

Thematic Evaluation of OP II (Phase 2)

Monitoring Committee

29 May 2015



Introduction

Objective:

- To communicate the analysis and conclusions emanating from the research carried out in Phase 2 of the Thematic Evaluation of OP II covering the period up to June 2014

This presentation covers:

- The scope of the evaluation and the methodology used
- Key findings in relation to *education and lifelong learning*
- Key findings in relation to *enhancement of employability and adaptability of the workforce*
- Key findings in relation to *horizontal priorities and ESF principles*
- Contribution of projects towards European and national strategies

Education and Life Long Learning

Contribution of projects focus areas of intervention relating to improving education and skills

The projects contributed towards addressing the focus areas of intervention as detailed in the OP in relation to improving education and skills:

- Investing in the education system - e.g. ESF 2.139, ESF 1.25, ESF 1.225, ESF 1.23 , ESF 2.139
- Addressing skills mismatches - e.g. ESF 1.34 and ESF 1.24
- Research and Innovation – e.g. ESF 1.40 and ESF 1.125
- Information and Communication Technology – e.g. ESF 1.123

Contribution of projects towards European Strategies

Apart from directly addressing the objectives of OP II 2007-2013, the projects also contributed towards achieving the objectives and targets of a number of European and national strategies including:

- Community strategic guidelines – More and Better Jobs:
 - CSG 4.3.1 “Attract and retain more people in employment and modernise social protection systems”; (e.g. ESF 1.23)
 - CSG 4.3.3 “Increasing investment in human capital through better education and skills”; (e.g. 1.130)
 - CSG 4.3.4 “Administrative Capacity”. (e.g. ESF 4.164 and ESF 4.159)

Contribution of projects towards European Strategies

- Integrated guidelines for growth and jobs 2005-2008 (Council Decision 2005/600/EC of 12 July 2005)
 - Guideline 20 “Improve matching of labour market needs”; (e.g. ESF 1.25)
 - Guideline 23 “Expand and improve investment in human capital”; (e.g. ESF 1.229)
 - Guideline 24 “Adapt education and training systems in response to new competence requirements”. (e.g. 1.130)
- Europe 2020 Integrated Guidelines (2010):
 - Guideline 8 “Developing a skilled workforce responding to labour market needs, promoting job quality and lifelong learning”; (e.g. ESF 2.201 and ESF 4.175)
 - Guideline 9 “Improving the performance of education and training systems at all levels and increasing participation in tertiary education”; (e.g. ESF 1.209)

Contribution of projects towards National Strategies

- National Reform Programmes
- Further and Higher Education Strategy 2020
- National Sector-Specific Strategies:
 - Smart Island Strategy 2008-2010 (e.g. ESF 4.98)
 - Smart Learning Strategy 2008-2010 (e.g. ESF 1.123)
 - Vision 2015 and Beyond: A Path to a Knowledge Based Economy (e.g. ESF 1.225)
 - The Tourism Policy for the Maltese Islands 2007-2011 (e.g. ESF 2.11)
 - Malta National Action Plan on Poverty and Social Exclusion 2004-2008 (e.g. ESF 3.102)

Participation rates in tertiary education

- When considering targets for participation in tertiary education, Malta achieved a rate of 26.9% in 2014 (30-34 year olds). This is below the EU average which stood at 37.7% in 2014. In this regard Malta has set its 2020 target at 33%. This emphasises the need for further interventions in this regard during the 2014-2020 programming period.
- With regard to result and output indicators, when considering the targets related to increasing the participation rate and creation of flexible paths, targets were not achieved in relation to ICT and S&T areas.
- Initiatives such as STEPS (ESF1.25) and Master IT (ESF1.225) which were successful in increasing participation rates should be implemented further in the 2014-2020 programming period

Early School Leaving rate

- The target for the 2007-2013 programming period was an early school leaving rate of 20.4% in 2014, compared to the target of 22%. This rate is however higher than the EU average of 11.1% for 2014. In fact, Malta has set its target in line with that of the EU to achieve an early school leaving rate of 10% by 2020.
- With regard to illiteracy, the different aspects of illiteracy need to be addressed in the interventions submitted under the next programming period. Also, when considering early school leaving, there needs to be further awareness amongst parents to encourage their children to continue their studies.

Contribution of projects focus areas of intervention relating to strengthening of institutional and administrative capacity

The projects contributed towards addressing the focus area of intervention as detailed in the OP in relation to strengthening of institutional and administrative capacity:

- to enhance and expand the training and re-training programmes for the public sector employees in line with Government's lifelong learning objective, with particular focus on training related to better management and administration e.g. ESF 4.100
- horizontal (general) and sectoral training together with the upgrading of training material was to be supported, also in the field of research and innovation policy design, and technology management e.g. ESF 4.98

Enhancement of Employability and Adaptability of the Workforce

Contribution of projects towards focus areas of intervention

The projects contributed towards addressing the focus areas of intervention as detailed in the OP as follows:

Investing in the employability & adaptability of the workforce:

- Continuous training and education – e.g. ESF 3.64
- Supporting the private sector – e.g. ESF 2.65 ESF 3.64 ESF 2.11

Promoting an equal & inclusive labour market

- Female participation in the labour market - e.g. ESF 3.59
- Promoting an inclusive society – e.g. ESF 3.64 , ESF 3.113
- Addressing labour market distortions and ensuring that work pays – e.g. ESF 2.201
- Strengthening the quality of employment services – e.g. ESF 1.24

Contribution of projects towards European Strategies

Apart from directly addressing the objectives of OP II 2007-2013, the projects also contributed towards achieving the objectives and targets of a number of European and national strategies including:

- Community Strategic Guidelines – More and Better Jobs:
 - CSG 4.3.1 “Attract and retain more people in employment and modernise social protection systems”; (e.g. ESF 2.11)
 - CSG 4.3.2 “Improve adaptability of workers and enterprises and the flexibility of the labour market”; (e.g. ESF 2.186)
 - CSG 4.3.3 “increasing investment in human capital through better education and skills”; (e.g. ESF 2.201) and
 - CSG 4.3.4 “Administrative Capacity” (e.g. ESF 4.100).

Contribution of projects towards European Strategies

- Integrated guidelines for growth and jobs 2005-2008 (Council Decision 2005/600/EC of 12 July 2005)
 - Guideline 17 “Implement employment policies aiming at achieving full employment, improving quality and productivity at work and strengthening social and territorial cohesion”; (e.g. ESF 3.64)
 - Guideline 18 “Promote a new lifecycle approach to work”; (e.g. ESF 3.231)
 - Guideline 19 “Ensure inclusive labour markets, enhance work attractiveness, and make work pay attractive for job-seekers, including disadvantaged people and the inactive”; (e.g. ESF 3.105)
 - Guideline 20 “Improve matching of labour market needs”; (e.g. ESF 3.110)
 - Guideline 21 “Promote flexibility combined with employment security and reduce labour market segmentation, having due regard to the role of the social partners”; (e.g. ESF 3.47)
 - Guideline 23 “Expand and improve investment in human capital”. (e.g. ESF 2.65)

Contribution of projects towards European Strategies

- Europe 2020 Integrated Guidelines (2010):
 - Guideline 7 “Increasing labour market participation and reducing structural unemployment”; (e.g. ESF 3.113)
 - Guideline 8 “Developing a skilled workforce responding to labour market needs, promoting job quality and lifelong learning”; (e.g. ESF 2.201)
 - Guideline 9 “Improving the performance of education and training systems at all levels and increasing participation in tertiary education”; (e.g. ESF 2.201)

Contribution of projects towards National Strategies

- National Reform Programmes
- Further and Higher Education Strategy 2020
- National Sector-Specific Strategies:
 - National Youth Employment Strategy 2015 (e.g. ESF 3.231)
 - National Action Plan for Employment 2004 (e.g. ESF 2.11)
 - Malta National Action Plan on Poverty and Social Exclusion 2004-2008 (e.g. ESF 3.102 and ESF 3.11)
 - National Report on Strategies for Social Protection and Social Inclusion 2006-2008 (e.g. ESF 3.71)
 - Sustainable Development Strategy for the Maltese Islands 2007-2016 (e.g. ESF 3.110)

Conclusion – Employment Rate

- When considering the employment rate, Malta achieved a rate of 62.3% in 2014. This is above the target which was set at 57%. However, the employment rate remains below the EU average which stood at 64.9% in 2014. This emphasises the need for further interventions in this regard during the 2014-2020 programming period.
- When considering targets for female employment, Malta achieved a rate of 51.9% in 2014. This is above the target which was set at 41%. However, the female employment rate remains below the EU average which stood at 63.5% in 2014. This emphasises the need for further interventions in this regard during the 2014-2020 programming period.
- To this end, Priority Axis 1 of OP II 2014-2020, specifically addresses investing in employability and adaptability of human capital. The expected results are: increasing the employment rate, increasing female participation rate in the labour market, increasing the number of elderly workers in the labour market and reduction of youth employment.

Conclusion – Reskilling of the workforce

- This ESF investment in the private sector training has been instrumental in ensuring that employees are provided with the skills necessary to help undertakings compete effectively and in line with market demands.
- To this end, Priority Axis 3 of OP II 2014-2020 (Investing in People through Education, Training and Life Long Learning), reinforces the importance of this investment area with funds allocated to provide opportunities to the employers to invest in their workforce.
- This type of initiative is therefore one of the actions/measures which should be implemented further in the 2014-2020 programming period.

Horizontal priorities and ESF Principles



Horizontal Priorities - *environmental sustainability and equal opportunities*

- In their funding application, beneficiaries were required to describe their proposed contribution towards horizontal priorities and report on the implementation of these activities
- Initiatives taken did not stand out to be more effective than what is generally expected in this area

Recommendations – Potential actions not addressed by the current programme

ESF Objectives of the 2007-2013 programming period	Recommendations
<p>Environmental protection and enhancement through the delivery of projects</p>	<p>A greater emphasis (for e.g. consultations with applicants) needs to be placed on the horizontal priorities for the next programming period, with more interventions aimed towards concretely addressing these priorities.</p>
<p>Equality between men and women are to be promoted</p>	<p>Organising annual events during which project leaders can meet and share best practices of how projects have considered one or more of the horizontal priorities.</p>
<p>Equal opportunities for all including accessibility for disabled persons</p>	

Recommendations – Potential Actions not addressed by the current programme

ESF Objectives of the 2007-2013 programming period	Recommendations
<p>Promotion of social innovation within all areas</p>	<p>A greater emphasis needs to be placed on innovation for the next programming period, with more interventions aimed towards concretely addressing this area.</p> <p>Most projects in the current programme related to training activities. More innovative ideas/projects should be encouraged for new programme.</p> <p>Organising annual events during which project leaders can meet and share best practices of how projects have been innovative.</p>

Recommendations – ESF Principles – Innovative Activities

- Social innovation has been defined for the 2014-2020 programming period, following the publication of a Commission note (*Guide to Social innovation, February 2013*) as follows:
 - *“the development and implementation of new ideas (products, services and models) to meet social needs and create new social relationships or collaborations”*
- Some examples of innovative practices in terms of ESF include:
 - Projects using ICTs to enhance/replicate other delivery mechanisms
 - Projects which develop social enterprises
 - Project which encourage new partnerships with new groups of partners working together for the first time

Recommendations – ESF Principles – Transnational Activities

- A large number of projects, especially those related to training and development, involved collaboration with foreign universities and the collaboration with consultants from foreign universities (Example: MCAST projects)
- More focus needs to be placed on promoting the advantages of trans nationality. For example:
 - Benefits of learning from the experiences of others across a range of areas
 - Observing similar approaches
 - Showing what could be achieved and providing lessons for delivery, e.g. through sharing of project experiences
 - Gaining confidence that innovative approaches could work (accounting for political, structural and cultural differences)
 - The benefits brought about from the sharing of experiences amongst the project team which results in learning from more advanced transnational partners
- ESF Regulation for 2014-2020 programming period states that transnational cooperation should aim to promote mutual learning for involved partners from at least 2 member states

Recommendations – Potential actions not addressed by the current programme

ESF Objectives of the 2007-2013 programming period	Recommendations
<p>Support of innovative activities delivered through transnational and interregional co-operation which will explore the application to the local situation of solutions (or modifications thereof) that other Member States are using to tackle specific problems in the relevant policy areas</p>	<p>A greater emphasis needs to be placed on transnational cooperation for the next programming period, with more interventions aimed towards concretely addressing them.</p> <p>Organising annual events during which project leaders can meet and share best practices of how projects have included transnational cooperation.</p>

General Recommendations

General Recommendations (Deliverable 1)

The general recommendations that could be adopted to improve the result of OPII in meeting its pre specified objectives and indicators include:

- More integration between different projects. In this regard the role of the line Ministry co-ordinators could be further enhanced with focus area discussions and communication taking place.
- The Managing Authority should conduct a study to assess the contribution of the projects to the overall impact indicator.
- Enhanced central Government support and training for project leaders, project managers and administrators.
- Consider having a published timetable of calls for different priority axis whilst at the same time balancing out the administrative capacity requirements this would entail.

General Recommendations (Deliverable 1)

- Consider whether proposed projects should also include post-delivery interventions to assess the realization of the intended project outcomes. This approach will in itself also improve the quality of project output and outcome indicators. The Cohort Study being carried out by the MA could be developed further in this regard.
- The Managing Authority should encourage pilot projects to be undertaken by beneficiaries in order to test a concept before going for a large project.
- The Managing Authority should consider harvesting the knowledge of project leaders by creating avenues for knowledge sharing– both within organisations as well as across the public administration – post-implementation learning. This would also contribute towards more continuity.

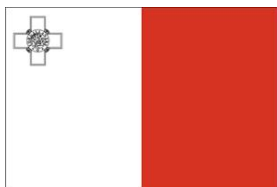
General Recommendations (Deliverable 2)

- More guidance could be provided to project applicants especially in those areas where successful project applications were low. This was particularly the case for projects directly targeting the training of women and for civil society projects aimed at contributing towards the integration, retention and progression of disadvantaged groups in the labour market.
- From a monitoring point of view, targets should be set in a way, which allows more detailed analysis of results to be made. This would make it possible to have a more detailed and meaningful analysis of achieved results.
- When considering the target groups for training, time constraints of the respective group needed to be considered. Furthermore, more attention should be given to the level at which training for different target groups is not inclined to discourage participants.

General Recommendations (Deliverable 2)

- Project leaders need to be encouraged to have better planning in initial stages in order to partially mitigate this. Furthermore, in some projects there were too many components.
- With regards to reporting requirements, more synergies are needed between PPCD, respective ministries and other Government reporting requirements so as to avoid repetitive work in different formats.

Thank-you



Operational Programme II – Cohesion Policy 2007-2013
Empowering People for more Jobs and a Better Quality of Life
Tender part-financed by the European Union
European Social Fund (ESF)
Co-financing rate: 85% EU Funds; 15% National Funds



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