



Report shows European Structural and Investment Funds have European added value by supporting investment and helping companies, workers and citizens in coping with the pandemic *

Brussels, 17 December 2021

Today, the European Commission has published the 2021 Summary Report on the Implementation of the European Structural and Investment Funds (ESI Funds). The report presents the cumulative achievements of the ESI Funds for the 2014-2020 period by the end of 2020.

The ESI Funds amount to €461 billion over the 2014-2020 period. Complemented by national co-financing, these funds have triggered so far an overall investment of €640 billion (excluding the REACT-EU resources) to foster lasting socio-economic convergence, a smooth green and digital transition, resilience, and territorial cohesion.

Executive Vice-President, Valdis **Dombrovskis**, said: *"The European Structural and Investment Funds provide real European added value through tailored growth-enhancing investments for regional development. Throughout 2020, the ESI funds were a frontline response to the coronavirus pandemic. ESI funds allowed workers to keep their jobs, businesses to survive and healthcare facilities to cope with unprecedented pressure. In the future, ESI funds will continue to play their part in reducing regional disparities and promoting long-term growth and a fair, digital and green recovery in the EU."*

Commissioner for Cohesion and Reforms, Elisa **Ferreira**, said: *"The European Structural and Investment Funds bring real European added value to EU Citizens. In 2020, the cohesion policy adapted quickly and with great flexibility, to provide a swift response to the public health crisis. Through the CRII package, adopted just a few months after the pandemic outbreak, cohesion policy offered immediate liquidity and financial support to regions and Member States. At the same time, implementation in the main priority areas for sustainable and inclusive growth progressed with investments in innovation, research, climate, employment and SMEs among others. While the provision of emergency support was essential, ESI funds should continue their core mission of reducing regional disparities."*

ESI funds' investments are directed to the real economy

Concrete achievements of the ESI funds by the end of 2020 include:

- supporting 3 million enterprises with additional working capital;
- creating 236,500 new jobs;
- improving the energy efficiency of more than 359,000 households;
- helping 45 million people with employment, social inclusion or education actions;
- supporting over 2 million projects in the agricultural sector and rural areas;
- maintaining 31,500 jobs and creating 4,000 new jobs in the maritime and fisheries sector.

ESI funds adapted to needs during the Covid-19 crisis

ESI Funds have been one of the main instruments in the fight against the Covid-19 pandemic. In spring 2020, thanks to the Coronavirus Response Investment Initiative package (CRII and CRII+), Member States were given the possibility to re-allocate unspent Cohesion policy funds to priority areas such as healthcare, short-time work schemes and support to SMEs. Total cohesion policy support to cope with the pandemic under CRII and CRII+ support reached €21.3 billion.

Besides this immediate crisis response, supplementary resources have been added to the Cohesion policy funding 2014-2020 via the REACT-EU, a top up of €50.6 billion that Member States can use in the course of 2021 and 2022 to spur the recovery and support a sound green and digital transition. REACT-EU was the very first instrument to be used under NextGenerationEU with the first payment made in June 2021.

Background

The Annual Summary report of ESI Funds covering implementation in 2014-2020 is a requirement as per Article 53 of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013. This year's report presents the evolution in the financial implementation of the ESI Funds of the 2014-2020 period up to the end of 2020.

As one of the largest investment instruments under the EU budget, the ESI Funds support the territorial, economic and social cohesion of Europe's regions, as well as their resilience and recovery from the crisis faced in the past years. They comprise of:

- the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF);
- the European Social Fund (ESF);
- the Cohesion Fund (CF);
- the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) and
- the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF).

The policy objectives pursued with the ESI Funds include:

- smart, sustainable and inclusive growth,
- strengthening the institutional capacity of public administration,
- urban development and territorial cooperation (Interreg).

More information

[2021 Summary Report on the Implementation of European Structural and Investment Funds](#)

[Annexes to the 2021 Summary Report](#)

[ESI Funds Open Data Platform – A guide to investment progress](#)

[Coronavirus Response Investment Initiative \(CRII\)](#) and [Coronavirus Response Investment Initiative Plus \(CRII+\)](#)

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