

FEBA

# EU Monitoring

JUNE / 2021



In this issue:

## European Social Fund Plus

Concluding a journey started in 2018 and following the vote of the European Parliament on June 8th and the approval of the Council of the EU, the **Regulation (EU) 2021/1057 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 June 2021 establishing the European Social Fund Plus (ESF+) and repealing Regulation (EU) No 1296/2013** was published on the Official Journal of the European Union of the ESF+ Regulation on June 30th. Please click [here](#) to access.

**With a budget of 88 billion euros for the period 2021-2027, its goal is to face the worst aspect of the pandemic in term of poverty and social exclusion and to implement the action plan of the European Pillar of Social Rights.**

For the period 2021-2027, the ESF+ is one of the main funding instruments to invest in people and to help Member States achieve the targets set out in the [European Pillar of Social Rights Action Plan](#).

The new ESF+ merges:

1. European Social Fund (ESF)
2. Youth Employment Initiative (YEI)
3. Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived (FEAD)
4. EU Programme for Employment and Social Innovation (EaSI)

The **European Social Fund 2014-2020** has proved to be a **crucial tool to promote employment, education and inclusion**. Since 2014, the ESF has supported over 33.4 million people across the Union. The Fund has also helped to cushion the blow of the pandemic by providing much-needed funding for short-time work schemes, youth employment measures, training and more. EU countries could flexibly reallocate cohesion funding to where they needed it most under **CRUI and CRUI+**. **Under REACT-EU, the ESF is expected to receive a top-up of around €17.5 billion, of which €1.2 billion have already been approved.**

### Key points of the new ESF+:

- Member States need to allocate **25% of ESF+ funds to social inclusion**;
- All Member States will devote **at least 3%** (on top of 25%) **of their ESF+ resources to provide food and basic material assistance to the most deprived**. The **co-financing rate** is fixed at 90%;
- **Member States** with a level of **child poverty** above the EU average should use **at least 5% of their ESF+ resources** to address this issue. All other Member States must allocate an appropriate amount of their ESF+ resources to targeted actions to combat child poverty;
- **Capacity building for social partners and civil society organisations**: all Member States need to allocate an appropriate amount (at least 0.25% for MSs with country-specific recommendations);

### The negotiation process started in 2018 and these are the key steps:

1. On 10 November 2020, the Parliament and the Council reached a political agreement on the 2021-2027 Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) and new own resources.
2. On 17 December 2020, the European Parliament gave its consent to the next MFF. The ESF+ will be allocated a budget of €88 billion (in 2018 prices) for the 2021-2027 period.
3. On the 29th of January 2021 a **political agreement** was reached on the ESF+ Regulation between the Parliament and the Council. The final agreement addressed some of the previous disagreements of the two institutions.
4. In March 2021 the EMPL Committee approved the Council's early second reading of the text.

**European Parliament Committee responsible:** [Employment and Social Affairs \(EMPL\)](#)

**Rapporteur:**



[CASA David](#)

On the other side, established in 2014, the **Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived (FEAD)** has been addressing the worst forms of poverty in the EU, such as food deprivation, child poverty and homelessness, with a **total allocation of €3.8 billion** (current prices) for the programming period 2014-2020. The EU provides up to 85% of funding, which is complemented by the Member States' own resources. This brings the total value of the fund to around €4.5 billion. Sole European fund to address the most severe forms of poverty, the FEAD has been instrumental to meeting the basic needs of the most vulnerable citizens. Furthermore, in addition to alleviating poverty through food and/or basic material assistance, the FEAD has introduced innovation offering possibilities to Member States to trigger real processes of social inclusion. To know more, read "[FEAD and the European Food Banks Federation: 2019 Implementation Report](#)".

**Shadow rapporteurs:**



[BENIFEI Brando](#)



[SEMEDO Monica](#)



[BALDASSARRE Simona](#)



[REINTKE Terry](#)



[RAFALSKA Elżbieta](#)



[GUSMÃO José](#)

### References

- EP Legislative Observatory, [European Social Fund Plus \(ESF+\) 2021-2027](#), 2018/0206(COD)
- European Commission, [Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the European Social Fund Plus \(ESF+\)](#) COM(2018)0382
- 3 June 2021 / [Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament](#) pursuant Article 294(6) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union concerning the position of the Council on the adaptation of a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the ESF+.
- Publication on the Official Journal of the European Union of the ESF+ Regulation. Please click [here](#) to access the Regulation (EU) 2021/1057 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 June 2021 establishing the European Social Fund Plus (ESF+) and repealing Regulation (EU) No 1296/2013.



## European Child Guarantee

In 2017 the European Parliament, the Council and the Commission proclaimed the European Pillar of Social Rights (EPSR). The EPSR has increased the awareness of social policies in the EU, including child poverty and has the potential to focus measures and funding on addressing child poverty for the 2021-2027 programming period. On 16 July 2019 the Political Guidelines of President Ursula von der Leyen announced the adoption of a Child Guarantee to help ensure that every child in Europe at risk of poverty or social exclusion has access to the “most basic of rights like health care and education” and also nutrition. ‘Healthy nutrition’ is a key element of the Child Guarantee, supporting access to healthy meals also outside of school days, including through in-kind or financial support. It is therefore vital to target and monitor Member States in their investments at tackling child poverty in the programming period 2021-2027 and ESF+ implementation.

Child poverty remains a serious issue in the EU with almost one out of four children at risk of poverty or social exclusion. In 2019, an estimated 22.5 % of children (aged less than 18 years) in the EU-27 were at risk of poverty or social exclusion compared with 21.5 % of working-age adults (aged 18-64 years) and 18.6 % of older people (AROE, 2019). In 2020 these estimates will sharply increase as a consequence of COVID-19. **Child poverty is a Pan-European problem and it exists in every EU country.**

The Child Guarantee came with [new obligations and requirements for Member-States](#):

- Member States need to allocate 25% of ESF+ funds to social inclusion
- Member States will devote at least 3% (on top of 25%) of their ESF+ resources to provide food and basic material

assistance to the most deprived. The co-financing rate is fixed at 90%.

- Member States with a level of child poverty above the EU average should use at least 5% of their ESF+ resources to address this issue. All other Member States must allocate an appropriate amount of their ESF+ resources to targeted actions to combat child poverty.

Two studies concluded that the Child Guarantee was feasible thanks to EU funds and member-state funds: with the [recent vote on ESF+](#), the obligation of member-state to fight against is levelled-up. With 3% of the state’s fund on food and basic material assistance to address the forms of extreme poverty that contribute most to social exclusion, the states will have to allocate funds on this question only.

Child poverty and concerning situations usually come with children who are unable to eat in a health and sufficient way. The Member States having almost no issue with lack of protein amongst children are the Scandinavian countries (Sweden, Finland, Denmark: quasi-null). Then comes western Europe countries (Belgium, France, Spain, Italy, Netherlands, Germany, Ireland, as well as some Baltic countries (Lithuania and Estonia) and Eastern Europe countries (Poland, Czech Republic) which have a percentage of lack of protein under 10% on average. The countries presenting alarming rates are Slovakia, Romania, Hungary and Bulgaria, with disparate rates that go from 12% for Slovakia to more than 40% for Bulgaria.

On 14 June 2021, the Employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumer Affairs Council (EPSCO) adopted the Commission proposal on establishing a European Child Guarantee.

**To know more:**

[Proposal for a Council Recommendation establishing the European Child Guarantee \(2021\)](#)

[Commission Staff Working Document accompanying the document Proposal for a Council Recommendation establishing a European Child Guarantee \(2021\)](#)

[Factsheet: European Child Guarantee \(2021\)](#)



## European platform on combatting homelessness

21 JUNE / 2021

### Background

European institutions, EU governments and civil society have for the first time committed to working together towards combatting homelessness in the EU. At a high-level conference in Lisbon today, they launched the **European Platform on Combatting Homelessness** to trigger dialogue, facilitate mutual learning, improve evidence and monitoring, and strengthen cooperation among all actors that aim to combat homelessness.

### Combatting homelessness – a priority for Social Europe

The high-level conference in Lisbon is co-organised by the Portuguese Presidency of the Council of the EU, the European Commission and the European Federation of National Organisations Working with the Homeless ([FEANTSA](#)). At the event, national ministers as well as representatives of EU institutions, civil society organisations, social partners and cities signed the "[Lisbon Declaration on the European Platform on Combatting Homelessness](#)" launching the Platform. They all pledged to work together under the umbrella of the platform and to deliver actions within their respective competences.

This **conference** was held on June 21st, following the lines drawn in the [Porto Conference](#). It is happening in a common will of the different Member States and the Commission to increase social inclusion and to fight against poverty, especially against the effect of the pandemic on populations at risk.

The platform launch is the beginning of a process to establish a **common understanding and commitment and ensure concrete progress in Member States** in the fight against homelessness. It offers an opportunity to engage and work with local actors, including cities and service providers. This will enable all actors to better exchange their knowledge and practices, and identify efficient and innovative approaches, to make progress on eradicating homelessness.

In the Declaration signed during the conference of June 21th, they agreed on the following objectives:

- no one sleeps rough for lack of accessible, safe and appropriate emergency accommodation;
- no one lives in emergency or transitional accommodation longer than is required for successful move-on to a permanent housing solution;

- no one is discharged from any institution (e.g. prison, hospital, care facility) without an offer of appropriate housing;
- evictions should be prevented whenever possible and no one is evicted without assistance for an appropriate housing solution, when needed;
- no one is discriminated due to their homelessness status.

**EU funding** is available to support inclusive policy measures aiming at combatting homelessness. **Member States will invest an important proportion of their European Social Fund Plus (ESF+) allocations to support social inclusion and poverty reduction.**

**Ana Mendes Godinho, Minister of Labour, Solidarity and Social Security in Portugal** underlined that the conference's goal is to give a voice to people who are not usually heard, to find solutions in order to provide for them decent housing and healthcare. In the example of Portugal, emergency measures have been implemented following the COVID-19 pandemic as Portugal invested heavily in social housing. In July only, 600 people will be offered a home thanks to this policy. Despite this progress, there is still a lot to do and this why, for Ana Mendes Godinho, this issue must be at the core of European focus. As a society, we until now failed to settle this issue of homelessness, but what has been achieved during the pandemic shows the capacities of Europe and its potential. After the Porto Summit, the people

in need have been placed at the centre of the attention of European institutions. More than ever, on this question, the EU needs to be united and coordinated. In this path to stop homelessness, this conference is a stepstone as a new platform to fight homelessness is created. This shows that the EU is moving from principles to actions.

**Commissioner Schmit** stressed the fact that homelessness is one of the great paradoxes of our times. Policies have failed in providing affordable housing to people: 10% of persons in the EU spend more than 40% of their income on housing, and this is a consequence of the raise of rents. Policies have failed to provide affordable energy to everyone. But the worst is that every night in Europe, more than 700.000 people sleep on the streets. They are precarious, and the pandemic endangered them even more. It is essential to have broad and coherent answers to fight this problem, such as ones like Housing First. This policy thrived to provide housing to homeless persons, but also to reintegrate them and socially include them so that they do not fall back to homelessness. There were collaborations with restaurants, or simple ideas such as them having their names on the doorbell. Now is the right moment to invest in social policies that will fight poverty and homelessness: what needs to be done is to strengthen healthcare, labour laws, minimal income, and social housing of course.

To have more information click [here](#).



## The EU's position at the UN Food Systems Summit

In 2021, UN Secretary-General António Guterres will convene a [Food Systems Summit](#) as part of the Decade of Action to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by

2030. The Summit will launch bold new actions to deliver progress on all 17 SDGs, each of which relies to some degree on healthier, more sustainable and equitable food systems.

### What does the Summit aim to achieve?

1. Generate significant action and measurable progress towards the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The Summit will succeed in identifying solutions and leaders, and issuing a call for action at all levels of the food system, including national and local governments, companies and citizens.
2. Raise awareness and elevate public discussion about how reforming our food systems can help us all to achieve the SDGs by implementing reforms that are good for people and planet.
3. Develop principles to guide governments and other stakeholders looking to leverage their food systems to support the SDGs. These principles will set an optimistic and encouraging vision in which food systems play a central role in building a fairer, more sustainable world.
4. Create a system of follow-up and review to ensure that the Summit's outcomes continue to drive new actions and progress. This system will allow for the sharing of experiences, lessons and knowledge; it will also measure and analyse the Summit's impact.

The Summit will bring together key players from the worlds of science, business, policy, healthcare and academia, as well as farmers, indigenous people, youth organizations, consumer groups, environmental activists, and other key stakeholders. The goal is to produce measurable progress towards the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, raise awareness, and develop principles to guide governments and other stakeholders.

### Questions to Ms Urpilainen (Commissioner International Partnerships) about the position of the EU in the summit:

Will the Commission urge the Council to adopt similar positions to those of the Farm to Fork and Biodiversity Strategies at the UN Food Systems Summit?

Will the Commission urge the Council to adopt positions that support the ambitions in these action track discussion papers?

*"The Commission fully supports the United Nations Secretary-General's Food System Summit initiative and is strongly committed to its aim of delivering progress on all 17 Sustainable Development Goals, each of which is interrelated with sustainable, fair and healthy food systems. The European Green Deal's Farm to Fork and Biodiversity Strategies will be key in shaping the EU contributions to the Summit and to the global transformation of food systems.*

*Furthermore, the Commission supports and is engaged in the preparatory process of the Food Systems Summit and seeks an ambitious outcome. The Commission has also actively engaged with the Council in the preparation of the Council Conclusions for the EU priorities for the Summit. In this respect, the Commission has been attentive that the objectives and key initiatives of the Green Deal's Farm to Fork and Biodiversity Strategies are integrated in the EU's policy messages for the United Nations Food System Summit, in its follow-up actions, and in all other relevant fora, such as the Conference of the Parties to the Rio Conventions and their preparatory processes."*

### How is FEBA contributing to the upcoming UN Food Systems Summit?

As a contribution to the forthcoming UN Food Systems Summit, the European Food Banks Federation in collaboration with Česká Federace Potravinových Bank organised [FEBA Annual Convention 2021](#) on 6-7 May 2021 in virtual mode.

More than 300 Food Bankers, policy-makers, business partners, leading experts and other NGO representatives participated and held a dialogue on a sustainable future food system. Would you like to relive the FEBA Annual Convention 2021? Click [here](#).





# AGRIFISH Council – CAP reform

28-29 JUNE / 2021

The main item on the agenda for this month's Council meeting was the **Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) reform**. The Portuguese presidency asked ministers to accept the provisional agreement on the main political issues reached with the European Parliament during inter-institutional negotiations.

Following a discussion of some of the main points, including environmental measures and the social dimension of the CAP, ministers **accepted the provisional deal reached with the Parliament** on the three regulations that **make up the CAP reform package**. Further technical work will now be carried out to finalise the legal texts, following which MEPs will be invited to vote on the reform package. The reform will then enter into EU law upon its adoption by the Council.

The new CAP will cover the period 2023-2027; a transitional arrangement agreed in 2020 will continue to apply until then.

Member States will have until 31 December 2021 to submit their draft national strategic plans for approval by the Commission.

*Infographic on "a fairer, greener and more performance based EU agricultural policy" – access [here](#).*

The reform wants to work on three different strategies:

1. A new "green architecture" based on environmental conditions to be met by farmers.
2. Direct payments and rural investment that will be planned and coherent.
3. A performance-based approach: Member States will have to report their achievements annually.

## A new social dimension

The post-2020 CAP places greater emphasis on the **social dimension** of farming. Under the new agreement, farmers and other beneficiaries receiving direct payments will be subject to an administrative penalty if they do not provide adequate employment conditions as set out in the relevant

EU legislation. It is the **first time that EU agriculture legislation has included a social dimension** and marks a historic step forward in the way the CAP takes conditions for farm workers into account.

## An environmentally ambitious CAP

The new CAP sets out a number of measures aimed at encouraging farmers to adopt '**greener' farming practices**. These include:

- enhanced conditionality standards that farmers need to meet in order to receive CAP support, including the **preservation of carbon-rich soils** through protection of wetlands and peatlands, and minimum shares of arable land to be dedicated to landscape features to protect biodiversity
- **eco-schemes** to support and/or incentivise farmers to observe agricultural practices that benefit the climate and the environment
- an increased share of rural development funding to be spent on **green interventions**
- **tracking of climate and biodiversity expenditure**, in line with the aims of the European Green Deal

## Support for smaller farms

The CAP reform package also includes measures aimed at **redistributing funds in favour of small and medium-sized farms**. Under the agreement, member states will be required to redirect 10% of direct payments to benefit such farms (in principle through redistributive payments, unless they can prove that they can achieve the same effect via other comparable instruments).

## Focus on performance

The reform also includes a shift from a focus on compliance to a performance-based CAP that will give member states the freedom to implement tailor-made interventions on the basis of strategic planning and specific shared objectives, in line with their needs.



European Food Banks Federation asbl - FEBA

Chaussée de Louvain 775, Brussels 1140, Belgium  
+32 2 538 94 50 / [info@eurofoodbank.org](mailto:info@eurofoodbank.org)



© FEBA. All rights reserved. Any reproduction in full or in part must mention the title and credit FEBA as the copyright owner.



This publication has received financial support from the European Union Programme for Employment and Social Innovation "EaSI" (2014-2020). For further information please consult: <http://ec.europa.eu/social/easi>. The opinions expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect the official position of the European Commission.