Agenda, the Quality Framework for Traineeships and the European Framework for Quality and Effective Apprenticeships.

¹⁰ The responses of all the respondents who have 'strongly agreed', 'agreed' and 'rather agreed' with the statement were used for the calculation of these values.

EC-OECD cooperation on inclusive and social entrepreneurship policies aims to build policy knowledge on how to tackle barriers to entrepreneurship for people from vulnerable groups and entrepreneurs having a primary social aim. This is done through several joint publications and the joint Better Entrepreneurship Policy Tool, which can act as a catalyst to improve inclusive and social entrepreneurship policies in a city, region or EU country.

Concerning **working conditions**, knowledge produced by EaSI directly supported enforcement of the EU law on occupational safety and health (OSH) and enforcement of the provisions of the Posting of Workers enshrined in Directive 2014/67/EU. It also contributed to the follow-up initiatives of the European Pillar of Social Rights, such as the Work-life balance for working parents and carers. The evidence generated by the EaSI Programme also supported the proposal for¹¹ and the implementation of Directive 2019/1152 on Transparent and Predictable Working Conditions¹².

Regarding **social protection and social inclusion**, EaSI-funded policy evidence supported implementation of the Council Recommendation on access to social protection for workers and the self-employed. The programme helped Member States' efforts to enforce the right to affordable long-term care services of good quality, in particular home care and community-based services, as part of the implementation of the European Pillar of Social Rights. The evidence generated by the programme also enhanced preparatory actions on establishing a possible child guarantee scheme. Moreover, EaSI contributed to the implementation of the 2013 EU Recommendation on 'Investing in children: Breaking the cycle of disadvantage and other family policies'. It also served policy initiatives in the field of social and labour market integration of migrants and refugees, the European Disability Strategy, Active Inclusion Strategy and Social Investment Framework set as a result of the Social Investment Package.

The evidence generated by the programme equally facilitated intra-EU mobility and generally the implementation of the EURES Regulation, as well as feeding into the design and implementation of the European Solidarity Corps initiative and Your First EURES Job.

Complementary indicator 1.2. Most useful (analytical) outputs funded by EaSI

Table 2 provides a list of EaSI-funded outputs that were seen by the respondents of the EaSI Stakeholder Survey as most useful in specific policy areas. Among the outputs, EaSI stakeholders had some strong favourites, which were seen as having been already very useful for several years :

- EURES Job Mobility Portal (96 % of stakeholders see this output as useful)
- European Code of Good Conduct for Microcredit Provision (89 %)
- Employment and Social Developments in Europe 2019 and 2020 (85 %)

11 COM (2017) 797: Proposal for a DIRECTIVE OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL on transparent and predictable working conditions in the European Union. See: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A52017PC0797>

12 Directive (EU) 2019/1152 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 June 2019 on transparent and predictable working conditions in the European Union. See: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/dir/2019/1152/oj>

- Modules of the Labour Force Survey (83 %)

Table 2. Most helpful outputs as judged by stakeholders

Policy area/output	Share of stakeholders saying that it was helpful (%):	Share of stakeholders who are not aware of this output (%)
Employment		
Surveys, studies, analyses, monitoring and assessment reports (in general)	91	7
Common methodologies, classifications, micro-simulations, indicators, benchmarks and statistical data (in general)	86	11
Employment and Social Developments in Europe 2019 and 2020	85	12
Labour Force Survey	83	13
Social protection and social inclusion (SPSI)		
Good practice guides, reports, educational material and measures related to information, communication and media coverage	88	11
Surveys, studies, analyses, monitoring and assessment reports (in general)	87	9
Employment and Social Developments in Europe 2019 and 2020	81	17
Working conditions (WC)		
Surveys, studies, analyses, monitoring and assessment reports (in general)	89	10
Common methodologies, classifications, micro-simulations, indicators, benchmarks and statistical data (in general)	82	15
Good practice guides, reports, educational material and measures related to information, communication and media coverage	72	17
Microfinance and social entrepreneurship (MF/SE)		
European Code of Good Conduct for Microcredit Provision	89	11
EaSI – Better access to finance for a more social Europe 2019	80	20
Labour mobility (EURES)		
EURES Job Mobility Portal	96	1

Source: EaSI Stakeholder Survey 2021¹³.

¹³ The responses of all the respondents who have found the analytical outputs 'very helpful' and 'rather helpful' were used to calculate these values.

3.1.3. Effective and inclusive information sharing, mutual learning and dialogue

The second specific objective of the Progress axis is to facilitate effective and inclusive information sharing, mutual learning and dialogue on EU policies in the target fields, at the EU, national and international level. This is to assist Member States and other countries participating in the programme in developing their policies and the Member States in implementing EU law¹⁴.

The knowledge of policies applied in other countries and of their results, including those achieved through social policy experimentation at the local, regional and national level, is expected to broaden the range of options available to policymakers and thereby trigger new policy developments. Practical guidance and mutual learning are foreseen to help the Member States in transposing and applying the EU Directives. They should also assist in ensuring that minimum labour standards are in place and that working conditions improve constantly in the EU, taking into account evolving work patterns and new health and safety risks.

3.1.3.1. Outputs

To achieve this objective, the programme funds five main types of activities:

- Exchanges of good practice, peer reviews, mutual learning and training
- Council Presidency events, conferences and seminars;
- Guides, reports and educational material
- Information and communication activities and
- Information systems to exchange and disseminate information

In the sections below this report presents an overview of information sharing and mutual-learning activities funded in each of the thematic sections of the Progress axis.

In the area of employment, funds were devoted to supporting peer reviews of the Mutual Learning Programme, as well as events organised by the Public Employment Service Network (PES Network), The European Alliance for apprenticeship (EAfA), and the Network of legal experts (MoveS).

The Mutual Learning Programme aims to facilitate, coordinate and encourage mutual learning between EU Member States towards achieving the goals of the Europe 2020 strategy. Likewise mutual learning opportunities result in policy influence at the EU and national levels and enhance the dissemination of results of the Mutual Learning Programme and its contribution to implementing policy objectives to wider audiences.

The Network of Public Employment Services (**PES Network**) aims to:

¹⁴ Regulation (EU) No 1296/2013, Article 15(b).

- enhance cooperation between Public Employment Services;
- compare PES performance through benchmarking;
- identify evidence-based good practices and foster mutual learning (individual PES practices can be found in the PES Repository and outputs from the network activities can be found in the PES Knowledge Centre);
- promote the modernisation and strengthening of PES service delivery, including of the Youth Guarantee;
- prepare inputs to the European Employment Strategy and the corresponding national labour market policies.

The European Alliance for Apprenticeships unites governments and key stakeholders to strengthen the quality, supply and overall image of apprenticeships across Europe, while also promoting the mobility of apprentices. EAfA members can benefit from Apprenticeship Support Services, which provide online resources and networking opportunities that enable like-minded individuals to connect and learn.

MoveS is a network of independent experts in the field of intra-EU mobility. Besides providing the Commission with legal expertise in the areas of free movement of workers and social security coordination, the network also plays a role in increasing experts' and practitioners' knowledge by organising seminars, sharing information and building networks between stakeholders.

In this thematic area, EaSI has also funded the Commission's activities to support the implementation of the Youth Guarantee and implementation of the annual **PES Network** work programme as well as meetings of the **PES Network Board** in the framework of the EU Council Presidencies.

On social protection and inclusion, the mutual learning and open discussions are facilitated through peer reviews. Peer reviews are key instruments of the Social Open Method of Coordination (OMC). They are hosted by one country presenting a selected good practice (e.g., a programme, policy reform, institutional arrangement) and attended by European Commission staff, thematic experts, peer country/ies representatives and relevant stakeholders. Peer reviews contribute to upward social convergence through mutual learning and exchange of best practices. They are useful tools to assess whether the practice discussed is effective, has contributed to achieving EU objectives and could be effectively transferred to other countries.

Under the thematic section of social protection and inclusion, the EaSI Programme has continued to support the **Electronic Exchange of Social Security Information (EESSI)**, which is an Information Technology (IT) system that helps social security bodies across the EU exchange information more rapidly and securely, as required by EU regulations on social security coordination.

In the area of working conditions the European Platform Tackling Undeclared Work enhances information sharing and mutual learning through thematic seminars and review workshops. The platform provides means for cooperation between EU countries to tackle undeclared work more effectively and efficiently, while fully respecting national competences and procedures. It drives change at the national level, promotes better working conditions and formal employment, and aims to increase awareness of issues related to undeclared work.

The EaSI Programme has continued its support for the meetings of the Senior Labour Inspectors Committee (SLIC) during EU Council Presidencies.

Various **communication activities** were also assisted under this specific objective in different thematic policy areas:

- Support for Euronews to report about issues related to EU employment and social affairs;
- Communication activities related to entrepreneurship and job creation;
- Dissemination of findings from the Employment and Social Developments in Europe (ESDE) Report.

While the complete list of mutual learning events can be consulted in the Catalogue of Outputs (Annex 4), Table 3 provides the list of issues addressed by such events in each thematic area.

Table 3. Issues addressed by the EaSI-funded mutual learning events in 2019-2020

Employment	Social protection	Working conditions
- Mutual learning on access to social protection for workers and the self-employed	- Ensuring adequate assistance for those most in need (Minimum Income)	- Tackling undeclared work in the agricultural sector, with a focus on seasonal workers and horticulture
- Whistle-blower protection through collaboration between responsible authorities	- Strategies for supporting social inclusion at an older age	- Cross-border concerted and joint inspections
- Social economy and social enterprises	- Access to social assistance and rights for homeless people	- Preventative approaches for tackling undeclared work, focusing on tax rebates and notification letters
- Minimum wages – extending coverage in an effective manner	- Financing Long-term Care	- Collaboration between competent authorities to tackle undeclared work in the air transport sector, with a special focus on bogus self-employment of aircrews.
- Entrepreneurship training for unemployed	- Housing exclusion: the role of legislation	
- Competence Assessment System: MyCompetence	- Innovative approaches to integration and inclusion of migrants	
- Legislation and practical management	- Work-life balance: promoting gender	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - of psychosocial risks at work - Platform work - Employer service delivery - Remote Learning – How technology is empowering new forms of work-based learning - Apprenticeships and the twin green and digital transition: challenges and opportunities ahead - The relationship between tax, social security and labour law in cross-border situations - Posting of workers and coordination of family benefits in the context of free movement in the EU - New types of work in the light of free movement and social security coordination - Rights and protections for apprentices at work - From School-to-Work – The Role of Chambers - PES Capacity planning measures in response to the COVID-19 crisis - Big data and ethics - Measuring employability - Local labour needs in the recovery phase - Upskilling, reskilling, and prevention in times of crisis 	<p>equality in informal long-term care provision</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Future role and competence profile of labour inspectorates - Cross-border sanctions in the area of undeclared work
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Source: desk research by PPMI.

Finally, a number of high-level events and Presidency conferences in 2019-2020 obtained financial backing from the EaSI Programme in all thematic areas, fostering effective and inclusive information sharing, mutual learning and dialogue. While a few of the most

notable ones are described below, others can be consulted in the Catalogue of Outputs attached as an annex to this report.

Adult upskilling and reskilling conference – Balancing the labour market took place in Bucharest on the 6th and 7th of June 2019. The conference was organised by the Romanian Ministry of Labour and Social Justice and the Romanian Presidency of the Council of the European Union in cooperation with the European Commission. The event provided a forum for discussing the key findings of the Stocktaking report on Upskilling Pathways. The conference reflected on the need to sustain implementation efforts in the future; aimed to identify innovative solutions and financing mechanisms for the delivery of upskilling and reskilling opportunities for all. In the light of a growing need for upskilling and reskilling and developing skills, it is crucially important to provide adequate guidance and validation for an effective adult learning system.

The event took account of the Council Recommendation on Upskilling Pathways: New Opportunities for Adults. The Council Recommendation was a result of the voluntary commitment of EU Member States to support the most vulnerable adult population: those who have already left initial education and training pathways, but whose levels of skills and/or educational attainment put them at risk of social and labour market exclusion.

The First EaSI Conference – From EaSI to ESF+: Supporting the sustainability of social and employment projects took place in Brussels on the 30th of September 2019. The Conference was dedicated to looking more closely into the achievements, challenges and future opportunities for the EaSI Programme. The event provided a platform to further discuss actions that build on past experiences of EaSI and gave an opportunity for beneficiaries to exchange practical experience relating to the sustainability of their projects, discuss lessons learned and ideas on how to best take forward these lessons into the future ESF+.

With the new European Social Fund Plus (ESF+) in mind, the event aimed to address the sustainability of the EaSI Programme. The event showcased different successful projects implemented across the Progress, Eures and Microfinance/Social Entrepreneurship axes.

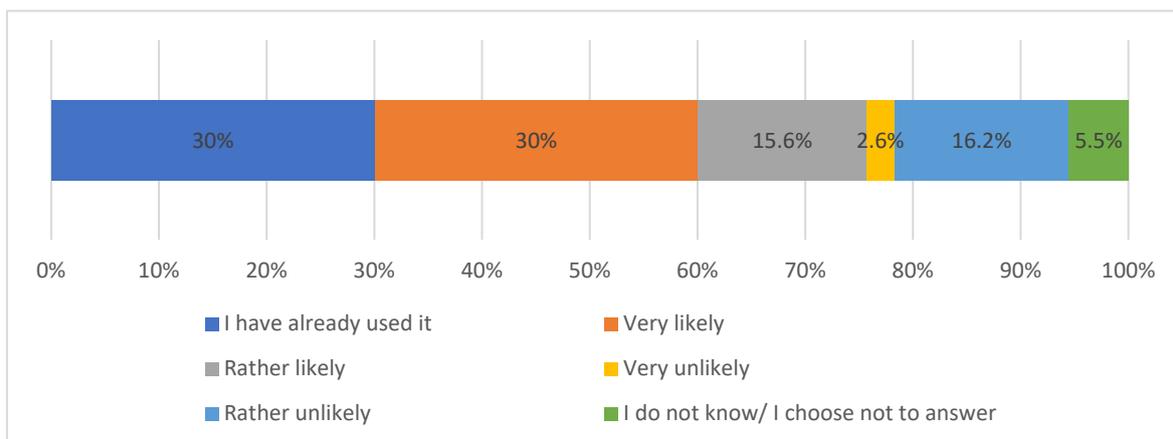
3.1.3.2. Outcome indicators

Headline indicator 2. *Share of participants declaring that they have used or intend to use information acquired during EaSI-funded events*

The headline indicator aims to assess the actual use of information learned during EaSI-funded events for policymaking, advocacy or other work-related activities. The measure estimates the share of participants declaring that they have used or intend to use the information acquired during the events for this purpose.

A third of stakeholders who participated in events financed under the EaSI Programme declared that they have already used information acquired during these events. Another third indicated that they will very likely use it in the future. Altogether, almost 76 % of all the respondents declared that they have already utilised it or indicated an intention to use the information acquired during these events for policymaking or advocacy purposes (see Figure 7).

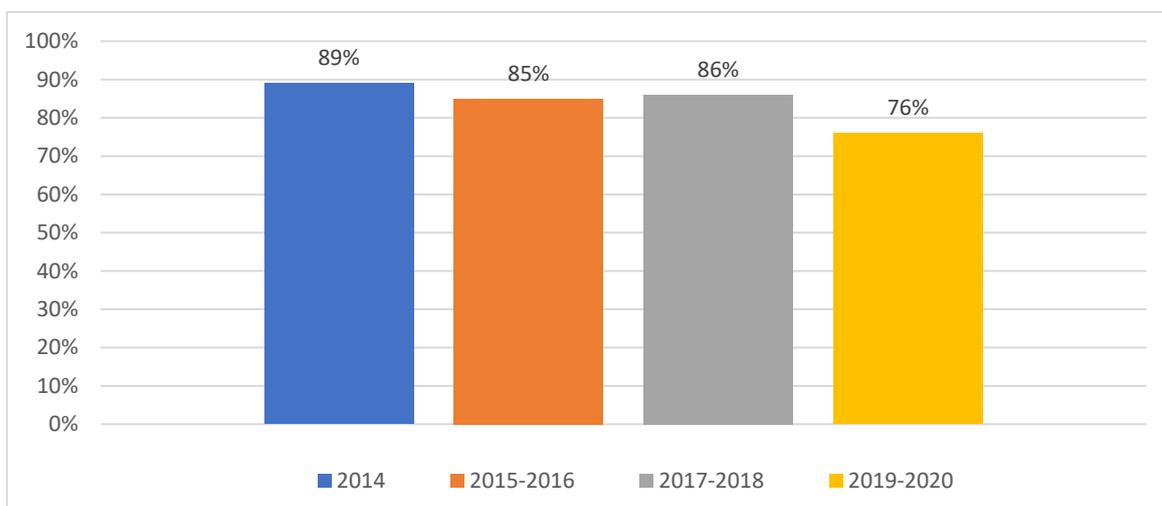
Figure 7. Share of participants who declare that they have used (or intend to use) the information acquired during the events for policymaking or advocacy



Source: Survey of participants in EaSI-funded events in 2019-2021.

Since 2014, the EaSI Programme has been perceived by stakeholders as providing useful information during EaSI-funded events. Since 2014 and up until 2018, around 85 % of stakeholders have declared that they already used or intend to use the knowledge acquired. A 10 % decrease can be noted for 2019-2020 when compared to 2017-2018.

Figure 8. Share of participants who declare that they have used (or intend to use) the information acquired during the events for policymaking or advocacy (%, 2014, 2015-2016, 2017-2018, 2019-2020)



Source: Survey of participants in EaSI-funded events in 2019-2020.

In the reporting period of this report (2019-2020), the EaSI Programme also provided financing for bench learning activities of the **European Network of Public Employment Services (PES Network)**. Bench learning refers to the “process of creating a systematic and integrated link between benchmarking and mutual learning activities that consist of identifying good performances through indicator-based benchmarking systems [...] and of using findings for tangible and evidence-informed mutual learning activities, including good or best practice models”¹⁵. This process involves yearly data collection and biannual site visits feeding into an overall assessment of the progress towards modernisation and change

¹⁵ Decision No 573/2014/EU of 15 May 2014; OJ L 159, 28 May 2014, p. 32-39.

in public employment services in the EU. Based on the results of this assessment, the PES Network organises mutual learning activities to tackle any shortcomings.

Overall, 629 and around 1 900 people participated in 2019 and 2020, respectively, in mutual learning events organised by the PES Network. Activities took the form of learning events (workshops, follow-up visits, seminars, webinars, conferences), production of learning resources (papers, reports, guides, toolkits, material on good practices) as well as enhancing the web presence and possibilities for online networking and collaborative exchange¹⁶.

The latest available data for 2019, indicates that **87 % of participants in mutual learning events** planned to **apply the knowledge and information** they had learnt in their work.

Complementary indicator 2.1. Examples of the actual use of information acquired during EaSI-funded events

The participants in EaSI-funded events use the information gained in several ways. For example, depending on the participants' affiliation, the knowledge informs activities ranging from the development of strategic documents, legislation, advocacy material, design and implementation of programmes and projects at all levels, to research and teaching. The participants also tend to share the information with others, such as colleagues within their organisation, colleagues in other institutions and students.

The following are some interesting examples of how the participants of EaSI-funded events applied the acquired information:

- Participants of the *Final Project SIPA – FESTI'JOB (19 June 2019)* used information obtained during the event 'in the construction of a European project with a consortium of actors on the identification of NEET audiences and their remobilisation to create online courses (Massive Open Online Course - MOOC) for employment professionals'.
- Participants of the *Platform seminar: Developing a European campaign for Declared Work, (12 June 2019)* indicated that they used information obtained for the preparation of an information campaign for declared work at the national level.
- Participants of the *Prezenční Listina – Homelab Národní Workshop, Olomouc (28 May 2019)* shared that they used the arguments presented at the workshop in dialogue with the Polish ministries concerning the development of a social rental agency in Poland.
- Several participants of the *2nd meeting of the Acceleration of Labour Market integration of Immigrants through mapping of skills and Training (ALMIT) project, (Belgrade, Serbia, 19 March 2019)* indicated that the information shared during the event helped them develop and provide better learning courses for refugees.

¹⁶ EC (2020). *European Network of Public Employment Services (PES). Annual Report 2020*. Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union; EC (2020). *European Network of Public Employment Services (PES). Annual Report 2019*. Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union.

- Several participants from the *Staff exchange visit, Bulgaria Estonia, (11-12 June 2019)* indicated that they used information acquired during the visit to develop a strategy for tackling envelope wages in Bulgaria and to reduce the tax-insurance gap from underreported remuneration.
- Several participants of the *ALMIT: National Advisory Group (NAG) meeting, (11 June 2020)*, indicated that during the event within the ALMIT project many experts shared their opinions, knowledge and experience regarding migrant issues. The participants will use the information acquired for policymaking, and resolving potential problems.
- Participants of the *Fast-track Action Boost (FAB) for integration in the labour market of migrants and asylum seeker: Training – Meeting no. 1, (Belgrade, Serbia, 30 December 2020)* already used the information for improving services for beneficiaries with granted international protection.
- Several participants of the *event Work-Life Balance under the project Master Parenting in Work and Life (Brussels, Belgium, 21-22 February 2020)* indicated that the information acquired will be used to better orient reconciliation and territorial welfare policies and by proposing adjustments to labour policy measures.
- Participants of the *Final Conference (23 November 2020)* of the project Regional Integration Accelerators (RIAC) indicated that the information will help them to create a supportive network and to enhance employment opportunities for youth as well as to design learning programmes that fit the market employability measures, especially in the technology sector.

Complementary indicator 2.2. Inclusive policymaking

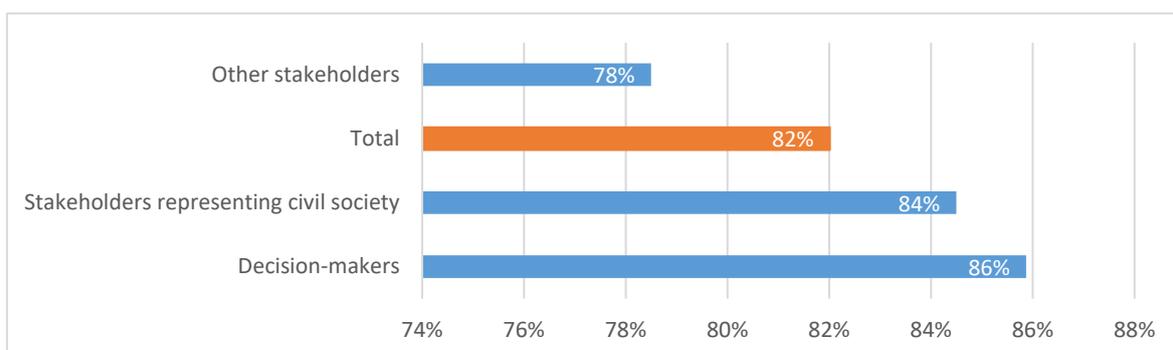
The second complementary indicator considers whether and to what extent relevant stakeholders participate in the policymaking process and EaSI-funded events. As such, the indicator considers two interrelated measures:

1. EaSI stakeholders' opinion on the participation of relevant policy- and decision-makers and other stakeholders in the EU debate overall;
2. The opinion of participants of EaSI-funded events on the involvement of relevant policy- and decision-makers and other stakeholders in EaSI-funded events in particular.

Opinion on the involvement of relevant policy- and decision-makers in the debate on EU employment and social policy and legislation remains positive among stakeholders. According to the EaSI Stakeholder Survey 2021 results, in total, 82 % of stakeholders believe that the debate on EU employment and social policy and legislation included relevant EU and national policy- and decision-makers, signifying a 10 % increase in comparison with 2019 (72 %). A steady upward trend can be noted when comparing different categories individually to the previous year. Decision-makers remain most positive (86 %), and the share increased by 8 %. The share of civil society stakeholders reached 84 % and grew by 10 % (74 % in 2019). Other stakeholders are less positive towards the statement (78 %),

although the share also increased by 10 % in comparison with the previous year (68 % in 2019).

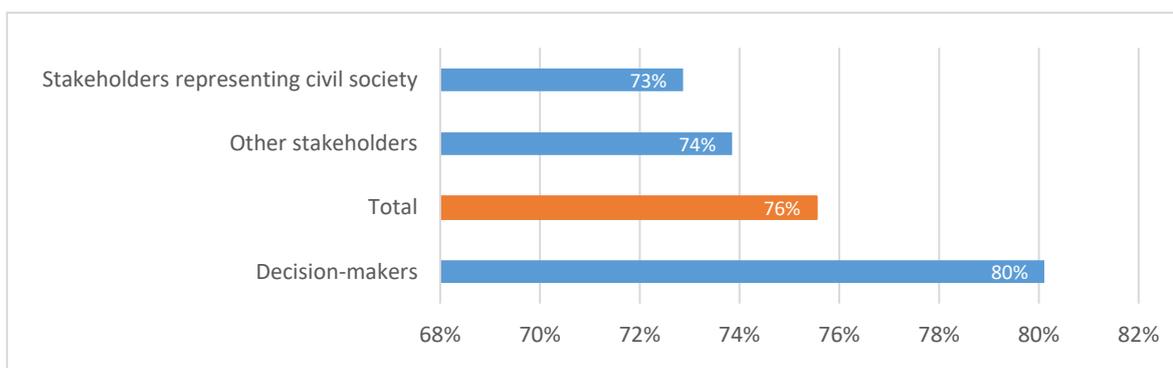
Figure 9. Share of stakeholders acknowledging that the debate on EU employment and social policy and legislation included relevant EU and national policy- and decision-makers (% , 2021)



Source: EaSI Stakeholder Survey 2021¹⁷.

A lower but still very positive share of stakeholders (76 %) believes that the debate on EU employment and social policy and legislation included other relevant stakeholders (social partners, networks, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), independent experts, etc.). Decision-makers remain the most positive group of stakeholders in this regard (80 %; 78 % in 2019), followed by civil society stakeholders (73 %; 74 % in 2019) and other stakeholders (74 %; 68 % in 2019).

Figure 10. Share of stakeholders acknowledging that the debate on EU employment and social policy and legislation included other relevant stakeholders (social partners, networks, NGOs, independent experts, etc.) (% , 2021)



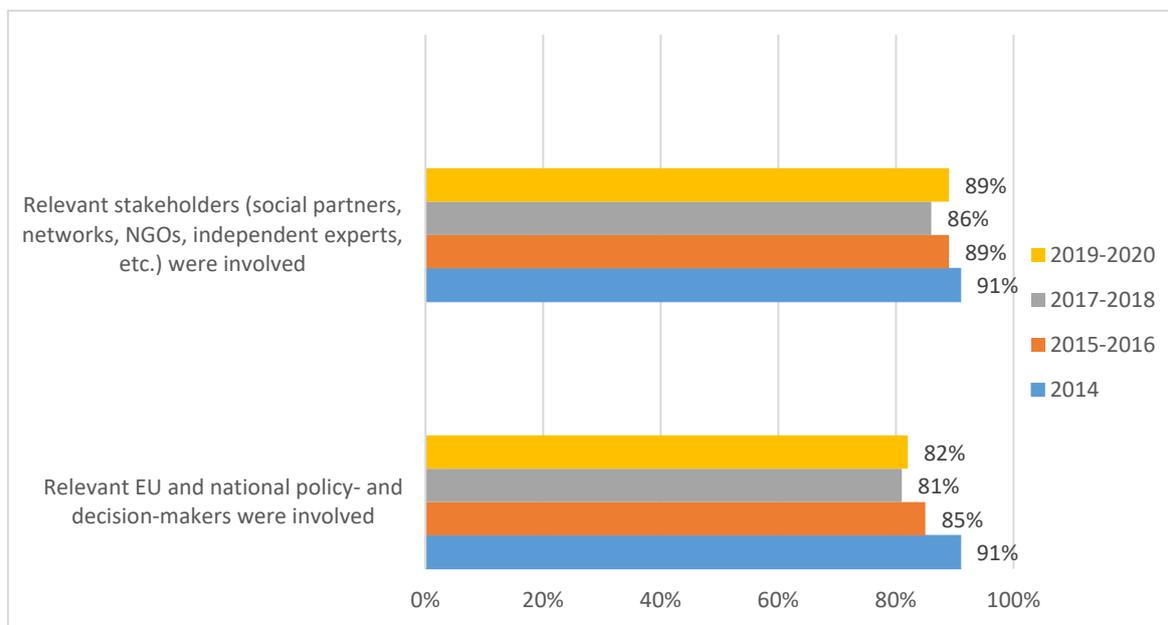
Source: EaSI Stakeholder Survey 2021.

Participants in EaSI-funded events were even more positive about the involvement of relevant stakeholders, both policy- and decision-makers and other relevant stakeholders (such as social partners, NGOs, independent experts) in a specific event (see Figure below). According to 82 % of respondents, the EaSI-supported events, in which they participated, involved relevant EU and national policy- and decision-makers. Even more respondents

¹⁷ The following classification has been used to group stakeholders in these categories: decision-makers and policymakers (officials of an EU institution and national, regional, or local government institutions), civil society (employees and volunteers in organisations of social partners at EU and national level, European-level NGO networks, national NGOs) and other stakeholders (employees of public or private employment services, employees of public or private organisations providing microfinance and/or funding for social enterprises, researchers, university teachers or independent experts and others).

(89 %) agreed that the events included all other relevant stakeholders. While both percentages are very high, there is a slightly decreasing trend as regards participants' perception regarding the involvement of relevant stakeholders in EaSI-funded events (see Figure 11 below for more detail).

Figure 11. Share of participants in events acknowledging that the following principles were followed during an event



Source: Survey of participants in EaSI-funded events for 2014, 2015-2016, 2017-2018 and 2019-2020.

3.1.4. Testing of social and labour market policy innovations

The third specific objective of the Progress axis is to provide financial support to test social and labour market policy innovations, and, where necessary, to build up the main actors' capacity to design and implement social policy experimentation, and to make the relevant knowledge and expertise accessible¹⁸.

Social innovations are defined as innovations that are social both as to their ends and their means and in particular those which relate to the development and implementation of new ideas (on products, services and models) that simultaneously meet social needs and create new social relationships or collaborations, thereby benefiting society and boosting its capacity to act¹⁹. Social innovations are tested through project-based social policy experimentation on a small scale, which allows policymakers and other relevant actors to gather evidence on their feasibility.

By financing social policy experimentation, **the programme is expected to help the Member States identify and analyse innovative solutions and scale up their practical**

¹⁸ Regulation (EU) No 1296/2013, Article 15 (c).

¹⁹ Regulation (EU) No 1296/2013, Article 2 (5).

implementation, to assist, where necessary, Member States in increasing the efficiency of their labour markets and further improving their social protection and inclusion policies.

3.1.4.1. Outputs

To achieve this objective, EaSI funds three major types of actions:

- (a) supporting the testing of social and labour market policy innovations (through grants to public authorities and organisations);
- (b) building up the main actors' capacity to design and implement social policy experimentation; and
- (c) disseminating and awareness-raising at the national and regional level to encourage shared interest from stakeholders.

This report concerns activities that were implemented in 2019-2020 and therefore will discuss social experimentation projects that resulted from the calls for proposals issued in previous years (note that project results take around 3 years to materialise after publication of the call). Projects resulting from two calls for proposals in this area were completed in 2019-2020:

- VP/2014/008, EaSI Progress – 7 projects awarded: **Social Policy Innovations supporting reforms in Social Services**. This call funded activities aimed at improving social security as well as social services concerned with employment, healthcare, training, social assistance, housing support, childcare, and long-term care. The overall purpose of this call for proposals is to foster innovation and reforms in social services, as well as to tackle such challenges as the ageing population, women's labour market participation, post-crisis recovery and to develop innovative responses corresponding to national, regional, and local realities.
- VP/2015/011, EaSI Progress – 8 projects granted: **Integrated social services for the integration in the labour market**. The eight projects awarded concerned employment and training services, housing and health, as well as the provision of minimum income. The target groups were, in general, those furthest away from the labour market, in particular, disadvantaged young people, low-skilled migrants, the Roma community and people living with mental disabilities. The projects covered many Member States: Belgium, Bulgaria, Czechia, France, Greece, Hungary, Italy, the Netherlands, Poland, Slovakia, Spain and the United Kingdom. Projects funded under this call for proposals are described in detail in our biannual report on projects and organisations funded by EaSI. Some of the notable actions are also highlighted below.

In 2019 and 2020, the Commission published two more calls for proposals on social innovation focusing on (1) long-term care and (2) active inclusion.

Call VP/2019/003 (7 projects) aims to support the relevant actors in addressing common long-term care (LTC) challenges. The social innovation activities supported under the call should aim to prepare and/or implement national policy reforms aimed at strengthening

the adequacy, affordability and quality of long-term care, including home care and community-based services, in line with Principle 18 of the European Pillar of Social Rights. The objectives of the call consist of the development of innovative approaches to LTC provision, development of sustainable multi-level partnership models, and the use of social innovation in LTC policy planning and monitoring.

The second call – VP/2020/003 (projects still under evaluation) – aims to support existing or new partnerships in testing innovative approaches supporting in particular the delivery of Principle 14 of the European Pillar of Social Rights on minimum income schemes at a local level. The objective is to address social exclusion through pilot projects that combine 3 strands of the active inclusion approach: the provision of adequate minimum income benefits, activation services supporting access to employment, and effective access to enabling goods and services.

In both 2019 and 2020, a direct grant to support refugees' integration in society and the labour market was provided to the International Federation of Red Cross. The funding will support the continuation of the capacity building programme to help local authorities implement social investment strategies for refugees. With the same objective in mind, The Council of Europe received a grant to strengthen and build capacity at the local level to integrate Roma.

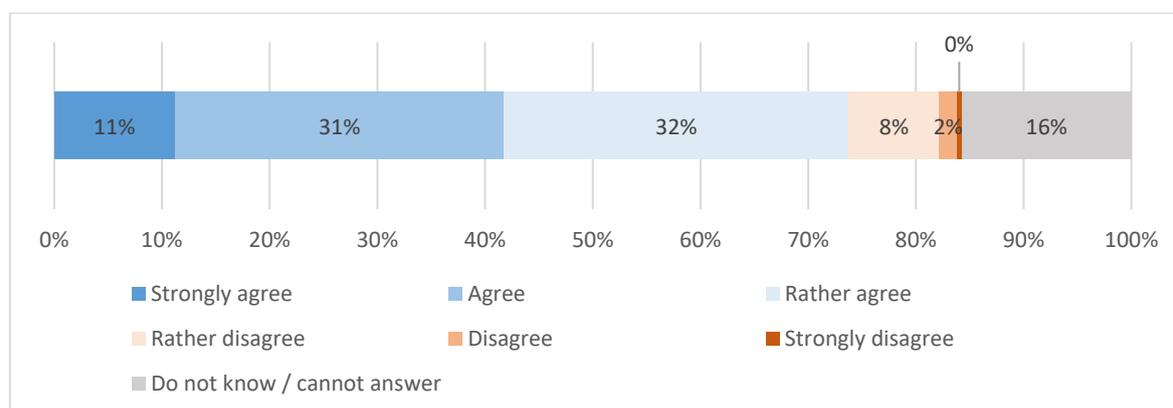
3.1.4.2. Outcome indicators

Headline indicator 3. Share of EU and national stakeholders who see the Commission as an effective source of guidance and support for social and labour market policy innovations

The headline indicator measuring progress towards this specific objective captures the extent to which EU and national stakeholders see the Commission as an effective source of guidance and support for social and labour market policy innovation.

Figure 12 provides an overview of stakeholders' opinion about whether the Commission is an effective source of guidance and support for social and labour innovation. According to the Stakeholder Survey 2021, a high share of stakeholders (74 %) agrees to the statement to a different extent. In comparison with the previous monitoring period, the value remained at almost the same level (73 % in 2017-2018).

Figure 12. Share of stakeholders who agree that the Commission is an effective source of guidance and support for social and labour market policy innovations



Source: EaSI Stakeholder Survey 2021.

Complementary indicator 3.1. Examples of results of social and labour market policy innovation projects funded through action grant agreements

The complementary indicator under this specific objective will aim to qualitatively describe some selected results of social and labour market policy innovation projects funded through EaSI action grant agreements, based on desk research, in particular, of the projects' final technical implementation reports.

In the period 2019-2020, nine social experimentation projects supported by the EaSI Programme were completed. These projects were funded within the 2014 and 2015 calls described in chapter 3.1.4.1.

In what follows, we briefly present the results of three of these projects. Detailed summaries of all nine projects are available in the monitoring reports on projects and organisations funded by the EaSI Programme, volume XII²⁰.

Between the 2015 and 2019, the Spanish region of Andalusia piloted a **RESISOR project** aimed at unifying existing systems which contain various types of personal social records and establishing a single channel of communication. Before the project implementation, the social records of citizens were dispersed and scattered through multiple administrators, making it hard to maintain adequate coordination and a holistic follow-up among administrative levels.

The project resulted in creating a one-stop-shop system for social records. The Electronic Single Social Record (ESSR) of Andalusia was the first experience of Single Social Record in Spain, especially on such a large scale. The RESISOR has become a reference model at the regional and European level and has laid the ground for a new integrated model for social services at regional and local levels in the long term.

As regards the possibility of being replicated, the RESISOR project has already attracted the attention of two other Spanish regions interested in implementing the ESSR. The process for spreading the ESSR out to the rest of the country has already set the stage. In this regard, the following steps have been established:

- The development of a collaboration agreement with the National Government for the integration of social inclusion procedures.
- The investment and acquisition of new infrastructure to achieve deployment of the tool at the regional level.

The launch of public procurement procedures for a Technical Office of Interoperability for the Data e-government and for the evolution of the tool to be available for use in the overall local public administration.

Bridging Young Roma and Business project was implemented by Open Society Institute – Sofia (Bulgaria); Autonomia Foundation (Hungary) and the Centre for Policy Studies at the Central European University (Hungary). The project focused on integrating social services by further strengthening the integration of young Roma into the labour market in the private sector. The objective also considered the importance of strengthened partnerships between public, private and civil society stakeholders.

The intervention targeted potential Roma employees to prepare them for successful entry into corporate employment. It also worked closely with companies by encouraging them to support less competitive recruitment and integration of Roma candidates.

20 Please visit: <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1081&langId=en&furtherPubs=yes>

The project resulted in positive changes regarding the employment situation, personal skills and competencies, and mental health of young Roma in the primary labour market. From the perspective of the business sector, some employer companies were assisted in adapting internal procedures, including sensitive recruitment and internal mentoring.

The experiment had an innovative and complex approach which involved training, coaching, and social support service delivery. More than half of the targeted treatment group was subsequently employed by various private companies in Bulgaria and Hungary.

The project **HomeLab** was an experimental project implemented in four EU countries (Hungary, Slovakia, Poland, and the Czechia). The experiment resulted in the creation of adaptable and scalable models of integrated service provision in the areas of housing, employment support, and social work. The project goal was to develop an integrated solution that could break the circle of poverty and the constant danger of eviction for the selected target group households. The project set two specific objectives:

- To provide and assist the target population in sustaining adequate housing and integrating them into the labour market to ensure their housing tenure.
- To foster regional mobility by providing access to housing for people with the capacity to enter the labour market.

The project developed five Social Rental Enterprise (SRE) models in four targeted countries in response to the specific objectives. In all four countries, the integrated service provision led to significant improvement in the housing situation. It also improved the employment status of persons in vulnerable labour market positions and those with marginalised housing.

The results achieved by the HomeLab project feed into the policy recommendations regarding housing, labour market integration solutions and support forms for the benefit of excluded populations.

Between 2016 and 2019, the **TSUNAMI** project provided job coaching to people suffering from mental illness in Italy. People with mental illnesses have greater difficulty in accessing the labour market, therefore the project offered specific support services, mainly based on job coaching and the initiation of internships to facilitate prospective job placements. The innovativeness of the project lies within the Individual Placement and Support methodology used, which aims to place individuals in real-world competitive employment settings. It starts with the provision of a traineeship to people suffering from mental illness who wish to work, followed by a very active job search process. The process is enabled by a close partnership between both public and private stakeholders.

The project was closely followed by the Labour Policy Department (Regione Piemonte) which expressed interest in further pursuing the experimentation of Individual Placement and Support methodology to verify if such practice can be mainstreamed in supporting employment for people with mental illness.

3.1.5. Greater capacity of national and EU organisations to develop, promote and support the implementation of EU policies

The fourth specific objective of the Progress axis is to provide EU and national organisations with financial support to increase their capacity to develop, promote and support the implementation of the EU instruments and policies in the areas of employment, social protection and working conditions, and relevant EU law²¹.

Social partners and civil society organisations also play a key role in promoting quality employment and combating social exclusion and poverty, as well as in fighting unemployment. Therefore, the programme funding is used to involve the social partners

²¹ Regulation (EU) No 1296/2013, Article 15(d).

and civil society organisations in mutual learning and the development, implementation and dissemination of new policies.

3.1.5.1. Outputs

To achieve this objective, EaSI funds the following types of actions under the Progress axis:

- (a) supporting the operating costs of key Union-level networks;
- (b) capacity building of national administrations and specialist services responsible for promoting geographical mobility and of microcredit providers;
- (c) organising working groups of national officials monitoring the implementation of Union law;
- (d) networking and cooperation among specialist bodies and other relevant stakeholders, national, regional and local authorities and employment services at European level;
- (e) funding of European-level observatories and the exchange of personnel between national administrations.

Most of the funding under this specific objective was devoted to funding projects and organisations via calls for proposals. All projects and organisations completed in 2019-2020 are described in detail in our biannual Reports on Projects and Organisations funded by EaSI.

EaSI has funded the key EU-level NGO networks (23 in total) for 2019 and 2020 as a result of two calls for proposals: VP/2018/016 & VP/2019/013. These calls for proposals for operating grants were open to EU-level NGO networks that had signed a Framework Partnership Agreement for 2018-2021, and are active in the promotion of social inclusion and poverty reduction or active in the promotion of microfinance and social enterprise finance.

The overall goal of the funded **organisations active in promoting social inclusion and poverty reduction** is to support the Commission's initiatives contributing to the modernisation of social protection systems and development of adequate social protection schemes as well as the implementation of the Europe 2020 Strategy, EU Structural and Investment Funds and the Social Investment Package. The organisations also contribute to processes related to the European Semester, the Open Method of Coordination (OMC) on social protection and social inclusion. Furthermore, their activities have paid particular attention to the key principles inscribed in the European Pillar of Social Rights, including gender equality, work-life balance, support to children, the inclusion of people with disabilities and long-term care, as well as to targets of Europe's 2020 Strategy in terms of

employment and fighting poverty, social exclusion. To this end, the following types of activities were implemented in 2019-2020:

- **Analytical activities** such as the collection of data and statistics, the development of common methodologies, the monitoring and assessment of relevant legislation, policies and practice, research, mapping projects and evaluations, publication of guides, reports and educational material, and different events, including expert meetings, workshops, seminars and conferences.
- **Training activities** such as staff exchange, workshops, seminars, capacity building actions, train-the-trainer events and developing online training tools.
- **Actions aiming at the creation and improvement of networks** through mutual learning, cooperation, awareness-raising and dissemination activities such as the identification and exchange of good practices, organisation of peer reviews and mutual learning, organisation of conferences, seminars, media campaigns, the compilation and publication of materials, and regular information on the EU social and employment policy issues.

The overall goal of the funded **organisations active in the promotion of access to finance (microfinance or social enterprise finance)** is to support the Commission's efforts to promote access to microfinance, particularly to vulnerable groups and stimulate the creation, development and growth of social enterprises, based on an integrated strategy, as set by the Social Business Initiative. To this end, the following types of activities were implemented in 2019-2020:

- **supporting the Commission in its outreach activities at EU, national and local level towards the implementation of EU policies** in the relevant area and initiatives, e.g., Programme for Employment and Social Innovation, European Social Fund, Social Business Initiative;
- **expanding the capacity of the network's members**, including through mutual learning;
- **voicing the concerns and expectations of organisations facilitating access to finance** to (potential) entrepreneurs from disadvantaged and underrepresented groups and social enterprises;
- providing data and research on developments in the field and on priority topics.

Furthermore, **many different activities (projects) of national administrations, social partners and civil society organisations were provided with action grants** through calls for proposals to support various projects. The following types of activities were completed in 2019-2020:

- In the area of employment:
 - Fast track integration into the labour market for third-country nationals targeting exclusively asylum seekers, refugees, and their family members (call VP/2016/015 – 5 projects);

- Support for the implementation of “Upskilling Pathways” (call VP/2017/011 – 4 projects & VP/2018/008 – 4 projects);
- Outreach and information activities towards stakeholder organisations and employers involved in solidarity activities to share opportunities, offers or job vacancies (call VP/2016/018 – 2 projects)
- In the area of social protection:
 - Social policy innovations supporting reforms in social services (call VP/2014/008 – 7 projects & VP/2015/011 – 7 projects).
- In the area of working conditions:
 - Posting of workers: enhancing administrative cooperation and access to information (call VP/2017/003 – 8 projects & VP/2018/011 – 5 projects);
 - Undeclared work (call VP/2017/005 – 2 projects & VP/2018/012 – 3 projects).

In 2019-2020, further calls for proposals were launched to support similar and new activities in the future. The following topics were addressed by the new calls: enhancing administrative cooperation and access to information on the posting of workers, supporting the deployment of skills assessments in the implementation of “Upskilling pathways”, supporting inclusive and social entrepreneurship.

3.1.5.2. Outcome indicators

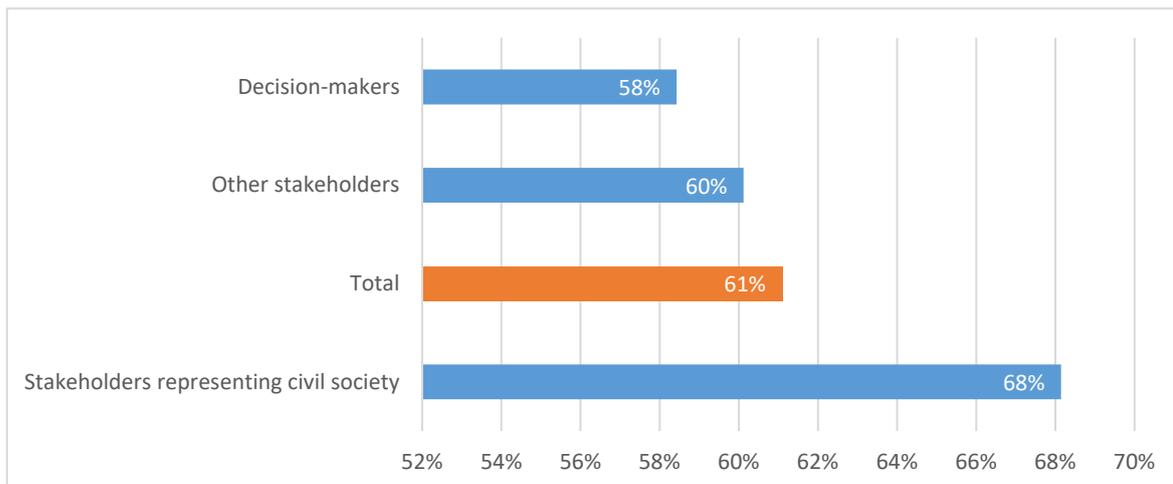
Headline indicator 4. *Share of stakeholders acknowledging that key EU-level NGO networks supported via operating grants are a useful source of information on EU employment and social policy*

The headline indicator captures stakeholders’ opinion about the extent to which the EaSI-supported EU-level NGO networks supported via operating grants are a useful source of information on EU employment and social policy.

The appreciation of the key EU-level NGOs has slightly decreased in 2021 (around 61 %) in comparison with the previous monitoring period (around 68 % in 2019). The statement was supported the most among stakeholders representing civil society (68 %), and the least – among decision-makers (58 %).

The observed decrease might be explained by looking more closely at the distribution of responses by category of respondents. 29 % of all the respondents indicated that they do not know whether key EU-level NGO networks are a useful source of information, out of which most respondents were employees of public or private employment services or officials of national, regional or local government institutions. These two categories of respondents amount to more than half of the total number of stakeholders who chose to answer this question. Throughout the years we have observed that employees of public or private employment services or officials of national, regional or local governments are less familiar with the work of EU-level NGOs.

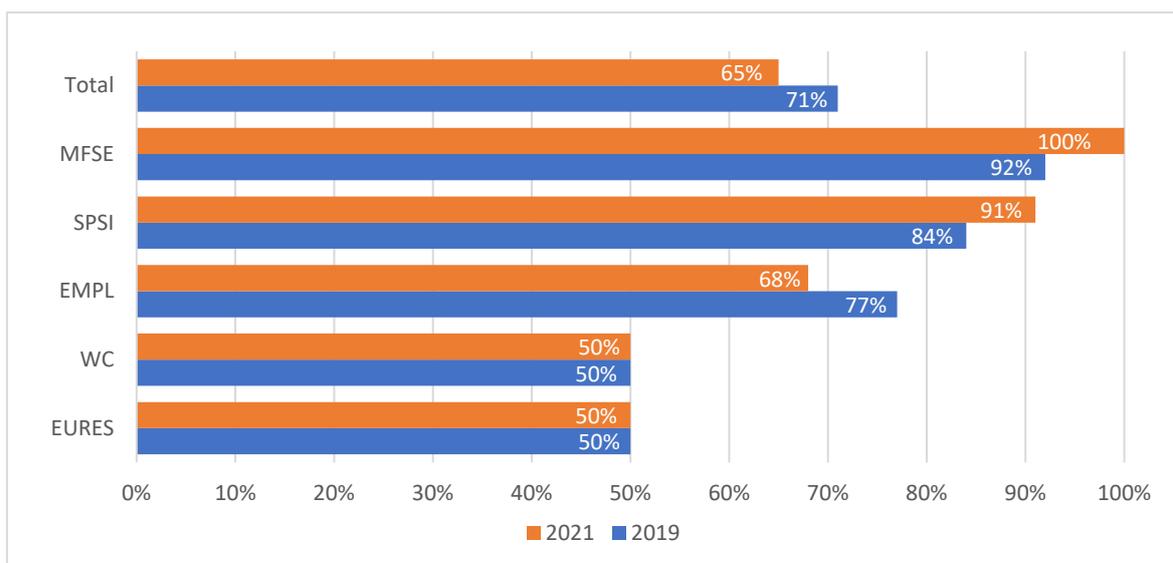
Figure 13. Share of stakeholders acknowledging that key EU-level NGO networks are a useful source of information on EU employment and social policy (by type of stakeholder)



Source: EaSI Stakeholder Survey 2021.

Figure 14 analyses the responses to the same question by stakeholders, who claimed that they follow the policy debate regularly. The figure also provides a breakdown of responses by stakeholders working in different policy areas. In 2021 the positivity rate by different policy areas remained at about the same level as 2019. Stakeholders in the field of microfinance and social entrepreneurship were the most positive about the EU-level NGOs working in their policy field (100 %) as well as stakeholders in social protection and social inclusion (91 %) and employment (68 %). Stakeholders in the policy area of working conditions (50 %) and EURES (job mobility) (50 %) were less positive.

Figure 14. Share of stakeholders following policy debate and acknowledging that key EU-level NGO networks are a useful source of information on EU employment and social policy (by policy area)



Source: EaSI Stakeholder Survey 2021 and 2019.

Complementary indicator 4.1. Share of stakeholders aware of the key EU NGO networks funded by EaSI

As in 2017 and 2019, the largest share of stakeholders is aware of Caritas Europe (48 %), European Social Network (ESN) (46 %) and EUROCITIES (33 %). On the contrary, the European Platform for Rehabilitation (6 %), European Venture Philanthropy Association (4 %) and The European Federation of National Organisations Working with the Homeless were known the least among stakeholders.

The general trend that can be noted is that stakeholder awareness of EU-level NGO networks is somewhat decreasing. Visibility decreased the most for Caritas Europe (by 13 %) and the European Social Network (by 9 %) when compared to figures for 2019. On the other hand, the decrease may result from changes in the sample population, i.e. the list of respondents is not identical in each year.

Looking at the categories of respondents who chose to answer this question, the smallest share of responses was received from the stakeholders representing civil society (15 %), while most of the responses came from policy/decision-makers and other stakeholder groups (29 % and 56 %, respectively). As stakeholders representing civil society are generally more involved and aware of EU-level NGOs, the decreasing level of awareness indicated in the table below can be somewhat attributed to the disproportionate representation of stakeholders representing civil society.

See Table 4 for stakeholders' awareness of EU-level NGO networks whose operational costs are supported by EaSI.

Table 4. List of EaSI-supported key EU-level NGO networks and the share of stakeholders aware of each network²²

Title of network	Policy area	Share of stakeholders aware of this network in 2017	Share of stakeholders aware of this network in 2019	Share of stakeholders aware of this network in 2021
Caritas Europa	Fighting poverty and social exclusion	55 %	61 %	48 %
ESN – European Social Network	Local public social services	53 %	55 %	46 %
EUROCITIES	Reinforcing the role of local and municipal governments	42 %	37 %	33 %
EAPN – European Anti-Poverty Network	Fighting poverty and social exclusion	31 %	36 %	29 %
Eurochild	Improving the quality of life of children and young people	31 %	26 %	21 %

²² The EaSI monitoring system reports on all actions finished in 2019-2020. In the year 2019 three more networks have finalised their activities with support from the EaSI programme. These networks (Reuse and Recycling Social Enterprises in the European Union; European Confederation of industrial and service cooperatives; European Food Bank Federation) are included in the table, but comparisons with previous years cannot be made.

European Microfinance Network (EMN)	Microfinance	27 %	22 %	15 %
EASPD – European Association of Service Providers for Persons with Disabilities	Promoting equal opportunities for people with disabilities	26 %	21 %	16 %
ENSIE – European Network of Social Integration	Social integration economy	28 %	21 %	15 %
EuroHealthNet	Tackling social determinants of health for fairer, healthier and more sustainable communities for all	23 %	21 %	18 %
Eurocarers	Informal care	22 %	20 %	16 %
SOLIDAR	Social policy, international cooperation, education and migration	26 %	19 %	15 %
COFACE – Confederation of Family Organisations in the European Union	Family	22 %	18 %	14 %
Eurodiaconia	Poverty and social exclusion, social and health care services and the future of social Europe	19 %	17 %	13 %
MFC – Microfinance Centre	Microfinance	13 %	14 %	8 %
PICUM – Platform for International Cooperation on Undocumented Migrants	Promoting respect for the human rights of undocumented migrants within Europe	11 %	13 %	8 %
ERGO Network – European Roma Grassroots Organisations Network	Roma inclusion	19 %	11 %	9 %
EPR – European Platform for Rehabilitation	Providing rehabilitation services to people with disabilities and other disadvantaged groups	15 %	9 %	6 %
EVPA – European Venture Philanthropy Association	Social investment and venture philanthropy	14 %	8 %	4 %
FEANTSA – The European Federation of National Organisations Working with the Homeless	Tackling homelessness and its effects	29 %	23 %	15 %
Reuse and Recycling Social Enterprises in the European Union (RREUSE)	Representing social enterprises active in reuse, repair and recycling	-	-	5 %
European Confederation of industrial and service cooperatives (CECOP)	For democracy and solidarity to the workplace, sustainable economic growth and social cohesion	-	-	9 %

European Food Banks Federation (FEBA)	Fighting hunger and food waste throughout Europe	-	-	12 %
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Source: EaSI Stakeholder Survey 2017, 2019 and 2021.

Among the stakeholders who follow policy debate, overall awareness of the key EU NGO networks was higher in general when compared to responses of all the stakeholders, although the difference is minor (+/- 1-5 percentage points (p.p.)) (see Table 5).

Table 5. List of EaSI-supported key EU-level NGO networks and the share of stakeholders aware of each network, as compared to those who follow policy debate

Network	Share of stakeholders aware of this network in 2021	Share of stakeholders following policy debate and aware of this network	Difference between the figures
Caritas Europa	48 %	52 %	4 p.p.
ESN – European Social Network	46 %	50 %	4 p.p.
EUROCITIES	33 %	38 %	5 p.p.
EAPN – European Anti-Poverty Network	29 %	34 %	5 p.p.
Eurochild	21 %	23 %	2 p.p.
European Microfinance Network (EMN)	15 %	16 %	1 p.p.
EASPD – European Association of Service Providers for Persons with Disabilities	16 %	19 %	3 p.p.
ENSIE – European Network of Social Integration	15 %	17 %	2 p.p.
EuroHealthNet	18 %	21 %	3 p.p.
Eurocarers	16 %	17 %	1 p.p.
SOLIDAR	15 %	18 %	3 p.p.
COFACE – Confederation of Family Organisations in the European Union	14 %	17 %	3 p.p.
Eurodiaconia	13 %	15 %	2 p.p.
MFC – Microfinance Centre	8 %	8 %	-
PICUM – Platform for International Cooperation on Undocumented Migrants	8 %	9 %	1 p.p.

ERGO Network – European Roma Grassroots Organisations Network	9 %	10 %	1 p.p.
EPR – European Platform for Rehabilitation	6 %	7 %	1 p.p.
EVPA – European Venture Philanthropy Association	4 %	5 %	1 p.p.
FEANTSA – The European Federation of National Organisations Working with the Homeless	15 %	18 %	3 p.p.
Reuse and Recycling Social Enterprises in the European Union (RREUSE)	5 %	6 %	1 p.p.
European Confederation of industrial and service cooperatives (CECOP)	9 %	11 %	2 p.p.
European Food Banks Federation (FEBA)	9 %	10 %	1 p.p.

Source: EaSI Stakeholder Survey 2017, 2019 and 2021.

Detailed information on the activities of all EaSI-funded NGO networks is available in the monitoring report on projects and organisations funded by the EaSI Programme, volume XII²³. The following are examples of how the evidence produced by EaSI-supported EU-level NGO networks contributed to the development of specific policy outputs in 2019, with reference to the monitoring report on projects and organisations:

- **The European Venture Philanthropy Association (EVPA)** covers a full range of venture philanthropy and social investment activities including venture philanthropy funds; social investors; grant making foundations; impact investing funds; private equity firms; professional service firms; philanthropy advisers; banks and business schools. In 2019, the EVPA held its annual conference, which attracted more than 750 attendees and organised a 'Gathering of Leaders' event, which offered a unique opportunity for an open exchange of ideas and experiences among prominent players within the venture philanthropy and social investment field in Europe. Likewise, EVPA organised two Training Academy courses focusing on impact measurement and management, tailored financing and non-financial support.
- **European Social Network (ESN)** focused on the political priorities of the EU regarding social welfare reform and the modernisation of social protection by addressing key challenges for public social services. In 2019 the network published

²³ EC (2019), *Projects and organisations funded by the European Union Programme for Employment and Social Innovation (EaSI) – Report 12*. Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union. Available at: <https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=738&langId=en&pubId=8184&furtherPubs=yes>

the report 'European Semester 2020: Social Services for a Social Europe', which included cross-country analysis, country profiles and CSRs put forward by members of ESN Reference Group on the European Semester. Additional policy documents were produced and published, including EASN Annual Review 2019, a proposal for Quality Assurance Principles in Europe, a policy brief on implementing the Sustainable Development Agenda, and a briefing on the European Parliament elections.

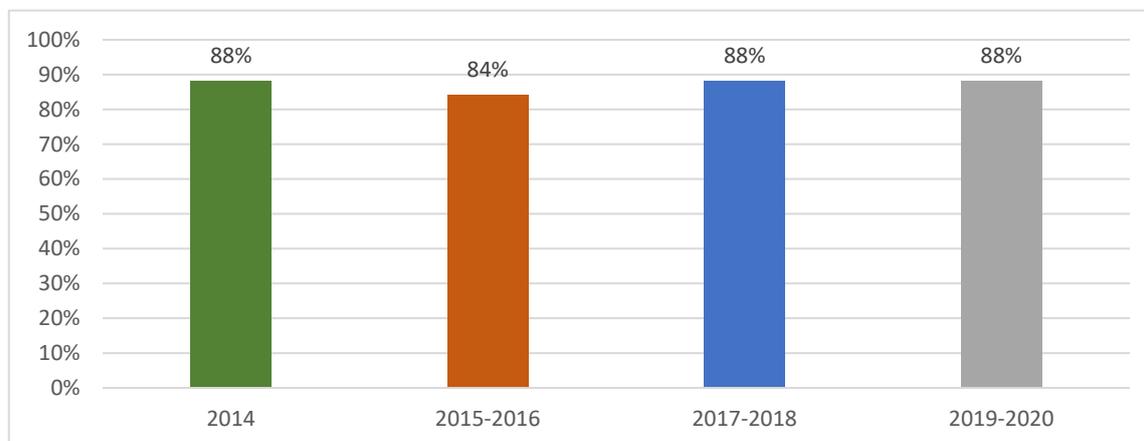
- **PICUM Platform for International Cooperation on Undocumented Migrants** aimed to enhance migrants' visibility within the policy discussion on social inclusion, adding a specific focus on negotiations on the next Multiannual Financial Framework (2021-2027). Against this backdrop, PICUM developed a brief "PICUM Priorities for the 2019-2024 legislature of the European Parliament" which outlined the network's policy priorities. The network also launched an online campaign 'Doing What's Best for Children' to raise awareness around the impact of return procedures on children. Also, PICUM's long-standing collaboration with the University of Oxford facilitated ongoing dialogue among cities on people's needs in irregular settings and shared concrete examples of the effective delivery of services to undocumented migrants and other marginalised communities.
- **Caritas Europa** and its member organisations generated critical inputs regarding the development and implementation of social policies, identified the policies' impacts, risks and gaps, and provided proposals on developing the European social model(s) in the future, with a particular focus on family. The relevant inputs were provided by implementing activities such as developing policy documents, organising conferences, seminars and other capacity building events in different technical and thematic areas. Caritas Europe prepared 16 Caritas CARES country reports and the European Caritas CARES report, including recommendations for policymakers.
- In 2019, **Eurodiaconia** contributed to social policies that tackle poverty, inequality, social exclusion and unemployment. Eurodiaconia supported implementation of the European Pillar of Social Rights i and worked to align the EU social goals with the Sustainable Development Goals adopted by all United Nations Member States. The network also provided data and strong evidence-based policy proposals on the social situation in the Member States. Among the most critical outputs, Eurodiaconia produced several analytical reports on inequality; integration and social inclusion of migrants and refugees; sustainable and inclusive growth.
- **EuroHealthNet** continued to act as a catalyst that facilitates the creative relationship between authoritative bodies and stakeholders from different Member States and sectors. In addition to capacity building workshops and skills-building seminars, EuroHealthNet provided input into 12 policy consultations organised by the Commission and its advisory bodies. Policy consultations focused on Sustainable Development Goals; impacts of the European Social Fund and support for social inclusion; options to foster health-promoting systems; Digital Europe; Horizon Europe, gender equality; youth employment, child guarantee, task shifting; value-based health care and health equity.

- **The European Association of Service Providers for Persons with Disabilities (EASPD)** strives to deliver high-quality, person-centred services promoting full participation and inclusion in society for all persons with disabilities. With support from the European Commission, EASPD launched a project to improve collaboration and understanding between the EU and the grassroots level. In 2019, the EASPD also published reports on public procurement in social care; the right to vote; technology for employment; service provision to people with disabilities; access to health; quality care funding and care workers. The association produced and published ten country fact sheets, on the social care and support services sector for persons with disabilities and actively participated in events organised by the European Union and civil society organisations.

Complementary indicator 4.2. *Improved competence of participants to further develop, promote and support the implementation of EU employment and social policy and legislation*

EaSI-funded events continued to be valuable for knowledge and capacity building purposes. In 2019-2020, 88 % of participants stated that the events they participated in improved their competence to further develop, promote and support the implementation of EU employment and social policy, and legislation. The level of agreement with the statement remained somewhat equal throughout the whole monitoring period.

Figure 15. Share of participants who agree that the event in which they participated improved their competence to further develop, promote and support the implementation of EU employment and social policy and legislation



Source: Survey of participants in EaSI-funded events in 2014, 2015-2016, 2017-2018 and 2019-2020.

3.2. EURES axis

The *Omnibus Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2018/1046 on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union* article 270 provided for an indicative percentage of at least 18 % that shall be dedicated to support actions under the EURES axis in three thematic sections respecting the following minimum percentages:

- transparency of job vacancies, applications and any related information for applicants and employers (minimum 15 % of funding);
- development of services for the recruitment and placing of workers in employment through the clearance of job vacancies and applications at Union level, in particular, targeted mobility schemes (minimum 15 % of funding);
- cross-border partnerships (minimum 18 % of funding)²⁴.

The COVID-19 pandemic and the immediate impact it had on the provision of EURES services, and the activities planned to be implemented under the EURES axis of the EaSI Programme must be mentioned. The pandemic substantially and directly affected mobile workers all around Europe. One of the most immediate consequences of the pandemic is the overall increase in the return mobility of workers living abroad. EURES Advisers had to adjust the usual service provision activities to facilitate the increasing number of workers who wished to return to their home country due to the uncertainty around the pandemic.

As projects funded under the EURES axis focus directly on transnational mobility, the funded activities have also experienced many difficulties because of the COVID-19 pandemic. As a result, the duration of some projects was extended, some were unfortunately cancelled.

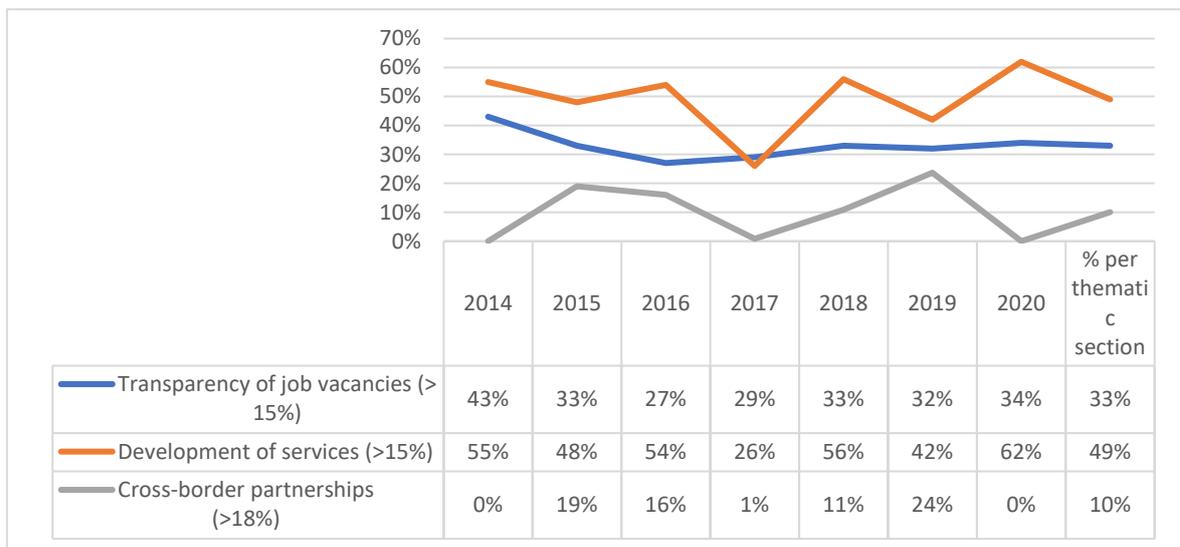
3.2.1. Financial implementation

Over the whole period of the EaSI Programme, the development of services for the recruitment and placing of workers in employment through the clearance of job vacancies and applications at Union level received the largest share of funding (49 %), whereas activities to induce transparency of job vacancies and applications accounted for 33 %. The smallest share of funding was dedicated to cross-border mobility (10 %). The commitments made under the EURES axis over the whole period of the programme accounted for 20 % of the total budget and exceeded the minimum indicative percentage (>18 %) set in the EaSI legal basis.

²⁴ Any remainder shall be allocated to one or more of the thematic sections referred to above or to a combination of them (cross-cutting issues).

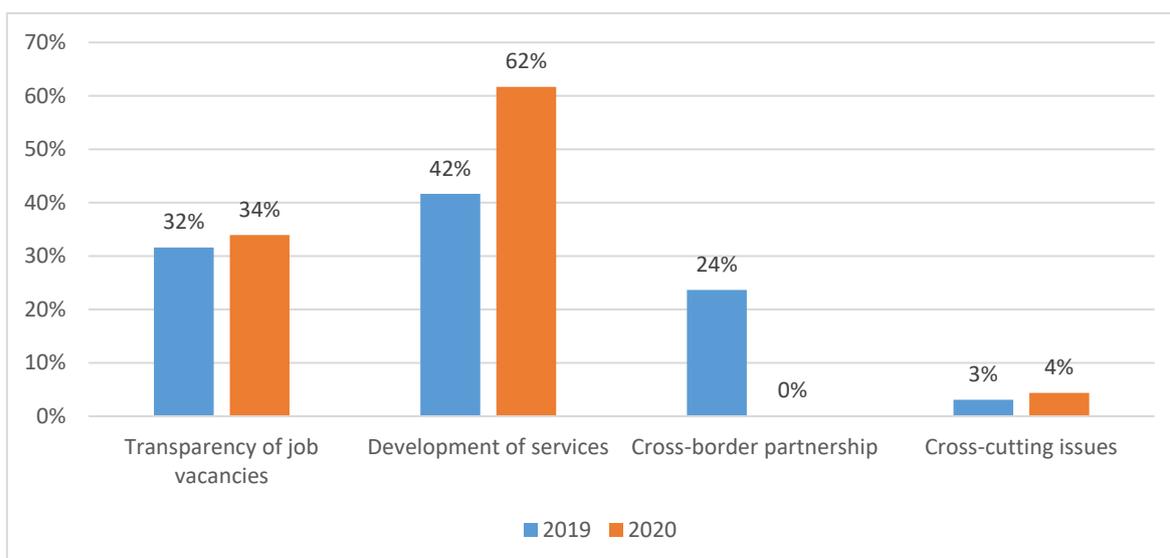
The committed funding for two first thematic sections exceeded the indicative minimum percentages set in the Omnibus Regulation, while activities under cross-border partnerships thematic section have not reached the minimum target foreseen (see Figure 16). The minimum target (>18 %) was not reached mainly because of the quantity and quality of applications received. The intra-mobility report explaining the mobility flows of cross-border workers revealed that cross-border commuting is more frequent between the Member States such as Denmark, France, Belgium, Luxembourg, Netherlands and Czechia while less recurring between newer Member States. Therefore, there was less demand and equally fewer proposals submitted.

Figure 16. Annual and overall shares of funding per thematic section of the EURES axis



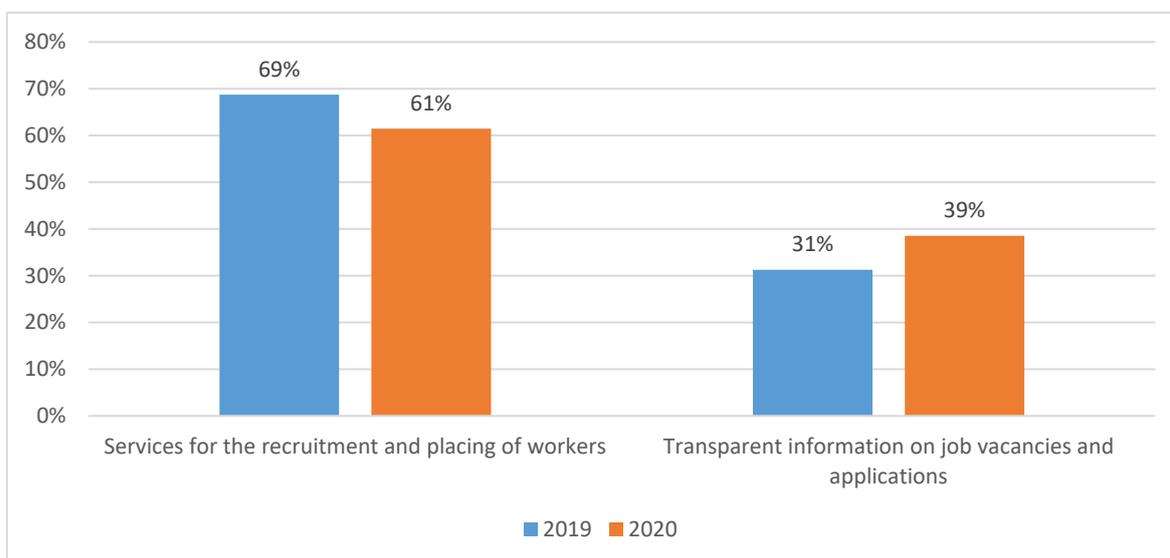
Source: DG EMPL.

In 2019, **EUR 33 761 331,00** were planned and **EUR 33 755 332,72** were actually disbursed. In 2020, **EUR 23 018 174,00** were planned and **EUR 23 001 378,12** were consumed. Taking both years into consideration most of the funding was devoted to the development of services and transparency of job vacancies. Although a substantial share of funding was committed to cross-border partnerships in 2019 (24 %), a significant drop in funding is noted for the same thematic section in 2020 (0 %).

Figure 17. Share of EURES commitments per thematic section in 2019 and 2020

Source: DG EMPL Finance unit.

Figure 18 shows the financial implementation of the EURES axis in terms of EaSI specific objectives. In 2019, a bigger share of funding was allocated to services for the recruitment and placing of workers (69 %), while a smaller share was devoted to transparent information on job vacancies and applications (31 %). Similarly, in 2020 the lion's share of funding was committed to services for the recruitment and placing of workers (61 %) and 39 % to transparent information on job vacancies and applications (39 %).

Figure 18. Share of EURES commitments per specific objective in 2019 and 2020

Source: DG EMPL Finance Unit.

3.2.2. Transparent labour market information

The EURES axis of EaSI aims to ensure that job vacancies, applications, the corresponding information and advice, as well as any related information, such as that concerning living and working conditions, are made transparent for jobseekers and employers. Actions

funded to achieve this contribute to promoting voluntary geographical mobility and, subsequently, boosting employment opportunities throughout Europe.

3.2.2.1. Outputs

Transparency of labour market information is being achieved through exchange and dissemination of available vacancies and applications at transnational, interregional and cross-border level, through the use of standard interoperability forms for job vacancies and applications and through other suitable means, such as individual counselling and mentoring, especially for the low skilled. An important instrument to achieve this goal is the maintenance, hosting, translation and help desk of the EURES Job Mobility Portal for the clearance of job vacancies and applications. Also, training on EURES services to be offered to both jobseekers and employers are organised for EURES advisers.

The EURES axis of EaSI is expected to contribute to making labour market information more transparent across the EU to the extent that:

- The EURES Job Mobility Portal is an increasingly relevant instrument not only for ensuring transparency of information but also for recruitment and placement;
- EaSI-funded mutual learning events, training activities and policy evidence are improving the understanding of key actors and other stakeholders of EU policies, objectives and legislation related to geographical mobility as well as awareness about successful new practices.

To fulfil these expectations, the following actions were funded by the programme in 2019-2020:

- A multilingual digital EURES Job Mobility Platform for the clearance of job vacancies and applications;
- 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.

In addition, to strengthen the overall aims of the EURES Network, the EaSI Programme has launched a call for proposals (VP/2019/010) to support Member States, EURES members and partners to establish high-quality mapping tables allowing for matching job vacancies and CVs in the European Job Mobility Portal and increase the usage and dissemination of the European classification of Skills, Competences, Qualifications and Occupations (ESCO) by either adopting parts or the entire classification.

Out of eight projects funded under this call for proposals two projects were fully implemented by the end of 2020. In what follows, we briefly present the results of these projects. More detailed summaries can be found in the monitoring report on projects and organisations funded by the EaSI Programme, volume XIII.

The project **AI4ESCO** realised the objective to establish high-quality mapping tables allowing for matching job vacancies and CVs in the European Job Mobility Portal by deriving a machine-readable structure of the lexicon used within the Italian National Occupation Taxonomy. Two mappings were established: one from the Italian National Occupation Taxonomy towards ESCO and from ESCO to Italian National Occupation Taxonomy.

The project has also used innovative solutions to connect ESCO to Italian National Taxonomy by using word-embedding algorithms which allows for automated matching between two different mapping platforms. The solutions used with the help of artificial intelligence indicate the possibility to apply the approach used by the project team on other national taxonomies.

The project titled **ESCO under Regulation (EU) 2016/568, Article 19** resulted in the establishment of mapping tables on occupations, skills and competences in Germany. The project team first developed a mapping concept considering the specific demands of the involved national classification systems and the mapping guidelines offered by the European Commission. The mapping tables were developed using a bidirectional approach.

As a result, all mapping tables were verified and integrated in the IT-systems of the German Public Employment Service Agency.

3.2.2.2. Outcome indicators

Headline indicator 5. Number of unique visitors to the EURES Job Mobility Portal

The headline indicator measures the average number of unique visitors to the EURES Job Mobility Portal per month. It serves as an indication of the appropriateness of the EURES Portal. This data is collected by the European Coordination Office on a biannual basis and is regularly made publicly available in the EU Single Market Scoreboard reports.

The number of unique monthly visitors to the EURES Job Mobility Portal in 2020 was 423 591, a decrease of 2.54 % compared to 2019.

Table 6. Average number of unique monthly visits to EURES Job Mobility portal

	2017	2018	2019	2020	Change
Number of monthly visits to EURES Job Mobility portal	454 450	567 308	434 638	423 591	▼ 2.54 %

Note: The percentage change reflects the change in monthly visitors in 2020 as in comparison with the previous year.

Source: EURES Performance Measurement System.

Complementary indicator 5.1. Number of jobseekers and employers registered on the EURES Job Mobility Platform

In 2020, there were 1 189 798 jobseekers registered on the EURES portal. This marks a significant increase of 110.2 % since 2019. On the contrary, the number of employers registered increased only by 3 %. In 2020 for every registered employer there were on average 76 registered jobseekers. Until 2019, not many Member States were fully compliant with the provisions of the EURES Regulation related to the exchange of CVs and Job Vacancies. Only at the end of 2019, did the the Member States start transferring

CVs to the EURES portal which explains the substantial increase of jobseekers registered on the EURES portal.

Table 7. Number of jobseekers and employers registered on EURES website

Indicator	2017	2018	2019	2020	Change
Jobseekers	295 8368	293 169	566 045	1 189 798	▲ 110,2 %
Employers	10 388	13 231	15 263	15 738	▲ 3 %

Note: The number of jobseekers registered on the EURES portal for the year 2019 and 2020 is the sum of jobseeker profiles registered via self-service on the EURES Portal and profiles transferred through the single coordinated channel to the EURES Portal.

Source: EURES Performance Measurement System.

Complementary indicator 5.2. Vacancies posted on EURES as a portion of national vacancies

The second complementary indicator measures the ratio of job vacancies available on the EURES portal compared to all job vacancies available in the Member States. As such, it considers (1) the number of job vacancies available through the single coordinated channel to the EURES Portal and (2) the total number of job vacancies at the Member State level. Together, they indicate the extent to which EURES covers the labour market.

According to the latest data provided by the EU Single Market Scoreboard, on average, the number of national vacancies shared on EURES has shifted from 48 % in 2017 to 74.12 %²⁵ in 2018 – a significant increase. However, it must be noted that the values for 2018 have been calculated and presented differently on the Single Market Scoreboard compared to previous years. Specifically, some countries reported values over the 100 % threshold. When a country reported more than 100 % of labour market share, it means that: 1) either the number of job vacancies collected through EURES (numerator) were higher than those reported on Eurostat (denominator), or 2) the number of job vacancies available on Eurostat was equal to 0.

3.2.3. Effective provision of services for recruitment and placing of workers

The EaSI Programme also supports the **provision of EURES services for recruitment and placing of workers in quality and sustainable employment through the clearance of job vacancies and applications**. Support for EURES services extends to various phases of placement, ranging from pre-recruitment preparation to post-placement assistance with a view to the applicant's successful integration into the labour market. Such support services may include targeted mobility schemes to fill job vacancies in a certain sector, occupation, country or a group of countries or for particular groups of workers, such as young people, with a propensity to be mobile, where a clear economic need has been identified.

²⁵ N.B. This may not accurately reflect countries' efforts to share vacancies as EURES only takes account of vacancies published on central national portals that meet standards set by public employment services. European Commission (n.d.). Single Market Scoreboard. Retrieved from: https://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/scoreboard/

Ensuring the effective provision of services that could reduce the mismatch between the skills existing in local labour markets and the skills in-demand, and to help eliminate various bottlenecks for labour mobility are of key importance both for boosting jobs, growth, and investment, and for striving for a deeper and fairer Internal Market.

The EURES services nonetheless aim to ensure that European citizens regardless of language barriers, cultural differences, diverse employment laws can benefit from the same opportunities.

3.2.3.1. Outputs

EaSI aims to contribute to effective provision of services for recruitment and placing of workers in quality and sustainable employment to the extent that:

- EURES as an overall instrument helps facilitate transnational placements;
- EURES services are accessible to every person in need.

Below the report assesses the extent to which the outputs mentioned above have contributed to making the provision of services for recruitment and placing of workers more effective in terms of the key performance indicators.

3.2.3.2. Outcome indicators

Headline indicator 6. *Total number of individual personal contacts of EURES advisers with jobseekers, job changers and employers made via cross-border partnerships and targeted mobility schemes*

This indicator measures the total number of individual personal contacts of EURES advisers made under cross-border partnerships and targeted mobility schemes.

According to the EURES Advisers' Monthly Reports, EURES advisers across Europe had 1 019 852 personal contacts in 2012, which is set as the baseline²⁶. A total of 947 489 personal contacts were retained in 2014, 852 842 (90 %) of which were with workers/jobseekers, and 94 647 (10 %) of them were with employers. The year 2016 also experienced a decrease in the total number to 866 536 personal contacts thus indicating a further decline²⁷.

According to the Single Market Scoreboard EURES advisers had a total of 1 263 173 personal contacts in 2017 across the whole EURES network, 1 097 921 (89 %) of which were with workers/jobseekers, and 165 252 (11 %) of them were with employers. In 2018, this number more than doubled, to 2 547 663 personal contacts, 2 353 477 (92 %) of which were workers/jobseekers, and 194 186 (8 %) of them were with employers.

Respectively, figures for the year 2019-2020 are taken from the newly established EURES Performance Measurement System, which is set to provide a common conceptual and

²⁶ The figure from 2012 is set as a baseline value representing the first measurable value which then allows for comparison with the values obtained from the following year.

²⁷ Figures for the year 2016 do not provide breakdown numbers for employers and jobseekers separately.

procedural framework to monitor and evaluate the functioning of the EURES network. Altogether 3 510 851 personal contacts were made in 2019, of which 3 332 622 contacts were with jobseekers, and 178 229 with employers. In 2020 the contacts made with jobseekers and employers decreased when compared to 2019. 2 472 625 contacts were made with jobseekers and 154 572 – with employers, giving a total of 3 510 851 personal contacts in 2020.

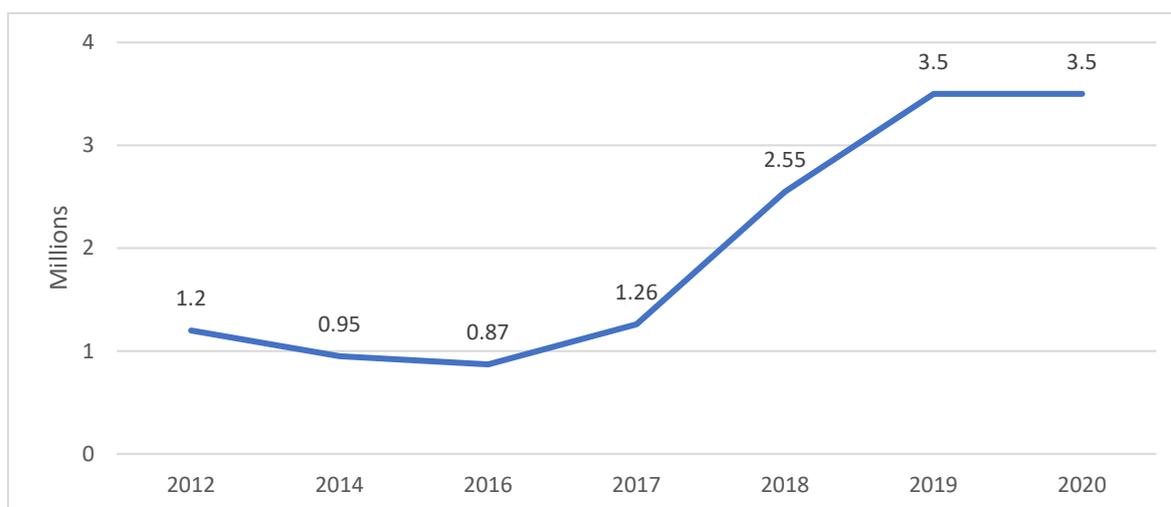
Table 8. Total number of individual personal contacts of EURES advisers with jobseekers/job changers and employers.

Indicator	2014	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Jobseekers	852 842	866 536	1 097 921	2 353 477	3 332 622	2 472 625
Employers	94 647		165 252	194 186	178 229	154 572

Source: EURES Advisors monthly reports; EURES Performance Measurement System and Single Market Scoreboard.

Note: The data sources used for this indicator have changed throughout the lifecycle of the EaSI Programme, therefore it may not be entirely comparable given that the length of the reporting periods may differ.

Figure 19. Total number of contacts of EURES advisers with jobseekers, job changers and employers.



Source: EURES Single Market Scoreboard and EURES Performance Measurement System.

Cross-border partnerships

In 2019, 11 cross-border partnerships (CBP) were supported through an EaSI grant. During 2019, eight CBPs were selected to receive support for 2020 and 2021. In total, EURES CBPs reported **195 060** contacts with jobseekers and job changers in 2019.

Table 9 provides a list of all EaSI- supported cross-border partnerships that finalised their activities in 2019.

Table 9. List of EaSI-supported cross-border partnerships in 2019

EURES cross-border partnerships (CBP)
EURES in den Grenzregionen Belgien, Deutschland, Niederlande
Galicia/North Portugal (ES-PT)
EURES-T Oberrhein (DE-FR-CH)
Scheldemond (BE-NL)
EURES-TriRegio (CZ-DE-PL)
Cross-border cooperation Extremadura–Alentejo (ES-PT)
EURES cross-border partnership Andalucia–Algarve (PT-ES)
EURES Euradria (IT-SI-HR)
EURES Grande Région (BE-DE-FR-LU)
EURES Northern Ireland/Ireland (IE-UK)
EURES Cross-border Øresund

Source: Final technical implementation reports on individual CBP.

Targeted Mobility Schemes

Table 10 below show the number of registered jobseekers and employers during three targeted mobility schemes supported by the EaSI Programme in the period July 2018 to June 2020.

Table 10. Number of registered jobseekers and job changers and employers during YFEJ targeted mobility schemes in 2018-2020

Total number of registered jobseekers	Total number of registered employers (July 2018–June 2020)
13 977	3 551

Complementary indicator 6.1. Examples of training for EURES advisers

The first complementary indicator presents the overall situation concerning training for EURES advisers as well as more specific examples. The EURES training programme is set to support and assist EURES staff in delivering EURES services. Pre-training is organised at the national level by National Coordination Offices of different Member States while at the European level (provided by the European Coordination Office) the EURES training offer includes:

- Consolidation Phase

- The EURES110 Academy

Consolidation phase is made up of three mandatory sequential components: (1) self-assessment and motivation tool, (2) learning and networking workshops and (3) virtual modules. The phase is designed to transfer competences useful for starting work at the European level and aims to:

- help to develop participants ability to use the European EURES tools;
- provide an understanding of Union policies on the free movement of workers and help to gain knowledge on EU and national programmes and tools supporting mobility;
- help understand the structure, the operational methods and procedures for cooperation in EURES at European level;
- develop a basic understanding of the European labour market;
- develop a basic understanding of how to work in a multicultural environment.

The EURES Academy specifically aims to ensure the continuous professional development of EURES staff by equipping them with specialised knowledge, tools, and methods to deliver optimal EURES services. The EURES Academy consists of (1) virtual trainings, (2) classroom trainings and (3) networking events and workshops and is open to EURES staff who have completed the EURES Consolidation phase. Participants can opt for one of the two following learning options:

- **A flexible choice of course** depending on their specific professional needs for single training courses available at the Academy, or
- **The Competence Pathways** by selecting courses which are available under specific competence pathways such as (1) job placement services towards jobseekers, (2) communication, (3) matching processes and (3) job recruitment services towards employers.

The European Coordination Office (ECO) provided 73 training sessions from July 2018 to December 2019, which were attended by 2 999 EURES staff.

Complementary indicator 6.2. Examples of successful services provided to jobseekers and employers via cross-border partnerships and targeted mobility schemes

Cross-border partnerships

Besides job placements and individual contacts between EURES advisers, jobseekers and employers, the cross-border partnerships and targeted mobility schemes have provided other successful services. These are monitored by the second complementary indicator. Reports on EaSI-supported projects and organisations are the main source for providing the information on this indicator.

For instance, **EURES cross-border partnership Scheldemond 2019** further developed an online digital app GrensMatch to support cross-border matching. The application works as

a matching tool for both employers and jobseekers. It only takes several easy steps to subscribe, and the matching is done automatically. The application provides information and guidance on cross-border opportunities. Information and guidance on working conditions, social security, taxation and labour law is provided to both jobseekers and employers after following up contacts by EURES advisers.

EURES Transfrontalier Grande Region 2018-2019 yielded significant results. The cross-border partnership was able to organise 91 ‘Work in Belgium/France/Germany/Luxembourg’ workshops with an attendance of 1 100 jobseekers. The workshops were a great success reaching a 95.5 % satisfaction rate.

EURES-TriRegio 2019 cross-border partnership has successfully organised multiple consultation days for cross-border commuters in Poland, Czechia and Germany. The events covered topics related to social security, labour law and the labour market. A total number of 303 commuters attended the events and participated in the consultations.

EURES Ireland/Northern Ireland Cross-border Partnership 2019 held five job fairs in three different regions. Out of 30 109 notified individuals, the job fairs attracted over 3 980 jobseekers and 202 employers from both sides of the border. As a result of these events, 222 job placements have been secured.

EURES cross-border partnership Northern Portugal and Galicia 2019 developed an integration procedure of Galician and Portuguese students to companies on the other side of the border. This will allow students to easily carry out cross-border professional internships. The action was implemented through an established relationship between the EURES Cross-Border Galicia-North Portugal partnership, vocational training centres, sectoral business associations, and universities.

Targeted mobility schemes

The Italian-led Targeted Mobility Scheme – **Your First EURES Job (YfEj 5.0)** - supported under call VP/2016/009 during February 2017-February 2019 offered a wide range of activities tailored to the individual needs of employers and jobless young people. The YfEj 5.0 provided financial support for language learning courses or successful placements in another EU country. As many as 1 068 young people received a relocation allowance and 299 jobseekers have benefited from free language training courses. Furthermore, a new internal tool to register and monitor beneficiaries’ data and related payments was created and consolidated by ANPAL²⁸.

The Targeted Mobility Scheme led by Sweden, **Your First EURES Job (TMS-YfEj)**, which was funded under the same call for the same duration as YfEj 5.0, also provided a range of successful services. In addition to the job placements, the project partners covered travel expenses for job interviews abroad for 754 young jobseekers; organised language courses benefiting 372 young people; issued recognition of qualifications for 264 jobseekers and offered financial assistance to 19 SMEs to hire young jobseekers and organise a job integration programme for them.

²⁸ Agenzia Nazionale Politiche Attive del Lavoro ANPAL (n.d.). For more information, see <https://www.anpal.gov.it/>

Table 11. Number and type of services provided via Italian-led and Swedish-led Targeted Mobility schemes

Type of Service	Your first EURES job	"Your first EURES job" YfEj TMS 5.0
Relocation allowances	N/A	1 068
Supplementary relocation allowances	13	11
Job interview travel expenses coverage	754	1 051
Language course/trainings	372	299
SMEs integration trainings for YfEj job finders	65	339
Recognition of qualifications	264	196

The French-led Targeted Mobility Scheme – **Your First EURES Job (A tool for mobility – second step)** – funded under the same call for the same duration as the YfEj 5.0 and TMS-YfEj, helped place 1 375 young people aged between 18 and 35, coming from 25 countries, regardless of their level of qualifications, education, previous professional experiences either in their country of residence or abroad. Moreover, an innovative practice was employed throughout the project – an animated short film in French was created and subtitled in English, German, Italian and Spanish. The short film was presented on the dedicated web pages of the consortium members and used as a promotional tool for various events such as job fairs.

3.3. Microfinance and Social Entrepreneurship

The EaSI Programme aims to “promote employment and social inclusion by increasing the availability and accessibility of microfinance for vulnerable people who wish to start up a micro-enterprise as well as for existing micro-enterprises, and by increasing access to finance for social enterprises”²⁹.

The Omnibus Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2018/1046 on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union article 270 provided for an indicative percentage of at least 18 % that shall be dedicated to support actions under the Microfinance and Social Entrepreneurship axis in two thematic sections respecting the following minimum percentages³⁰:

- Microfinance for vulnerable groups and micro-enterprises: 35 %;
- Social entrepreneurship: 35 %.

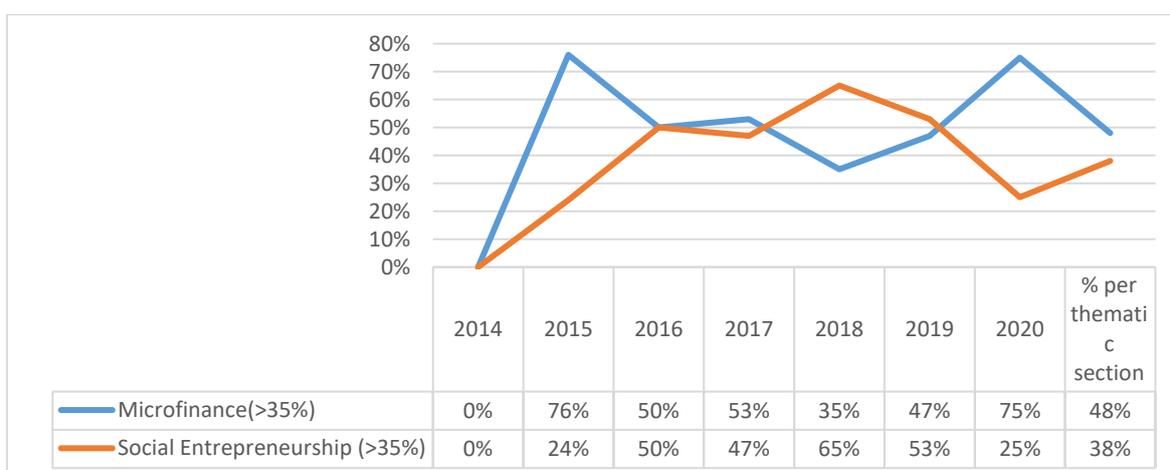
²⁹ General objective e) from the EaSI Regulation.

³⁰ Any remainder shall be allocated to one or more of the thematic sections referred to above or to a combination of them (cross-cutting issues).

3.3.1. Financial implementation

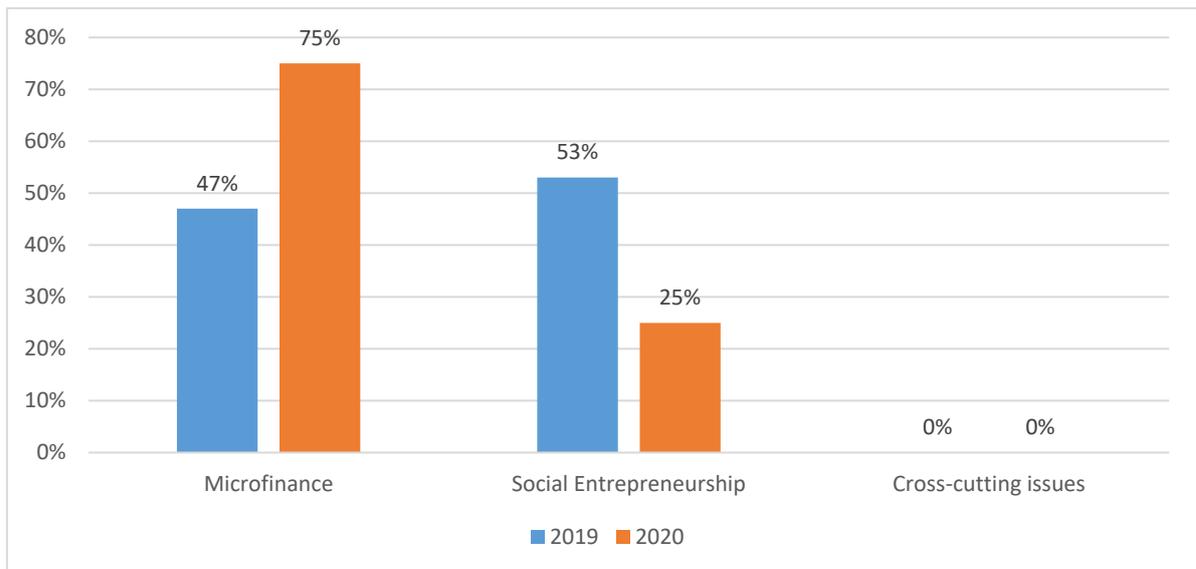
The commitments made under the Microfinance and Social Entrepreneurship axis over the whole period of the programme accounted for 22 % of the total budget and exceeded the indicative percentage (>18 %) set in the EaSi legal basis. The Microfinance thematic section received the largest share of funding per axis (48 %), whereas activities under the thematic section of Social Entrepreneurship accounted for 38 %. The shares of funding committed for both Microfinance and Social Entrepreneurship thematic sections also exceeded the minimum shares of financial commitments foreseen in the EaSI legal basis (>35 %) (see Figure 20).

Figure 20. Annual and overall shares of funding per thematic section of the MF/SE axis



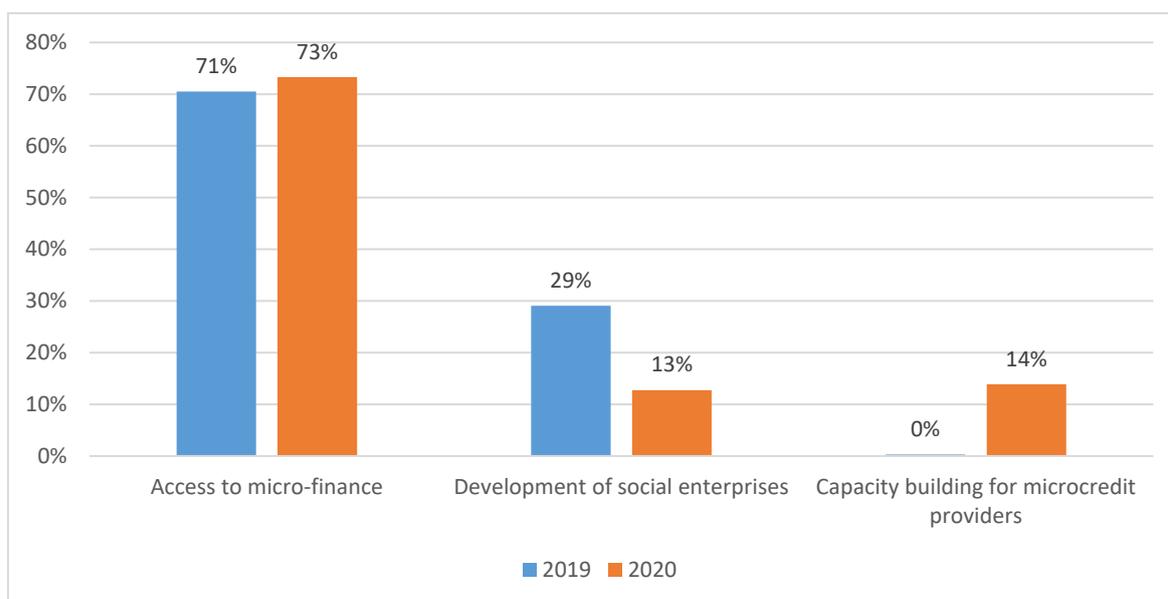
Source: DG EMPL.

In 2019, **EUR 20 843 726,00** were planned and actually disbursed while in 2020, **EUR 14 254 929,00** were planned and consumed. In 2019, the shares of funding for both Microfinance and Social entrepreneurship thematic sections were somewhat equal (47 % and 53 %, respectively). In 2020, three fourths of funding was devoted to the Microfinance thematic section while 25 % of funding was dedicated to the activities under the thematic section of Social Entrepreneurship.

Figure 21. Share of MF/SE commitments per thematic area in 2019 and 2020

Source: DG EMPL Finance Unit.

Figure 22 shows the financial implementation of the EURES axis in terms of EaSI specific objectives. In both years the largest share of funding was devoted to increasing the access and availability to microfinance, whereas increasing the access to finance for social enterprises received funding to a significantly lesser extent (29 % and 13 %, respectively). In 2019 activities to build capacity for microcredit providers have not received any funding while in 2020 around 14% was foreseen.

Figure 22. Share of MF/SE commitments per specific objective in 2019 and 2020

Source: DG EMPL Finance Unit.

3.3.2. Better access to, and the availability of, microfinance

Actions funded by the programme under the Microfinance Window of the MF/SE axis contributed to increasing the overall availability and access to finance for:

- vulnerable people, who wish to start up a micro-enterprise and who do not have access to a conventional credit market; and
- micro-enterprises, who employ such vulnerable persons.

The overall aim of such actions is to improve the employment situation of socially disadvantaged people and to promote their social inclusion. The EaSI Programme is expected to contribute to this goal to the extent that:

- Funding from EaSI creates a leverage effect. Such effect is created by co-investment either at the level of the Commission (e.g. by the EIB Group) or at the level of financial intermediaries.
- Vulnerable persons (who have lost or are at risk of losing their job, or have difficulty in entering or re-entering the labour market, or are at risk of social exclusion, or are socially excluded, and are in a disadvantaged position concerning access to the conventional credit market), who wish to start up or develop their own micro-enterprises, as well as micro-enterprises in both start-up and development phase, especially micro-enterprises which employ persons as referred to above, have increasingly equal access to finance.

3.3.2.1. Outputs

The objectives of the MF/SE axis of EaSI are being achieved by supporting microcredit providers through financial instruments. These may include guarantees and counter-

guarantees offered by the European Investment Fund (EIF) to financial intermediaries, thereby providing them with partial credit risk protection for newly originated loans to eligible final recipients³¹.

Table 12 provides a list of Financial Intermediaries, who have received support from the Microfinance Window of the EaSI Programme. In 2020, 34 contracts were signed in the area of microfinance with as much as EUR 74 million committed to supporting the 34 selected Financial Intermediaries.

Table 12. Financial intermediaries participating in the Microfinance Window in 2020

Financial Intermediaries / Agreements	Country	Amount of legal commitment (EUR)
Alpha Bank Greece – EaSI MF	Greece	3 600 000
Aros Kapital – EaSI MF	Sweden	1 457 354
Attica Bank – EaSI MF	Greece	1 222 500
BT Microfinantare IFN – EaSI MF	Romania	5 782 734
Colonya Caixa Pollenca 2 – EaSI MF	Spain	900 000
Cooperative Bank of Chania – EaSI MF	Greece	925 300
Cooperative Bank of Karditsa 2 – EaSI MF	Greece	1 440 000
Faktoro – EaSI MF	Lithuania	576 000
FIN Yritysrahoitus Oy – EaSI MF	Finland	1 285 440
Initiative France 2– EaSI MF	France	750 000
Komerčni Banka 2 – EaSi MF	Czechia	5 681 647
Laboral Kutxa 2 – EaSI MF	Spain	3 045 000
Lithuanian Central Credit Union (LCCU) – EaSI MF	Lithuania	1 200 000
Moneta Money Bank – EaSI MF	Czechia	6 825 438
Nordic Finance Business Partner AB – EASI MF	Sweden	1 475 623
Noviti Finance - EaSI MF	Lithuania	784 000

³¹ It should be noted that the EaSI Guarantee scheme has also been supported partially by the European Social Investment Fund (EFSI).

OMRO – EaSI MF	Romania	1 429 222
Oportunitas – EaSI MF	Spain	432 000
Patria Bank 2 – EaSI MF	Romania	5 848 823
Patria credit – EaSI MF	Romania	2 624 672
Pekao WC Loan – EaSI MF	Poland	2 836 590
Raiffeisen Bank Romania – EaSI MF	Romania	9 303 287
UniCredit Umbrella–UniCredit Bank Romania – EaSI MF	Romania	1 280 000
UniCredit Umbrella–Zagrebacka Banka – EaSI MF	Croatia	1 280 000
UTCAR-West – EaSI MF	Romania	827 729
Banca Intesa ad Beograd – EaSI MF	Serbia	2 400 000
Crnogorska Komercijalna Banka (CKB) – EaSI MF	Montenegro	1 248 000
FED Invest – EaSI MF	Albania	1 800 000
Investiciono-Razvojni Fond Crne Gore (IRFCG) – EaSI MF	Montenegro	400 000
Komercni Banka – EaSI MF	Czechia	121 022
Silk Road Bank Skopje – EaSI MF	North Macedonia	733 500
UniCredit Umbrella–UniCredit Bank Serbia – EaSI MF	Serbia	1 920 000
Unicredit Umbrella – Unicredit SpA (CE) – EaSI MF	France	640 000
Vojvodjanska banka a.d. Novi Sad – EaSI MF	Serbia	2 000 000
	Overall:	74 075 881

Source: Annual reports for the EaSI Financial Instruments

3.3.2.2. Outcome indicators

Headline indicator 7. Total number and volume of microloans provided, and leverage effect created (total volume of microloans / EU funding used for guarantees and other instruments)

By the end of 2020, 97 271 microloans had been provided under the EaSI Microfinance Window. With a total disbursement of EUR 1 273.32 million, the average microloan was around EUR 13 090.

Table 13. Cumulative number/volume of microfinance provided by EaSI for 2019-2020

	2019	2020
Total number of microloans to final recipients with EU support	74 936	97 271
Volume of microloans (EUR) provided to final recipients (in millions)	870 09	1 273 32
Average microloan size (EUR)	11 611	13 090

Source: Annual reports for the EaSI Financial Instruments.

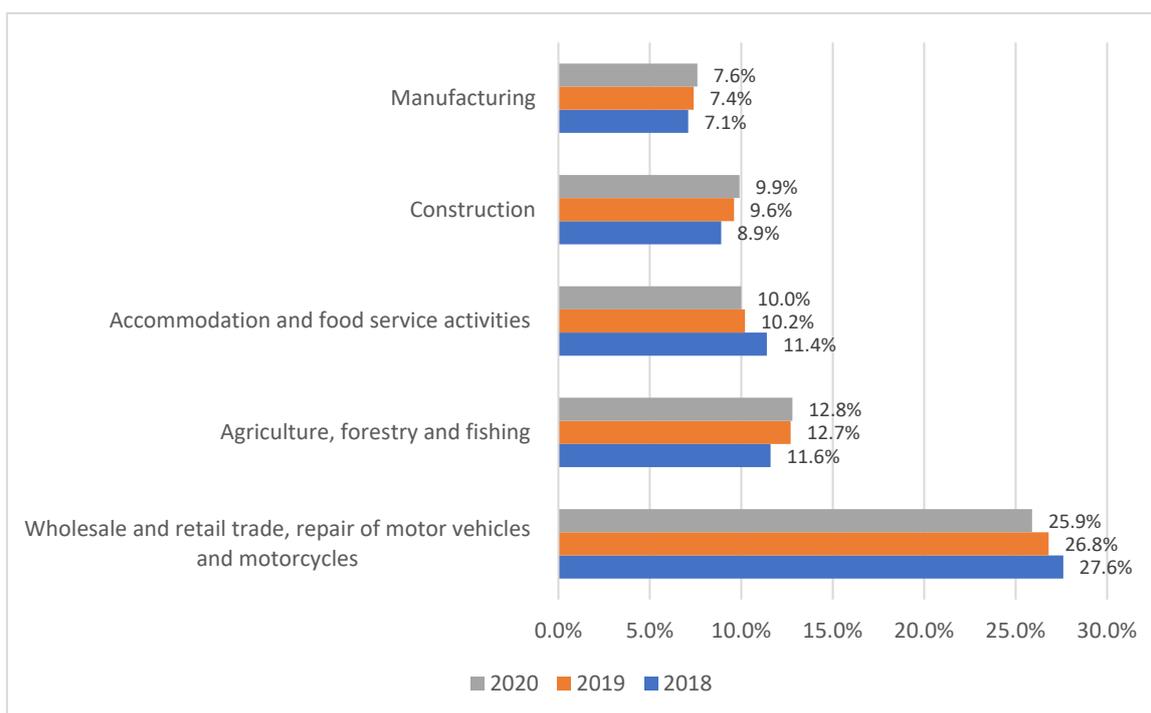
Having in mind that around EUR 241.56 million were used to provide guarantees to the Financial Intermediaries, **the leverage of 5.3 was achieved** under the Microfinance Window. This means that the Financial Intermediaries have provided final recipients with four times more support than the amount of funding provided in guarantees by the EU.

Complementary indicator 7.1. Share of final recipients, who have received training and mentoring services

To ensure the highest effectiveness of the microloans, microfinance intermediaries are regularly providing mentoring and training services to final recipients. However, not all Financial Intermediaries were collecting the data about the training/mentoring services provided. Out of 38 723 final recipients, who reported on this issue until the end of 2019, 77.8 % said that they had received training and mentoring services from the institutions providing microcredit. By the end of September 2020, the number of final recipients increased to 44 124, but the percentage figure remained at 76.5 %.

Complementary indicator 7.2. Types of supported micro-enterprises per (1) sector and (2) country

The figure below provides an overview of the sectoral distribution of microloans. From 2018 onwards the most prominent sectors remained the same. Most of the funding throughout 2019 and 2020, even with a slight and steady decline, went to enterprises operating in the area of wholesale and retail trade, repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles (26.8 % and 25.9 % respectively). However, a notable increase for agriculture, forestry and fishing can be observed throughout the same period.

Figure 23. Sectoral distribution of funding under the Microfinance Window of EaSI

Source: Annual reports for the EaSI Financial Instruments.

Table 14 shows the regional distribution of funding in different years. Throughout 2019 and 2020, the highest amounts of funding were disbursed to final recipients in France (15.5 % and 12.9 % respectively). Despite a noticeable decrease, France has historically received the most funding under EaSI, often followed by Spain. It is worth noting that from 2018 onwards, Albania overtook Spain in terms of the end-percentage distribution of funding.

Table 14. Regional distribution of funding under the Microfinance Window of EaSI

2018	2019	2020
France (18.9 %)	France (15.5 %)	France (12.9 %)
Albania (11.4 %)	Albania (14.4 %)	Albania (12.6 %)
Spain (10.7 %)	Spain (8.6 %)	Romania (9.7 %)

Source: Annual reports for the EaSI Financial Instruments.

3.3.3. Better access to finance for social enterprises

Under the Social Entrepreneurship Window of the MF/SE axis, EaSI is funding actions aimed at increasing the overall availability and access to finance for social enterprises and thus supporting development of the European social investment market. Subsequently, this will contribute to achieving the ultimate outcome of EaSI by improving the employment situation and including vulnerable people in society. The latter aim will be achieved not only through the potential employment of vulnerable persons but also via the pursuit of other measurable positive social impacts, which according to the Regulation must be the primary objective of a social enterprise.

EaSI is expected to contribute to improving access to finance for social enterprises to the extent that:

- funding from EaSI enables increasing financial support (in terms of number and volume of financial support) to social enterprises;
- supported social enterprises pursue an increasing variety of social goals (there is increased coverage of needs that the social investment market aims to satisfy).

3.3.3.1. Outputs

This is being achieved by providing financial support to investors in social enterprises through various financial instruments, which may include guarantees (predominantly), debt instruments, equity/quasi-equity instruments.

Table 15 provides the list of Financial Intermediaries, who have received support from the Social Entrepreneurship Window of the EaSI Programme. In 2020, eight contracts were signed with Financial Intermediaries in the area of social entrepreneurship. More than EUR 50 million were used to guarantee the funding provided by these intermediaries to the final recipients.

Table 15. Financial Intermediaries participating in the Social Entrepreneurship Window in 2020

Financial Intermediaries/Agreements	Country	Amount of legal commitment (EUR)
Banco Comercial Portugues (BCP) – EaSI SE	Portugal	9 600 000
Coop57 SCCL – EaSi SE	Spain	4 000 000
Erste Bank – Umbrella - Erste Bank der oesterreichischen Sparkassen – EaSI – SE	Austria	600 000
France Active Investissement 2 – EaSI – SE	France	5 264 000
Gruppo Cooperativo CGM Finance – EaSI SE	Italy	1 200 000
Microbank – EaSI SE	Spain	12 000 000
Montepio EaSI SE	Portugal	12 000 000
Triodos – EaSI – SE	Spain	5 724 000
	Overall:	50 388 000

Source: Annual reports for the EaSI Financial Instruments

3.3.3.2. Outcome indicators

Headline indicator 8. Total number of social enterprises supported, and the volume of funding provided

Up until 31 December 2020, 3 337 social enterprises received funding through the EaSI Social Entrepreneurship Window. Altogether the amount of funding provided to final recipients was more than EUR 490 million, with single average support of EUR 147 135 per enterprise. A notable increase in the number of social enterprises funded (around 40 %

increase) and the amount of funding received (almost a 70 % increase) can be observed since 2019.

Table 16. Total number of social enterprises supported, and the volume of funding provided by EaSI

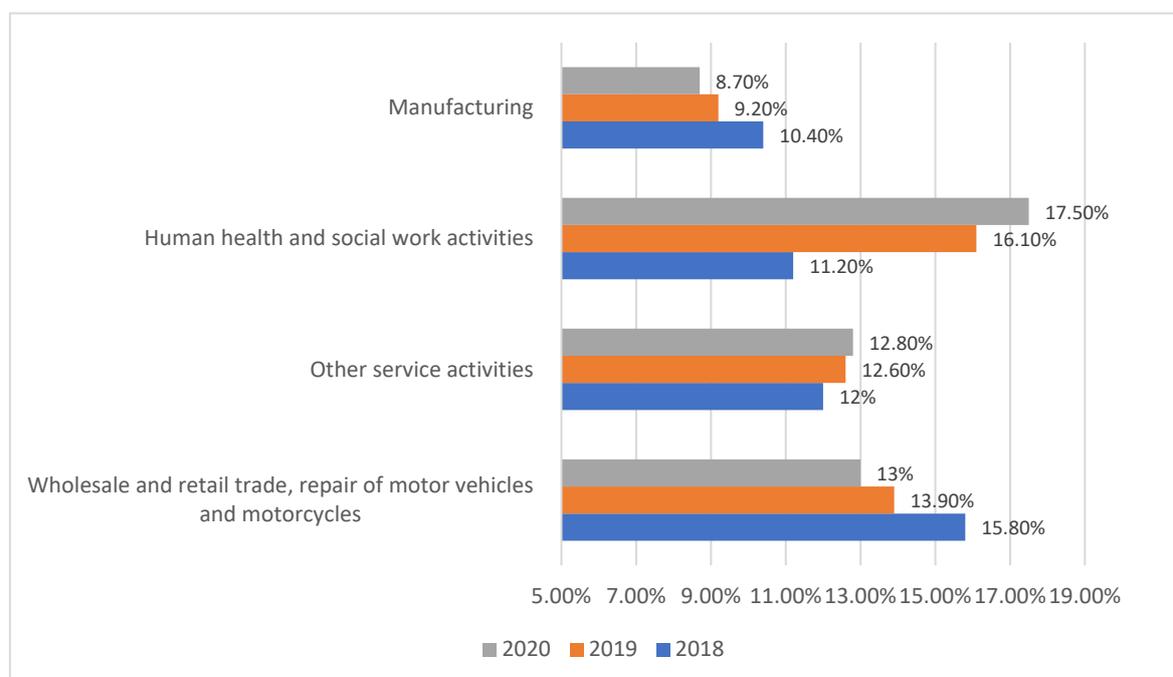
	2019	2020
Total number of social enterprises supported	2 368	3 337
Volume of funding (EUR) provided to final recipients (in millions)	292 59	490 99
Average microloan size (EUR)	123 562	147 135

Source: Annual reports from DG EMPL Microfinance Unit.

Complementary indicator 8.1. Types of supported social enterprises per (1) sector and (2) country

Figure 24 shows the distribution of funding social enterprises received according to the sector of economic activity. Most of the funding throughout 2019 and 2020 went to social enterprises operating in the area of human health and social work activities. Since 2018, a notable drop in funding in wholesale and retail trade, repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles (from 15.8 % to 13.0 %) as well as manufacturing (from 10.4 % to 8.7 %) can be observed. On the contrary, other service activities were experiencing a small but steady increase in funding from 2018 up till 2020.

Figure 24. Sectoral distribution of funding in the MF/SE axis of EaSI



Source: Annual reports from DG EMPL Microfinance Unit.

Regarding the regional distribution of funding disbursed to final recipients, France remains the leader even with a notable decrease in funding from 2018 to 2020. Correspondingly,

the amount of funding for final beneficiaries in Italy has increased. It is worth noting that the overall number of final recipient countries has increased substantially, whereas in 2016 only three countries were participating in the Social Entrepreneurship Window of the EaSI Programme.

Table 17. Regional distribution of funding in the MF/SE axis of EaSI

2018	2019	2020
France (46.1 %)	France (39.3 %)	France (37.3 %)
Spain (20.8 %)	Italy (22.6 %)	Italy (23.3 %)
Italy (14.8 %)	Spain (21.0 %)	Spain (22.5 %)
Poland (5.2 %)	Belgium (4.4 %)	Netherlands (4.3 %)
Austria (3.4 %)	Netherlands (2.7 %)	Belgium (3.9 %)
Netherlands (2.4 %)	Poland (2.6 %)	Poland (2.0 %)
Belgium (2.4 %)	Austria (2.1 %)	Austria (1.5 %)
Slovakia (1.9 %)	Slovakia (1.7 %)	Denmark (1.3 %)
Hungary (0.7 %)	Denmark (1.1 %)	Slovakia (1.2 %)
Serbia (0.6 %)	Czechia (0.7 %)	Hungary (0.9 %)
Denmark (0.5 %)	Hungary (0.7 %)	Czechia (0.7 %)
United Kingdom (0.5 %)	Serbia (0.5 %)	Serbia (0.4 %)
Czechia (0.3 %)	United Kingdom (0.3 %)	Finland (0.3 %)
Slovenia (0.2 %)	Croatia (0.1 %)	United Kingdom (0.2 %)
Romania (0.1 %)	Slovenia (0.1 %)	Croatia (0.2 %)
Croatia (0.1 %)		Slovenia (0.1 %)

Source: Annual reports for the EaSI Financial Instruments

3.3.4. Stronger institutional capacity of microcredit providers

In addition to providing loans to vulnerable persons, micro and social enterprises, EaSI also aims to build up the institutional capacity of microcredit providers. Experience with the predecessor instruments (Progress Microfinance Facility and JASMINE) showed that the capacity of microfinance institutions needs to be further strengthened to improve the quality of services provided to final recipients. This, in turn, contributes to increasing access to finance for vulnerable people and micro-enterprises through, for instance, better-qualified staff (loan officers), ability to hire new people, and modernised internal working procedures (e.g. new IT system).

3.3.4.1. Outputs

To achieve this objective, actions funded under the MF/SE axis will not concentrate on mutual learning, training and similar activities, but on support for improvement of

microcredit providers' infrastructure. EaSI is expected to contribute to stronger institutional capacity of microcredit providers to the extent that:

- the institutional capacity of microcredit providers in terms of funding (which can be received from EaSI financial instruments), human resources, operational management as well as systems and infrastructure is adequate;
- microcredit providers comply with European-level standards in terms of their institutional capacity (specifically, to the European Code of Good Conduct for Microcredit Provision).

3.3.4.2. Outcome indicators

Headline indicator 9. Examples of EaSI-funded capacity building for microcredit providers

In December 2016, the Commission launched an instrument to build up the institutional capacity of financial intermediaries that have not yet reached sustainability or need risk capital to sustain their growth and development³². The scheme is called **the EaSI Capacity Building Investments Window**. The window provides funding to financial institutions, both in the microfinance and in the social entrepreneurship space mainly through quasi-equity investments. The following activities are supported by the EIF:

- **Organisational development and expansion**, including branch expansion, scaling up or developing IT infrastructure (e.g., mobile banking), or investments in human resources such as recruitment and training of staff;
- **Strengthening operational and institutional capabilities**, including, but not limited to, investments in working capital and in improving the strategic/governance capabilities of the financial intermediary to maintain a balanced business, financial sustainability and social performance focus;
- **Seed financing support of newly created intermediaries with a strong social focus.**

The ultimate objective of this instrument is **to build up the institutional capacity of selected financial intermediaries that have not yet reached sustainability** or that need risk capital to sustain their growth and development. Funding of EUR 45 million has been committed within the EaSI Programme for this initiative.

Up to the end of 2020, 14 capacity building contracts had been signed, covering 9 countries (8 EU MSs and 1 candidate country), for a total committed amount of EUR 30.2 million, with EUR 21.4 million committed to microfinance and EUR 8.8 million to social entrepreneurship.

The setting up of this scheme can be seen as a reaction to the findings of the annual implementation reports of the predecessor Progress Microfinance Facility. They have often concluded that the institutional capacity of microcredit providers was seen as insufficient. The annual reports of the predecessor programme often noted that **the issue of providers'**

³² https://www.eif.org/what_we_do/microfinance/easi/easi-capacity-building-investments-window/index.htm

institutional capacity was acknowledged to be a bottleneck that slows down the disbursement of loans³³.

Another tool developed to support the capacity of financial intermediaries is the **EaSI Technical Assistance**. The EaSI Technical Assistance is funded from the Progress axis of EaSI. By building on the experience of the JASMINE Programme, it delivers three types of support:

- **Provision of an institutional assessment or rating to selected European microcredit providers**, followed by tailored training in line with the main findings of the assessment or rating, to increase the quality of their internal processes. Interested microcredit providers can apply through a call for expression of interest.
- **Making certain market development services publicly available**, such as workshops and seminars on microfinance-related topics, and a helpdesk to lodge information requests on microfinance in Europe, to promote the spread of best practices and improve the visibility of microfinance.
- **Offering advice to microcredit providers regarding the European Code of Good Conduct for Microcredit Provision** by way of training and evaluation of its implementation by microcredit providers. The code has become a crucial element for microcredit providers to acquire recognition and attract European-wide consideration and potentially more support from the private and public sector.

The code is also becoming the most important tool to assess the capacity and quality of the microcredit providers and a crucial component of the European microfinance infrastructure.

The code sets out good practice guidelines for microcredit providers and is expected to better enable sector organisations face the challenges of accessing long-term finance, maintaining and raising the quality of services and moving towards sustainability. The objective of the code is to detail a set of common standards for microcredit providers in the areas of customer and investor relations, governance, risk management, reporting standards and management information system.

As a pre-condition for benefitting from the EaSI Microfinance Guarantee or the EaSI Capacity Building in the area of microfinance, non-bank microcredit providers have to sign up to the code and banks have to endorse it. Non-bank microcredit providers signing a guarantee agreement with the EIF have to comply with the code after a grace period of 18 months (36 months in the case of Greenfield institutions).

In February 2017, the first European microfinance institution was certified under the code – the Dutch firm Qredits. By the end of 2020, 52 microfinance institutions from 19 countries (16 Member States and 3 candidate countries) have been awarded certificates of compliance with the code. Twenty-eight (28) microfinance institutions received the certificate between 2019 and 2020.

Since 2018, when DG EMPL started managing the Technical Assistance:

³³ *Report on the Implementation of the European Progress Microfinance Facility 2012, p. 16.*

- Up to 25 microcredit providers from 9 countries were selected and received tailored training to increase the quality of their internal processes; an additional 13 institutions are presently receiving this type of training.
- As many as 36 microcredit providers from 12 countries received technical assistance to implement the Code's best practice guidelines covering Governance, Strategic Planning, Risk Management, Management Information Systems and Reporting for the European Microfinance Industry; an additional 3 institutions are presently receiving training on the code.
- 8 peer-to-peer trainings were organised in Albania, Belgium, France, Italy, Montenegro, Portugal.
- Up to 30 EaSI TA workshops and 34 webinars were organised in Albania, Austria, Belgium, Hungary, North Macedonia, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Spain, Turkey. Event co-organisers were local microfinance associations, the European Parliament and universities and the overall audience reached more than 1 000 practitioners.

Since 2019, Technical Assistance has been offered also to social finance providers.

4. CONTRIBUTION TO PROGRAMME'S GENERAL OBJECTIVES

This chapter reviews the extent to which EaSI has contributed to the achievement of its general objectives which refer to the long-term goals that the programme is expected to achieve enshrined in the EaSI regulation³⁴. It presents the rationale for each of the objectives, describes their links to the programme-funded activities and their results, presented in the previous chapter, and measures progress against predefined indicators. It also provides examples of policy reforms, social innovations and the improvement of EU legislation, which took place in 2019-2020, with the contribution of the programme.

This section of the report reviews the extent to which EaSI has contributed to the achievement of its five general objectives:

1. Stronger ownership of EU objectives;
2. Facilitation of policy reforms;
3. Modernisation and effective application of EU law;
4. Improved conditions for voluntary geographic mobility whilst enforcing workers' rights;

³⁴ Regulation (EU) No 1296/2013, Article 4 (a).

5. Increased access to finance for vulnerable persons, micro- and social enterprises.

4.1. Stronger ownership of EU objectives

The first general objective of the programme is **to strengthen ownership among policymakers at all levels**, and produce concrete, coordinated and innovative actions at both Union and Member State level, in respect of the Union objectives in the target fields, in close collaboration with the social partners, as well as civil society organisations and public and private bodies³⁵.

To produce concrete, coordinated and innovative actions and to sustain their implementation, policymakers at all levels should agree on the common EU objectives in the social and employment policy fields and be willing to take action to implement them. Thus, ownership of objectives implies not only a good understanding of those objectives (which is also shared with other stakeholders in the field) but also readiness to act to achieve them. Improved shared understanding and stronger ownership requires timely collection and analysis of relevant and accurate evidence and policy advice capable of withstanding detailed scrutiny and rallying EU-wide support as well as the organisation of peer reviews, mutual learning activities and other types of events, which respond to the needs, concerns and expectations of EU and national policymakers and other stakeholders. It is also very important that the process in which EU objectives are defined is inclusive, i.e. social partners, civil society organisations and all other relevant public and private bodies must be involved. Such organisations must also possess a capacity to transmit the views of the societal groups that they represent.

Ensuring that policymakers at all levels feel stronger ownership of EU objectives therefore chiefly depends on the availability of comparable policy evidence, effective information sharing, mutual learning and dialogue as well as on the capacities of national and EU organisations to advocate for common actions and to support policy implementation, i.e. outputs supported by the EaSI Programme.

Below the report assesses the contribution of EaSI to creating stronger ownership of EU objectives in terms of the outcome indicators.

Headline indicator 10. *Share of stakeholders who feel familiar with the main issues in the policy fields covered by EaSI*

The awareness level of stakeholders regarding the main issues in the policy fields covered by EaSI shows the extent to which common EU policy priorities have reached relevant stakeholders. According to the 2021 Stakeholder Survey results, the general stakeholder awareness level is high; it stands at 79 % (70 % in 2019, 71 % in 2017, 63 % in 2015). The tables below provide an overview of stakeholders' familiarity with the main issues in the policy fields covered by EaSI. No target for a satisfactory awareness level has been set.

In the area of **social protection and social inclusion**, respondents to the EaSI Stakeholder Survey 2021 are most familiar with fighting poverty and social exclusion (97 %), gender equality (88 %) and equality of treatment and opportunities regardless of gender, racial or

³⁵ Regulation (EU) No 1296/2013, Article 4 (a).

ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation (83 %). Less familiar issues in the policy area of SPSI concern access to affordable and quality long-term care (71 %), access essential services of good quality, including water, sanitation, energy, transport, financial services and digital communications (71 %) social protection and working conditions in new forms of flexible employment (70 %).

Table 18. Most to least familiar policy issues in the field of social protection and social inclusion

Social protection and social inclusion	Stakeholders familiar with the issue
Fighting poverty and social exclusion	97 %
Gender equality	88 %
Equality of treatment and opportunities regardless of gender, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation	83 %
Access to affordable and quality long-term care	71 %
Access essential services of good quality, including water, sanitation, energy, transport, financial services and digital communications	71 %
Social protection and working conditions in new forms of flexible employment	70 %

Source: EaSI Stakeholder Survey 2021.

In the area of **employment**, respondents to the EaSI Stakeholder Survey 2021 are most familiar with active support to employment (85 %), tackling long-term unemployment (79 %), and gender equality (79 %). On the contrary, the least familiar issues among stakeholders with experience and expertise in this policy area were integration of marginalised people in society and in the labour market (notably, integration of refugees and vulnerable migrants, homeless and Roma communities) (63 %), tackling informal and undeclared work (54 %), and harnessing the potential of job-rich sectors (50 %).

Table 19. Most to least familiar policy issues in the field of employment

Employment	Stakeholders familiar with the issue
Active support to employment	85 %
Tackling long-term unemployment	79 %
Gender equality	79 %
Integration of marginalised people in society and in the labour market (notably, integration of refugees and vulnerable migrants, homeless and Roma communities)	63 %
Tackling informal and undeclared work	54 %
Harnessing the potential of job-rich sectors	50 %

Source: EaSI Stakeholder Survey 2021.

As regards **working conditions**, the most familiar issues indicated by stakeholders were health and safety at work (90 %), social dialogue and involvement of workers (78 % %) and fair and decent wages (77 %). The least familiar to stakeholders were policy issues related to social and labour market policy innovation (51 %), integration of marginalised people in society and in the labour market (notably, integration of refugees and vulnerable migrants, homeless and Roma communities) (50 %), and tackling long-term unemployment (49 %).

Table 20. Most to least familiar policy issues in the field of working conditions

Working conditions	Stakeholders familiar with the issue
Health and safety at work	90 %
Social dialogue and involvement of workers	78 %
Fair and decent wages	77 %
Social and labour market policy innovation	51 %
Integration of marginalised people in society and in the labour market (notably, integration of refugees and vulnerable migrants, homeless and Roma communities)	50 %
Tackling long-term unemployment	49 %

Source: EaSI Stakeholder Survey 2021.

Stakeholders in the area of **EURES (labour mobility)** were most familiar with improving transparency of job vacancies, job applications and any related information for jobseekers, workers and employers (94 %), enhancing the matching of jobs and jobseekers across borders (91 %), and mutual recognition of professional qualifications across the EU (89 %), as well as rights at work and fair conditions (89 %).

The least familiar to stakeholders were policy issues related to social and labour market policy innovation (66 %), cross-border enforcement of relevant Union law, including facilitating joint inspections (54 %), and integration of marginalised people in society and in the labour market (notably, integration of refugees and vulnerable migrants, homeless and Roma communities) (36 %).

Table 21. Most to least familiar policy issues in the field of EURES (labour mobility)

EURES (Labour mobility)	Stakeholders familiar with the issue
Improving transparency of job vacancies, job applications and any related information for jobseekers, workers and employers	94 %
Enhancing the matching of jobs and jobseekers across borders	91 %
Mutual recognition of professional qualifications across the EU	89 %
Rights at work and fair working conditions	89 %
Social and labour market policy innovation	66 %
Cross-border enforcement of relevant Union law, including facilitating joint inspections	54 %
Integration of marginalised people in society and in the labour market (notably, integration of refugees and vulnerable migrants, homeless and Roma communities)	36 %

Source: EaSI Stakeholder Survey 2021.

Regarding **microfinance and social entrepreneurship**, stakeholders feel most familiar with policy issues related to increasing access to microfinance (100 %), ethical standards for microcredit provision (100 %) and supporting social enterprises (100 %). Less familiar policy issues include integration of marginalised people in society and in the labour market (notably, integration of refugees and vulnerable migrants, homeless and Roma communities) (80 %), gender equality (80 %), and enabling environment for social entrepreneurship (78 %).

Table 22. Most to least familiar policy issues in the field of microfinance and social entrepreneurship

Microfinance and social entrepreneurship	Stakeholders familiar with the issue
Active support to employment	100 %
Tackling long-term unemployment	100 %
Gender equality	100 %
Integration of marginalised people in society and in the labour market (notably, integration of refugees and vulnerable migrants, homeless and Roma communities)	80 %
Tackling informal and undeclared work	80 %
Harnessing the potential of job-rich sectors	78 %

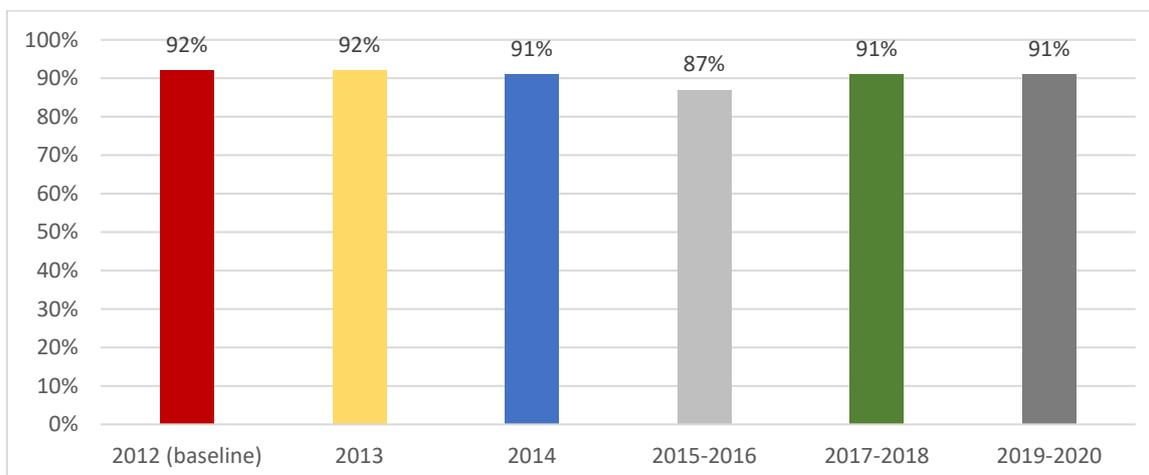
Source: EaSI Stakeholder Survey 2021.

Complementary indicator 10.1. Declared gain of better understanding of EU policies and legislation

Indicator of DG EMPL's Management Plan	
Milestone (2017)	>85 %
Target (2020)	Maintain results over 85 %

In total, 91 % of participants in EaSI-funded events (2019-2020), who submitted their responses in the survey, agreed that the event in which they participated helped them to gain a better understanding of EU policies and objectives in the policy field that the event addressed. According to the indicator set in the DG EMPL Management Plan, the Commission aims to maintain results of over 85 %. As demonstrated in Figure 25, since **2012 the performance of the programme per this specific indicator was in line with the target** throughout the whole EaSI monitoring period.

Figure 25. Share of participants in EaSI-funded events who agreed that the event in which they participated in helped them to gain a better understanding of EU policies and objectives the policy field that the event addressed



Source: Annual Progress Survey 2013 and survey of participants in EaSI-funded events 2014, 2015-2016, 2017-2018 and 2019-2020.³⁶

Complementary indicator 10.2. Active collaboration and partnership between government institutions of the EU and Member States

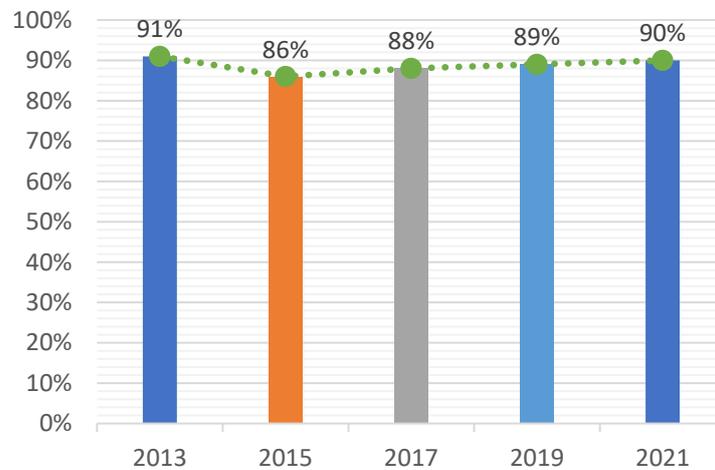
Indicator of DG EMPL's Management Plan	
Milestone (2017)	>85 %
Target (2020)	Maintain results over 85 %

A large share of officials of national, regional and local institutions (90 %) have indicated that they collaborate actively with the EU institutions. A stable increase can be noted for this indicator over the past years (89 % in 2019; 88 % in 2017; 86 % in 2014; 91 % in 2013 – Annual Progress survey).

The target for this indicator, outlined in the DG EMPL Management Plan and the Strategic Plan 2016-2020, aims to maintain the results over 85 %. **The performance of the programme per this indicator is in line with the target.**

³⁶ The 2012 figure is set as a baseline value representing the first measurable value which then allows for comparison with the values obtained from the following year.

Figure 26. Share of officials working in national, regional and local government institutions indicating that they collaborate actively with government institutions of the EU

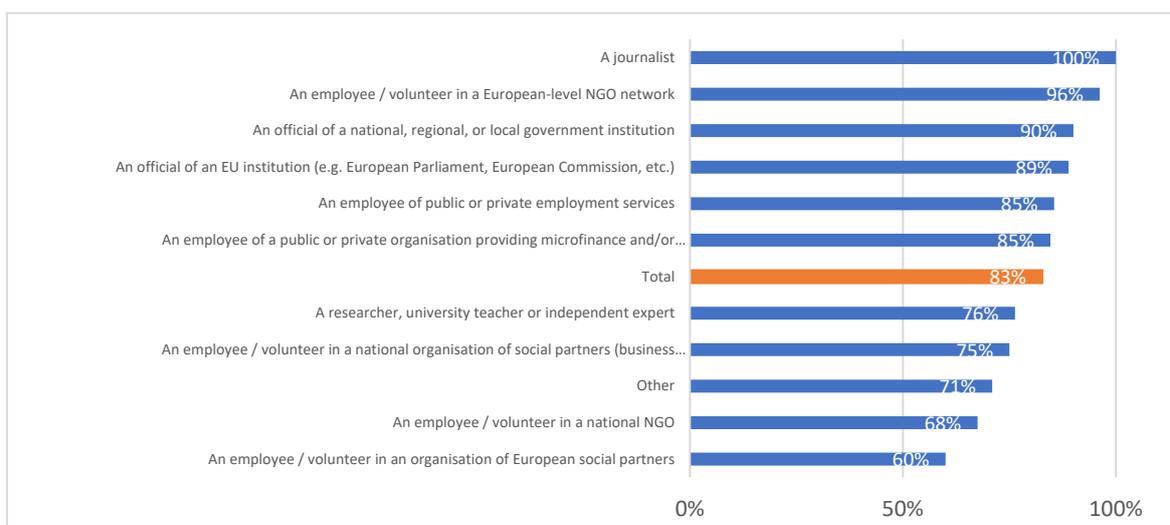


Source: *The Progress Annual Survey 2013 and the EaSI Stakeholder Survey 2015, 2017, 2019 and 2021.*

The percentage is relatively high for all groups of stakeholders. In total, 83 % of stakeholders feel a sense of collaboration between their organisation and the EU institutions. The biggest share of stakeholders who feel that there is a sense of collaboration are employees/volunteers working in European-level NGOs (96 %) and officials of national, regional, or local government institutions (90 %). The least sense of collaboration is felt among employees/volunteers working in national NGOs (68 %) and employees/volunteers working in organisations of European social partners.

When looking at the sense of collaboration from the perspective of employees/volunteers working in national NGOs, some survey participants indicated that for smaller NGOs there is a limited capacity to collaborate closer with EU institutions emphasising that this issue is particularly related to the size of their organisations. Several survey participants belonging to other categories of stakeholders not implicitly indicated in the list below have expressed their concern that EU institutions are becoming more concentrated on single-issue policies and directing resources towards those issues ranked highest on the political agenda.

Figure 27. Share of officials working in the following organisations indicating that there is a sense of collaboration between their organisation and the EU institutions



Source: EaSI Stakeholder Survey 2021.

4.2. Facilitation of policy reforms, convergence and capacities for social innovation and mutual learning

The second general objective of the programme is to **support the development of adequate, accessible and efficient social protection systems and labour markets and facilitate policy reform**, in the target fields, notably by promoting decent work and working conditions, a prevention culture for health and safety at work, a healthier balance between professional and private life and good governance for social objectives, including convergence, as well as mutual learning and social innovation³⁷.

EaSI aims to facilitate policy reforms to the extent that:

1. EaSI-funded policy innovations contribute to the facilitation of policy reforms;
2. Learning among the EU Member States is enhanced.

First, EaSI supports activities testing social and labour policy innovations on the ground before the possible dissemination and/or scaling up of the most successful innovations, including with further support of the ESF³⁸. Creating better conditions for social policy innovations has been key to test and implement innovative policy solutions, which, in turn, can translate into policy reforms (in particular, innovations at the systemic level relevant for strategic welfare reforms).

Ensuring that the relevant knowledge and expertise gained through social policy experimentation activities are available and easily accessible is key for the second aspect of this objective – information sharing, mutual learning and dialogue. Effective

³⁷ Regulation (EU) No 1296/2013, Article 4 (b).

³⁸ Notably, such action was supported by the public consultation with stakeholders before the launch of the programme: see *Impact Assessment of the ESF and related instruments, SEC(2011) 1130 final, Brussels, 6 October 2011, p. 7.*

dissemination of knowledge generated by EaSI can enhance the modernisation of social and labour market systems and other policy reforms.

Headline indicator 11. *Declared use of social and labour market policy innovation in the implementation of social CSRs and the results of social policy experimentation for policymaking*

Indicator of DG EMPL's Management Plan	
Milestone (2017)	64 %
Target (2020)	>66 %

In total, 62 % of stakeholders declared that they have used or intend to use social policy innovations developed at the EU level for policymaking³⁹. The result is equal to the baseline target set in 2014 at 62 %.

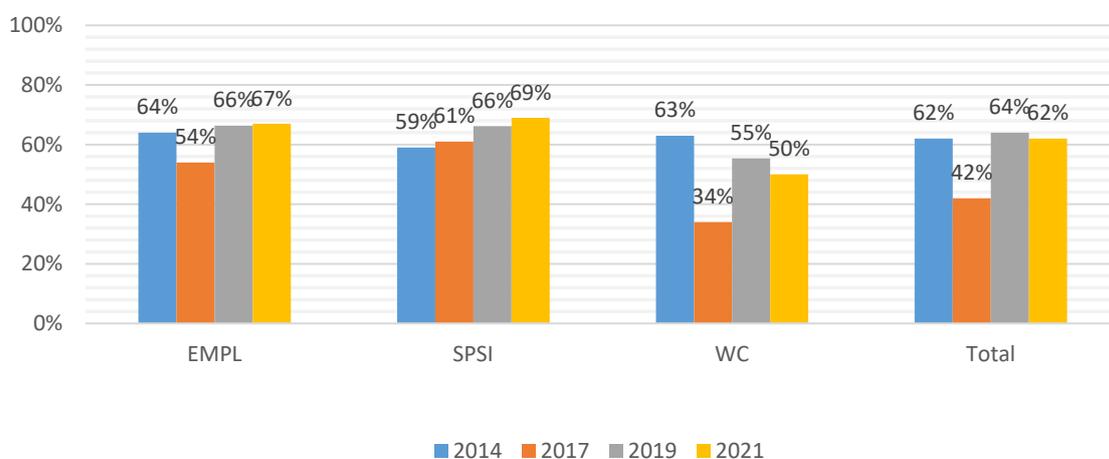
Around 67 % of stakeholders within the policy area of employment have used or intend to use social and labour market policy innovations. For stakeholders within the SPSI policy area, the share accounts for 69 %. In the area of working conditions, 50 % of stakeholders chose this answer.

It can be noted that over the past few years the share related to stakeholders in the SPSI policy area was growing steadily, while in other policy areas the figures have been fluctuating.

Several additional concerns can be noted while looking at the individual responses in more detail. When asked to provide specific examples of social policy innovation developed at the EU level the respondents were hesitant to indicate it even after they stated that they already used or intend to use it in the future. Additionally, some respondents emphasised that overall, it takes a considerable amount of time to review and evaluate whether social policy innovations developed at the EU level are suitable for individual Member States because of the visible differences in regulatory frameworks.

³⁹ This indicator is calculated by counting only responses of those stakeholders, who said they are familiar with social and labour market policy innovations at the EU level.

Figure 28. Share of stakeholders who declare that they have used or intend to use social policy innovations developed at the EU level for policymaking or implementation



Source: EaSI Stakeholder Survey 2021.

Complementary indicator 11.1. *Share of national, regional and local policymakers and civil society representatives who declare that they have used (or intend to use) outputs produced by EaSI-funded analytical activities for policymaking or advocacy*

According to the Stakeholder Survey 2021, around 74 % of national, regional and local policymakers and civil society representatives indicate that they have used or intend to use the major EaSI-supported policy evidence for policymaking or advocacy.

In total, 75 % of all stakeholders, regardless of their professional affiliation report that they have used or intend to use the policy evidence for policymaking or advocacy. This is slightly less than in 2019 when around 71 % of all the stakeholders declared this.

Even though the majority of national, regional and local policymakers indicated that they already used or intend to use social policy innovations developed at the EU level, when asked to provide examples or explain how they used or intend to use it, the respondents were hesitant to indicate it. This could be explained by looking at the amount of policy outputs produced yearly by the Commission. Some stakeholders noted that policymakers have limited capacity to familiarise themselves with all the policy innovation developed by the EU given the demands of their daily work.

Complementary indicator 11.2. *Examples of how EaSI outputs, including social and labour market policy innovations, were used for national and local policy reforms*

This section provides selected examples of how EaSI-funded outputs (in particular, social policy experimentation and innovation projects) have contributed to supporting national and local policy reforms. Please note that *examples provided in this section are based on the intentions to use EaSI-funded outputs stated by stakeholders*. This means that while stakeholders have stated their intention to use the outputs as described, we have not analysed whether they have followed up on this. This will be a task for the evaluation of EaSI.

Table 23. Examples of how EaSI-funded outputs were used for national and local policy reforms

Examples
<p>The EaSI-funded project 'ERSISI' (2016-2019) aimed to design and test a new care/activation model for unemployed, vulnerable populations based on coordinated intervention of social and employment services in Spain. ERSISI experimentation has led to a greater adaptation of the public service to reality, based on a comprehensive socio-labour assessment of each individual situation. The project advanced further in improving coordination between social and employment services, allowing to develop more complete and inclusive socio-labour inclusion and job integration itineraries. The project concluded with a report on the Transferability of the components of the implemented project. As a result, the Social Rights Department of the Government of Navarra in Spain has committed to upscale some elements of the ERSISI in their own strategies. Moreover, the SIDIS application, developed during the project, is ready to be used in all social service offices and is interoperable with the application of the employment agencies.</p>
<p>Between 2015-2019, the EaSI-funded project 'Regional Single Social Record' aimed to unify existing systems that contain various types of personal social records and establishing a single channel of communication in the Spanish region of Andalusia. The project resulted in the creation of a one-stop-shop system for social records – the Electronic Single Social Record of Andalusia (ESSR). As a result of this project, the White Book⁴⁰ of the ESSR was undertaken by the Regional Ministry of Equality and Social Policies and Agency for Social Services and Dependency of Agency for Social Services and Dependency of Andalusia. The policy document outlines the future of the ESSR in Andalusia, following the setting up, the background and baseline of the ESSR.</p>
<p>The EaSI-funded project 'Employment enhancement and Social services integration in Athens Municipality (ESTI@)' (2016-2019) aimed to assist Greek citizens in achieving re-integration/re-inclusion in society through social innovation and examine the existing landscape. The Municipality of Athens utilised the project conclusions and designed three new Single-Entry Points that adopt the model and integrated approach of the ESTI@ project. The municipality also carried out the 'Impact Study of ESTI@ project in the Municipality of Athens and sustainability Guide of the Patissia SEP'. The results of the study improved ways of addressing vulnerable populations and enriched the overall municipal social policy and strategy.</p>
<p>The EaSI-funded project 'E.QU.A.L Enchancing Qualifications of Adult Learners through the implementation of Upskilling pathways' (2018-2019) contributed to the upskilling of low skilled adults by assisting Italian public authorities in implementing the Council recommendation on "Upskilling Pathways". The project aimed to overview the current situation in Italy, to propose criteria for the identification of priority groups, and further support national and regional stakeholders in devising such upskilling schemes by drawing on existing tools and resources. As a result, the Ministry of Labour has requested the technical support of some members of the partnership in the negotiation phase for the drafting of the new European Social Fund planning documents for the period 2021- 2027. Moreover, the Councillor for Labour and Vocational Training of the Lazio Region in Italy has publicly stressed the importance of the results and recommendations of the EQUAL project for the next intervention programmes for the adult population with low skills and low qualifications.</p>
<p>The EaSI-funded project 'BASIC – Building Alternative Skills Innovative sChemes' (2018-2020) aimed to reinforce the upskilling of adults with low levels of basic skills or low qualifications relying on the Council's Recommendation on Upskilling Pathways. The project set a national policy objective to recommend specific actions and policies to be adopted in Greece to ensure easy access to upskilling that include credible skills, assessment tools, customised and flexible quality learning and recognised/validated educational outcomes (qualifications). The BASIC project resulted in the development of an innovative 'package' of vocational training for basic skills in four fields of literacy (linguistic, numerical, scientific, and digital).</p>

4.3. Modernisation and effective application of EU law

The third general objective of the programme is to **ensure that Union law on matters relating to the target fields is effectively applied, and, where necessary, contributes to**

⁴⁰ Junta de Andalucía (n.d.). White Book: Electronic Single Social Record of Andalusia. Retrieved from: www.juntadeandalucia.es/export/drupaljda/publicacion/19/04/190123%20RESISOR%20Libro%20Blanco%20INGLES.pdf

modernising Union law, in line with decent work principles and taking into account the Smart Regulation principles⁴¹.

To create a level playing field and guarantee a common level of EU legal protection to all people and organisations, effective application of EU law throughout the EU must be ensured. Through funding various activities, EaSI supports monitoring, effective application and enforcement of EU legislation developed in the fields of employment, social protection and social inclusion and, especially, working conditions (in the areas of labour law and health and safety at work).

The effectiveness of EU law is largely determined by its implementation at national, regional and local levels. A substantial number of infringement cases and complaints of non-compliance with EU law illustrates that problems with the application and enforcement of EU law persist. **The need for better implementation of EU law has therefore been repeatedly recognised as a key priority.** Furthermore, many respondents of the public online consultation organised before the launch of EaSI (in particular, public authorities) emphasised the importance of monitoring the application of EU legislation in the Member States and underlined that this objective should be a key priority for EaSI⁴².

While the primary aim of EaSI in this area is to ensure that EU law is effectively applied, actions funded by the programme also seek to improve its quality. Better law-making and the need to ensure implementation, application and enforcement are closely linked. Previous experience shows that only a limited number of Member States experience delays in the timely transposition of directives, while application problems for the Member States are more common and arise primarily as a result of the political will of national administrations to invest themselves in the EU's decisions⁴³. This implies that improvements are necessary for specific areas, such as guaranteeing administrative capacity, screening domestic rules and procedures, a systematic discussion between relevant authorities across the EU, ex post evaluations and accountability of national administrations towards their counterpart authorities in other Member States, involvement of sub-national authorities with autonomous legislative powers, supporting networks of public authorities and NGOs, systematic assessment of their performance and the identification and spread of best practices, as well as the extension of training programmes for judges and public administrations. To address these challenges, a 'cultural' change is also required, which includes a shift from increasing new EU law to an emphasis on effective application.

EaSI aims to contribute to the modernisation and effective application of EU law to the extent that:

- Legal proposals and the new legislation are of high quality, i.e. implementation and interpretation of rules are clear for public authorities, citizens and businesses. Legislation responds to, *inter alia*, the emergence of new risks for human health and safety in the workplace, and unnecessary administrative burden is reduced;

41 Regulation (EU) No 1296/2013, Article 4 (c).

42 Impact Assessment of the ESF and related instruments, SEC (2011) 1130 final, Brussels, 6 October 2011.

43 Ex-ante evaluation of the EU Programme for Employment and Social Innovation (EaSI), SEC(2011) 1134 final, Brussels, 6 October 2011, p. 7.

- EU law in the areas of a) labour law and b) health and safety at work is correctly transposed into national law and effectively applied by the Member States;
- The European Commission acts as an effective and efficient guardian of the EU law, effectively monitoring its transposition and implementation in all Member States.

Headline indicator 12. Examples of how EaSI-funded outputs contributed to the improvement or review of EU legislation

In 2019-2020, a number of EaSI-supported outputs were instrumental in contributing to the improvement and better application of EU law. Table 24 lists notable examples.

Table 24. Examples of how EaSI-funded outputs contributed to the improvement, review or application of EU legislation

Examples
<p>Between 2018 and 2019, EaSI funded the project 'Posting of workers in Eastern Europe (EEPOW)', which proactively addressed the issue of posting of workers at its pre-accession stage by assisting Eastern European countries, especially the four candidate countries Albania, Montenegro, North Macedonia and Serbia, in implementing the Directive on the Posting of Workers (96/71/EC) before it actually comes into force. EEPOW increased the awareness for needs and gaps in the directive. As a result of this project the participating Member States have addressed the issues of protection of workers, access to information, equal pay enforcement, and occupational safety and health in various ways by combining EU and national legislation.</p>
<p>Between 2018 and 2019, EaSI funded the project 'TIDE POWER - Trade unions In DEFence of POsted WorkERS', which contributed towards improving the protection of workers' rights and full implementation of the Directive 96/71/EC on the posting of workers in the framework of a transnational provision of services; and of the Directive 2014/67/EU giving the trade unions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a role of legality defender through tasks such as the correct information of workers; • the monitoring of employment conditions; and • the engagement of proceedings aiming at enforcing the obligations under the above-mentioned directive. <p>The project collected good practices at European level on the protection and representation of posted workers. The practices were shared with trade union officials in charge of assisting posted workers. Trade unionists highlighted how the international federation tools of European trade unions are very active in lobbying with the European Commission and the European Parliament.</p>
<p>The EaSI-funded project 'TRANSposition – reconciliation between the freedom to provide [EB1] services in the EU and the social rights of posted workers in transport sector' (2018-2019) aimed to improve the effectiveness of the implementation of the EU Posting of Workers Directive and its Enforcement Directive. The project worked towards including social partners and workers in the transport sector in the discussion on the revision of the EU Posting of Workers Directive. The project resulted in data being collected on stakeholder attitudes towards the revision of Enforcement Directive 2014/67/EU. For the time being, it is planned to use the data towards the revision of Enforcement Directive 2014/67/EU.</p>
<p>In 2019 EaSI funded the action '(Re)connect: EU4you' which supports the implementation of the European Association of Services Providers for Persons with Disabilities (EASPD) strategy '2018-2021 Comit! Delivering the support services of Tomorrow'. The activities implemented under the action grant aim to reduce the gap between the European and the grassroots level by building better communication tools and developing a stronger performing support services sector. With financial support from the EaSI Programme, the EASPD directly contributed to the implementation of the European Disability Strategy, prepared a global report on the European Semester and the European Pillar of Social Rights 'Disability Support Services in the EU: A Reality Check'.</p>
<p>In 2019 EaSI-funded the action 'Roma included in Social Europe 2019, which was coordinated by the European Roma Grassroots Organisations Network (ERGO). The work carried out by ERGO fed directly into the development of the Post 2020 EU Roma Strategic Framework. The organisation also provided evidence-based input to the EU institutions and the Member States on the implementation of National Roma Integration Strategies (NRIS). Case studies were produced covering different aspects of NRIS implementation, particularly in education, funding, employment and poverty. ERGO also provided evidence-</p>

based input and recommendations to the EU institutions and the Member States for the adoption of the Post 2020 EU Roma policy and mainstream social and employment policies.

4.4. Improved conditions for voluntary geographic mobility whilst enforcing workers' rights throughout the EU

Free movement of workers is one of the four freedoms established in the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU). One of the ideas behind Articles 45 and 46 of TFEU is to enable workers from Member States with a high level of unemployment to move to other states where there is a demand for jobs, i.e. geographical labour mobility should contribute to promoting a high level of quality and sustainable employment throughout Europe. However, geographical labour mobility in Europe is limited due to a number of obstacles. Aside from uncertainty over the advantages of being mobile, individuals face several other hurdles to free movement. These can range from legal and administrative obstacles, housing costs and availability, employment of spouses and partners, and portability of pensions to linguistic barriers and issues on transparency of job vacancies, and missing support from the employment services for matching CVs with job offers⁴⁴.

Through its various activities under the Progress and EURES axes described earlier in this report, EaSI aimed to contribute to the development of high-quality and inclusive EU labour markets to the extent that:

- adequate information, advice and services are available for workers and employers wishing to benefit from the principle of the free movement of workers;
- EU citizens are aware of their rights (such as how they can benefit from EU social security coordination rules while moving within Europe), which are being defended and promoted.

On 15 March 2016, the Council adopted the Commission's proposal to reinforce EURES⁴⁵. As a result of the reform, the EURES network was opened up to more partners, such as private employment services, and more jobs are being advertised on its job portal. In addition, the regulation aims at a better online matching between candidates and vacancies.

Activities at both national and EU level concerning the EURES reform resulted in the following immediate effects⁴⁶:

- The focus shifted even more towards matching, placement & recruitment activities;

⁴⁴ *Ex-ante evaluation of the EU Programme for Employment and Social Innovation (EaSI), SEC(2011) 1134 final, Brussels, 6 October 2011, p. 10.*

⁴⁵ *Regulation 2016/589 of 13 April 2016 on a European network of employment services (EURES), workers' access to mobility services and the further integration of labour markets and amending Regulations (EU) No 492/2011 and (EU) No 1296/2013. See: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=OJ:L:2016:107:FULL&from=EN>.*

⁴⁶ See: http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/scoreboard/performance_by_governance_tool/eures/index_en.htm

- The national services catalogues and practices were finalised;
- New EURES member organisations in the EU countries were selected (partners and associated partners).

In total, 17 projects were funded during the analysed period in the area of geographical labour mobility (EURES) to support:

- cross-border partnerships (Call VP/2018/007 – 14 projects), including activities of cross-border partnerships between employment services and other stakeholders relevant in the cross-border labour markets and the development of new cross-border partnerships and social partners' activities within EURES;
- targeted mobility schemes (Call VP/2016/009 – 3 projects).

Headline indicator 13. *Number of placements facilitated by (1) cross-border partnerships and (2) targeted mobility schemes*

Cross-border partnerships

The data for this indicator comes from final technical implementation reports of individual cross-border partnerships. Table 25 shows the number of placements facilitated in 2019 by the supported cross-border partnerships. It is also important to note that different CBPs have participated under different calls, therefore the table presents CBPs who have finalised their activities in the year 2019. EURES-T Oberrhein (DE-FR-CH⁴⁷); EURES Northern Ireland/Ireland (IE-UK) and EURES Cross-border Øresund partnerships have managed to facilitate the highest number of placements, while the remaining facilitated fewer placements.

The EURES Performance Measurement System also reports that in 2018 and 2019, all cross-border partnerships combined have facilitated 5 408 placements.

Table 25. Placements facilitated in 2019 by EURES Cross-border partnerships

EURES cross-border partnerships	Number of placements facilitated in 2019
EURES in den Grenzregionen Belgien, Deutschland, Niederlande	65
Galicia/North Portugal (ES-PT)	16
EURES-T Oberrhein (DE-FR-CH)	696
Scheldemond (BE-NL)	N/A
EURES-TriRegio (CZ-DE-PL)	11
Cross-border cooperation Extremadura–Alentejo (ES-PT)	12
EURES cross-border partnership Andalucia–Algarve (PT-ES)	N/A
EURES Euradria (IT-SI-HR)	3

⁴⁷ Participating at its own cost.

EURES Grande Région (BE-DE-FR-LU)	N/A
EURES Northern Ireland/Ireland (IE-UK)	315
EURES Cross-border Øresund	138
Total	1 256

Source: Final technical implementation reports of individual CBPs.

Between 2011 and 2013, Your First EURES Job Preparatory Action facilitated nearly 4 300 placements and achieved around 90 % of its overall placement goal. Drawing on experience from the implementation of Your First EURES Job Preparatory Action, Your First EURES Job (YFEJ) and REACTIVE continue in the EU 2014-2020 budgetary period as Targeted Mobility Schemes (TMS) financed under the EURES axis of the EaSI Programme. The table below presents targeted mobility schemes that were running from February 2017 to February 2019. In total, three targeted mobility schemes facilitated 4 062 placements⁴⁸.

Table 26. Number of placements by EURES targeted mobility schemes

Targeted Mobility Scheme	Placements
“Your first EURES Job” – YFEJ TMS 5.0	1 154
Your first EURES Job	1 533
A tool for mobility – second step	1 375
Total	4 062

Source: Final technical implementation reports on individual TMS.

Complementary indicator 13.1. Share of placements resulting from contacts made with jobseekers and employers via EURES cross-border partnerships and targeted mobility schemes

According to the EURES Performance Measurement System, there were 105 265 placements in 2019 and the 1st semester of 2020 combined. These placements were the result of 4 576 250 consultations between EURES advisers and jobseekers.

Table 27. Number of placements facilitated by EURES Network

	Value in 2019	Value in 2020
Total Number of placements	76 210	49 862
Total number of contacts with jobseekers	3 332 622	2 472 625
Share of placements from all contacts	2.3 %	2.0 %

Source: EURES Performance Measurement System.

Cross-border partnerships

⁴⁸ The number reflects placements that were facilitated between July 2018 and June 2020.

As reported by the EURES Performance Measurement System report for 2018-2020, the share of contacts resulting in placements throughout all 11 cross-border partnerships that were operational in 2018-2019 is 2.8 %. The figure shows that the focus of CBPs' was mainly on other activities such as the provision of multilingual information, relocation allowances or language courses/trainings.

Table 28. Share of placements facilitated by cross-border partnerships in 2019

Number of contacts with jobseekers and job changers	Number of placements facilitated	% Of contacts resulting in placements
195 060	5 408	2.8 %

Source: Final technical implementation reports of individual CBPs and Report from the Commission to the European Parliament, The Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions on EURES activity July 2018 – June 2020.

Targeted Mobility Schemes

Three targeted mobility schemes that were implemented between July 2018 and June 2020 managed to reach 29.1 % share of placements from the total number of registered jobseekers.

Table 29. Share of placements facilitated by EURES targeted mobility schemes⁴⁹

Number of registered jobseekers	Number of placements facilitated	% Share of placements from all registered jobseekers
13 977	4 062	29.1 %

Complementary indicator 13.2. Customer satisfaction with (1) online help desk for users of the EURES Portal and (2) functionalities and information on the EURES Portal

In 2019-2020 the level of satisfaction with both the assistance provided concerning the technical functioning and overall understanding of the EURES Portal remained at around 95 %.

Table 30. Level of customer satisfaction with online help desk for users of the EURES Portal

Online Help desk	2019	2020
Assistance related to the technical functioning of the EURES Portal	96 %	95 %
Assistance related to the overall understanding of the EURES Portal	95 %	96 %

⁴⁹ Report from the Commission to the European Parliament, The Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions on EURES activity January 2016 - June 2018 Submitted pursuant to Article 33 of Regulation (EU) 2016/589. See: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/ALL/?uri=CELEX:52019DC0164>

Source: EURES Performance Measurement System.

Note: The percentage value accounts for respondents indicating that they were 'very satisfied' and 'satisfied' with the services provided.

The majority of respondents indicated that they were 'very satisfied' or 'satisfied' with the information and guidance available on the EURES Portal. In 2019, the level of satisfaction among employers was 69 %, and was a little less for the jobseekers – 62 %. For 2020, satisfaction with the information and guidance available on the EURES Portal was higher among employers (73 %) when compared to jobseekers (55 %).

Table 31. Level of satisfaction with information and guidance provision of the EURES Portal

Information and guidance provision	2019	2020
Employers	69 %	73 %
Jobseekers	62 %	55 %

Source: EURES Performance Measurement System.

Note: The percentage value accounts for respondents indicating that they were 'very satisfied' and 'satisfied' with the services provided.

4.5. Increased access to finance for vulnerable persons, micro and social enterprises

Boosting jobs, growth and investment is one of the main priorities of the new Commission. In line with this goal, entrepreneurship and self-employment can be powerful tools in getting Europe growing again and increasing the number of jobs without creating new debt. A significant share of new jobs in the EU is created by newly established firms. **Access to finance, however, remains one of the most important problems faced by business start-ups across Europe**, particularly those established by vulnerable groups of people.

The EaSI Programme aims to increase access to finance for vulnerable persons as well as micro- and social enterprises through provision of support to microcredit providers and investors in social enterprises in the form of guarantees, funded instruments, equity, quasi-equity as well as support for capacity building of microcredit intermediaries. Achievement of this goal is also supported by activities funded under the Progress axis, namely, policy evidence produced in the areas of microfinance and social entrepreneurship, information sharing and mutual learning activities in the latter thematic areas, support for the main actors operating in the field (European Microfinance Network, European Venture Philanthropy Association and the Microfinance Centre), including EaSI Technical Assistance for microcredit providers.

EaSI is expected to contribute to the increased access to finance for vulnerable persons, micro- and social enterprises to the extent that:

- final recipients, who are unemployed or belong to vulnerable groups (as well as micro-enterprises, which may employ such persons), are being reached by programme-supported funding mechanisms;
- unemployed and otherwise socially and economically vulnerable persons are able to create or further develop their businesses as a result of the programme support;
- impact of the EU microfinance and social entrepreneurship support is sustainable, i.e. the supported enterprises are economically active for an indefinite duration after receiving the EU support;
- access to finance for social enterprises is increasing.

Headline indicator 14. *Proportion of final recipients that have created or further developed a business with EU microfinance support that are unemployed or belong to vulnerable groups*

Indicator of DG EMPL's Management Plan	
Milestone (2017)	45 %
Target (2020)	50 %

This headline indicator aims to assess the extent to which EU microfinance and social entrepreneurship support reach persons who are in a disadvantaged position to access the conventional credit market. Such vulnerable persons include women, the unemployed, those with no or only primary education, young and older people.

As already noted by the Interim Evaluation of the predecessor Progress Microfinance Facility⁵⁰, data such as age, gender, education level, etc. is collected only for natural persons applying for EU microfinance funding. This results in an incomplete picture since many applicants are legal persons (enterprises) and therefore their social data (e.g., the social data of a representative) is not being collected. For legal persons, only data on their employees is being collected and not that of the owner or legal representative. However, the data collected on natural persons is also important regarding the overall direction of the programme.

A significant increase in support for persons from non-EU countries can be observed. A slight but steady increase in the category of people aged 51 years and above is noticed as well. On the contrary, the support for women; unemployed or inactive; and persons aged less than 25 years is decreasing, while disabled people received a somewhat equal amount of financing from 2018 to 2020.

⁵⁰ Ramboll, *Interim Evaluation of the European Progress Microfinance Facility*, November 2014, p. 84.

Table 32. Vulnerable groups supported by the EaSI financial instrument, cumulative (%)

Vulnerable group	2018	2019	2020
Women	31.5 %	30.3 % ▼	29.8 % ▼
Unemployed or inactive ⁵¹	15.7 %	14.0 % ▼	12.3 % ▼
Long-term unemployed	28.1 %	10.3 % ▼	19.5 % ▲
No or only primary education	17.6 %	21.0 % ▲	17.2 % ▼
People aged 51 years and above	19.5 %	21.5 % ▲	22.4 % ▲
Persons aged less than 25 years	6.9 %	6.3 % ▼	5.8 % ▼
Disabled	1.1 %	0.9 % ▼	1.0 % ▲
Non-EU country as country of origin	11.9 %	14.3 % ▲	22.1 % ▲

Note: Changes are marked in comparison to the previous year, i.e., from 2018 to 2019, and from 2019 to 2020. A change of -0.1 % to +0.1 % is marked as ▲ Source: Annual reports from DG EMPL Microfinance Unit.

Complementary indicator 14.1. Number of jobs created or maintained as a result of MF/SE funding

Enterprises, supported by the MF/SE axis of EaSI, employed 94 155 employees in 2018: 17 481 of whom were employed in social enterprises, with the rest employed in micro-enterprises supported under the Microfinance Window. Between 2018 and 2020 the number more than tripled to 295 707: with 180 774 employed in micro-enterprises and 114 933 in social enterprises.

Table 33. Number of persons employed at micro-enterprises under the MF/SE axis of the EaSI Programme

	2018	2019	2020
Number of persons employed	94 155	203 646	295 707

Source: Annual reports from DG EMPL Microfinance Unit.

Complementary indicator 14.2. Number of businesses (final recipients) that have benefitted from EU support

As many as 71 790 enterprises benefitted from EaSI MF/SE support in **2019**, which helped them to either consolidate an already established business or to set up a new business: 2 020 of them benefitted under the Social Entrepreneurship Window, while the rest were supported under the Microfinance Window. By the end of September **2020**, there were 100 554 enterprises – 3 337 of them benefitting under the Social Entrepreneurship Window with the remaining 97 217 benefitting under the Microfinance Window. The number of enterprises benefitting from the EU support more than doubled from 2018 to 2020.

⁵¹ The definition 'Unemployed or inactive' encompasses final recipients that have been unemployed for less than a year.

Table 34. Number of enterprises that have received support from the MF/SE axis of the EaSI Programme (cumulative)

	2018	2019	2020
Number of businesses	45 629	71 790	100 554
Social enterprises	864	2 020	3 337

Source: Annual reports from DG EMPL Microfinance Unit.

4.6. Horizontal objectives

Horizontal objectives of the EaSI Programme include promoting gender equality (including through gender mainstreaming and gender budgeting), paying particular attention to vulnerable groups, such as young people and ensuring non-discrimination on all grounds, promoting fair working conditions and sustainable work and combatting long-term unemployment, ensuring adequate and decent social protection, and fighting social exclusion and poverty.

According to the EaSI Regulation⁵², the programme should pursue these objectives in all its axes and actions. Furthermore, the EaSI Regulation stipulates that the monitoring of the EaSI Programme should include assessing how gender equality principles, gender mainstreaming and anti-discrimination measures, including accessibility issues, were integrated and applied into all EaSI activities. To identify to what extent EaSI has been succeeding in mainstreaming horizontal principles in EaSI-supported activities, the following indicators are assessed:

Headline indicator 15. *Share of stakeholders stating that the EU contribution to the integration of the horizontal objectives in the EaSI-relevant policy areas is moderate or high*

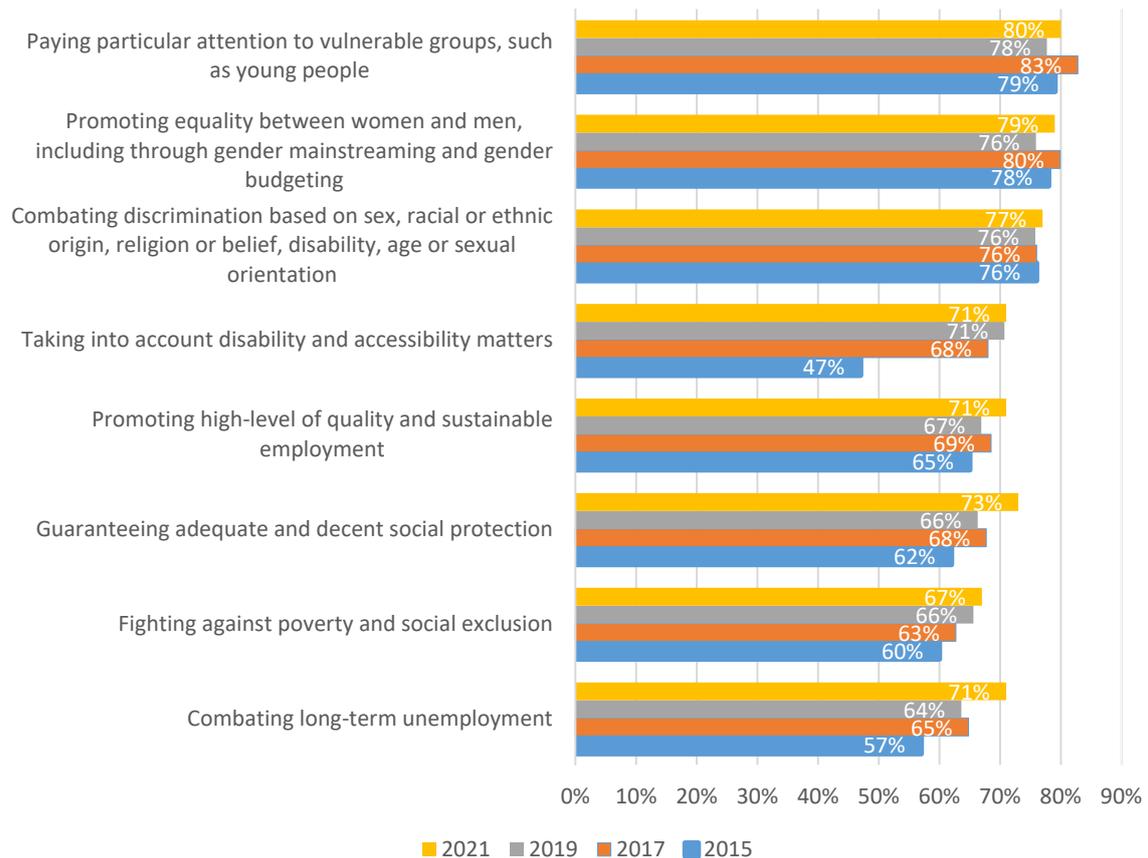
According to respondents to the EaSI Stakeholder Survey 2019, the EU contributes to the integration of some horizontal objectives more than others. The largest share of stakeholders reported that the **EU contribution is moderate or high** to the integration of these horizontal objectives: paying particular attention to vulnerable groups (80 %), promoting equality between women and men (79 %) and combatting discrimination (77 %). On the contrary, the smallest share of stakeholders indicated that the EU contribution is moderate or high to fighting against poverty and social exclusion (67 %), combating long-term unemployment (71 %), promoting high level of quality and sustainable employment (71 %).

In comparison to the results of the 2015 Stakeholder Survey, values for all of the horizontal objectives show an increasing trend. The share of respondents who thought that the EU has contributed to taking into account disability and accessibility matters and combating long-term unemployment grown the most (from 47 % to 71 % and 57 % to 71 %, respectively).

⁵² Regulation (EU) No 1296/2013, Article 4.2.

Compared to the 2019 Stakeholder Survey results, the shares for all the horizontal objective increased as well, although to a different extent. The highest increase can be noted for two horizontal objectives: combating long-term unemployment (by 7 %) and guaranteeing adequate and decent social protection (by 7 %).

Figure 29. Share of stakeholders stating that the EU contribution to the integration of the following horizontal objectives into their respective policy area is moderate or high (total, %, 2015, 2017, 2019, 2021)

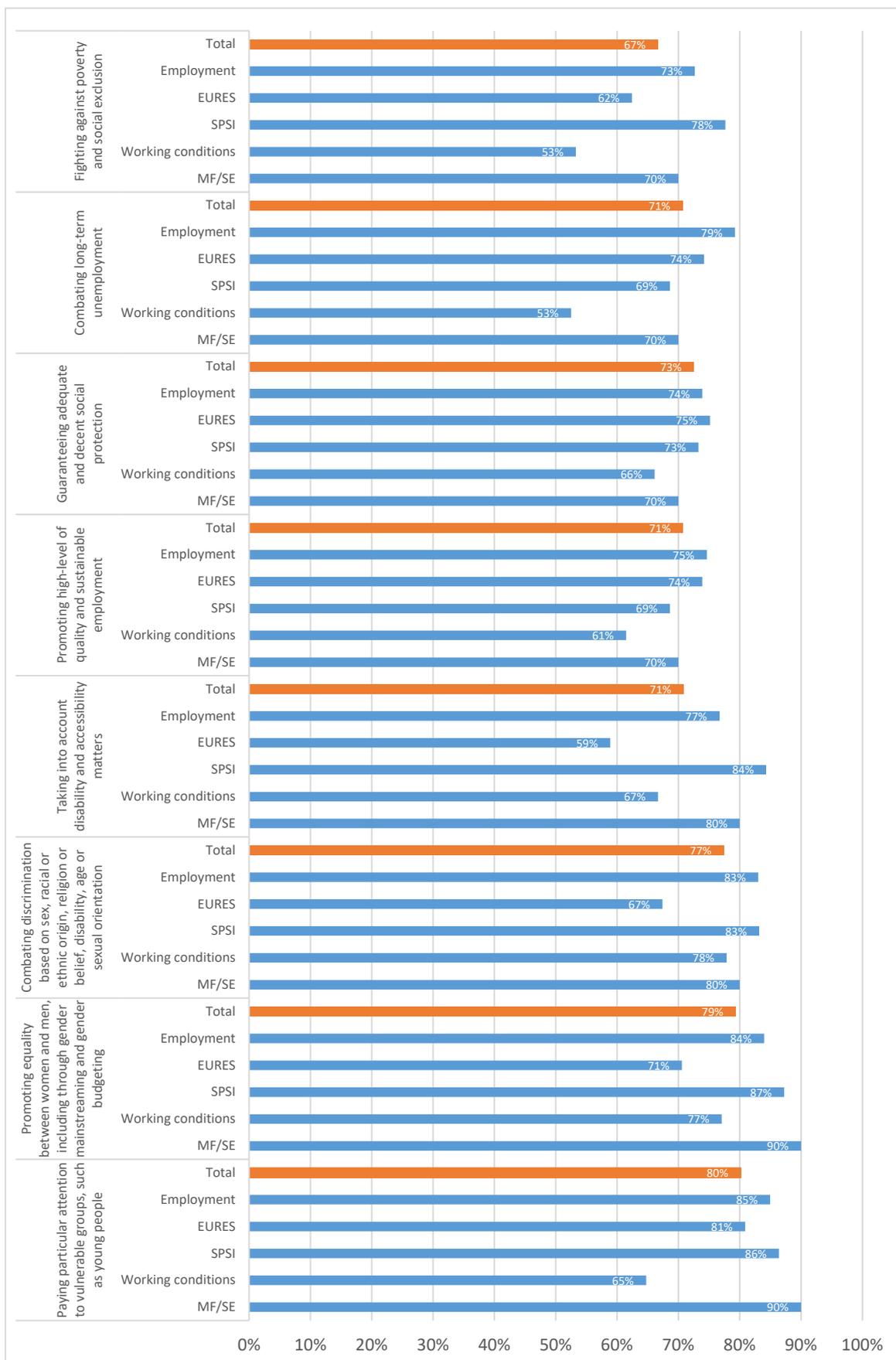


Source: EaSI Stakeholder Survey 2021.

The stakeholders in the policy area of **employment** are the most positive about the EU contribution to the integration of the horizontal objectives. In the area of **working conditions**, the horizontal objectives least supported by the EU according to the stakeholders are (1) paying particular attention to vulnerable groups, such as young people, (2) combating long-term unemployment and (3) fighting against poverty and social exclusion. For stakeholders in the policy area of **labour mobility**, the least supported horizontal objective is related to attention to disability and accessibility matters. Stakeholders in the area of **microfinance and social entrepreneurship** see the EU contribution most positively in two areas: (1) promoting equality between women and men, including through gender mainstreaming and gender budgeting and (2) paying particular attention to vulnerable groups, such as young people. Lastly, for the stakeholders in the area of **social protection and social inclusion**, the EU contribution is least felt in relation to (1) combating long-term unemployment and (2) promoting a high level of quality and sustainable employment. Stakeholders in the same area stated that EU

contribution is felt the most in promoting equality between women and men, including through gender mainstreaming and gender budgeting.

Figure 30. Share of stakeholders stating that the EU contribution to the integration of the following horizontal objectives into their respective policy area is moderate or high



Source: EaSI Stakeholder Survey 2021.

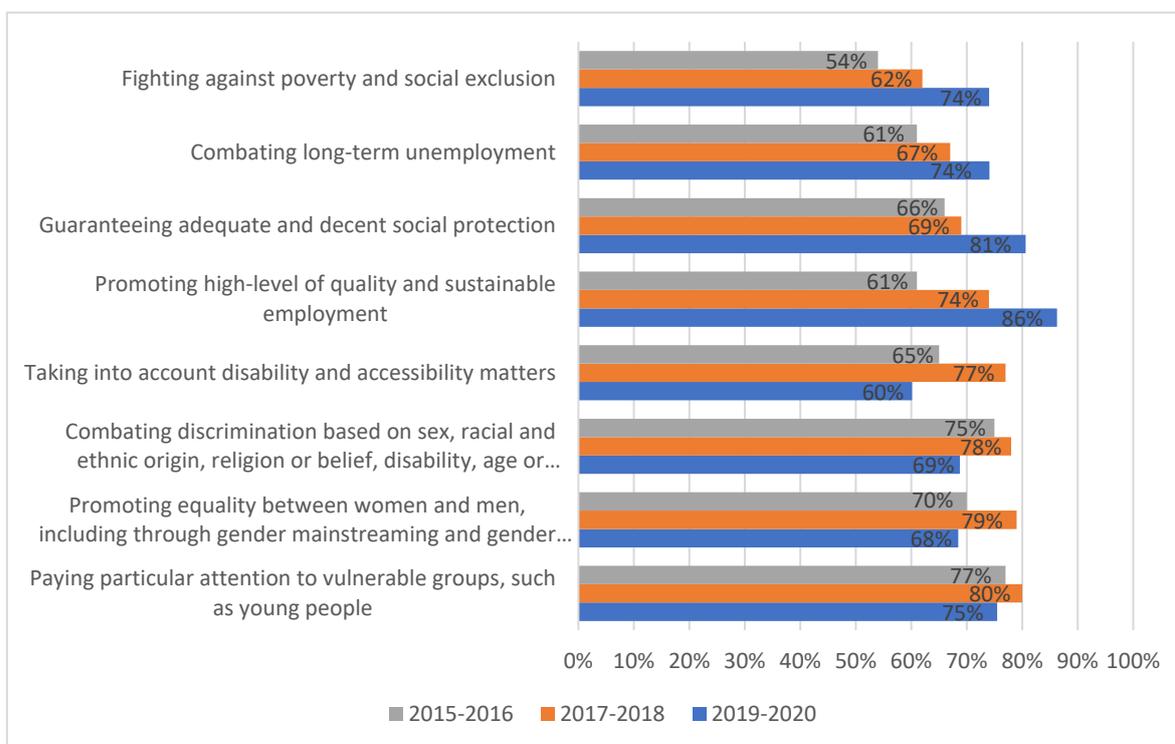
Complementary indicator 15.1. Share of participants stating that the event, which they participated in, took into account horizontal objectives

In comparison with the previous years, the values of four horizontal priorities have increased. This is noted for fighting against poverty and social exclusion (54 %, 62 %, 74 %, respectively), combating long-term unemployment (61 %, 67 %, 74 %, respectively), guaranteeing adequate and decent social protection (66 %, 69 %, 81 % respectively), and promoting a high level of quality and sustainable employment (61 %, 74 %, 86 %).

Most participants in EaSI-funded events that took place in 2019-2020 stated that the events considered horizontal objectives such as fighting against poverty and social exclusion (74 %), combating long-term unemployment (74 %), guaranteeing adequate and decent social protection (81 %), and promoting high level of quality and sustainable employment (86 %).

The lowest share of participants declared that events took into account disability and accessibility matters (60 %). The participants also indicated that issues such as combating discrimination based on sex, racial and ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation (69 %) as well as promoting equality between women and men, including through gender mainstreaming and gender budgeting were acknowledged the least.

Figure 31. Share of stakeholders stating that the event, which they participated in, took into account the following horizontal objectives



Source: Survey of participants in EaSI-funded events 2015-2016, 2017-2018 and 2019-2020.

Complementary indicator 15.2. Examples of integration of horizontal objectives in the EaSI Programme

The second complementary indicator provides examples of how EaSI horizontal principles have been considered and operationalised in selected EaSI-supported activities, namely projects and operational activities of EU-level NGO networks.

In the final implementation reports, the project teams of the supported actions and EU-level NGO networks are systematically required to reflect on how their projects addressed horizontal objectives. In 2019-2020, the most common ways used to integrate horizontal objectives into the technical implementation and content of actions and NGOs' operational activities were the following:

- Paying attention to diversity and vulnerabilities of participants and recipients during the organisation and implementation of project activities (considering a variety of social positions along the lines of gender, age, household type, work organisation, disabilities);
- Organisation of project and organisation activities focused specifically on these topics (e.g., events, policy briefs, advocacy and social media campaigns).
- Some of the projects constitute targeted actions aimed at supporting specific groups (such as young people) and/or tackling challenges these groups systematically face (such as in the case of posting workers);
- Providing equality and non-discrimination training and producing specific information material raising awareness on these topics;
- Some projects directly contributed to combating discrimination through their work by aiming to decrease segregation and improving the situation of Roma households;
- Providing equality and non-discrimination training and producing specific information material raising awareness on these topics;
- Some projects followed a participatory approach in full respect of equal opportunities and access, both in the selection of the beneficiaries as well as in the composition of staff.
- Some involved organisations applying specific equality and non-discrimination policies, tools and organisational structures (e.g., gender mainstreaming, women's committees, guidelines for posting job vacancies free of stereotypes).

The following table provides specific examples of the integration of horizontal objectives into activities of selected projects and organisations. Detailed summaries are available in the monitoring reports on projects and organisations funded by the EaSI Programme, volume XII (forthcoming)⁵³.

⁵³ European Commission (n.d.). *Publications on EU Programme for Employment and Social Innovation (EaSI)*. For more information, please see: <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1081&langId=en&furtherPubs=yes>

Table 35. Integration of horizontal objectives into activities of projects and organisations

Name of the project or organisation	Short description of the project or organisation	Integration of horizontal objectives
Microfinance Centre – Financial Inclusion for Inclusive Growth in Europe II (VS/2019/0182)	The Microfinance Centre (MFC) is a social finance network that promotes fairness, inclusion, equality and responsible service.	In 2019, MFC joined forces with Euclid, Caritas and RREUSE to work towards a greener economy. Together they issued a joint statement, which called for inclusion of social enterprises as an integral part of the fair, green and circular transition in Europe. MFC addressed the topic of migrants' access to finance. The network collaborated with a group of NGOs based in Germany, Greece, France, Bulgaria and the UK to overcome problems in financing migrants and create a broader community of EU institutions supporting migrants and refugees.
"Your first EURES job" – Targeted mobility scheme – YfEj TMS 5.0 (VS/2016/0380)	The YfEj 5.0 Project is a targeted mobility scheme that aims to support youth in making successful transitions into the EU labour market and companies, fill in bottlenecks vacancies, thereby resulting in increased employment, filled bottleneck vacancies, and sustain workers' freedom of movement in the EU-27, United Kingdom, Norway and Iceland.	The project addressed horizontal issues by delivering an EU-wide quality mobility package, embedded in the EURES system, combining information, recruitment, matching and placement services with EU financial incentives in the frame of a client-oriented, multi and cross channelling integrated and effective services, designed to respond to the individual needs of young jobseekers to employment and job mobility and to support young mobility, brain circulation and facilitate transition from school-to-work in the EU-27, United Kingdom, Norway, and Iceland.
Cross-border Øresund 2019 (VS/2018/0457)	The Cross-border Øresund partnership aims to: (1) get a better understanding of the mobility flows and their economic relevance, the mobility of different occupations, the profile of current frontier workers and their obstacles; (2) decrease youth unemployment (especially on the Swedish side); (3) match and place unemployed craftspeople and construction advisers and other academics within construction companies and subsidiary businesses particularly in Eastern Denmark; (4) help Danish and Swedish companies fill vacant positions by recruiting life science specialists from other EU/EEA countries; (5) match and place unemployed Danish academics within fields in Scania which lack academic employees; and (6) better the process of employers finding jobseekers and vice versa.	The project addressed multiple horizontal issues. The issue of youth employment was addressed by offering young Swedish jobseekers a training course thus improving their chances of obtaining a job in east Denmark. Long-term unemployment was addressed by offering help and assistance to consistently vulnerable long-term unemployment groups – young jobseekers without experience, and jobseekers above the age of 55 or more. Promotion of high-level quality and sustainable employment and adequate and decent social protection was guaranteed via living and working seminars at job fairs, courses, etc. The cross-border partnership cooperates with employers that follow the labour law and collective labour market agreements, which in turn ensures adequate and decent social protection. Moreover, the partnership works closely with and

		also refers clients to one stop shops where they receive updated and correct information about the labour market and living and working conditions in the region.
Sites d'Information, de Projets et d'Accompagnement (SIPA) (VS/2016/0206)	The overall goal of the project Sites d'Information, de Projets et d'Accompagnement (SIPA) was to provide adapted support to the most fragile and vulnerable groups of the society of the Metropolitan Community of the Montbéliard Region to reintegrate the changing labour market.	The project identified the most marginal groups of society which receive the least support and adapted the support service to their needs. The mobilisation also took place in the areas where these populations lived, with a focus on the younger parts of society with innovative approaches. The project paid special attention to gender parity. Women were offered workshops to develop their interpersonal communication skills to exit isolation within families or neighbourhoods.
MISSION: Mobile Integrated Social Services Increasing Employment Outcomes for people in Need (VS/2016/0203)	The objective of the MISSION action was to implement, test, and validate a pilot programme for integrated service delivery. Such a pilot programme was aimed to increase the take up of local employment services amongst disadvantaged families.	To combat long-term unemployment, the MISSION project implemented a pilot programme to test an innovative outreach approach for the integrated delivery of local services in the Belgian city of Kortrijk. It aimed to facilitate the integration of disadvantaged families in the labour market. The project team assessed whether the outreach pilot succeeded in reducing non-take up of local employment services as well as helped to understand the reasons for non-take up of local employment services. This enabled specific measures to improve take up of local employment services and combat long-term employment to be implemented.

Source: *Projects and organisations funded by the European Union Programme for Employment and Social Innovation (EaSI), volume XII.*

5. CONCLUSIONS

The main conclusions regarding EaSI performance monitoring 2019-2020 are presented below.

Evidence generated by EaSI contributed to the key EU policy objectives and initiatives. Much of EaSI-funded evidence fed directly into key EU policy processes such as the European Semester, including its Annual Growth Survey, country-specific recommendations, employment guidelines and joint employment reports. The evidence generated by the programme also contributed to many other policy initiatives in employment and social affairs, for instance: the EU Council's recommendations on the integration of long-term unemployed into the labour market (LTU), Youth Guarantee, Youth Employment Initiative, European Skills Agenda, the Quality Framework for Traineeships, and the European Framework for Quality and Effective Apprenticeships, social and labour market integration of migrants and refugees, the European Disability Strategy, Active Inclusion strategy, Social Investment Framework and the European Pillar of Social Rights (work-life balance, long-term care, as well as minimum income).

National, regional and local policymakers as well as other stakeholders considered EaSI-supported evidence as sound and highly useful for policymaking and advocacy purposes. The share of stakeholders who regarded the EU employment and social policy and legislation as strongly evidence-based has grown by 9 % in comparison with the previous year (83 % in 2021, 74 % in 2019). The biggest share of stakeholders who thought that EU policy was grounded in strong evidence was involved in the policy area of employment (87 %).

According to the EaSI stakeholders, **the most useful outputs were the following:**

- Labour Force Survey;
- EURES Job Mobility Portal;
- European Code of Good Conduct;
- Surveys, studies, analyses, monitoring and assessment reports (in general);
- Common methodologies, classifications, micro-simulations, indicators, benchmarks and statistical data (in general).

In 2019-2020, the EaSI Programme remained strong in facilitating effective and inclusive information sharing, mutual learning, and dialogue on the EU policies in the target fields. Overall, 76 % of stakeholders declared that they have already used or intend to use information acquired during the events for policymaking or advocacy purposes. (86 % in 2017-2018; 85 % in 2015-2016; 89 % in 2014).

The opinion on the involvement of relevant policy- and decision-makers in the debate on EU employment and social policy and legislation remained positive among stakeholders. In total, 82 % of stakeholders believe that the debate on EU employment and social policy legislation included relevant EU and national policy- and decision-makers in 2019-2020.

Participants in EaSI-funded events were slightly more positive than in previous years: 82 % of them said that the EaSI-supported events, in which they participated, involved relevant EU and national policy- and decision-makers (81 % in 2017-2019; 85 % in 2015-2016; 91 % in 2014).

The Commission's goal to support social policy innovations remained highly visible. A large number (73 %) of stakeholders agree that the Commission is an effective source of guidance and support for social and labour innovation. Also, the share of stakeholders who personally used or intend to use EU-funded social policy innovation remained high as well at 62 % (64 % in 2019; 42 % in 2017; 62 % in 2014).

EaSI continued to provide 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. **EaSI-funded events remained valuable for knowledge and capacity building purposes.** In 2019-2020, 88 % of participants reported that their participation in a specific EaSI-funded event improved their competence to further develop, promote and support the implementation of EU employment and social policy and legislation (88 % in 2017-2018; 84 % in 2015-2016; 88 % in 2014).

In 2019-2020, EaSI continued to fund the operating costs of the key EU-level NGO networks active in the area of employment and social affairs. In total, 23 EU level NGOs received funding from the EaSI Programme. **The appreciation of key EU-level NGOs has decreased.** 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 61 % (68 % in 2019; 70 % in 2017; 68 % in 2015). The most well-known of these networks were Caritas Europa (48 % of stakeholders were aware of this network), European Social Network (46 %), Eurocities (33 %) and the European Anti-Poverty Network (29 %).

With a view to contributing to stronger ownership of EU objectives, the EaSI-funded events continued to provide a better understanding of EU policies to their participants. Most of the participants (91 %) in EaSI-funded events gained a better understanding of EU policies and objectives as a result of participating in an EaSI-funded event (91 % in 2017-2018; 87 % in 2015-2016; 91 % in 2014).

The sense of collaboration between the national governments and EU officials remained high and stable. Around 90 % of EaSI stakeholders working at national, regional or local government institution declared that they feel a sense of collaboration between their organisation and the EU institutions (89 % in 2019; 88 % in 2017; 86 % in 2015). The percentage is high for all groups of stakeholders. In total, 81 % feel a sense of collaboration between their organisation and the EU institutions.

In 2019-2020, EaSI induced transparency of labour market information. Even though the use of the EURES Job Mobility Portal was rather uneven from one year to another, the number of registered users increased. According to the latest data, the EURES Job Mobility Portal attracted around 0.43 million monthly users in 2019 and more than 0.42 million monthly users in 2020. An increase in the number of both registered jobseekers and employers is also being observed every year. According to the latest data, in 2018, on average, around 74.12 % of all national vacancies are posted on EURES.

EURES acted not only as a catalyst for providing transparent labour market information but also for effective recruitment and placing of workers. Cross-border partnerships reported 195 060 contacts with jobseekers and job changers in 2019-2020. Targeted mobility schemes (Your First EURES Job) in comparison, provided services to several hundreds of jobseekers per year / per scheme, but were more targeted and customised. While all cross-border partnerships which finalised their activities in 2019 translated 0.76 % of contacts into placements, targeted mobility schemes facilitated 29.1 % of contacts into actual placements.

2019-2020 marked a strong period for the Microfinance and Social Entrepreneurship axis. Microfinance support continued to provide real added value. Altogether 34 contracts worth more than EUR 74 million were signed with microfinance intermediaries. The cumulative number of microloans at the end of 2020 was 97 271 with a total value of EUR 1.27 billion (the leverage of 5.3 was achieved).

Support for social enterprises has increased significantly. In total, 3 337 social enterprises received funding through the EaSI Social Entrepreneurship Window by the end of 2020. Together, the amount of funding provided to final recipients amounted to more than EUR 490 million, with an average of EUR 147 135 per enterprise.

Finally, when implementing all activities, according to the stakeholders, the EaSI Programme considered the following horizontal objectives the most:

- promoting a high level of quality and sustainable employment;
- guaranteeing adequate and decent social protection;
- paying particular attention to vulnerable groups, such as young people;
- combating long-term unemployment;
- fighting against poverty and social exclusion.

6. CONSOLIDATED INFORMATION ON FINANCIAL INPUTS

Table 36. Indicative and individual commitments by axes for 2019

Axis	Planned commitments (€)	Actual Commitments (€)	Share of actual commitments in the total budget of the Programme	Execution rate
Progress (>55 %)	80 750 408.00	80 728 270.45	59 %	100 %
EURES (>18 %)	33 761 331.00	33 755 332.72	25 %	100 %
MF/SE (>18 %)	20 843 726.00	20 843 726.00	15 %	100 %
Support EaSI	3 400 000.00	1 510 040.88	1 %	44 %
Grand Total	138 755 465.00	136 837 370.05		99 %

Source: DG EMPL.

Table 37. Indicative and individual commitments by axes for 2020

Axis	Planned commitments (€)	Actual Commitments (€)	Share of actual commitments in the total budget of the Programme	Execution rate
Progress (>55 %)	79 777 390.00	79 172 352.10	67 %	99 %
EURES (>18 %)	23 018 174.00	23 001 378.12	19 %	100 %
MF/SE (>18 %)	14 254 929.00	14 254 929.00	12 %	100 %
Support EaSI	2 500 000.00	1 805 425.00	2 %	72 %
Grand Total	119 550 493.00	118 234 084.22		99 %

Source: DG EMPL.

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