



Work Programme Funding priorities for 2014

European Union Programme for
Employment and Social Innovation
(EaSI)

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1. Introduction

The EU Programme for Employment and Social Innovation – EaSI¹ – is established to contribute to the implementation of the Europe 2020, including its headline targets, Integrated Guidelines and flagship initiatives, by providing financial support for the Union’s objectives in terms of **promoting a high level of quality and sustainable employment, guaranteeing adequate and decent social protection, combating social exclusion and poverty and improving working conditions.**

The Programme incorporates and extends the coverage of three existing Programmes, the Programme for Employment and Social Solidarity (Progress), European Employment Services (EURES) and the Progress Microfinance Facility, which represents three complementary axes.

The Programme plays a key role in terms of supporting:

- the Union policies and law, to promote evidence-based policy-making, social innovation and social progress, in partnership with the social partners, civil society organisations and public and private bodies
- voluntary geographical mobility for workers on a fair basis and contributing to a high level of quality and sustainable employment information exchanges and dissemination and other forms of cooperation, such as cross-border partnerships;
- access to, and the availability of, financing for vulnerable persons and support the development of the social investment market and facilitate access to finance for social enterprises.

2. Policy context in employment, social and working conditions fields

There are signs of fragile economic recovery, but economic growth is unlikely to be sustained unless it is inclusive and job rich, especially while labour market and social conditions remain extremely challenging and divergence between countries is growing.

The EU is struggling with many challenges:

- High unemployment has already led to all-time high long-term unemployment;
- Large job destruction has aggravated low employment;
- In the same time precarious employment has increased and labour mismatches occurred with the rise of structural unemployment;
- The impact of the crisis has seen rising inequality with the lower income groups hardest hit by job losses;
- The number of young people not in education, employment and training (NEET) expanded;
- Poverty and social exclusion has increased, following rise in jobless households and rise in in-work poverty, and household incomes have declined.

Policy responses to confront the employment and social challenges and ensure a job-rich recovery are necessary in following areas: investing in jobs and people; improving labour market functioning; increasing the effectiveness and efficiency of tax and benefit systems; and, constructing a genuine social dimension of the European Monetary Union.

¹ REGULATION (EU) No 1296/2013 OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL of 11 December 2013 on a European Union Programme for Employment and Social Innovation (“EaSI”) and amending Decision No 283/2010/EU establishing a European Progress Microfinance Facility for employment and social inclusion

3. EaSI objectives and priorities

Taking into account the context presented above, the 2014 Work Programme should:

- address the policy challenges outlined above, the consequences of the economic crisis, particularly fighting unemployment, reducing poverty within a context of budgetary constraints;
- ensure strong prioritisation and optimal alignment of EaSI-related expenditure with the goals of Europe 2020;
- focus on activities with the highest EU added-value, including new legislative initiatives;
- promote complementarities across axes and with other EU instruments, such as transnational cooperation under the European Social Fund or support for social dialogue.

2014 will represent the launch of the Programme; the first Work Programme should aim to set out the policy priorities that will guide next year's funding priorities. However 2014 is also the last year of this Commission and EU Parliament; new priorities will be fixed for the next five years. Therefore the EaSI Work Programme reflects the main policy priorities but would need to be reviewed for 2015 and following years.

It should be noted that the 2014 Work Programme of EaSI is established taking into account the activities already launched in 2013 and the years before under the three previous Programmes.

3.1. EASI-PROGRESS AXIS THEMATIC SECTIONS AND SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

The EaSI-Progress axis will support the development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the **Union instruments and policies**. It will help the EU and the Member States to improve the policies in three main thematic sections: **a) employment, in particular to fight youth unemployment; b) social protection, social inclusion and the reduction and prevention of poverty; c) working conditions**. The EaSI PROGRESS axis represents 61 % of the financial envelope for the implementation of the Programme.

The preparation of the Work Programme for EaSI-PROGRESS takes notably into account the comments provided by the Members of the Committee in April 2013 about the main milestones and policy priorities for 2014. The views of the policy Committees dealing with EaSI-Progress issues² have been asked between May and September 2013. They have in overall agreed with the Commission's proposals.

The section below presents the specific objectives and the main funding priorities for the thematic sections.

² *Employment Committee, the Social Protection Committee, the Advisory Committee on Safety, Hygiene and Health Protection at Work, the General Directors on Industrial Relations.*

3.1.1. Develop and disseminate comparative analytical knowledge and provide evidences on Union's policies

The specific objective of the EaSI-Progress axis aiming to develop analytical knowledge helps to ensure that policy and legislation are based on sound, relevant comparative data and analysis. The Programme will contribute to this new policy tool. Evidences gathered through studies, analysis, statistics and EU surveys will be used to shape policy developments under the European Employment Strategy, social protection and social inclusion OMC and working conditions policies and to develop potential new legislative initiatives.

The planned expenditures amount to around €15.5 million, which represent 22% of the financial envelop of the 2014 Progress Work Programme.

The **employment** thematic section will continue to support and develop the Commission's capacity to analyse and assess national and Union's employment policies in the framework of the Europe 2020 semester and implementation of the European Employment Strategy. Following the adoption of the Youth Employment Package³ in 2013 a comprehensive set of analytical activities and EU surveys will be launched. The anticipation of skills needs, analysis of skills supply and labour market needs will be supported through the monitoring of labour demand and supply across the EU and of the benchmarking of skills governance, including effectiveness of Public Employment Services. The multilingual classification of European skills competences, occupation and qualification (ESCO) will be further continued.

The **social protection/social inclusion** thematic section will continue to support the development of appropriate policy advice, research and analysis relating to the three strands of the OMC (social protection, social inclusion and long term care). The capacity to assess the impact of outcomes policy measures will continue through EUROMOD, including development of dynamic micro-simulation modelling. New topics for analytical work to address the social consequences of the crisis will be developed such as the methodology for determining the financial and social return on investment for social policies, the development of a framework for assessing health care and the stock taking exercise on housing and social services.

The main activities in the **working conditions** section will focus on evaluating EU labour law legislations, supporting the scientific committee of occupational exposure limits, launching an Eurobarometer on working conditions or analysing the EU labour inspection systems and the promotion of the occupational safety and health strategy (OHS). In addition, international organisations like the International Agency for Research on Cancer, the International Labour Organisation or the International Commission on Non-Ionizing Radiation Protection will be supported in their research activities in order to strengthen the knowledge base in the area of occupational health and safety.

The Work Programme also includes analytical activities which **combine issues and policy themes** described above to enhance the knowledge of global employment and social policy challenges that may impact on EU policy in these fields (e.g. on migration or adults competences) as well as statistical tools (e.g. statistics on income and living conditions and labour force survey on work organisation). The possibility to quickly launch specific targeted studies on emerging themes is also foreseen.

³ COM(2012) 727 from 5/12/2012

3.1.2. Improve information-sharing, learning and dialogue

EaSI-Progress aims to foster a shared understanding of, and consensus among stakeholders on, problem identification and policy options or solutions that respond to real needs. EU policy initiatives need broad-based support at both EU and national level. EaSI-Progress helps to create such an enabling environment by providing for high-quality, inclusive, participatory policy debates.

The specific objective information-sharing and learning will support EU, national and international information-sharing, mutual learning and dialogues in order to develop Union's policies and laws. Activities which have key EU added value for this specific objective are for instance the EU experts' networks which allow learning and exchanges about policies and legislation developments.

The planned activities under this specific objective represent around €22.5 million 32% of the financial envelop.

Under the **employment thematic** section the European Employment Policy Observatory (EEPO) will provide information on policy developments in the field of employment; mutual learning programmes are foreseen to support cooperation between public employment services, with the Sectoral Skills Councils and on various themes such as skills and employment, youth employment, social entrepreneurship and household services.

The **social protection /social inclusion** thematic section will support notably the new social policy experts' network, mutual learning through the European Platform against Poverty and Social Exclusion, mutual Information on Social Protection (MISSOC) and the share of best practices in the fields defined in the Social Investment Package⁴.

The thematic section on **working conditions** will support the European labour law network to provide the Commission with relevant information regarding the application of EU law in Member States, the work of the new EU platform on undeclared work, as well as the Labour inspectors (SLIC).

A set of activities on a **combination of issues and policy themes** will take place at EU level. Information and communication activities will raise awareness on priority issues. For instance specific means will be dedicated to communication activities centred around growth and jobs events and conferences (including those organised by the Presidencies) will allow reinforcing dialogue and mutual learning at regional, national, European and international level and mobilise key policy/decision-makers and stakeholders with a view to creating the necessary support for meeting EU objectives and priorities.

3.1.3. Test social and labour market policy innovation and build capacity to design and implement social policy innovation

EaSI-Progress axis specific objective on policy innovation and experimentation aims 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 accessible.

⁴ COM(2013) 883 from 20/02/2013

The planned activities under the heading "Social Policy Experimentation" represent around €12 million 17% of the financial envelop.

Support is foreseen through grants to public authorities and organisations to test innovative social and active labour market policy reforms aiming also to the modernisation of the welfare states in line with Europe 2020 and the policy priorities supported by the EaSI Programme. Dissemination and awareness-raising is also foreseen at national and regional level to encourage shared interest from stakeholders. It will in particular emphasise the link between the new tested measures and their transferability and mainstreaming via other EU instruments (such as the ESF) and national / regional policies.

3.1.4. Increase the capacity of Union and national organisations to develop, promote and implement Union policies and law

EaSI-Progress will support the capacity to deliver Union's policies and laws at national and European level. The expenditures planned in 2014 for those activities amount to around 20.1 million and represent about 29% of the financial envelop.

The European Commission pursues its key role in promoting the involvement of civil society, in particular under the social inclusion thematic section through **financial support for key Union level networks**.

The support to the specific issue of **Roma integration** will also be addressed under the social inclusion thematic section, the capacity to deliver measures for Roma inclusion at local level will be subject of cooperation with the Council of Europe.

In addition, it is foreseen to support the capacity of Union and national organisations to implement EU policies and laws in the policy fields supported by the Programme. This will involve for instance to support under the **youth employment** policy theme the implementation of Youth Guarantees, including apprenticeship and quality traineeships, programmes and initiatives. It will also imply, under the social protection thematic section, the support to **cross-border cooperation of pension** and financial providers and to support the Union's electronic exchange of social security platform.

Finally administrative cooperation will also be strengthened for cross-border cooperation in the area of **posting of workers**.

3.2. EASI-EURES AXIS THEMATIC SECTIONS AND SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

EaSI-EURES axis will help the EU and the Member States to improve their policies in three thematic sections: **a) transparency of job vacancies, job applications and any related information for applicants jobseekers, workers and employers, b) development of services for the recruitment and placing of workers in employment through the clearance of job vacancies and job applications at Union level, in particular targeted mobility schemes and c) cross-border partnerships**.

This axis will support activities to develop information exchanges and dissemination and other forms of cooperation, such as cross-border partnerships, to promote job seekers and workers' voluntary geographical mobility on a fair basis, including services

to employers, and boost employment opportunities by developing high-quality and inclusive European labour markets that are open and accessible to all while respecting workers and job seekers' rights throughout the Union, including freedom of movement. The EaSI EURES axis represents about 21.5 million 18 % of the financial envelop.

The section below presents the main funding priorities foreseen in 2014 under three thematic sections:

3.2.1. Ensure transparency of job vacancies for the potential applicants and the employers

The transparency of job vacancies will be supported through **exchange and dissemination** at transnational, interregional and cross-border level, the use of standard interoperability forms for job vacancies and applications and other means, such as individual counselling and mentoring, especially for the low skilled.

Trainings on EURES services to be offered to both job-seekers and employers are foreseen for EURES advisers and other staff from Public Employment Services and social partner organisations involved in EURES activities as well as other EURES partner organisations. The maintenance, hosting, translation and help desk for the **European job mobility portal** will contribute to achieve the transparency of job vacancies, applications and any related information for applicants and employers.

3.2.2. Development of EURES services for the recruitment and placing of workers in quality and sustainable employment

The EaSI-EURES will support the recruitment and placing of workers in quality and sustainable employment through the clearance of job vacancies and applications. It will extend the existing support 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.

The **targeted mobility schemes** to fill job vacancies in certain sectors, occupations, countries or a group of countries or for particular groups of workers and job seekers (such as young people) with a propensity to be mobile where a clear economic need has been identified, will build on the pilot project "Your First EURES Job". Support is foreseen in 2014 for their implementation by public, private or third sector labour market organisations from the EU/EEA countries.

The Programme will support the **Public Employment Services (PESs)** cooperation through the "*EURES network*" of more than 5 000 local employment offices through coordination meetings. Support will also be provided to ensure the representation of Social partners in the Advisory Committee and their cooperation with the Member States.

3.2.3. Cross-border partnerships

The **cross border partnerships** will be further supported and developed aiming to meet the need for information and coordination connected with labour mobility in the border regions. These partnerships will bring together public employment and vocational training services, employers and trades union organisations, local

authorities and other institutions dealing with employment and vocational training. They are a key element in the development of a genuine European labour market.

The EaSI-EURES Work Programme also includes activities which **complement issues** described above such as the evaluation of these activities, the innovative communication and promotional activities.

3.3. EASI-MF/SE AXIS THEMATIC SECTIONS

The EaSI-Microfinance and Social Entrepreneurship axis will support actions in two thematic sections: **a) microfinance for vulnerable groups and micro-enterprises, b) social entrepreneurship.**

The Microfinance and Social Entrepreneurship axis, will aim 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. This axis represents about 24.3 million 21 % of the financial envelop.

The main funding priorities for the thematic sections are the following:

3.3.1. Increase access to, and the availability of, microfinance

Increase access to microfinance by extending funding to microcredit providers with the objective of improving access to, and availability of microfinance, particularly to persons facing difficulties to access the credit market such as 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 with regard to access to the conventional credit market and who wish to start up or develop their own micro-enterprises.

3.3.2. Build up the institutional capacity of microcredit providers

The EaSI-MF/SE Work Programme includes activities to **support capacity-building activities for microfinance and social entrepreneurship.** Such funding could take multiple forms and can be used, for example, by a microcredit provider to buy an IT system.

3.3.3. Support the development of the social investment market and facilitate access to finance for social enterprises

Develop the new financial instrument for social entrepreneurship to promote social entrepreneurship by making available hybrid financing for social enterprises in the form of a combination of equity, quasi-equity, loan instruments and grants. Complementarity will be ensured between these actions and those undertaken in the framework of cohesion policy and national policies.

The EaSI-MF/SE Work Programme includes **activities which combine issues** to support the implementation of this axis such as information and communication activities.

3.4. TRANSVERSAL PRIORITIES AND ISSUES

In pursuing those objectives, the EaSI Work Programme will, in all its axes and actions, pay particular attention to:

- promote a high-level of quality and sustainable employment, guarantee adequate and decent social protection,
- combat long-term unemployment, fight against poverty and social exclusion and target people in vulnerable situation, such as the young “NEET”
- promote equality between women and men including through gender mainstreaming and, where appropriate, gender budgeting;
- combat discrimination based on sex, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation

4. Complementarity with other Programmes

The Programme will complement other Union programmes, synergies will be developed between EaSI, other Union programmes (for instance Rights and Citizenship or Horizon 2020) and the Structural Funds, especially the ESF and the Youth Employment Initiative.

Member States will be encouraged to consider the practical implementation of successful ideas tested notably through employment and social policy experimentation to be pursued with financial support from the ESF (as well as from other sources) so as to increase the efficiency of their labour markets and to further improve their social protection and inclusion policies.

5. Participation

- The Programme is open to the EU 28 Member States.
- The EEA countries and EFTA Member States will define whether they will participate in the Programme and integrate EaSI axis in the EEA Agreement.
- The participation in the Progress and Microfinance and Social Entrepreneurship axes is also open to the candidate countries and potential candidates' countries (not the EaSI-EURES axis). New International Agreement should be signed between the European Commission and the countries to fix the scope of the participation and the related financial contribution.

6. Monitoring and evaluating the performance of EaSI and improving dissemination

As part of the activities foreseen for launching the Programme, efforts will also be made to provide visibility to the programme through a brochure on EaSI and a new website.

The monitoring of performance of EaSI will also start in the light of the main operational conclusions of the current Annual Performance Monitoring system through a new contract that starts end of 2013. A first qualitative and quantitative monitoring report covering the first year of implementation of the Programme is foreseen in 2015.

This contract foresees also improving the dissemination of examples of good practices funded through calls for proposals.

The PROGRESS ex-post evaluation is also on-going as a preparatory analysis and has brought useful intermediary results to help to shape the design of the activities. The results will be available in 2014.

7. Financial appropriations

Financial forecast for the operational expenditures under EaSI for the seven years.

Forecast of operational expenditure by axis and thematic sections for the seven years

		2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	Total
PROGRESS	61%	70,307,298	72,480,130	74,421,813	76,784,734	79,004,538	81,522,886	86,098,505	540,619,903
Employment. Min.	20%	14,061,460	14,496,026	14,884,363	15,356,947	15,800,908	16,304,577	17,219,701	108,123,981
Social protect. Min.	50%	35,153,649	36,240,065	37,210,907	38,392,367	39,502,269	40,761,443	43,049,253	270,309,952
Working condit. Min	10%	7,030,730	7,248,013	7,442,181	7,678,473	7,900,454	8,152,289	8,609,851	54,061,990
Cross-cutting max	20%	14,061,460	14,496,026	14,884,363	15,356,947	15,800,908	16,304,577	17,219,701	108,123,981
EURES	18%	20,746,416	21,387,579	21,960,535	22,657,790	23,312,814	24,055,934	25,406,116	159,527,185
transparency min.	32%	6,638,853	6,844,025	7,027,371	7,250,493	7,460,101	7,697,899	8,129,957	51,048,699
development min	30%	6,223,925	6,416,274	6,588,161	6,797,337	6,993,844	7,216,780	7,621,835	47,858,155
cross-border min	18%	3,734,355	3,849,764	3,952,896	4,078,402	4,196,307	4,330,068	4,573,101	28,714,893
Cross-cutting max	20%	4,149,283	4,277,516	4,392,107	4,531,558	4,662,563	4,811,187	5,081,223	31,905,437
MF/SE	21%	24,204,152	24,952,176	25,620,624	26,434,089	27,198,284	28,065,256	29,640,469	186,115,049
microfinance min	45%	10,891,868	11,228,479	11,529,281	11,895,340	12,239,228	12,629,365	13,338,211	83,751,772
social entrepren min	45%	10,891,868	11,228,479	11,529,281	11,895,340	12,239,228	12,629,365	13,338,211	83,751,772
Cross-cutting max	10%	2,420,415	2,495,218	2,562,062	2,643,409	2,719,828	2,806,526	2,964,047	18,611,505
TOTAL EaSI operational expend.		115,257,865	118,819,885	122,002,972	125,876,612	129,515,636	133,644,076	141,145,091	886,262,137

The total amount of the 2014 Work Programme operating expenditure (excluding EFTA-EEA contributions), amounts to **€118.10 million**.

Allocation of operating expenditure by axis and specific objectives for 2014

EaSI Axis and thematic sections	Max amounts	Min amounts	Value	%
EaSI-Progress Total	71,176,000		71,249,494	
EaSI-Progress Thematic sections				
a) PROGRESS Employment		14,061,460	16,722,000	23%
b) PROGRESS Social protection		35,153,649	36,106,220	51%
c) PROGRESS Working conditions		7,030,730	7,604,274	11%
d) PROGRESS Cross-cutting issues	14,235,200		10,817,000	15%
<i>EaSI-Progress Specific objectives</i>				
<i>a) EaSI - PROGRESS_Analytical knowledge and comparative information</i>			16,210,274	23%
<i>b) EaSI - PROGRESS_Information-sharing mutual learning and dialogue</i>			22,777,000	32%
<i>c) EaSI - PROGRESS_Capacity building for organisations</i>			20,620,220	29%
<i>d) EaSI - PROGRESS_Social policy experimentation</i>	14,235,200	10,546,095	11,970,000	17%
EaSI-EURES Total	21,300,000		21,422,355	
EaSI-EURES Thematic sections				
a) EURES Transparency of job vacancies		6,816,000	7,050,000	33%
b) EURES Development of services		6,390,000	9,772,000	46%
c) EURES Cross-border partnership		3,834,000	3,862,355	18%
d) EURES Cross-cutting issues			738,000	3%
<i>EaSI-EURES Specific objectives</i>				
<i>a) Transparency information on job vacancies and applications</i>			7,058,000	33%
<i>b) Services for the recruitment and placing of workers</i>			14,364,355	67%
EaSI-Micro-finance and Social Entrepreneurship Total	26,500,000		26,304,151	
a) MF/SE Microfinance		11,925,000	11,891,868	45%
b) MF/SE Social Entrepreneurship		11,925,000	11,891,868	45%
c) MF/SE Cross-cutting issues	2,650,000		2,520,415	10%
TOTAL EASI	118,976,000		118,976,000	