



GOVERNMENT  
OF MALTA



# Update on 2021-2027 Programming Period

## *ERDF/CF/JTF Programme*

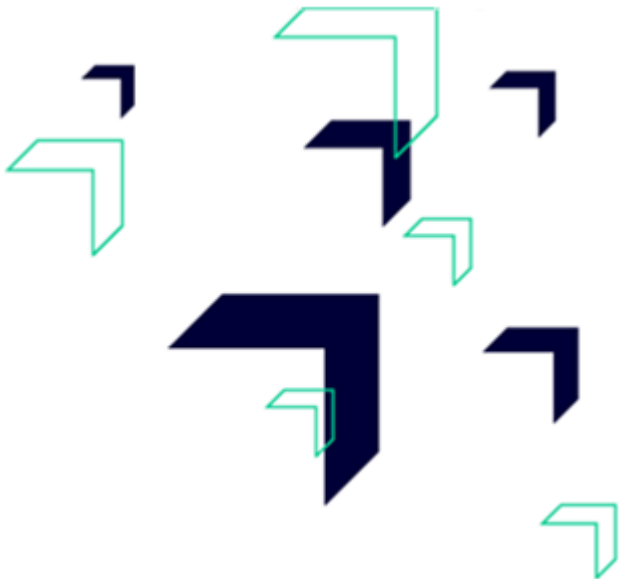
*Towards a smarter, well connected and resilient economy, a greener environment and an integrated society*

## *ESF+ Programme*

*Fostering the socioeconomic wellbeing of society through the creation of opportunities for all and investment in human resources and skills*

## **Monitoring Committee**

22<sup>nd</sup> November 2023



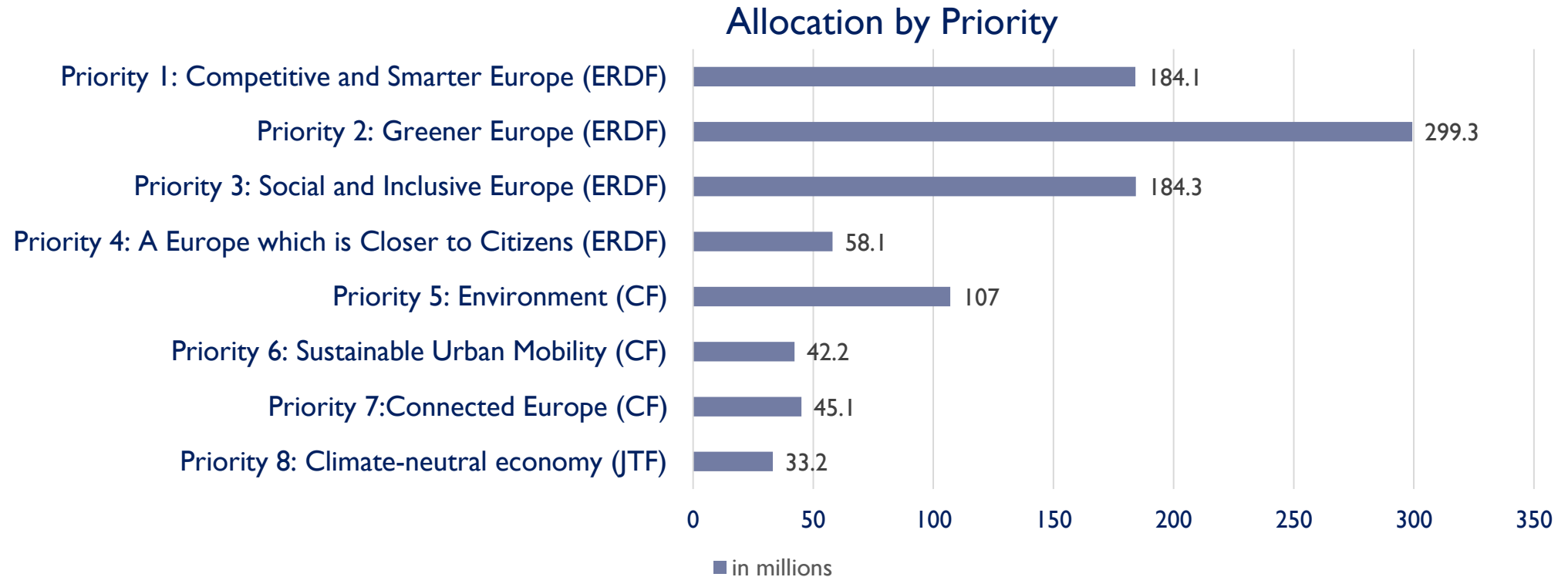
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## Presentation overview

- Update on the Implementation of the Programmes, including an update on the Just Transition Fund
- Update on Communication and Visibility actions
- Information on the Evaluation Plans
- Update on the progress of the fulfilment of Enabling Conditions

# **Update on the Implementation of the Programmes including the Just Transition Fund**

# ERDF/CF/JTF Programme

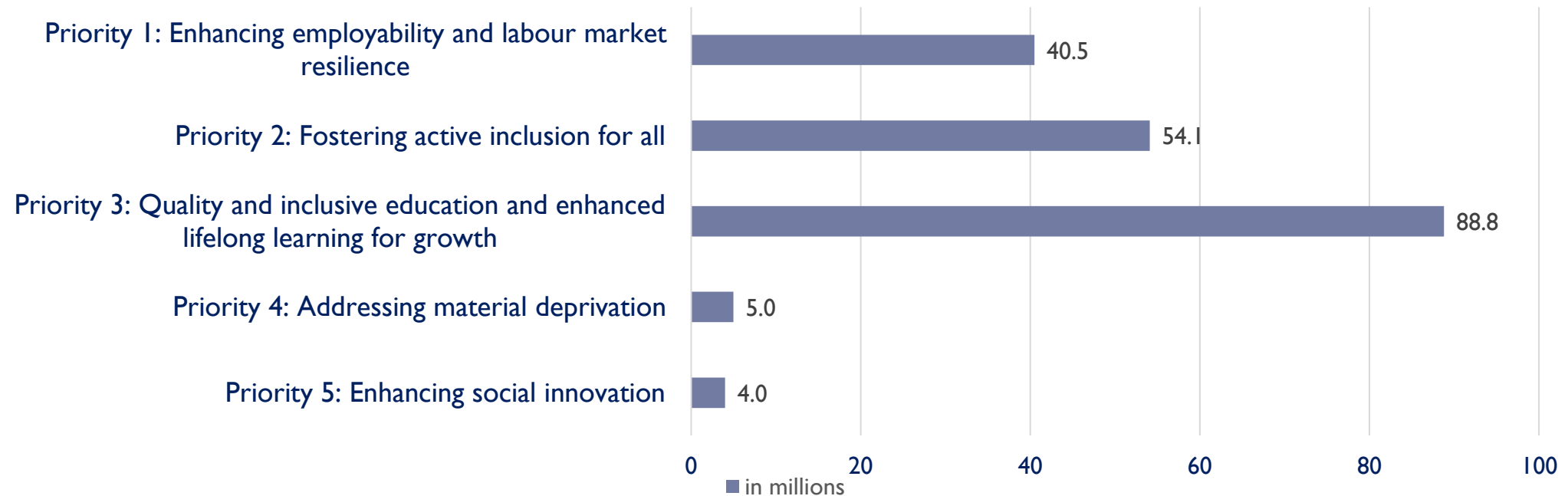


The applicable co-financing rate for the 2021-2027 Programme is:

- 60% EU share and 40% MT share for ERDF
- 70% EU share and 30% MT share for JTF
- 85% EU share and 15% MT share for CF

# ESF+ Programme

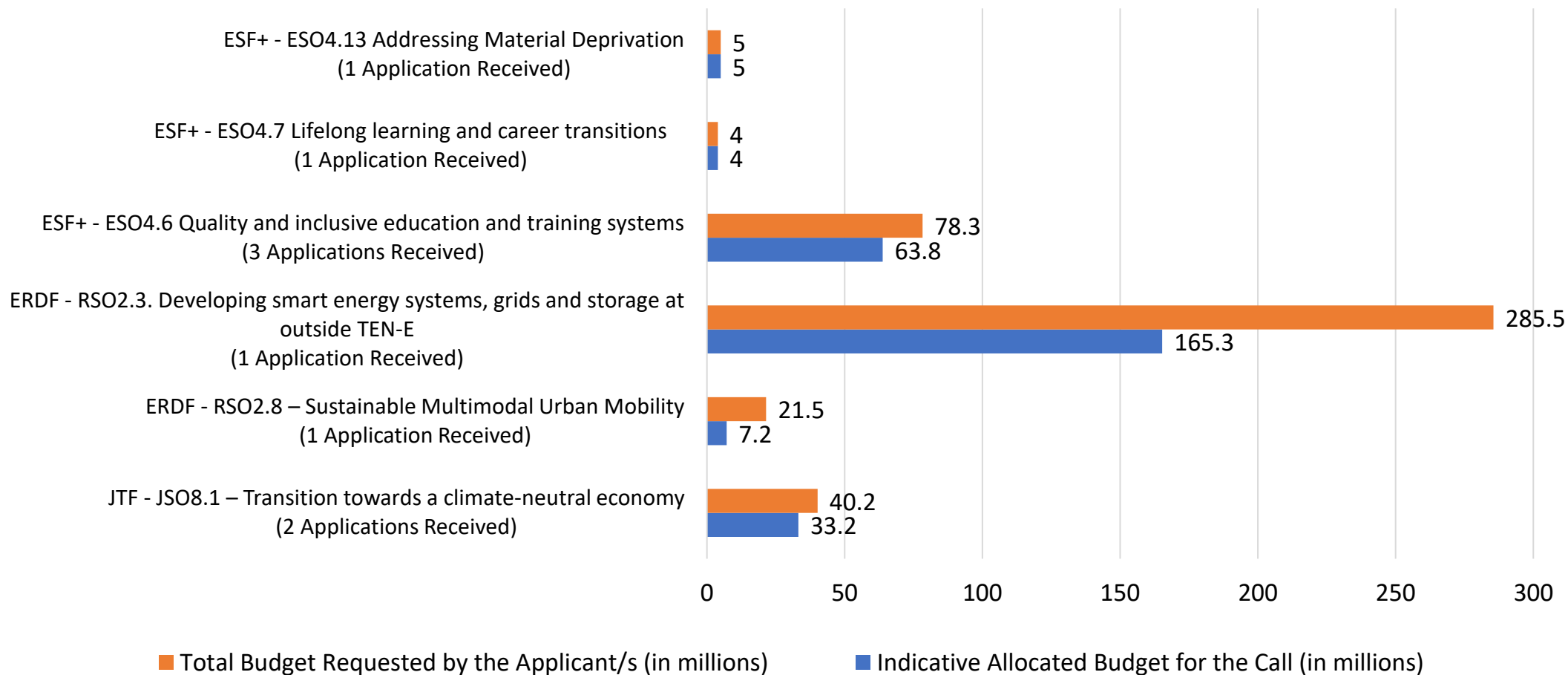
## Allocation by Priority



The applicable co-financing rate for the 2021-2027 Programme is:

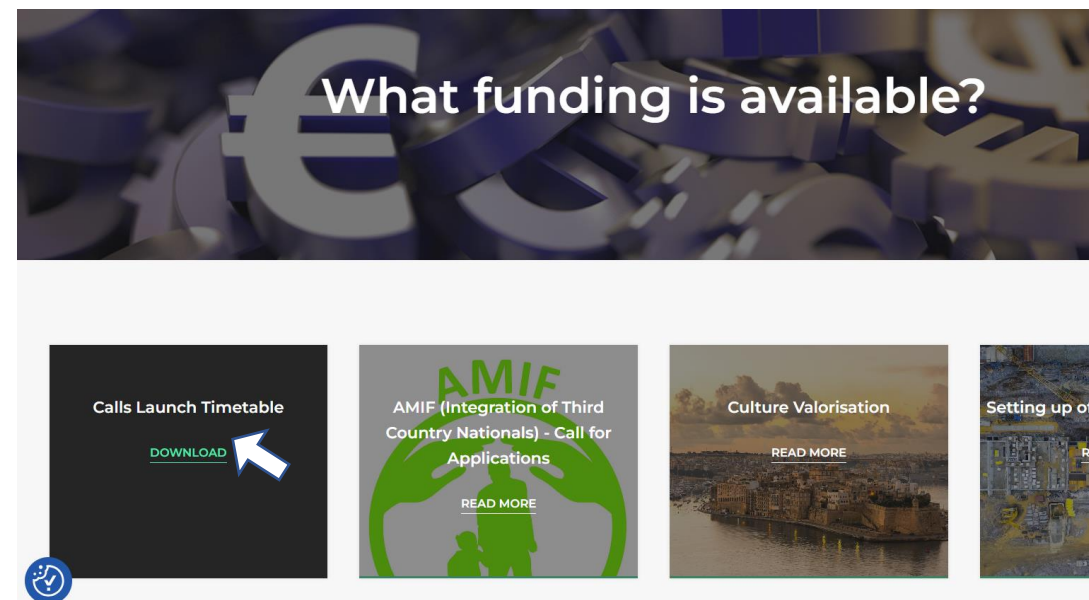
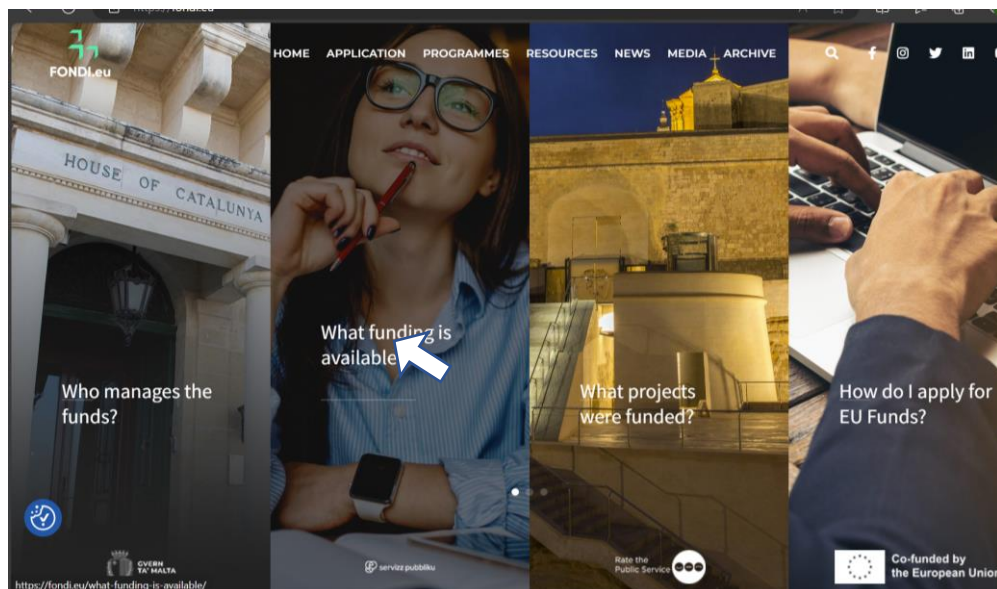
- 60% EU share and 40% MT (P1, 2,3, and 5)
- 90% EU share and 10% MT (P4)

# Calls closed as at 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2023

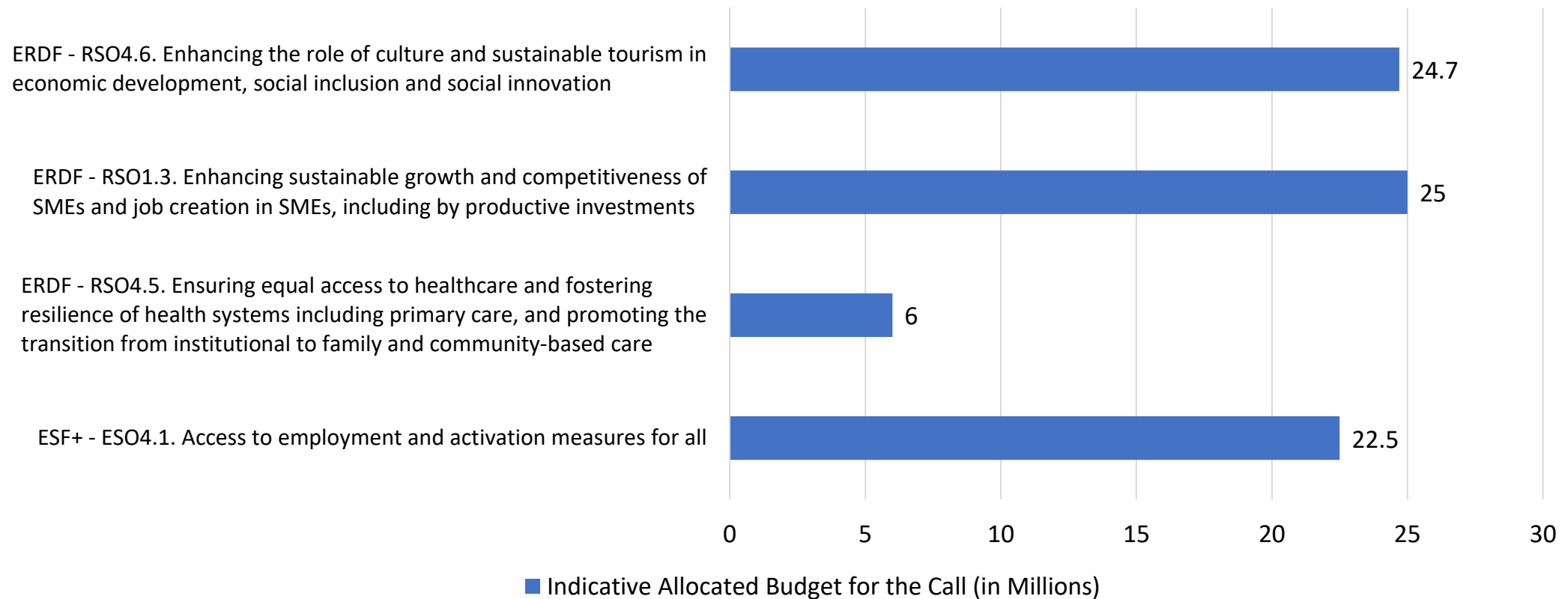


# Timetable of planned calls for proposals

- **Article 49 of the Common Provisions Regulation** requires “a *timetable of the planned calls for proposals that is updated at least three times a year*”.
- The timetable of planned calls can be accessed through the following link: <https://fondi.eu/what-funding-is-available/>.
- It is regularly updated and the next revision is expected in **December 2023**.



# Calls issued and still open as at 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2023





## Update on Aid Schemes

| Fund | Priority & Specific Objective | Description               | Date of Issue of Call | Date of Closure of Call                                    | Total Amount Available | Applications Received | Applications Under Evaluation | Applications Approved |
|------|-------------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------|--|------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------|
| ERDF | Priority 1, RSO1.3            | Business Reports for SMEs | June 2023             | Open rolling call with cut-off dates falling twice a month | €1.5M                  | 39                    | 14                            | 14                    |
| ERDF | Priority 1, RSO1.3            | SME Enhance (de Minimis)  | June 2023             | Open rolling call with cut-off dates falling twice a month | €5M                    | 51                    | 35                            | 13                    |
| ERDF | Priority 1, RSO1.3            | SME Enhance (GBER)        | June 2023             | Open rolling call with cut-off dates falling twice a month | €5M                    | 4                     | 1                             | 3                     |
| ERDF | Priority 1, RSO1.3            | Start-up Enhance          | June 2023             | Open rolling call with cut-off dates falling twice a month | €5M                    | 5                     | 5                             | 0                     |

## Update on Aid Schemes

| Fund | Priority & Specific Objective | Description                       | Date of Issue of Call | Date of Closure of Call | Total Amount Available | Applications Received | Applications Evaluated | Applications Approved |
|------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|------------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|-----------------------|
| ESF  | Priority 1, ESO4.1            | Access to Employment Scheme (A2E) | January 2023          | Open rolling call       | €12M                   | 577                   | 467                    | 298                   |
| ESF  | Priority 3, ESO4.7            | Investing in Skills Scheme (IIS)  | Sept 2023             | Open rolling call       | €10M                   | 187                   | 79                     | 40                    |

# Update on Financial Instruments



Photo taken during information session held by the European Investment Fund (EIF)

- **ESF+ Financial instrument**, 'Further Studies Made Affordable' will continue with a total of €5M supported across both programmes.
- With a total contribution of €15M, the new Financial Instrument (FI) **INVEST\_EU** is reflecting the transfer of €9.4M from ERDF Funds and the balance from JEREMIE reflows. This FI is intended to build-up a portfolio leveraged by a factor of 4.1, resulting in an available finance amount of €61.4M in investments for Small and Medium Sized Enterprises.

## Planned calls up to April 2024

| Fund | Specific Objective   | Indicative Total Amount | Launch of Call |
|------|--|-------------------------|----------------|
| ERDF | RSO4.5. Ensuring equal access to health care and fostering resilience of health systems, including primary care, and promoting the transition from institutional to family- and community-based care | €5M                     | Nov-23         |
| ERDF | RSO4.6. Enhancing the role of culture and sustainable tourism in economic development, social inclusion and social innovation (NGOs)   | €5M                     | Nov-23         |
| ERDF | RSO2.3. Developing smart energy systems, grids and storage at outside TEN-E  | €35M                    | Jan-24         |
| ERDF | RSO1.2. Reaping the benefits of digitisation for citizens, companies, research organisations and public authorities  | €25M                    | Jan-24         |
| ERDF | RSO4.5. Ensuring equal access to health care and fostering resilience of health systems, including primary care, and promoting the transition from institutional to family- and community-based care | €10M                    | Jan-24         |
| ESF+ | ESO.4.8 Active inclusion and employability   | €23M                    | Jan-24         |

# Planned calls up to April 2024

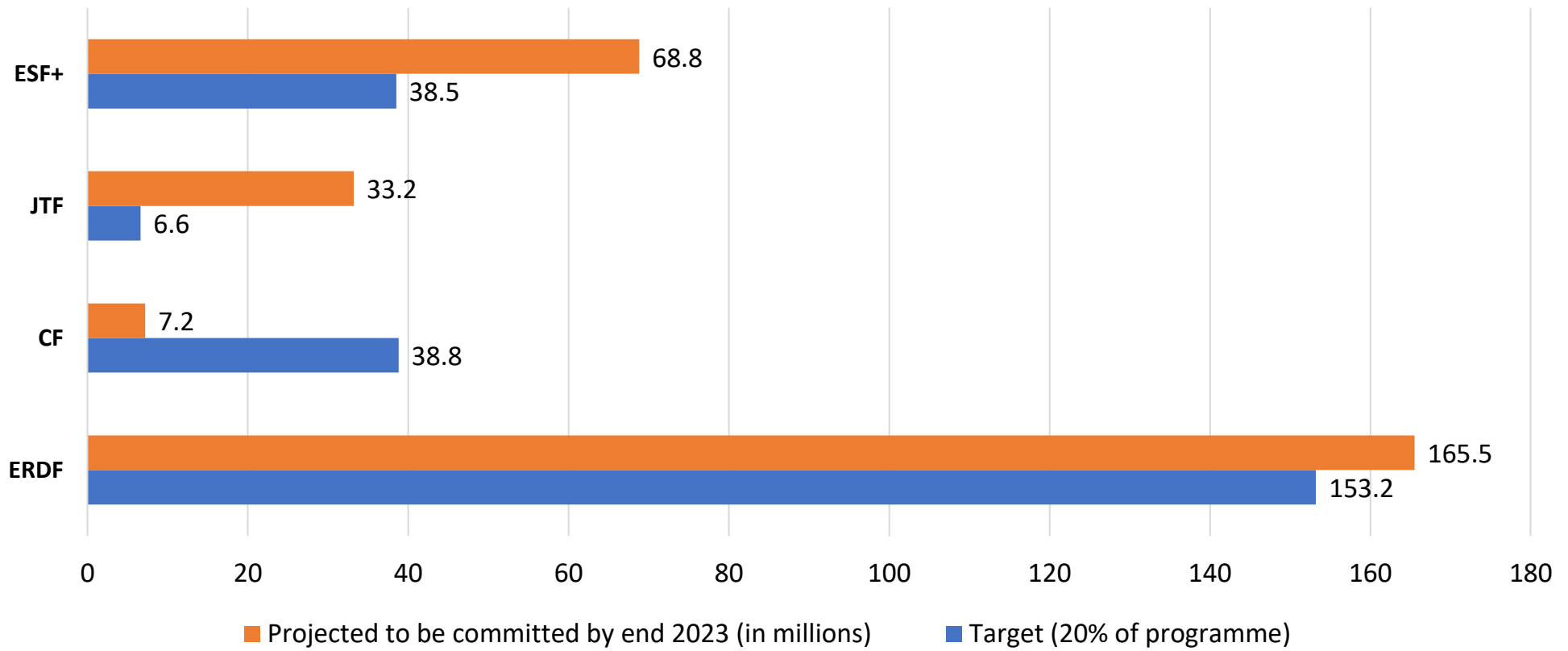


| Fund | Specific Objective  | Indicative Total Amount | Launch of Call |
|------|---|-------------------------|----------------|
| ESF+ | ESO.4.3 Gender balanced labour market participation   | €5M                     | Jan-24         |
| ESF+ | ESO.4.9 Integration of third country nationals  | €1.5M                   | Jan-24         |
| CF   | RSO2.6. Promoting the transition to a circular and resource efficient economy   | €45M                    | Feb-24         |
| ERDF | RSO4.2. Improving equal access to inclusive and quality services in education, training and lifelong learning through developing accessible infrastructure, including by fostering resilience for distance and on-line education and training | €30M                    | Feb-24         |
| ERDF | RSO4.5. Ensuring equal access to health care and fostering resilience of health systems, including primary care, and promoting the transition from institutional to family- and community-based care  | €58.6M                  | Feb-24         |
| ERDF | RSO4.5. Ensuring equal access to health care and fostering resilience of health systems, including primary care, and promoting the transition from institutional to family- and community-based care  | €35M                    | Mar-24         |

# Planned calls up to April 2024

| Fund | Specific Objective  | Indicative Total Amount | Launch of Call |
|------|---|-------------------------|----------------|
| CF   | RSO2.8. Promoting sustainable multimodal urban mobility, as part of transition to a net zero carbon economy | €35M                    | Mar-24         |
| CF   | RSO3.1. Developing a sustainable, climate resilient, intelligent, secure, sustainable and intermodal TEN-T  | €24.8M                  | Mar-24         |
| CF   | RSO3.1. Developing a sustainable, climate resilient, intelligent, secure, sustainable and intermodal TEN-T  | €20.3M                  | Mar-24         |
| ESF+ | ESO4.11 Equal access to quality social and healthcare services  | €29.6M                  | Apr-24         |
| ESF+ | ESO4.7 Lifelong learning and career transitions   | €6M                     | Apr-24         |

# Conclusion: Projected level of commitment per fund by end 2023



## **Update on Communication and Visibility Actions**



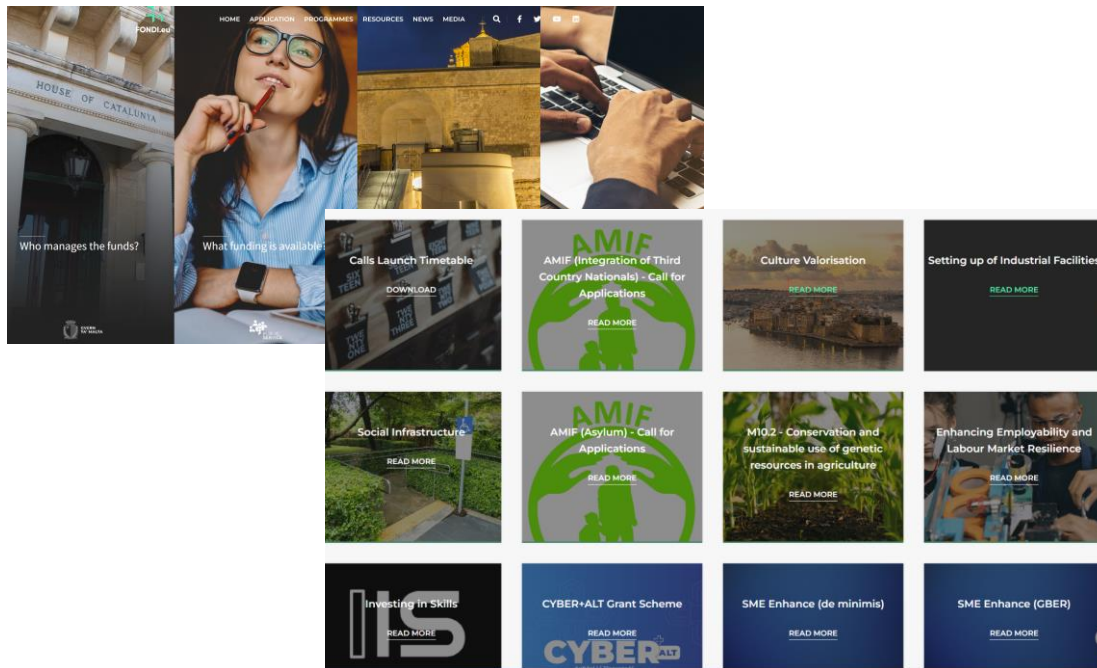
# Launch of Programmes and calls

Apart from the planned communication activities from the 14-20 programming period mentioned in the dedicated presentation, other activities linked to the 21-27 programming will follow.

Launched on the 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2023 together with the launch of fondi.eu new website.

Various info sessions held tied to calls launched.

Open calls published on FONDI.eu and social media, and organised information sessions in collaboration with SEM.



Screenshots from Fondi.eu website including of open calls page



Launch of programmes on 23 January 2023

# Looking forward: Communication Activities

- The highlight of the first half of 2024 will be the promotion of the **20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Malta's accession to the European Union.**
- In order to **increase visibility and awareness** on European Funds, there are plans to publish tenders relating to **promotional material, videography and photography.**
- The intention to create **more synergy** and communication with the Servizzi Ewropej f'Malta (SEM) shall be consolidated with the finalisation of the joint **Communication Strategy** for the year 2024.
- In line with the obligations arising from the CPR, communication activities for Projects of Strategic Importance and projects with a value above €10M will be organised.

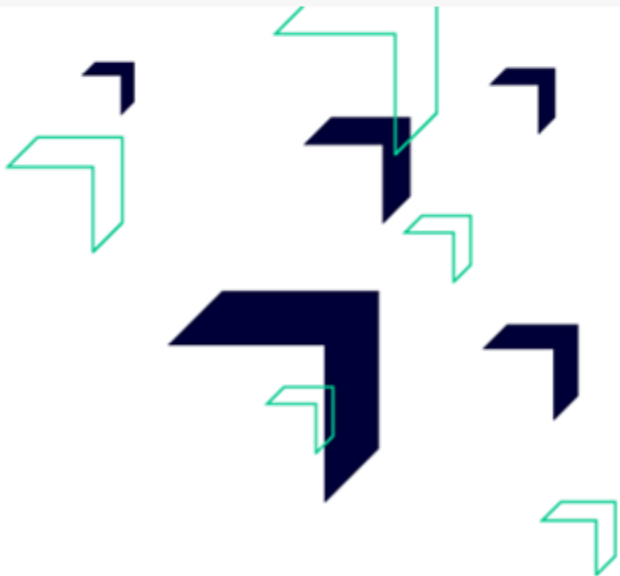


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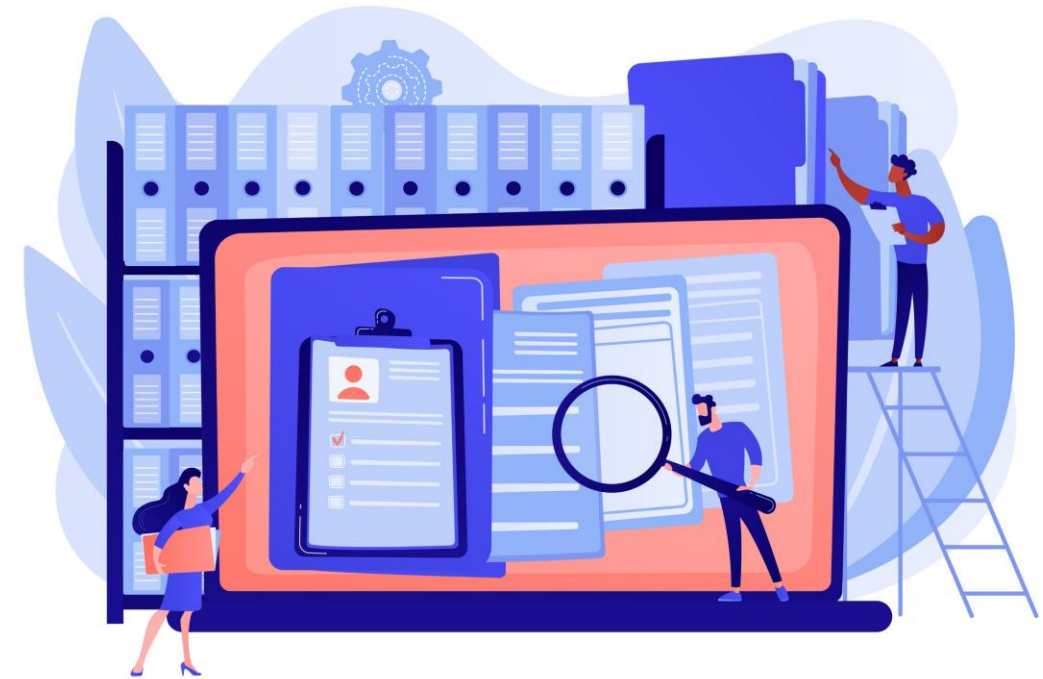
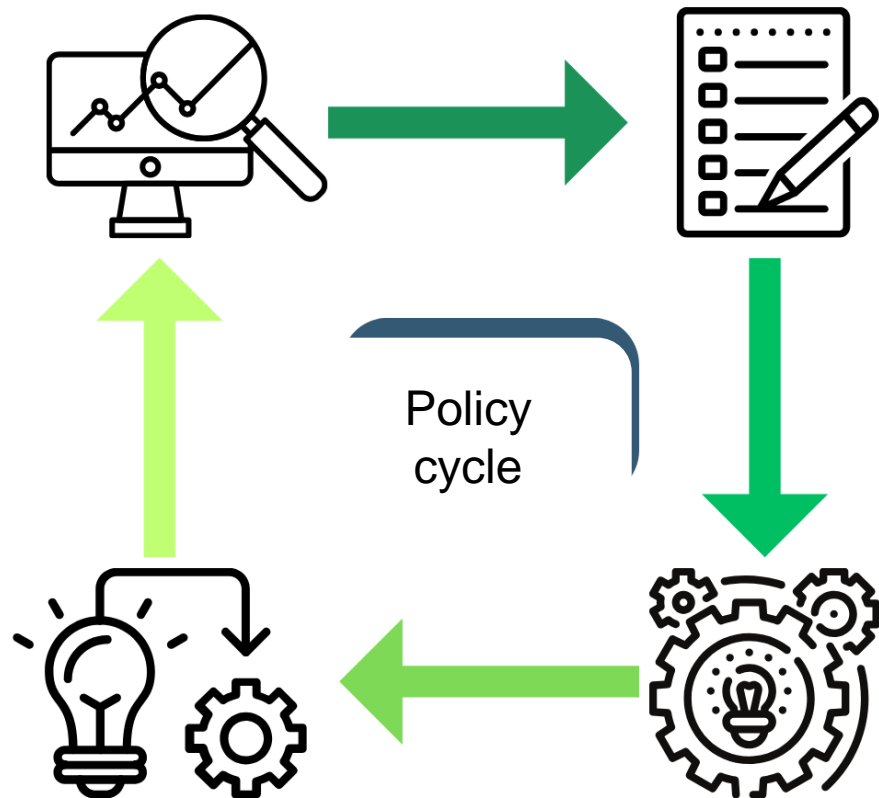
# **Evaluation plans 2021-2027 ERDF/CF/JTF and ESF+**



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# Why Evaluate?

It is a Key Stage of the policy-making process



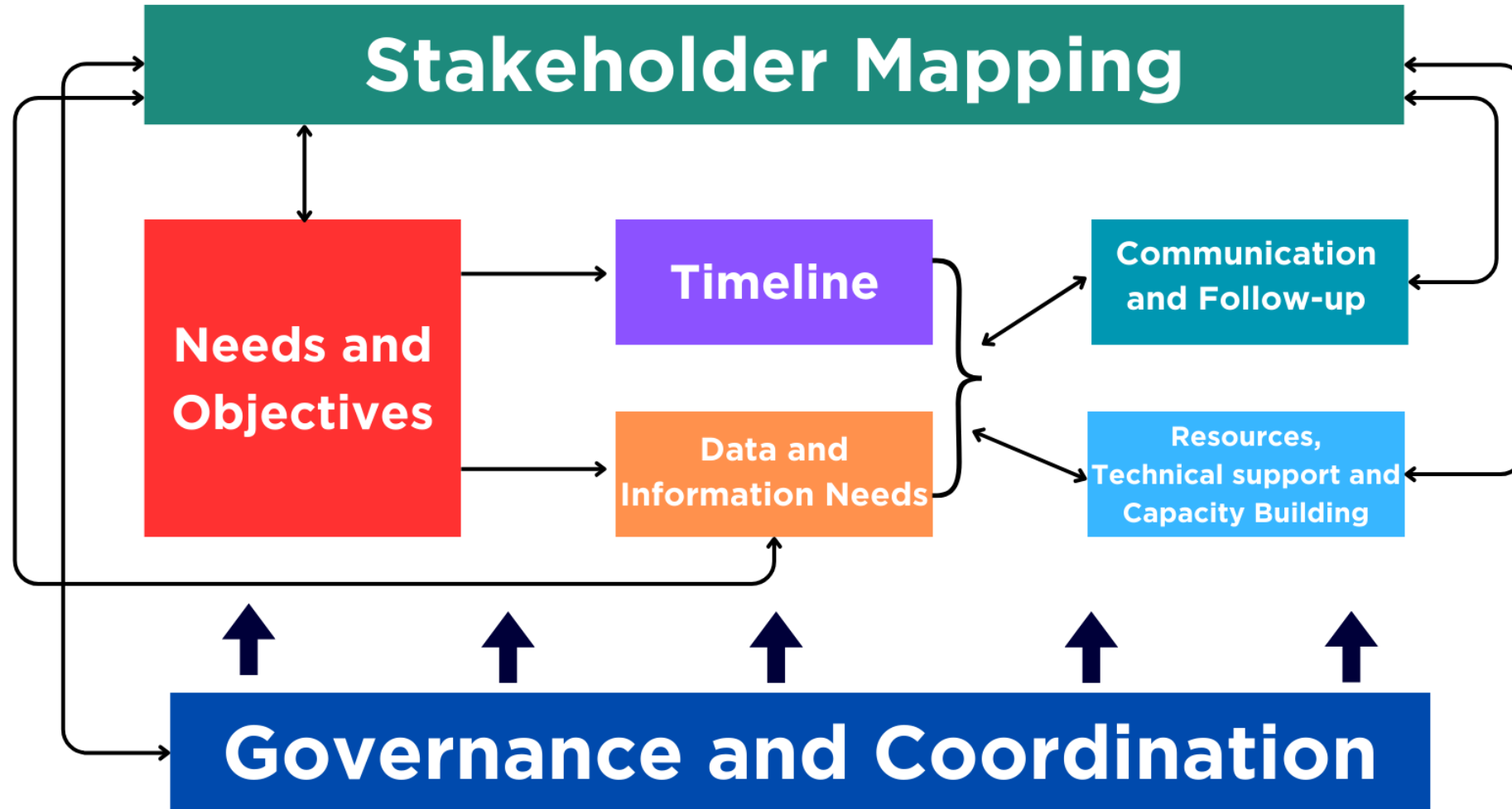
**More evidence-based policy-making**

# The Evaluation Plan

- Is an important and evolving tool
- Ensures quality and effective evaluation processes
- Enhances accountability and transparency
- Gearing towards more evidence-based approaches
- Recognises importance of partnership as well as horizontal principles.
- **Legal Basis:** Art 44(5) of Common Provision Reg.



# The Evaluation Framework



# Key considerations

- **Which areas will be evaluated**, the recommended timeframes, focus, and resources needed to achieve goals; whilst aligning with other strategic timelines.
- In **Q1 of 2024 a consolidation exercise** across all EU Funds will be carried out where these plans may no longer all be stand-alone.
- Ensure to have an **Evaluation enabling framework**, including the identification of key stakeholders, with whom the same work is shared, validated, analysed, and used for future enhanced actions/decisions.
- Important in understanding **the specificities of each Programme**.
- Finally, evaluation work will continue to be **entrusted to internal or external experts who are functionally independent**. Led and coordinated by the Evaluation Unit which is functionally independent from the Managing Authorities.

# Horizontal Evaluations



# Horizontal Evaluations

| Evaluation Type  | Timeframe         | Evaluation |
|--|-------------------|------------|
| Preparatory Data Study   | Q2 2024 – Q3 2024 | HEV1       |
| Communication Evaluation   | Q3 2026 – Q3 2029 | HEV2       |
| Effectiveness and Efficiency of key processes of EU Funds          | Q3 2026 – Q4 2027 | HEV3       |
| Summative evaluation EU funding across locations in Malta and Gozo | Q1 2027 – Q2 2028 | HEV4       |

**The aim is to consolidate Horizontal Evaluations once all programme-specific Evaluation Plans are finalised.**

# Preparatory Data Study

HEV1

## Rationale:

- To have a **clear indication of the data that needs to be gathered**, thus **ensuring better quality and reliable outcomes**.
- To **gather information on the specific data sets** that would be required to implement the proposed evaluation activities for each priority and **provide for adequate monitoring feeding into the evaluation**.

# Communication Impact Evaluation

HEV2

## Rationale:

- To evaluate specifically the **impact of the communication activities** foreseen as part of the implementation of the applicable EU funded programmes in Malta.
- To help demonstrate the **effectiveness of communication activities** in achieving their intended outcomes and impact such as raising awareness on how funds were used and seen to be used.
- Relevant Data gathered as part of HEV-1 (preparatory data study) will feed into this Evaluation.

# Effectiveness and Efficiency of key processes of EU Funds

HEV3



## Rationale:

- To understand the **effectiveness and efficiency of key processes involved in relation to access and to use of EU funding.**
- To **take stock of the business processes in place** and carry out a mapping exercise.
- To **gather stakeholder feedback** on their perspectives on strengths and weaknesses.
- To research opportunities for adapting/transferring/introducing new models/processes for **evidence-based solutions.**
- Relevant Data gathered as part of HEV-1 (preparatory data study) will feed into this Evaluation.

# Summative evaluation EU funding across locations in Malta and Gozo

HEV4

## Rationale:

- To **understand the distribution** of the different EU fundings across different locations in Malta and Gozo.
- To outline findings in terms of forms of collective support and results.
- Relevant Data gathered as part of HEV-1 (preparatory data study) will feed into this Evaluation.

# **Programme-Specific Evaluations**

## **Common to ERDF/CF/JTF and ESF+**

# ERDF/CF/JTF and ESF+ Common Evaluations



| Evaluation Type | Timeframe         | Evaluation code |
|-----------------|-------------------|-----------------|
| Mid-term review | Q2 2024 – Q3 2024 | EV 1            |

# Mid-Term Review of ERDF/CF/JTF and ESF+ Programmes

EV 1



## Rationale:

- To provide key information to the Managing Authority and Monitoring committee on the relevance of the programme with respect to the elements listed in **Article 18** on mid-term review and flexibility amount and with due respect to **Article 6** on Climate targets and climate adjustment mechanism as applicable.



# Programme-Specific Evaluations

ERDF/CF/JTF

# ERDF/CF/JTF Evaluation Plan

| Evaluation Type   | Timeframe         | Evaluation code |
|---|-------------------|-----------------|
| Mid-term review   | Q2 2024 – Q3 2024 | EV 1            |
| A socio-economic assessment on the added-value for supporting SMEs  | Q1 2027 - Q4 2027 | EV 2            |
| Impact Evaluation in the thematic priorities of the ERDF/CF/JTF 2021-2027 Programme                       | Q1 2028 - Q2 2029 | EV 3            |
| Thematic study assessing effectiveness, efficiency, and synergies in reaching objectives linked to Health | Q3 2028 - Q4 2029 | EV 4            |

# A socio-economic assessment on the added value for supporting SMEs

EV 2

## Rationale:

- Recognising that Malta is predominantly reliant on SMEs, the current programme continues to provide **assistance to SMEs** to make them more competitive, sustainable, and resilient, through various priority areas including research and innovation, energy, and digitalisation.
- A **socio-economic assessment on the added value** of supporting SMEs. Such assessments are important for better understanding the impact of SME support schemes and may also provide an evidence input and insight to guide future policy decisions.
- The methodological approach is planned to include data collection, stakeholder interviews, case studies, and surveys to evaluate the impact of SME support schemes.

# Impact Evaluation in the thematic priorities of the ERDF/CF/JTF 2021-2027 Programme

EV 3

## Rationale:

- An **impact evaluation activity** intended to identify the relevant economic, environment, and social impact which may be attributed to ERDF/CF/JTF investments under each thematic priority area, namely: Smarter Europe, Greener Europe (incl. Just Transition objectives), Connected Europe, Social Europe and Europe Closer to the Citizens.
- This will be done in line with obligations stipulated under Article 44(2) of the CPR and is intended to cover the entire programme.
- The evaluation intends to employ a Theory of Change (ToC) methodology combined with an impact assessment to allow for a comprehensive evaluation.

# Mix-Methods Evaluation – Health

EV 4

## Rationale:

- As outlined in the Programme, Malta has been at the forefront of building resilience in **health** through continued investment in infrastructure and human resources, setting best practices amongst small states.
- **Thematic study** assessing **effectiveness and efficiency and synergies** in reaching objectives. The study may also seek to understand to what extent health determinants have also been positively contributed to.
- The approach is planned to use **Theory of Change** (ToC) combined with an **impact assessment** to comprehensively evaluate ERDF/CF/JTF investments, identifying intended outcomes, impacts, beneficiaries, and change, and focus on causal links and mechanisms of change.

# Programme-Specific Evaluations

European Social Fund +

# ESF+ Evaluation Plan

| Evaluation Type   | Timeframe         | Evaluation code |
|---|-------------------|-----------------|
| Mid-term review   | Q2 2024 – Q3 2024 | EV 1            |
| Structured Survey<br>(Material Deprivation)   | Q4 2024 - Q2 2028 | EV 2            |
| Longitudinal and retrospective tracer study tied to opportunities enabled through ESF | Q4 2024 - Q4 2029 | EV 3            |
| Impact Evaluation on the priorities of ESF+ 2021-2027 Programme                       | Q1 2028 - Q2 2029 | EV 4            |
| Financial Instruments ex-ante assessment<br>(as needed)                               | On a needs basis  | EV 5            |
| SCO-related ex-ante assessment (as needed)  | Q1 2024 - Q1 2025 | EV 6            |

# Structured Survey (Material Deprivation)

EV 2

## Rationale:

- Structured Survey in line with obligations stipulated under Article 23(3) of the ESF+ Regulation, for priority addressing **material deprivation**. Structured surveys of end recipients, within deadlines established by the Regulation and following a Commission-established survey model.
- The Interviewing organisation responsible for collecting data from end users receiving support shall be trained to collect data through the structured survey template, including training on interviewing methods and GDPR compliance.
- Data collected from end users may be collected using sampling and randomisation techniques to ensure a wide coverage and representation of the end user population. Validation and verification techniques may also be implemented in order to minimise potential risks and increase reliability of the gathered data. Following this process data gathered will be analysed and included in a Final Report.



# Longitudinal and retrospective tracer study tied to opportunities enabled through ESF

EV 3

## Rationale:

- The study will employ a longitudinal approach, including retrospective analysis of past ESF participants, to understand the long-term cause-and-effect/impact of ESF and ESF+ support.
- This method will provide insights into medium to longer-term changes and participants' pathways, offering broader evidence for shaping future policies and programmes beyond the immediate program indicators and using cross-sectional evaluations.
- The study will adopt a **participant-centered approach**, combining quantitative and qualitative elements to assess changes in participants' job status, employability, skills, well-being, and inclusion, aiming to confirm expected changes and identify unintended effects.
- To increase the robustness of this study, a large sample size should be established to ensure the validity of the findings. Data integrity and confidentiality will be maintained throughout the process. The inclusion of a counterfactual element will be considered based on data availability and other practical considerations.

# Impact Evaluation on the priorities of the ESF+ 2021-2027 Programme

EV 4

## Rationale:

- Impact Evaluation in line with obligations stipulated under Article 44(2) of the CPR intended to cover each priority of the programme to identify programme impact.
- The evaluation seeks to determine the **impact of the ESF+ interventions** on measurable changes outlined in the performance framework, while also exploring softer outcomes that may be harder to quantify.
- A theory-based approach will be used to analyse the effectiveness and the impact of the ESF+ priorities. Additional data sources, including interviews, surveys, and case studies will be used to ensure that evaluation is based on sound evidence. Direct inputs from participants and beneficiaries is a key part of this evaluation.
- As an impact evaluation, this should be scheduled as late as possible to give time for the expected results to appear whilst at the same time allowing that their findings feed into the policy process.

**Ex-ante assessment of ESF+ Financial Instrument (on a needs basis) EV 5 Ex-ante assessment of ESF+ Simplified Cost Options (SCOs) (on needs basis) EV 6**

Rationale:

- **Financial Instruments** were implemented during the 2014-2020 programming period aimed increasing participation in tertiary and in training for life-long learning measures, education. The 2021-2027 ESF+ programme also includes measures that incorporate financial instruments supporting increased participation in high level education through the provision of scholarships.
- This will be carried out in line with the FI Compass guidelines, this study may need to be carried out throughout lifetime of programme, depending on the factors triggering the need for such an updated review.
- **SCOs:** The MA may identify throughout the course of the programme new areas for simplification, requiring the dedicated studies which would be used as a basis to establish a new SCOs.

## Next steps and conclusions (Evaluation update)

- Monitoring Committee will be kept updated on progress.
- All evaluations will be published on [fondi.eu](https://fondi.eu).
- Importance to have strong collaborative inputs from all stakeholders as part of preparatory data study.

# **Update on the status of the Enabling Conditions**

# Enabling Conditions

- As per Article 40 of the CPR, the Monitoring Committee shall examine the fulfillment of Enabling Conditions and their application throughout the programming period.

| Horizontal Enabling Condition   | Status of Fulfilment |
|---|----------------------|
| G.1 – Effective monitoring mechanisms of the public procurement market  | Fulfilled            |
| G.2 – Tools and capacity for effective application of State aid rules   |                      |
| G.3 – Effective application and implementation of the Charter of Fundamental Rights   |                      |
| G.4 – Implementation and application of the United Nations Convention on the rights of person with disabilities (UNCRPD) in accordance with Council Decision 2010/48/EC |                      |

# Enabling Conditions - Fulfilled

| Thematic Enabling Condition  | Fund       | Status of Fulfilment |
|--|------------|----------------------|
| T1.1 – Good governance of national or regional smart specialisation strategy   | ERDF       | Fulfilled            |
| T2.1 – Strategic policy framework to support energy efficiency renovation of residential and non-residential buildings | ERDF       |                      |
| T2.3 – Effective promotion of the use of renewable energy across sectors and across the EU                             | ERDF       |                      |
| T2.6 – Updated planning for waste management   | CF         |                      |
| T2.7 – Prioritised action framework for the necessary conservation measures involving Union co-financing               | ERDF       |                      |
| T4.1 – Strategic policy framework for active labour market policies  | ESF +      |                      |
| T4.3 – Strategic policy framework for the education and training system at all levels                                  | ERDF/ ESF+ |                      |
| T4.4 – National strategic policy framework for social inclusion and poverty reduction                                  | ESF +      |                      |

# Enabling Conditions – Approved

| Thematic Enabling Condition                                     | Fund       | Status of Fulfilment                                 |
|---|------------|--|
| T4.2 – National strategic framework for gender equality         | ESF+       | Considered fulfilled since the programmes' adoption. |
| T4.6 – Strategic policy framework for health and long-term care | ERDF/ ESF+ |  |

- The fulfilment of these conditions will be reflected in the next programme amendment.



# Enabling Conditions - Fulfilled

- Over the summer 2023 the Strategy and Implementation Division held a series of discussions with relevant Ministries on the continued fulfilment of the enabling conditions.
- Around 10 bilateral meetings were held on enabling conditions, including horizontal enabling conditions.
- Based on this monitoring exercise, these enabling conditions continue to be deemed fulfilled.

# Enabling Conditions – Not Fulfilled

| Thematic Enabling Condition  | Fund      | Status of Fulfilment   |
|--|-----------|--|
| T2.2 – Governance of the Energy Sector   | ERDF      | Pending the Publication of Document F foreseen by the end of this year.  |
| T2.5 – Updated planning for required investments in water and wastewater sectors | ERDF & CF | Pending Government endorsement and publication of the National Investment Plan for the Water and Wastewater Sector 2023-2030 foreseen in the coming weeks. |
| T3.1 – Comprehensive transport planning at the appropriate level                 | CF        | Pending the finalisation of the National Transport Plan 2025, its eventual publication and the Commission’s assessment.                                    |

The Division will continue to monitor the fulfilment of the enabling conditions through engagement and follow up actions, as necessary.

# Conclusions

- The 2021-2027 Programmes will undoubtedly help support Malta in achieving its socio-economic goals.
- Ensuring a steady momentum at the start of the Programmes is critical and a number of calls have already been launched while a pipeline of calls is planned for the coming weeks and months.
- A timetable for the calls to be published can be found on the [fondi.eu](https://fondi.eu) website, aimed to give applicants more time to prepare good quality applications.
- Success of the Programmes is not limited to financial commitments but also in terms of performance, in that the EU budget can only be deemed a success if it delivers tangible results on the ground.
- Indeed, the new Programmes have strengthened the focus on performance, by setting clearer objectives and focusing on a smaller number of higher quality performance indicators, making it easier to monitor and measure results.
- The mid-term review process will be carried out in 2024 in line with Article 18 of the CPR and this will include an assessment on the progress in achieving the milestones – we are only 12 months away!
- The MA looks forward to work with all stakeholders to once again make a success of the implementation of the new Programmes in Malta, by maximising the use of EU funding to reap the benefits for all.