

Public consultation on the ex post evaluation of the European Regional Development Fund & the Cohesion Fund 2014-2020

Fields marked with * are mandatory.

Introduction

The European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and Cohesion Fund (CF) are aimed to increase the economic, social and territorial cohesion in the European Union by reducing disparities between its regions. The ERDF invests in the social and economic development of all EU regions and cities; the CF invests in environment and transport in the less prosperous EU countries. In the 2014-2020 period the two funds invested around EUR 290 billion, equal to more than 70% of the entire EU budget for cohesion policy (see https://cohesiondata.ec.europa.eu/2014-2020_cohesion_overview).

The aim of this consultation is to seek feedback from the main stakeholders and the wider public on the interventions funded by ERDF and CF during 2014-2020 programming period in the 27 Member States plus the UK. The consultation will contribute to the evidence collected during the ERDF and CF 2014-2020 ex post evaluation (https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/en/policy/evaluations/ec/2014-2020/).

The results of the consultation, together with other analyses and studies, will feed into the ex post evaluation, which is aimed to examine the effectiveness and efficiency of the funds and their contribution to the Union strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth, in order to produce lessons for the current and future policy.

A factual summary report of the public consultation will be published within 8 weeks from the closure of the public consultation along with the contributions to the consultation on the '[Have Your Say](#)' web portal of the Commission.

The time estimated to fill in the questionnaire is around 20 minutes.

About you

* Language of my contribution

- Bulgarian
- Croatian
- Czech
- Danish

- Dutch
- English
- Estonian
- Finnish
- French
- German
- Greek
- Hungarian
- Irish
- Italian
- Latvian
- Lithuanian
- Maltese
- Polish
- Portuguese
- Romanian
- Slovak
- Slovenian
- Spanish
- Swedish

* I am giving my contribution as

- Academic/research institution
- Business association
- Company/business
- Consumer organisation
- EU citizen
- Environmental organisation
- Non-EU citizen
- Non-governmental organisation (NGO)
- Public authority
- Trade union
- Other

* First name

Felicia

* Surname

Covalciuc

* Email (this won't be published)

felicia.covalciuc@aecm.eu

* Organisation name

255 character(s) maximum

European Association of Guarantee Institutions (AECM)

* Organisation size

- Micro (1 to 9 employees)
- Small (10 to 49 employees)
- Medium (50 to 249 employees)
- Large (250 or more)

Transparency register number

255 character(s) maximum

Check if your organisation is on the [transparency register](#). It's a voluntary database for organisations seeking to influence EU decision-making.

67611102869-33

* Country of origin

Please add your country of origin, or that of your organisation.

This list does not represent the official position of the European institutions with regard to the legal status or policy of the entities mentioned. It is a harmonisation of often divergent lists and practices.

- Afghanistan
- Djibouti
- Libya
- Saint Martin
- Åland Islands
- Dominica
- Liechtenstein
- Saint Pierre and Miquelon
- Albania
- Dominican Republic
- Lithuania
- Saint Vincent and the Grenadines
- Algeria
- Ecuador
- Luxembourg
- Samoa

- American Samoa
- Andorra
- Angola
- Anguilla
- Antarctica
- Antigua and Barbuda
- Argentina
- Armenia
- Aruba
- Australia
- Austria
- Azerbaijan
- Bahamas
- Bahrain
- Bangladesh
- Barbados
- Belarus
- Belgium
- Belize
- Benin
- Bermuda
- Bhutan
- Bolivia
- Bonaire Saint Eustatius and Saba
- Bosnia and Herzegovina
- Botswana
- Egypt
- El Salvador
- Equatorial Guinea
- Eritrea
- Estonia
- Eswatini
- Ethiopia
- Falkland Islands
- Faroe Islands
- Fiji
- Finland
- France
- French Guiana
- French Polynesia
- French Southern and Antarctic Lands
- Gabon
- Georgia
- Germany
- Ghana
- Gibraltar
- Greece
- Greenland
- Grenada
- Guadeloupe
- Guam
- Guatemala
- Macau
- Madagascar
- Malawi
- Malaysia
- Maldives
- Mali
- Malta
- Marshall Islands
- Martinique
- Mauritania
- Mauritius
- Mayotte
- Mexico
- Micronesia
- Moldova
- Monaco
- Mongolia
- Montenegro
- Montserrat
- Morocco
- Mozambique
- Myanmar/Burma
- Namibia
- Nauru
- Nepal
- Netherlands
- San Marino
- São Tomé and Príncipe
- Saudi Arabia
- Senegal
- Serbia
- Seychelles
- Sierra Leone
- Singapore
- Sint Maarten
- Slovakia
- Slovenia
- Solomon Islands
- Somalia
- South Africa
- South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands
- South Korea
- South Sudan
- Spain
- Sri Lanka
- Sudan
- Suriname
- Svalbard and Jan Mayen
- Sweden
- Switzerland
- Syria
- Taiwan

- Bouvet Island
- Brazil
- British Indian Ocean Territory
- British Virgin Islands
- Brunei
- Bulgaria
- Burkina Faso
- Burundi
- Cambodia
- Cameroon
- Canada
- Cape Verde
- Cayman Islands
- Central African Republic
- Chad
- Chile
- China
- Christmas Island
- Clipperton
- Cocos (Keeling) Islands
- Colombia
- Comoros
- Congo
- Cook Islands
- Costa Rica
- Guernsey
- Guinea
- Guinea-Bissau
- Guyana
- Haiti
- Heard Island and McDonald Islands
- Honduras
- Hong Kong
- Hungary
- Iceland
- India
- Indonesia
- Iran
- Iraq
- Ireland
- Isle of Man
- Israel
- Italy
- Jamaica
- Japan
- Jersey
- Jordan
- Kazakhstan
- Kenya
- Kiribati
- New Caledonia
- New Zealand
- Nicaragua
- Niger
- Nigeria
- Niue
- Norfolk Island
- Northern Mariana Islands
- North Korea
- North Macedonia
- Norway
- Oman
- Pakistan
- Palau
- Palestine
- Panama
- Papua New Guinea
- Paraguay
- Peru
- Philippines
- Pitcairn Islands
- Poland
- Portugal
- Puerto Rico
- Qatar
- Tajikistan
- Tanzania
- Thailand
- The Gambia
- Timor-Leste
- Togo
- Tokelau
- Tonga
- Trinidad and Tobago
- Tunisia
- Türkiye
- Turkmenistan
- Turks and Caicos Islands
- Tuvalu
- Uganda
- Ukraine
- United Arab Emirates
- United Kingdom
- United States
- United States Minor Outlying Islands
- Uruguay
- US Virgin Islands
- Uzbekistan
- Vanuatu
- Vatican City

- Côte d'Ivoire
- Croatia
- Cuba
- Curaçao
- Cyprus
- Czechia
- Democratic Republic of the Congo
- Denmark
- Kosovo
- Kuwait
- Kyrgyzstan
- Laos
- Latvia
- Lebanon
- Lesotho
- Liberia
- Réunion
- Romania
- Russia
- Rwanda
- Saint Barthélemy
- Saint Helena
- Ascension and Tristan da Cunha
- Saint Kitts and Nevis
- Saint Lucia
- Venezuela
- Vietnam
- Wallis and Futuna
- Western Sahara
- Yemen
- Zambia
- Zimbabwe

*** Region**

100 character(s) maximum

Brussels Capital

The Commission will publish all contributions to this public consultation. You can choose whether you would prefer to have your details published or to remain anonymous when your contribution is published. **For the purpose of transparency, the type of respondent (for example, 'business association', 'consumer association', 'EU citizen') country of origin, organisation name and size, and its transparency register number, are always published. Your e-mail address will never be published.** Opt in to select the privacy option that best suits you. Privacy options default based on the type of respondent selected

*** Contribution publication privacy settings**

The Commission will publish the responses to this public consultation. You can choose whether you would like your details to be made public or to remain anonymous.

Anonymous

Only organisation details are published: The type of respondent that you responded to this consultation as, the name of the organisation on whose behalf you reply as well as its transparency number, its size, its country of origin and your contribution will be published as received. Your name will not be published. Please do not include any personal data in the contribution itself if you want to remain anonymous.

Public

Organisation details and respondent details are published: The type of respondent that you responded to this consultation as, the name of the organisation on whose behalf you reply as well as its transparency number, its size, its country of origin and your contribution will be published. Your name will also be published.

I agree with the [personal data protection provisions](#)

1. Experience and knowledge in ERDF and CF

* Main role played in ERDF/CF:

- Programme manager (Managing Authority, Intermediate Body)
- Other programme authority
- Member of monitoring committee
- Evaluation or technical assistance expert
- Beneficiary of ERDF and/or CF support
- Applicant for ERDF/CF funding
- Involved in ERDF/CF project
- Researcher working on ERDF/CF programmes
- Citizen interested in EU funds
- Other

* Please, specify your role:

100 character(s) maximum

AECM's members channel ERDF/CF to SMEs through FIs acting as implementing bodies/ Fin intermediaries

* In completing the questionnaire your focus is mainly on:

- ERDF
- CF
- Both

* What is your main area(s) of experience as regards the ERDF/CF?

- All thematic objectives
- Some thematic objectives (to be selected below)
- No thematic experience

* Which are your main thematic objectives (TOs) of experience?

between 1 and 3 choices

- TO1: Strengthening research, technological development and innovation
- TO2: Enhancing access to, and use communication technologies (ICT)
- TO3: Enhancing the competitiveness of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs)
- TO4: Supporting the shift towards a low-carbon economy in all sectors
- TO5: Promoting climate change adaptation, risk prevention and management
- TO6: Preserving and protecting the environment and promoting resource efficiency
- TO7: Promoting sustainable transport and removing bottlenecks in network infrastructures
- TO8: Promoting sustainable and quality employment and supporting labour mobility
- TO9: Promoting social inclusion, combating poverty and any discrimination
- TO10: Investing in education, training and vocational training for skills and lifelong learning by developing education and training infrastructure
- TO11: Enhancing capacity of public authorities and stakeholders
- Fostering crisis repair in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic and its social consequences and preparing a green, digital and resilient recovery of the economy

2. Evaluation of the effects of ERDF and CF

2.1. Effectiveness

* In your experience, to what extent have the ERDF/CF been effective? Have the desired objectives been achieved?

- Very effective
- Reasonably effective
- Not very effective
- Not effective at all
- Do not know/no opinion

Please, assess the effectiveness of ERDF/CF in the investment priorities under the selected TOs with a score from 1 (very low) to 10 (very high):

Enhancing the competitiveness of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs):

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	No opinion
* (a) promoting entrepreneurship, in particular by facilitating the economic exploitation of new ideas and fostering the creation of new firms	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* (b) developing and implementing new business models for SMEs, in particular with regard to internationalisation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* (c) supporting the creation and the extension of advanced capacities for product and service development	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* (d) supporting the capacity of SMEs to grow in regional, national and international markets, and to engage in innovation processes	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

In your opinion, what facilitating factors are most important in increasing the effectiveness of the ERDF/CF?

Please, also indicate illustrative examples if possible:

1000 character(s) maximum

- 1) Prioritisation of the repayable aid for SMEs
- 2) Regulatory obstacles and administrative burden such as high administrative costs due to public bureaucracy
- 3) The design of the ERDF calls

In your opinion, what obstacles reduce the effectiveness of the ERDF/CF?

Please, also indicate illustrative examples if possible:

1000 character(s) maximum

The effectiveness of the ERDF/CF is drastically reduced when Managing authorities provide grants alone to SMEs instead of reimbursable aid such as loans or guarantees, as in case of grants there is no revolving effect nor leverage effect. Unfortunately, due to the inexperience of many implementing bodies, we noticed that for the 2014-2020 programme period, grants remained by far the most widely used form of direct financial support for SME competitiveness. In other cases, where reimbursable aid has been chosen, the lack of knowledge of these instruments led to delays in implementation. Although there was significant improvement in 2014-2020 compared to previous programming period, most Managing authorities still need administrative and legal certainty, especially for audit. To this end, the use of repayable forms of support would have enabled the fund to support more businesses and consequently, increase the Fund's effectiveness.

Please expand, if you wish, on your replies, giving concrete examples of the effective use of ERDF/CF, where possible:

1000 character(s) maximum

2.2. Efficiency

* In your opinion, have the results been achieved within a reasonable timeframe and in a cost-effective manner?

- To a significant extent
- To some extent
- To a minor extent
- Not at all
- Do not know/no opinion

Please expand, if you wish, on your replies, giving concrete examples of the efficient use of ERDF/CF, where possible:

1000 character(s) maximum

2.3. Coherence

In your opinion, to what extent are the projects and measures supported by the ERDF/CF coordinated with, or complementary to, the following?

	They reinforce each other	They do the same thing	They hinder each other	Do not know/no opinion
* ESF (European Social Fund)	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

* EAFRD (European Agricultural Fund For Rural Development)	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* EMFF (European Maritime and Fisheries Fund)	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* SRSP (Structural Reform Support Programme)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
* Horizon 2020	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* COSME (Competitiveness of Enterprises and Small and Medium-sized Enterprises)	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* LIFE programme	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
* National and regional strategies	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Other	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please expand, if you wish, on your replies, giving concrete examples of coherence between ERDF/CF and other policies, where possible:

1000 character(s) maximum

2.4. Relevance

In your opinion, to what extent have the ERDF/CF been important in addressing the economic, social and territorial needs of your ...

	Very important	Mostly important	Mostly unimportant	Not important at all	Do not know/no opinion
* Neighbourhood	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
* City	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
* Region	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
* Country	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>

* In your opinion, to what extent have the ERDF/CF been important to respond to the new economic, social and territorial needs that have emerged as a consequence of the COVID-19 pandemic?

- Very important
- Mostly important
- Mostly unimportant
- Not important at all

- Do not know/no opinion

Please expand, if you wish, on the above replies, giving concrete examples of the relevance of the ERDF/CF, where possible:

1000 character(s) maximum

The Commission adapted well the 2014-2020 cohesion policy rules so that Member States could make full use of cohesion policy funds. The flexibilities offered through CRII/CRII+, as well as the additional funding provided through REACT-EU, led to a smart reallocation of funding towards businesses with a focus on supporting working capital needs thus helping SMEs that entered into difficulties.

2.5. EU value-added

* To what extent do you agree with the following statement: ‘The ERDF and CF have produced effects that would not have happened without EU funding’?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- Do not know/no opinion

In your opinion, what were the main benefits resulting from the provision of financing from the ERDF/CF?

	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Do not know /no opinion
* Common EU objectives have been pursued (such as increasing the use of renewable energy and improving energy efficiency) which would not have been possible otherwise	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* The awareness of being part of the EU has been reinforced among the population and the enterprises	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* New policy areas were covered and new strategies were pursued	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* New groups of people or enterprises were supported	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* Useful and efficient managing models have been imported in regional/national administration	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

* Economic and social reforms were made possible	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* More could be done than with national or local money only	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please expand, if you wish, on your replies, giving concrete examples of the EU added value, where possible:

1000 character(s) maximum

3. Cross-cutting aspects

To what extent are the different management and implementation aspects burdensome, and where would simplification be most necessary, with a score from 1 (least burdensome) to 10 (most burdensome)?

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	No opinion
* The entire management and implementation system	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* Management and control system	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* Project selection process	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* Account systems (including simplified cost options)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* Implementation of projects	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* Audit and control requirements	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* Reporting and monitoring	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
* Monitoring committee and partnership	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
* Communication	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
* Evaluation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Other	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

* The most burdensome management and implementation aspects are the result mainly of:

at most 3 choice(s)

- EU regulations
- National/local regulations
- Specific national/local regulation adding to already sufficient EU regulations ('gold plating')
- Inadequate capacity in the administration
- Inadequate capacity in beneficiaries
- Other
- Do not know/no opinion

* Please, specify:

100 character(s) maximum

State aid rules

To what extent have the ERDF/CF been effective in ensuring the horizontal principles listed below are respected?

	Very effective	Mostly effective	Mostly ineffective	Not effective at all	Do not know/no opinion
* Gender equality	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
* Equal opportunities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
* Sustainable development	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

* How useful was the requirement to fulfil ex ante conditionalities for improving programming and implementing capacity of the ERDF/CF in the 2014-2020 period?

- Very useful
- Reasonably useful
- Not very useful
- Not useful at all
- Do not know/no opinion

Please provide, if you wish, further details on the usefulness of the ex ante conditionalities:

4. Further evidence

Please feel free, if you wish, to upload a concise note alongside your response to the questionnaire to better express your view and/or to provide additional evidence, facts and data.

Only files of the type pdf,txt,doc,docx,odt,rtf are allowed

Contact

REGIO-EVAL@ec.europa.eu