



CONTRIBUTION OF THE EUROPEAN STRUCTURAL AND INVESTMENT FUNDS TO THE 10 COMMISSION PRIORITIES ECONOMIC AND MONETARY UNION





HOW ARE THE EUROPEAN STRUCTURAL AND INVESTMENT FUNDS (ESI FUNDS) CONTRIBUTING TO THIS COMMISSION PRIORITY 2014-2020?

The single currency has eased cross-border trade and investment, brought price stability and business opportunities, and made travel a lot cheaper. However, the financial crisis showed that the EU needs to keep an eagle eye on its economic policy to safeguard jobs, growth, social fairness and financial stability.

HOW CAN THE EUROPEAN STRUCTURAL AND INVESTMENT FUNDS HELP?

For the first time, the 2014-2020 programming period has involved so-called **Country Specific Recommendations (CSRs)** and **National Reform Programmes (NRPs)**. As a result, this programming period should strengthen ties between the goals of the European Semester process, the EU's top economic priorities and the programming of the European Structural and Investment Funds (ESI Funds).

By linking this new policy with the Stability and Growth Pact and the support for structural reforms in Member States, the ESI Funds can make the best use of investments and offer an instrument to ensure the financial and economic stability of the Union. It is important to assess the social effects of these structural reforms, while making the fight against poverty a priority.



ESI FUND ACTIONS: 2014-2020

COUNTRY SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS

For 2014-2020 the ESI Fund legislation introduced a very strong policy and results orientation for the Funds by **linking them directly to the CSRs**, in order to contribute to the achievement of the Europe 2020 headline targets. This is being achieved in a number of ways:

- Monitoring the **consistency** of Partnership Agreements and Programmes with the NRPs and CSRs.
- **Adjusting programmes where necessary** following the new priorities identified in the framework of the European Semester. Any changes should always be done in consultation with the involved Member States and regions.
- Providing **substantial resources – financial support, training initiatives and exchange of good practice – for structural reforms.**

More than two-thirds of the Country Specific Recommendations (CSRs) were relevant for cohesion policy investments and have been translated into Member State programmes' priorities. Examples of CSRs where the Funds support reforms include improvements to the functioning of the labour market as well as education and health-care reforms.



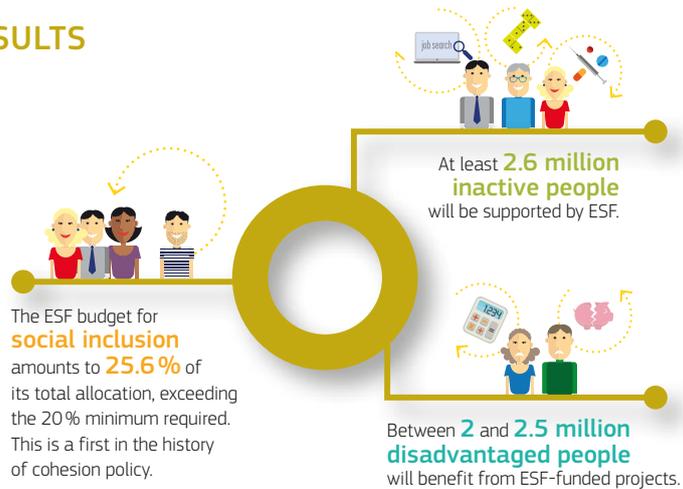
SOCIAL INCLUSION AND AN ACTIVE LABOUR MARKET

Promoting social inclusion and an active labour market under the European Social Fund (ESF) will provide more opportunities for individuals and businesses. Measures for this period include improved access to the labour market, support for labour market organisations and more worker mobility. ESF will in particular **target groups most in need of support** – the long-term unemployed, inactive or unemployed youth and older workers.

The ESI Funds can also **support migrants**, including refugees and asylum seekers once a Member State has granted them the right to work. Funds can ease access to the labour market and promote social inclusion through education, vocational training, one stop-shops, counselling, coaching activities and language courses.



EXPECTED RESULTS





PROJECT EXAMPLES

- Following country specific recommendations, structural funds will support Bulgarian, Romanian, Slovakian, Lithuanian and Latvian healthcare reforms and a more efficient health spend. In **Slovakia**, for example, ESI Funds will support the national strategy for integrated care by modernising health care infrastructure and improving access to quality services in primary and acute bed health care.
- **'I'm learning again'**, a project co-financed by ESF in Hungary, offers unskilled and low-skilled people the chance to boost their employability by offering training options that match the needs of the country's economy. By January 2015 129 000 people, including some 34 000 Roma, had already successfully completed training modules.
<http://europa.eu/!Cu66cm>
- **STEP** is a one-year project for people from disadvantaged communities in Western Scotland. STEP used community outreach events to attract candidates, and offered assistance at every stage: from promoting punctuality to arranging contacts with local employers. Within five months STEP had attracted 1 100 of its targeted 1 200 participants and provided training in a range of fields including administration, tourism, hairdressing, childcare, construction and computing.
<http://europa.eu/!Qv86hk>

More factsheets on how ESI Funds contribute to Commission priorities are available at http://ec.europa.eu/contracts_grants/funds_en.htm

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