



EUROPEAN
COMMISSION

Strasbourg, 17.6.2025
COM(2025) 824 final

REPORT FROM THE COMMISSION

**TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, THE COUNCIL AND THE COURT OF
AUDITORS**

Annual Management and Performance Report for the EU Budget - 2024 financial year

The *Annual Management and Performance Report for the EU Budget – 2024 financial year*, together with its annexes, is the European Commission's main contribution to the annual discharge procedure ⁽¹⁾ by which the European Parliament and the Council of the European Union monitor the implementation of the EU budget. It fulfils the Commission's obligations under the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union ⁽²⁾ and the Financial Regulation ⁽³⁾. Implementing the EU budget is a shared responsibility, where the Commission works hand in hand with the Member States and with other partners and organisations.

The report is composed of three volumes.

- Volume I provides the key facts and achievements in relation to budgetary management in 2024.
- Volume II presents a more comprehensive picture of the implementation of the EU budget. Annex 1 provides an overview of the performance of the EU budget in 2024 in delivering the Commission priorities and systematically integrating horizontal policy priorities ('mainstreaming') into the EU budget. Annex 2 provides a high-level overview of the internal control and financial management procedures. Annex 3 covers the performance and compliance aspects of the Recovery and Resilience Facility.
- Volume III contains technical annexes supporting the report. It includes Annex 4, with detailed programme-by-programme performance information in the 'programme performance statements'.

This report is part of the broader integrated financial and accountability reporting package ⁽⁴⁾, which also includes the consolidated annual accounts ⁽⁵⁾, a long-term forecast of future inflows and outflows covering the next five years ⁽⁶⁾, the report on internal audits ⁽⁷⁾ and the report on the follow-up to the discharge of the previous year ⁽⁸⁾.

⁽¹⁾ The annual discharge procedure is the procedure through which the Parliament and the Council give their final approval on the budget implementation for a specific year and hold the Commission politically accountable for the implementation of the EU budget (https://ec.europa.eu/info/about-european-commission/eu-budget/how-it-works/annual-lifecycle/assessment/parliaments-approval_en).

⁽²⁾ [Article 318](#) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union.

⁽³⁾ Article 253(1)(b) and (e) of Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2024/2509 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 September 2024 on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union, OJ L, 2024/2509, 26.9.2024, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2024/2509/oj>.

⁽⁴⁾ Article 253 of the Financial Regulation.

⁽⁵⁾ Article 252 of the Financial Regulation.

⁽⁶⁾ Article 253(1)(c) of the Financial Regulation.

⁽⁷⁾ Article 118(8) of the Financial Regulation.

⁽⁸⁾ Article 267(3) of the Financial Regulation.

Contents

CONTENTS 3

THE EU BUDGET CONTINUES TO DELIVER AMID TRANSITION AND CRISES..... 5

EU BUDGET CONTRIBUTION TO HORIZONTAL PRIORITIES 13

NEXTGENERATIONEU DRIVING REFORMS AND INVESTMENTS VIA RECOVERY AND RESILIENCE PLANS
..... 16

EFFECTIVE TOOLS ENSURE THAT THE EU BUDGET IS WELL MANAGED AND SAFEGUARDED 18

THE CONDITIONALITY REGIME CONTINUES TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE PROTECTION OF THE EU’S
FINANCIAL INTERESTS 28

MANAGEMENT CONCLUSION 29

The EU budget continues to deliver amid transition and crises

Introduction

2024 was a year characterised by institutional transition in the European Union and a time of significant geopolitical turbulence. It marked the end of a five-year political cycle, with the beginning of a new term for the European Parliament and a new mandate for the European Commission. The Commission worked throughout the year with the Parliament and the Council of the European Union to complete work on the political priorities for the 2019-2024 mandate, and to respond decisively to many new challenges as they arose. Following the European elections in May 2024, President von der Leyen defined the Commission's priorities for 2024-2029, in line with the Strategic Agenda and the Political Guidelines presented to the European Parliament.

In 2024, the EU budget played a vital role in helping the EU deliver in all priority areas. It supported the green and digital transition, as well as the strengthening of EU defence capabilities, contributed to addressing migration pressures and strengthening the EU's external borders, provided unwavering support to Ukraine, and helped the EU respond to the humanitarian crisis in the Middle East. The EU budget was a key driver of intensified efforts to boost European competitiveness and bolster economic security, for example through investment in clean technologies, in cross-border infrastructure to strengthen the single market, and in human capital. The budget also continued to underpin the EU's strategic partnerships across the globe.

The current long-term budget was reinforced in February 2024 through a [midterm revision](#).

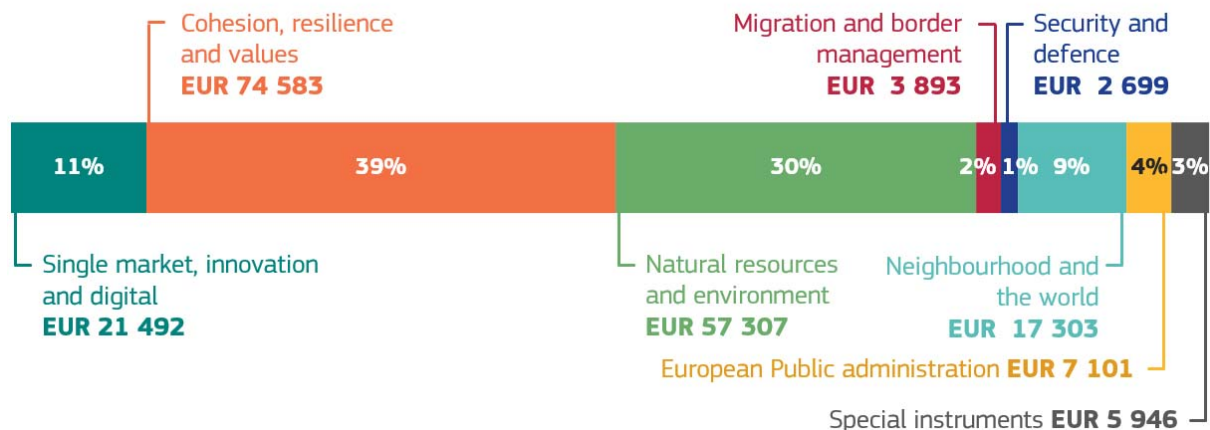
Reflecting the scale of the challenges facing the EU, this included, for the first time, a revision of the EU budget's expenditure ceilings, covering the years 2024-2027. Meanwhile, the implementation of the landmark NextGenerationEU recovery plan continued to drive the economic transformation of the EU, notably through support for investments and reforms in the Member States from the Recovery and Resilience Facility.

The Commission has made active use of the flexibility in the EU budget to respond to crises and support new priorities. This flexibility has been almost entirely depleted, due to the size of the shocks the EU budget has had to address, first and foremost the fallout of Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine, but also natural disasters in the EU and beyond. The EU also made extensive use of redeployments, for instance by redirecting funds from cohesion policy to support refugees from Ukraine (Cohesion's Action for Refugees in Europe – CARE), or to address the energy crisis (REPowerEU). The remaining flexibility for the final years of the current programming period is thus very limited. This is why the Commission has highlighted the urgent need to increase the flexibility of the EU budget under the next multiannual financial framework so that the EU is able to act and react decisively in a fast-changing world.

The total commitment appropriations for the EU budget in 2024 amounted to EUR 190 billion, complemented by commitments for NextGenerationEU that amounted to nearly EUR 79 billion.

Multiannual financial framework: 2024 EU budget commitment appropriations by budget heading (million EUR)

Total **EUR 190 323**



Source: European Commission.

Investing in people and boosting competitiveness

The EU budget is at the heart of the European Union's efforts to boost competitiveness and bolster economic security. Through EU budget programmes, and the Recovery and Resilience Facility powered by NextGenerationEU, the EU finances essential investments and reforms that will shape the future of the EU's economy and help tackle the competitiveness challenges highlighted in the Draghi report ⁽⁹⁾.

The EU supports research and innovation via Horizon Europe, the EU's main science programme, to which over EUR 13 billion was allocated in 2024. During the year, over 11 000 proposals were submitted to nine Horizon Europe calls for funding ⁽¹⁰⁾. Examples of funding in 2024 included more than EUR 450 million awarded to projects addressing food, the bioeconomy, natural resources, agriculture and the environment ⁽¹¹⁾ and more than EUR 220 million awarded to support research infrastructures ⁽¹²⁾. By 2024, 5 330 intellectual property rights applications were filed as a result of actions funded by the programme ⁽¹³⁾. Via the European Innovation Council (EIC), the EU supports deep tech innovators with an integrated set of instruments. By the end of 2024, under Horizon Europe, the EIC had awarded nearly EUR 2 billion in grants, supporting over 700 startups and SMEs. Since 2020, the EIC Fund has crowded in over EUR 2.6 billion of additional investment into EIC-supported companies, with a leverage effect of over EUR 3 for every euro of equity invested by the EU ⁽¹⁴⁾.

The InvestEU programme is a powerful driver of private investment. It deploys budgetary guarantees to de-risk and catalyse investment in key economic sectors, with the aim of supporting innovation and decarbonisation along with the EU's long-term competitiveness. InvestEU is estimated to have mobilised

⁽⁹⁾ [The future of European competitiveness](#).

⁽¹⁰⁾ European Research Executive Agency, 'More than 11,000 project proposals submitted to Horizon Europe', European Research Executive Agency website, 16 October 2024, https://rea.ec.europa.eu/news/more-11000-project-proposals-submitted-horizon-europe-2024-10-16_en.

⁽¹¹⁾ [Horizon Dashboard](#).

⁽¹²⁾ European Research Executive Agency, '31 new projects set to deliver state-of-the-art technology and services to the benefit of the entire research community', European Research Executive Agency website, 10 January 2025, https://rea.ec.europa.eu/news/31-new-projects-set-deliver-state-art-technology-and-services-benefit-entire-research-community-2025-01-10_en.

⁽¹³⁾ COM(2025) 824, Annex 4, page 8.

⁽¹⁴⁾ EISMEA (2025), Scaling Deep Tech in Europe - European Innovation Council - Impact Report 2025. Available at: https://eic.ec.europa.eu/document/download/7b947b36-66cb-4471-a2d0-158d5ae6770f_en?filename=EICImpact-Report-2025.pdf

EUR 300 billion of private and public investments by the end of 2024, helping to support investments as diverse as, for example, the development of energy-efficient household appliances, satellite-based internet connectivity, and innovation in small and medium-sized enterprises.

Moreover, with the Innovation Fund, the EU is supporting industry in the net-zero transition, providing financing to innovative projects to the tune of around EUR 12 billion through a combination of grants and auctions. Via the single market programme, and with over EUR 600 million allocated for 2024, the EU supports the digitalisation of services and business operations in areas such as consumer protection and product safety. Through REPowerEU, EUR 10 billion in prefinancing was provided to 21 Member States by the end of 2024 to help the EU reduce its reliance on Russian energy.

The European Regional Development Fund under cohesion policy contributes to regional development and to increasing research and innovation capacity across the Union. By improving their innovation performance and cohesion, Member States and regions become more attractive, allowing them to retain talents and attract new ones. Cohesion policy support to innovation is complementary to Horizon Europe investments, with the main source of innovation support targeting emerging innovators. Moreover, 85% of cohesion policy funding for research and innovation goes to less developed and transition regions. Since 2021, cohesion policy has financed over 21 400 MW of additional production capacity for renewable energy, as well as the reconstruction and modernisation of 895 km of tram and metro lines ⁽¹⁵⁾.

The EU stepped up its investment in people and skills in 2024. For instance, the European Social Fund Plus, with a budget allocation of EUR 96.6 billion for 2021-2027, including [EUR 16.8 billion](#) for 2024, contributes to the EU's employment, social, education and skills policies. Under the shared management strand of the fund, 1 million participants gained a qualification, 690 000 participants found a job (including self-employed), and 320 000 were in education or training by the end of 2024.

The EU budget also supports mobility in the fields of education, training, youth and sports via the Erasmus+ programme, which had a budget of EUR 4.6 billion for 2024. Erasmus+ international initiatives in 2024 provided support to around 1 200 international mobility projects, providing opportunities to up to 50 000 higher education students and staff.

The common agricultural policy also supports people and competitiveness. In 2024, it helped to support and stabilise farming income and helped create around 200 000 jobs, with the largest contribution coming from interventions supporting young farmers to become established.

To further develop the Trans-European Transport corridors, the Connecting Europe Facility allocated EUR 7 billion to projects to improve seamless cross-border connectivity, and launched the last calls for proposals for its remaining budget of EUR 2.5 billion. This support includes, among other things, the digitalisation of the trans-European transport network, notably railways.

The Strategic Technologies for Europe Platform

The COVID-19 pandemic crisis and Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine heightened supply chain vulnerabilities, undermining the EU's industrial competitiveness. Through the midterm revision of the multiannual financial framework, the EU budget was adjusted to enhance the EU's sovereignty and security, reduce its strategic dependencies and strengthen its competitiveness, among other objectives. This led to the establishment of the Strategic Technologies for Europe Platform (STEP), along with EUR 1.5 billion to strengthen the European Defence Fund under the new platform. The platform was designed to foster

⁽¹⁵⁾ [Open Data Portal for the European Structural Investment Funds - European Commission | Cohesion Open Data.](#)

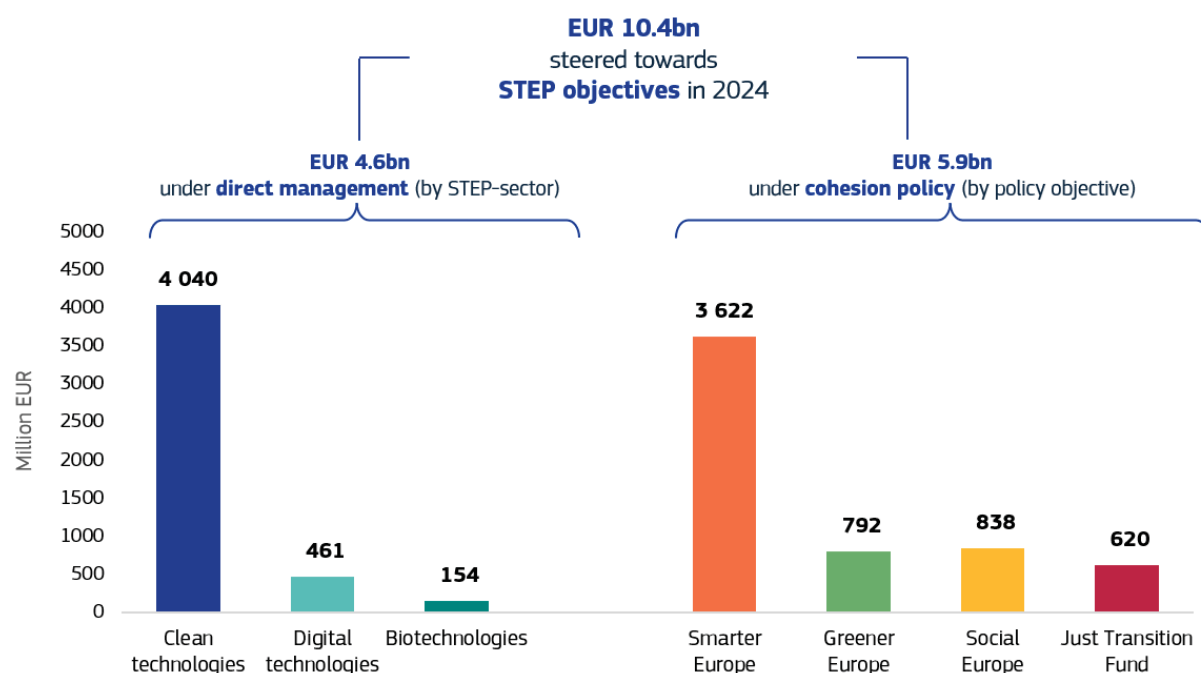
digital technologies and deep-tech innovation, along with clean and resource-efficient technologies and biotechnologies. This support includes the reinforcement of value chains and investment in skills development.

In 2024, STEP's first year of operation, it mobilised over EUR 10 billion in EU funding, combining EUR 4.6 billion under five spending programmes directly managed by the EU and EUR 5.9 billion reprogrammed by Member States and regions under cohesion policy.

STEP operates by coordinating 11 existing EU programmes and leveraging a series of tools: a network of national contact points to facilitate its implementation in the Member States; a new quality label awarded by the Commission to high-quality projects (the STEP Seal); and an integrated and more accessible online portal with information for project promoters, investors and public authorities (the STEP Portal).

The results of the platform in 2024 are summarised in Annex 1 of this report and presented in greater detail in the **2024 annual report on STEP** ⁽¹⁶⁾. For example, in October 2024, the Commission selected 85 innovative net-zero projects to receive EUR 4.8 billion in grants in total from the Innovation Fund, all of which received a STEP Seal. A total of 149 high-potential projects have been awarded the STEP Seal, including ⁽¹⁷⁾ OpenEuroLLM, which aims to train the first-ever family of open-source large language models for artificial intelligence covering all official and future EU languages; Energy Observer 2, which will be the world's first hydrogen-powered cargo ship; and PHARMSD 3.0, which aims to set a new standard for continuous pharmaceutical manufacturing through the optimisation of spray drying, a method that turns liquid drug formulations into stable powders.

Funding steered towards STEP objectives



Source: European Commission.

⁽¹⁶⁾ An interim evaluation of STEP is under preparation and will be published later in 2025 at https://strategic-technologies.europa.eu/step-documents_en.

⁽¹⁷⁾ European Commission, 'Strategic Technologies for Europe Platform mobilises over EUR 15 billion to boost investments in Europe in its first year', European Commission website, 4 March 2025, https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/ip_25_665.

Stepping up the EU's security and defence capabilities

Against the backdrop of a highly unstable global geopolitical situation, the EU in 2024 faced increasing and evolving security threats across the continent. To tackle these threats, the EU reinforced its common strategic vision for security and defence. It took decisive steps to ensure that the EU defence industry is competitive and responsive, and that defence systems and equipment are ready when needed. This is why, in March 2024, the EU presented the first [European defence industrial strategy](#), guided by the principle that Member States need to invest more, better, together and European.

The Commission proposed a [EUR 1.5 billion Europe defence industry programme for 2025-2027](#) to support the concrete implementation of the strategy. This initiative seeks to continue to support the defence industry after the conclusion of short-term emergency measures such as the Act in Support of Ammunition Production and the European Defence Industry Reinforcement through Common Procurement Act. Between 2023 and 2024, over EUR 500 million worth of grants were allocated through the Act in Support of Ammunition Production, contributing to ramping up European artillery ammunition production to [1 million loaded shells per year](#).

The EU continued to foster the robustness and innovative capacity of its defence technological and industrial base through the [European Defence Fund](#) by committing EUR 4 billion in support of 162 collaborative defence projects between 2021 and 2024. These projects support the development of critical defence technologies and capabilities in all military domains, including ground, air, naval, space and cyber, in line with the EU capability priorities agreed by the Member States.

Additionally, in January 2024, the EU launched the [Defence Equity Facility](#), funded by the European Defence Fund and managed by the European Investment Fund. With a budget of EUR 175 million between 2024 and 2027, this instrument will invest in innovative small and medium-sized enterprises in the field of defence (including start-ups and small mid-caps) established in the EU and Norway. To increase the capacity for movements of troops and material, the EU allocated EUR 807 million in 2024 for strategic investments in dual-use transport infrastructure under the Connecting Europe Facility.

Providing unwavering support to Ukraine

Following the unprovoked full-scale invasion and illegal occupation of Ukrainian territory by Russia, the EU's commitment towards Ukraine has been steadfast and wide-ranging. Since the beginning of the war, the EU has provided unprecedented and comprehensive support to Ukraine and its people, mobilising **EUR 130.2 billion** by the end of 2024 to provide financial, economic, humanitarian, military and diplomatic support, including in essential areas such as demining, energy, and accountability.

EU budget contributions to help Ukraine and Member States face the consequences of the full-scale Russian invasion between 2022 and 2024



Allocations to Ukraine and Member States to face the consequences of the war from the EU budget and outside the EU budget for the European Peace Facility from 2022 to 2024.

- (1) Support under cohesion policy refers to flexibility offered through the 'cohesion's action for refugees in Europe' and 'flexible assistance to territories' packages, covering a combination of amounts invested (or reprogrammed) and liquidity lines made available to Member States.
- (2) The EUR 19.6 billion include the financial support provided in 2024 to Ukraine in the form of grants and loans by the EU, directly or indirectly through its implementing partners (international financial institutions).
- (3) Horizon Europe, EU4Health, European Instrument for International Nuclear Safety Cooperation, common foreign and security policy, and interest rate subsidy provided under macrofinancial assistance.
- (4) This figure corresponds to the amount that was frontloaded from the 2027 to the 2023 budget for Erasmus+, to provide specific support for Ukrainian learners and staff.

Source: European Commission.

In February 2024, European leaders agreed to create a new Ukraine Facility to help Ukraine in its recovery, reconstruction and modernisation. Through this new facility, [EUR 50 billion](#) in stable and predictable financial support is expected for the period from 2024 to 2027. This instrument should also support Ukraine in pursuing reforms on its path towards EU membership. The budgetary allocation for the Ukraine Facility in the year 2024 was [EUR 4.77 billion](#) provided in non-repayable support and EUR 13.1 billion disbursed in the form of loans. Achievements under the plan in 2024 include ⁽¹⁸⁾:

- the development and approval of an integrated national energy and climate plan for Ukraine;
- the adoption of a strategy for the thermal modernisation of buildings until 2050;

⁽¹⁸⁾ Ministry of Economy of Ukraine, 'Plan for the implementation – Ukraine Facility – 2024-2027', Ministry of Economy of Ukraine website, 2024, .

- the introduction of a market-based framework for renewable energy;
- the adoption of a strategy for developing and expanding border infrastructure with EU Member States and Moldova;
- the adoption of a strategy for agriculture and rural development until 2030.

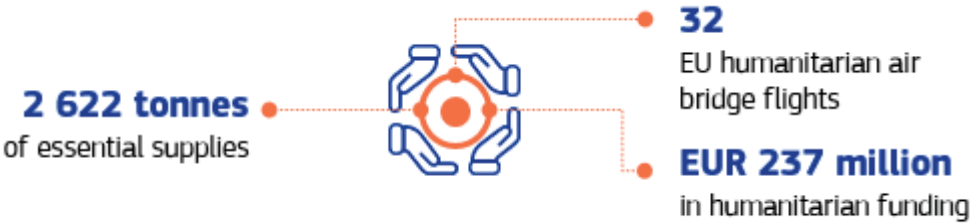
Since 2022, the EU has granted **around EUR 950 million** in humanitarian aid to help people affected by the war in Ukraine. It has also provided emergency assistance to Ukraine via the Union Civil Protection Mechanism. Additionally, more than **4 million Ukrainians** have fled from Russia’s war of aggression and sought refuge in the EU, leading the EU to redirect funds from both cohesion policy, via the Cohesion’s Action for Refugees in Europe, to help Member States and regions to provide emergency assistance, and from social policy, via the European Social Fund Plus, to cater for the needs of Ukrainian children evacuated to the EU from institutions in Ukraine.

Aims of the Ukraine Facility

	Support Ukraine’s recovery, reconstruction and modernisation
	Support Ukraine’s financing needs to allow the government to deliver uninterrupted public services
	Mobilise investment in Ukraine’s private sector for fast economic recovery and reconstruction
	Support Ukraine in making the reforms needed on its path to EU accession
	Support broader Ukrainian society by helping to address the social consequences of the war

Responding to the crisis in the Middle East

Following Hamas’s terrorist attacks on Israel in October 2023 and the ensuing Israeli military response, the situation dramatically escalated in the Middle East. The EU remains committed to the provision of needs-based assistance to people in the region. Since the start of the war, the EU, together with Member States, has mobilised **EUR 1.3 billion** in humanitarian assistance to the Palestinian people in key areas such as food, health, shelter, water, sanitation and hygiene.



For Lebanon, the EU allocated, in September 2024, an additional EUR 25 million in humanitarian funding to provide crucial support to populations affected by the conflict between Hezbollah and

Israel, which led to large-scale displacement. In addition to this funding, in-kind humanitarian help was provided via humanitarian air bridge operations and the maritime corridor. The EU has also provided [EUR 35 billion in support](#) since 2011, including [EUR 163 million](#) in 2024, to those affected by the conflict in **Syria**, the world's largest humanitarian disaster and refugee crisis. The EU also provided crisis response assistance in the Middle East (EUR 30 million), addressing both the drivers and the consequences of instability and hostilities in the region, such as hate speech.

Addressing migration pressure and reinforcing border control

To address migration challenges and to step up the protection of its external borders, the EU set up the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund as part of the 2021-2027 multiannual financial framework, with a total of [EUR 9.88 billion](#), including [EUR 1.51 billion](#) for 2024.

The 2024 midterm revision of the multiannual financial framework resulted in an additional EUR 2 billion to be used for migration and border management between 2025 and 2027:

EUR 0.8 billion for the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund; EUR 1 billion for the Border Management and Visa Instrument (part of the Integrated Border Management Fund); and EUR 0.2 billion for the European Union Agency for Asylum.

Between 2021 and 2024, the fund financed the creation of more than 36 000 places in reception accommodation infrastructures and supported the resettlement of over 25 000 people. In May 2024, the EU adopted the [pact on migration and asylum](#), a new set of rules on managing migration, establishing a common asylum system and securing the EU's external borders that will be implemented as from 2026.

A common EU system to manage migration

 Secure external borders	 Fast and efficient procedures	 Effective system of solidarity and responsibility	 Embedding migration in international partnerships
Robust screening	Clear asylum rules	Permanent solidarity framework	Preventing irregular departures
Eurodac asylum and migration database	Guaranteeing people's rights	Operational and financial support	Cooperation on readmission
Border procedure and returns	EU standards for refugee status qualification	Clearer rules on responsibility for asylum applications	Fighting migrant smuggling
Crisis protocols and action against instrumentalisation	Preventing abuses	Preventing secondary movements	Promoting legal pathways

The EU has also been investing in enhanced border management via the Integrated Border Management Fund. The fund, with [EUR 1.28 billion](#) allocated for 2024 ([EUR 7.37 billion](#) for 2021-2027), supports Member States in ensuring strong and effective European integrated border management, helping to ensure a high level of internal security within the EU and the free movement of people within it. The fund has been helping, for instance, to digitalise visa processing: between 2021 and 2024, over 11.9 million visa applications were made using digital means.

Enhancing partnerships around the globe

In an increasingly complex geopolitical landscape, the EU's official development assistance remains a major source of financial support for countries in need. In 2024, the EU and its Member States maintained their position as the [largest global provider of official development assistance](#). Furthermore, the EU allocated over EUR 2.49 billion in humanitarian assistance, helping more than 300 million people. The EU continued to strengthen its role in the world and to support the green and digital global transitions. It aims to provide up to EUR 300 billion in investment by 2027 through the [Global Gateway](#), the EU's global investment strategy. The Global Gateway is supporting hundreds of flagship projects across Asia, Latin America, the Pacific, the Western Balkans and the Eastern and Southern Neighbourhoods.

In 2024, the EU–Africa partnership had a particularly strong impact as the EU deployed the EUR 150 billion [Global Gateway Africa–Europe investment package](#), targeting areas such as clean energy, environmental sustainability, digital infrastructure, transport, health and education. Examples include ongoing works on a wastewater treatment plant to clean the Hann Bay in Senegal, as well as support to mobilisation of public and private investment for increasing renewable energy production in Madagascar.

The **Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument – Global Europe**, which also helps to fund the Global Gateway, contributes to actions in areas such as democracy, human rights, crisis response, peace and stability, climate action and environmental protection, with a total initial financial envelope of EUR 79.5 billion for 2021–2027. Moreover, via the European Fund for Sustainable Development Plus, the EU has helped to deliver on the Global Gateway, helping to mobilise the private sector by providing guarantees amounting to EUR 13.3 billion between 2021 and 2024.

The midterm revision of the multiannual financial framework increased support for the Southern Neighbourhood and the Western Balkans region, to be provided through the Reform and Growth Facility for the Western Balkans **and secured continued funding to address the crisis in Syria.** An additional EUR 7.6 billion was allocated, with EUR 3.1 billion in fresh funding and EUR 4.5 billion redeployed from other areas of the budget.

In light of the current geopolitical tensions, **the EU enlargement process** continued bringing enlargement countries closer to the EU's security, economic and social orbit before joining the EU. **The Reform and Growth Facility for Western Balkans partners** ⁽¹⁹⁾ **will bring reforms** with support of up to [EUR 2 billion in grants and EUR 4 billion in loans](#) from 2024 to 2027. The Growth Facility for Moldova will provide EUR 1.9 billion in financial support and the Ukraine Facility will provide up to EUR 50 billion in stable and predictable financial support for the years 2024 to 2027.

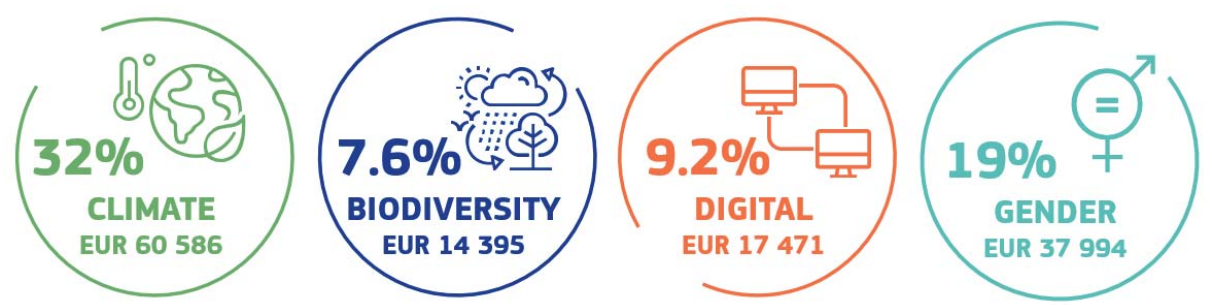
EU budget contribution to horizontal priorities

The EU budget focuses on delivering EU added value in the form of results that could not be achieved through national action alone. All EU funding programmes continued to progress towards their performance targets in 2024 and together provide strong support to a range of cross-cutting priorities. For example, the EU budget is essential to the **twin green and digital transitions**. In 2024, it is estimated that almost EUR 61 billion supported climate objectives, over EUR 14 billion targeted biodiversity objectives, EUR 17 billion was allocated to digital priorities and nearly EUR 38 billion supported gender equality ⁽²⁰⁾.

⁽¹⁹⁾ Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Montenegro, North Macedonia and Serbia.

⁽²⁰⁾ Figures based on budgetary commitments. Support to different priorities should not be aggregated, as in some cases the same intervention may contribute to more than one priority.

EU budget and NextGenerationEU allocation to horizontal priorities in 2024 (percentage of total budget and estimated amounts in million EUR)



Source: European Commission.

Examples of contributions from the EU budget to horizontal priorities

Climate

- The Horizon Europe mission '100 Climate-Neutral and Smart Cities by 2030' aims to make cities inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable. It supports 112 cities in achieving climate neutrality and becoming smart by 2030, with a particular focus on energy transition and the development of renewable energy projects.
- A total of 915 995 new or upgraded refuelling and recharging points for clean vehicles had been installed through measures under the Recovery and Resilience Facility (part of NextGenerationEU) by the end of 2024.
- Some 2.55 million hectares of agricultural and forest land were covered by common agricultural policy management contracts contributing to carbon sequestration or conservation in 2023.
- Under the LIFE programme, more than 1.4 million tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent are expected to be avoided thanks to projects awarded in 2022 and 2023, and 7 799 gigawatt hours per year of primary energy savings are expected to be delivered by the 2022-2023 projects.
- The Ukraine Facility contains a chapter on green transition and environmental protection. In 2024, Ukraine adopted a new law on preventing, reducing and controlling industrial pollution; an integrated national energy and climate plan; and a new strategy for thermal modernisation of buildings until 2050.

Biodiversity

- Some 21 million hectares are covered by selected projects to protect against wildfires under cohesion policy funds.
- The Copernicus atmosphere monitoring service uses near-real-time observations of the location and intensity of active wildfires to estimate the emission of pollutants that may impact biodiversity in the affected areas.
- The loss of 176 species is expected to be halted or reversed thanks to LIFE nature and biodiversity projects in 2022 and 2023.
- A total of 915 actions contributing to good environmental status were selected between 2022 and 2023 under the European Maritime, Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund.

Digital

- Some 16.2 million additional dwellings had broadband access via very-high-capacity networks by the end of 2024 thanks to investments financed by the Recovery and Resilience Facility.
- Additional capacity of 5 000 terabits per second had been created by backbone networks, including submarine cables, deployed by the Connecting Europe Facility by the end of 2024.

Gender equality

- In 2024, 19% of the EU budget contributed to the promotion of gender equality, according to the gender tracking methodology.
- The 27 recovery and resilience plans include 253 gender-equality milestones and targets, with 60 already completed by Member States and 63 assessed by the Commission as having been fulfilled.
- Horizon Europe requires that public bodies, research organisations and higher education institutions from Member States and associated countries have a gender equality plan in place as a condition for eligibility.

NextGenerationEU driving reforms and investments via recovery and resilience plans

In 2024, NextGenerationEU continued to support economic recovery and reforms in the Member States through the Recovery and Resilience Facility. The total financial envelope under the facility stands at EUR 650 billion, comprising EUR 359 billion in grants and EUR 291 billion in loans.

In 2024, the Commission disbursed 41 payments amounting to EUR 85.3 billion (EUR 29.4 billion of which was in the form of loans), including EUR 3.3 billion in pre-financing payments. This corresponds to 47.2% of milestones and targets assessed as satisfactorily fulfilled and brought the total disbursements by the end of 2024 to EUR 306.1 billion, divided into EUR 197.5 billion in grants (55% of the total Recovery and Resilience Facility envelope) and EUR 108.7 billion in loans (37% of the total envelope).

The Recovery and Resilience Facility, the centrepiece of NextGenerationEU, is making a real difference to the lives of EU citizens. Its major achievements include the following ⁽²¹⁾.

- **Green transition.** By the end of 2024, thanks to the facility, annual energy consumption had been reduced by 33.4 million megawatts and more than 915 000 refuelling and recharging stations for clean vehicles had been installed or upgraded.
- **Digital transition.** More than 16.1 million additional homes had gained access to very-high-capacity internet networks by the end of 2024, and more than 1.6 billion users ⁽²²⁾ were already using new or improved public digital services.
- **Healthcare.** Healthcare capacity has been increased, including in hospitals, clinics, outpatient care centres and specialised care centres. By the end of 2024, thanks to the Recovery and Resilience Facility, around 49.8 million people annually could benefit from a new or modernised healthcare facility.
- **Education and training.** Some 29.0 million people had participated in education and training and almost 2.8 million people are in employment or engaged in job-searching activities thanks to Recovery and Resilience Facility support. In addition, 10.7 million young people aged 15-29 had received support, whether monetary or in kind (i.e., education, training and employment support), thanks to measures supported by the facility by the end of 2024.
- **Support for businesses.** Almost 4.5 million enterprises had received support – whether monetary or in kind – under the facility by the end of 2024.

The reforms triggered by NextGenerationEU, via the Recovery and Resilience Facility, support the long-term resilience of Member States and improve the conditions for the successful delivery of the related investments under the facility and cohesion policy funds. The Recovery and Resilience Facility supports, for instance, the modernisation of regulatory frameworks in key sectors (e.g. digital, renewables, transport), improvements in permitting and public procurement procedures and the strengthening of rule-of-law and anti-corruption safeguards. More information is provided in **the recovery and resilience scoreboard** ⁽²³⁾.

⁽²¹⁾ This information is based on data reported by the Member States in the context of the biannual reporting on the common indicators. More information and data are available from the recovery and resilience scoreboard (https://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/recovery-and-resilience-scoreboard/index.html).

⁽²²⁾ The indicator counts the total number of uses rather than the number of unique individuals.

⁽²³⁾ https://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/recovery-and-resilience-scoreboard/index.html.

REPowerEU continues to help Member States save energy, diversify energy supplies and produce clean energy. Three more REPowerEU chapters were adopted in 2024, with the addition of Germany, Ireland and Luxembourg. In total, the REPowerEU chapters of 26 Member States amount to EUR 64.75 billion in support for reforms and investments to save energy, substitute fossil fuels and address security-of-supply needs, while reducing dependency on Russian fossil fuels. By the end of 2024, more than 42.6% (EUR 276.6 billion) of the total Recovery and Resilience Facility allocation financed investments and reforms supporting the green transition, including energy efficiency, renewable energy, electricity grids and other green investments.

Key climate and energy commitments for 2026 under the REPowerEU component of the Recovery and Resilience Facility

 Renewable energy for all	 Saving energy
• Speeding up permitting for renewables thanks to ambitious reforms in 15 Member States. • Enabling at least 20 gigawatts of renewable energy by 2026, on top of 40 gigawatts in the existing plans – more than the entire installed capacity of offshore wind in the EU.	• Long-lasting energy-efficiency interventions will reduce energy bills for at least 1 million households. • At least 180 000 sustainable heating and cooling systems will be installed by 2026.
 Boosting the competitiveness of EU industry	 Secure energy networks for the EU
• More than EUR 12 billion will be made available to decarbonise EU industries, including EUR 2.5 billion for renewable hydrogen production. • Strategic clean-tech investments in electrolyzers, batteries and solar panels. • Dedicated green-skills training for more than 100 000 individuals.	• More than 3 000 km of transmission and distribution electricity grid lines will be modernised – roughly the distance from Lisbon to Riga. • Grid-scale electricity storage will easily accommodate intermittent renewables. • Key cross-border gas infrastructure projects will meet immediate security-of-supply needs.

In 2024, the Commission supported Member States in revising their recovery and resilience plans. It assessed a total of 17 plan revisions in 2024 ⁽²⁴⁾, which were subsequently endorsed by the Council. When revising the recovery and resilience plans, commitments that were no longer achievable due to objective circumstances were adjusted or replaced by more suitable alternatives, while keeping the original ambition of the plan intact.

Almost EUR 73.2 billion had been issued in the form of NextGenerationEU green bonds as of April 2025. The largest share of these funds was used to make disbursements to Member States under the Recovery and Resilience Facility. This means the EU is well on track to becoming one of the world's largest issuers of green bonds. In December 2024, the Commission published the first NextGenerationEU green bond allocation and impact report ⁽²⁵⁾, which confirms the EU's commitment to sustainable finance. The report shows that the full implementation of all measures funded by NextGenerationEU green bonds will reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 55 million tonnes per annum, which is equivalent to 1.5% of all such emissions in the EU.

⁽²⁴⁾ A total of 17 revisions to plans were adopted in 2024 with the support of the Technical Support Instrument.

⁽²⁵⁾ [NGEU green bonds allocation and impact report 2024](#)

Further information on the implementation and management of the Recovery and Resilience Facility (part of NextGenerationEU) is provided in **Annex 3** to this *Annual Management and Performance Report for the EU Budget*.

Effective tools ensure that the EU budget is well managed and safeguarded

The Commission attaches great importance to making the best possible use of taxpayers' money.

It is fully committed to ensuring that funding reaches the intended beneficiaries at the right cost and in compliance with the applicable rules. To achieve this objective, the Commission relies on a number of tools that have proved to be fit for purpose over the years and have remained effective in relation to the new challenges encountered by the EU.

A robust chain of accountability

The Commission's governance system and chain of accountability are tailored to its unique structure and role.

The College of Commissioners is politically responsible for managing the EU budget. It delegates the day-to-day operational management to the 51 authorising officers by delegation⁽²⁶⁾, who manage and steer their departments and are accountable for the share of the EU budget implemented in their department.

The **annual activity reports** demonstrate how the authorising officers by delegation have obtained the assurance that the resources assigned to them have been used in accordance with the principle of sound financial management and that the control procedures in place give the necessary guarantees concerning the legality and regularity of the underlying transactions. If the authorising officers by delegation identify weaknesses, they may qualify their declaration of assurance with reservations.

The assurance is built on the following: (1) an assessment of the internal control system, including anti-fraud measures; (2) the results of the controls carried out and their assessment of the risks to which their department is exposed and the mitigating measures taken; (3) the preventive and corrective measures they have applied as a result of the controls they have carried out, together with the Member States in the case of shared management; (4) the observations and conclusions of the internal auditor and of the European Court of Auditors; and (5) the mitigating measures taken to address the weaknesses identified, especially in higher risk areas.

An internal control framework and measures to fight fraud that are continuously updated

The Commission's internal control framework is crucial to ensuring the effectiveness, efficiency and economy of its operations, along with their legality and regularity.

This is especially true in a context of scarce resources and an increasing number of priorities. In 2024, the Commission continued to adapt its internal control framework as needed, for instance in relation to the risk management of its borrowing and lending activities and its spending instruments; further fine-tuning and developing specific

⁽²⁶⁾ The term 'authorising officers by delegation' covers Directors-General of Commission departments and heads of executive agencies, offices, services, task forces, etc. Article 74(1) of the Financial Regulation provides that: 'The authorising officer shall be responsible in the Union institution concerned for implementing revenue and expenditure in accordance with the principle of sound financial management, including through ensuring reporting on performance, and for ensuring compliance with the requirements of legality and regularity and equal treatment of recipients.'

audit and control strategies for lump-sum grants under Horizon Europe; and publishing new guidance for Member States. Based on the departments' self-assessments, the Commission considers that internal control systems are functioning well and that suitable mitigating measures are being implemented in areas where weaknesses have been identified.

On the fight against fraud, the Commission progressed in the implementation of its revised anti-fraud strategy action plan, which aims to prevent and tackle fraud. The Financial Regulation (recast) that entered into force in September 2024 extended the scope of the early detection and exclusion system to beneficial owners, among others, and new exclusion grounds such as incitement to hatred were introduced to better protect the EU budget from fraud and irregularities. As of 2028, core provisions will also apply to shared management. The revision also includes, as of 2028, Member States' compulsory feeding of key data into a single integrated information technology system for data mining and risk scoring, to access and analyse data on the recipients of EU funding and allow the identification of contracts and recipients that might be susceptible to risks.

The European Anti-Fraud Office continued its strategic analytical work and investigative activities and included for the first time a qualitative assessment of the national anti-fraud strategies in its 2023 annual report on the protection of the EU's financial interests ⁽²⁷⁾.

As part of the fight against fraud, all Commission departments, along with other EU agencies and bodies, have been required to establish a cybersecurity risk management, governance and control framework, based on an initial cybersecurity review. This follows the entry into force in January 2024 of Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2023/2841 ⁽²⁸⁾ laying down measures for a high common level of cybersecurity at the institutions, bodies, offices and agencies of the EU. This review confirmed the good cybersecurity posture of the Commission, which remains an attractive target. However, the current geopolitical context creates new motives for cyber threat actors who are exploiting technical and human vulnerabilities in increasingly sophisticated ways. This requires continuous improvement and upscaling of the Commission's capabilities and awareness to ensure appropriate levels of protection. The resulting priorities were endorsed as part of the European Commission Corporate Cybersecurity Strategy 2025-2026, and Action Plan.

Control results confirm the EU budget is well protected

As part of their control strategies, within the internal control framework, the Commission and the Member States perform thousands of checks every year to prevent, detect and correct errors and weaknesses in the control systems. For shared management, the Commission relies on the checks carried out by the national authorities and supervises them with its own controls and audits where necessary, in line with the single audit principle, which rationalises audit and control and minimises the audit burden on beneficiaries. Under indirect management the Commission relies on implementing partners' control systems, whereas for direct management it is the Commission itself that performs the controls. For the Recovery and Resilience Facility (the centrepiece of NextGenerationEU), checks and controls are performed according to the division of responsibilities between the Commission and the Member States.

⁽²⁷⁾ Report from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament – 35th annual report on the protection of the European Union financial interests and the fight against fraud, COM(2024) 318 final, 25 July 2024, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A52024DC0318&qid=1747055395142>.

⁽²⁸⁾ Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2023/2841 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 December 2023 laying down measures for a high common level of cybersecurity at the institutions, bodies, offices and agencies of the Union, OJ L, 2023/2841, 18.12.2023, <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2023/2841/oj>.

In agriculture 	In cohesion 
Member States continue to enhance their highly automated and systematic <i>ex ante</i> checks (e.g. through the compulsory use of the area monitoring system) and to recover ineligible expenditure from the beneficiaries to ensure compliance with the rules. The Commission reviewed the annual reports and opinions for all 72 paying agencies and carried out 48 audits in 22 Member States.	Member States audited more than 8 300 operations, and the Commission reviewed the annual reports and opinions for 441 programmes and carried out 73 audits.

As a result of these controls and audits, preventive and corrective measures to the amount of EUR 2 659 million were implemented in 2024. EUR 1 184 million is the amount of errors prevented as a result of controls and audits carried out before payments took place, and EUR 1 475 million in corrections implemented by the Commission and the Member States, as a result of controls and audits carried out after payment took place.

Based on these controls and audits, for all headings under which expenditure is cost-based, the Commission estimates the risk at payment and the risk at closure. The risk at payment measures the risk that the payments made are affected by irregularities before any correction has been applied. The risk at closure represents the remaining level of error at the end of the programming cycle after all controls and all corrections have been implemented. Given the multiannual character of the funding programmes, the Commission, together with Member States in the case of shared management, makes a substantial effort to perform controls after payment and to make corrections until the closure of the programmes. These efforts are reflected in the estimated risk at closure.

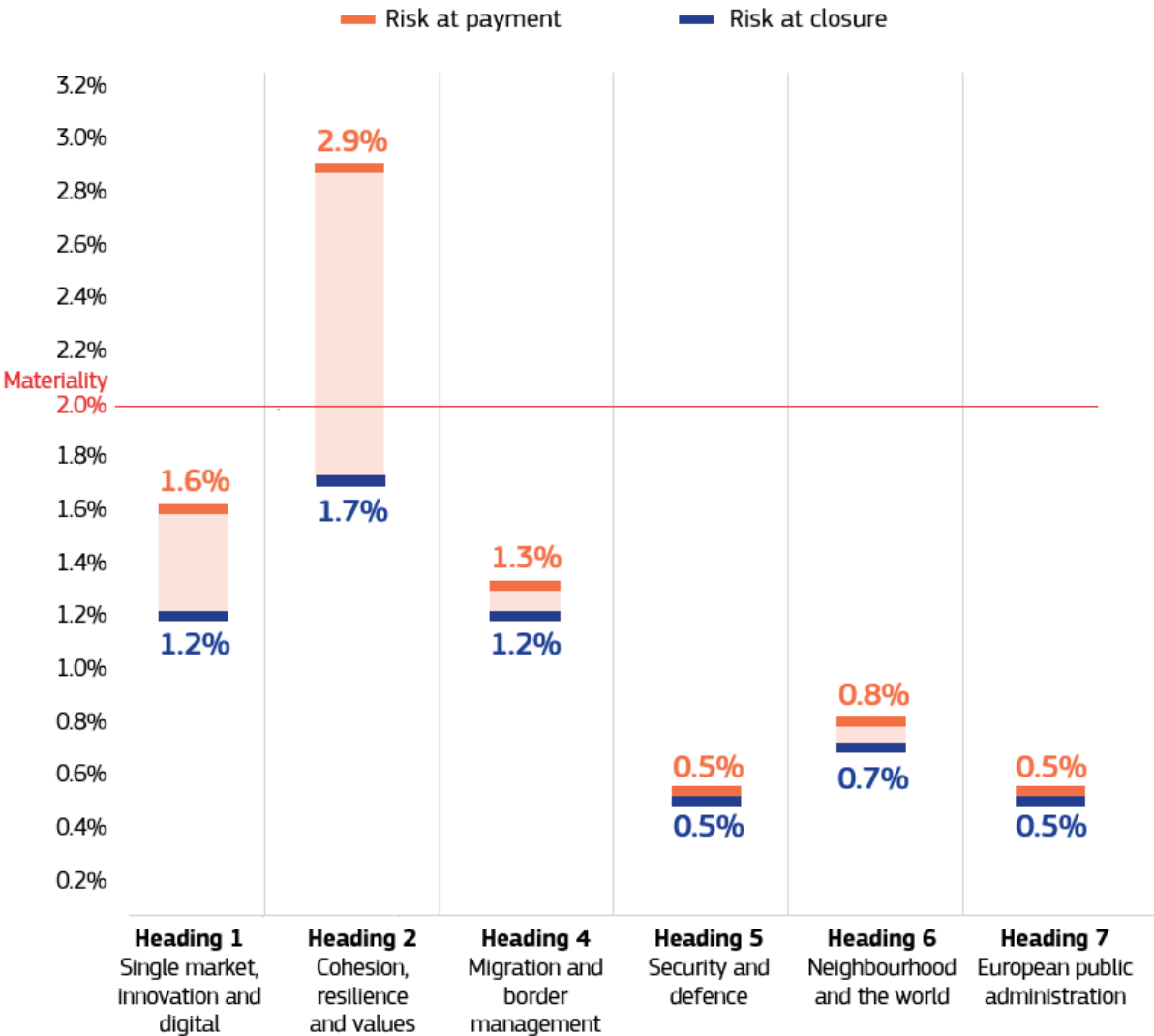
In 2024, the Commission used a new indicator for the heading ‘natural resources and environment’: the share of expenditure that is low risk. From 2024 onwards, for most of the expenditure under the common agricultural policy (representing 74.8% of the heading’s expenditure and almost 24% of total budget expenditure for the year), the 2023-2027 legal framework represents a shift from compliance-based policy to a greater focus on performance results. The focus is also on the proper functioning of the governance systems put in place in the Member States to ensure both the legality and regularity of the underlying transactions and the quality of performance results. In keeping with this performance-based approach, new reporting has been required from the Member States on performance and on the assessment of the governance systems. There is no obligation under the CAP Regulation for Member States to report control statistics at the level of financial beneficiaries to the Commission. Reflecting this, instead of determining an error rate and a risk at payment, the Commission groups expenditure in three categories of risk: low, medium and high, based on an assessment of the functioning of Member State (governance) systems. To conclude on how well the EU budget is protected, the share of low-risk expenditure is compared with the previous years’ share of low-risk expenditure for the Directorate-General for Agriculture and Rural Development, since this department represents the bulk of the expenditure under the heading ‘natural resources and environment’. On average, in the last six years, the share of low-risk expenditure was 64% ⁽²⁹⁾.

Because of this new approach, no risk at payment and risk at closure can be determined for the Commission as a whole. The conclusion on the level of protection of the EU budget is therefore presented at the level of each heading of the multiannual financial framework.

⁽²⁹⁾ In 2022 this share was 72%, and in 2023 it was 69%.

In 2024, for compliance-based expenditure, the risk at payment remained below 2% for all multiannual financial framework headings except cohesion, resilience and values (see chart below). The risk at closure is below 2% for all headings, which means that the Commission has robust internal controls in place to protect the EU budget under these headings. This is in line with the conclusions for previous years. It is also consistent with the fact that expenditure in 2024 was still mostly related to the 2014-2020 programming period. This shows that the approach to internal control has remained robust, even in the challenging context of recent years.

Overview of risk at payment and risk at closure for compliance-based expenditure

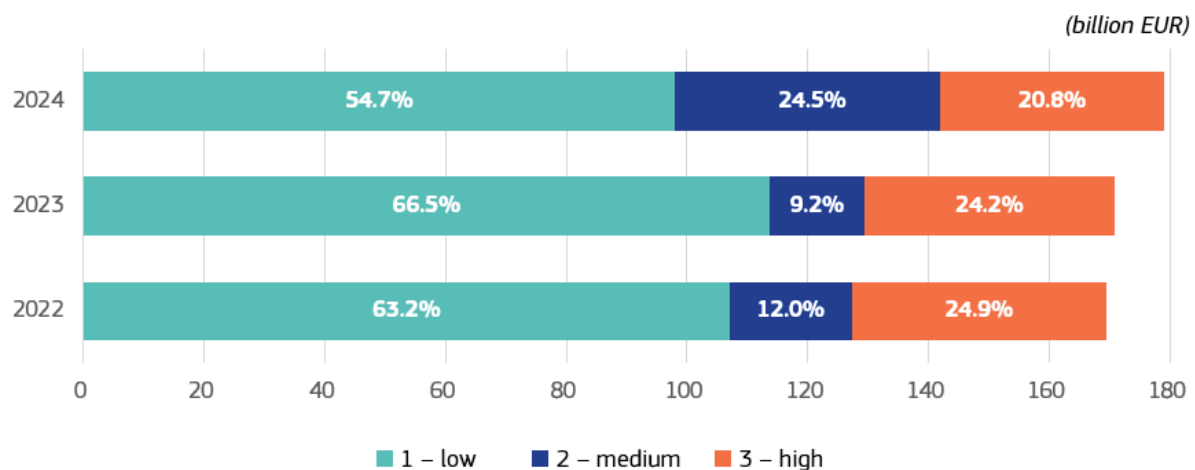


Source: European Commission annual activity reports for 2024.

For natural resources and environment, the share of low-risk expenditure was 77%, above the average of the last six years (64%). This is broadly in line with previous years' results, which show a positive trend, confirming the maturity of the Member States' governance systems under which the common agricultural policy expenditure is implemented.

To ensure comparability with previous years at the Commission level, it is still possible to present an overview of the share of expenditure in each of the three categories of risk, i.e. low, medium and high risk. The evidence gathered by the Commission through its controls and audits, and those of the Member States, allows expenditure to be grouped together in three risk categories based either on the risk at payment (low, if below 2.0%; medium, if between 2.0% and 2.5%; or high, if above 2.5%) or on the share of expenditure found (low, medium or high risk) based on the tailored methodology established for performance-based payments.

Expenditure per risk category



Source: European Commission annual activity reports for 2024.

Based on all the controls and audits carried out, the Commission has detailed and robust evidence of the differentiated risk level for EU budget expenditure. This evidence is detailed down to the level of programmes for cohesion policy and down to the level of interventions within paying agencies, for performance-based expenditure under natural resources. This in turn makes it possible to address and correct weaknesses precisely in the segments of expenditure where they occur and to focus action where it is deemed necessary.

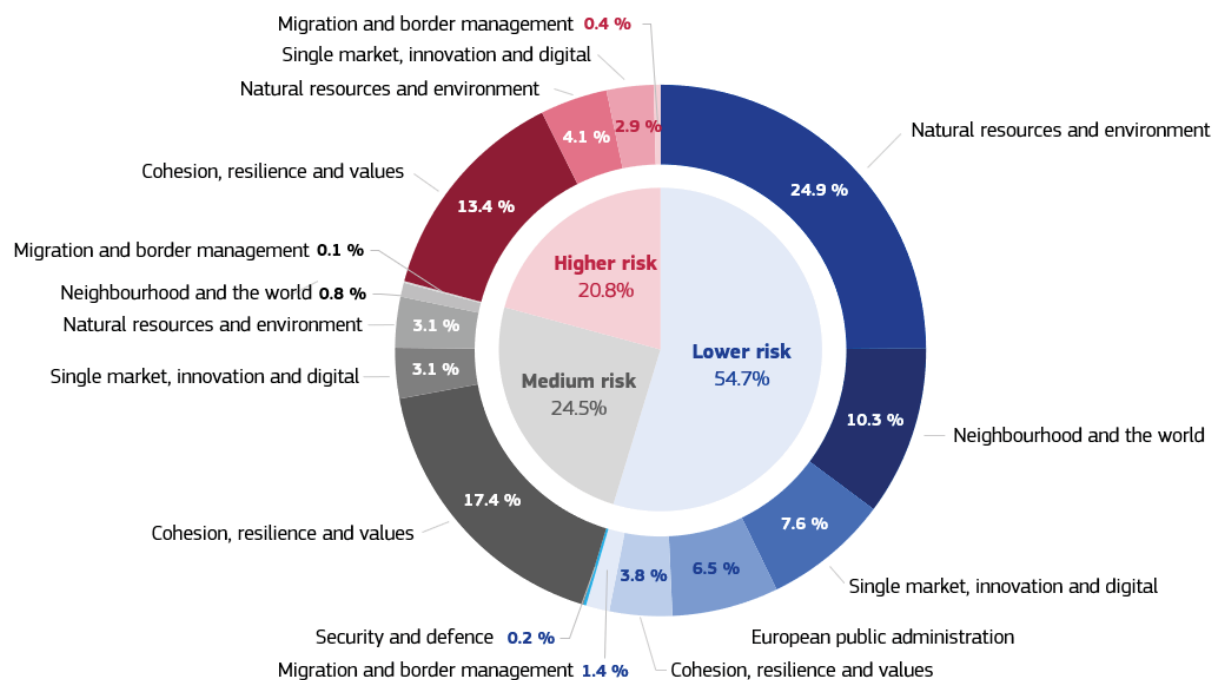
This approach allows the Commission to present a nuanced picture of the managed expenditure.

Horizon 2020 and cohesion policy as a whole carry a risk at payment above 2%, and natural resources (as a whole) and administrative expenditure are low risk. However, while the overall risk at payment for cohesion is 2.9%, the majority of cohesion policy programmes were in the medium risk category in 2024. Moreover cohesion policy's multi-level control and corrective framework ensures that the risk at closure remains below the materiality threshold of 2%. The Commission is able to report precisely which programmes in which Member States have a risk at payment above 2% ⁽³⁰⁾. Similarly, for expenditure for natural resources that are low risk in general, the Commission can identify those interventions at paying agency level that are estimated under the medium and high risk segments ⁽³¹⁾.

⁽³⁰⁾ In 2023, reservations were made in relation to 43 programmes in 17 Member States and the United Kingdom for both the 2014-2020 and the 2021-2027 programming periods.

⁽³¹⁾ In 2024, for expenditure under the new performance-based model, 37 interventions in 14 paying agencies in 12 Member States are put under reservation.

European Commission categorisation of expenditure into higher-, medium- and lower-risk segments, as a percentage of the total of relevant expenditure for 2024



Source: European Commission annual activity reports for 2024.

The Commission's approach to the control of the funds it is implementing reflects its specific role.

The Commission's duty as manager of the EU budget is, on a multiannual basis, to prevent errors and, if necessary, to correct them, recover funds unduly spent and address identified weaknesses. The Commission's approach differs from that of the Court of Auditors, which is annual by definition and with an auditor's perspective, as it results from a multiannual management perspective and requires that more detailed information be provided.

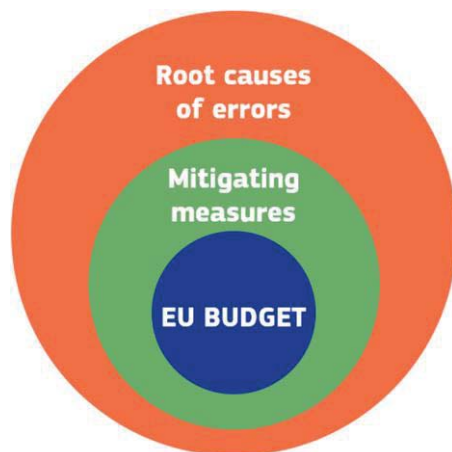
A recent study commissioned by the Committee on Budgetary Control of the European Parliament compares the Commission's risk at payment and closure and the Court of Auditors' estimated level of error, focusing on cohesion funds ⁽³²⁾. The study concludes that both institutions use state-of-the-art methodologies, based on international audit standards and that the error rate and risk at payment are not directly comparable. The study stresses the usefulness of the two approaches that meet each institution's needs and expectations.

For 2023-2027 expenditure under the common agricultural policy, the Court of Auditors continues to apply the approach of previous years.

The Court determines an error rate based on audits of payments to final beneficiaries, checking whether they comply with the rules set by the Member States in their plans. Errors identified in payments are also analysed by the Court of Auditors for indications of potential serious deficiencies in the governance systems in Member States, which are the focus of the Commission's assessment. The Court's approach is therefore complementary to the Commission's.

⁽³²⁾ European Parliament: Directorate-General for Budgetary Affairs, Rampton, J. and Stedtnitz, C.: Error Rates [Compared – Methodologies underpinning the European Commission's risk at payment/closure and the European Court of Auditors' estimated level of error, 2025](#).

The Commission reports transparently on expenditure with a high level of risk that is deemed to be material, with significant weaknesses in the management of funds or with reputational risks. This is done in the annual activity reports of each authorising officer by delegation through reservations qualifying their declaration of assurance. For 2024, there are 18 reservations, 17 related to expenditure under the EU budget, with a total financial impact of EUR 330.9 million, or 0.2% of the total expenditure, and one related to the Resilience and Recovery Facility, with a financial impact of EUR 17.5 million, 0.02 % of the total expenditure under the Facility in 2024. Reservations are a keystone in the accountability chain. They outline the challenges and weaknesses encountered and are systematically accompanied by a description of the measures envisaged to address them. Appropriate financial corrections are also applied.



Root causes of errors

- Ineligible costs in cost claims.
- Non-compliance with EU or national rules (procurement, State aid, etc.).
- Ineligible participants.
- Missing supporting documents.

Mitigating measures

- Continuous update of control strategies.
- Simplified cost options.
- Awareness actions.
- Guidance.
- Training.
- Digital solutions.

The Commission also uses appropriate measures to address the main weaknesses identified through its controls, taking into account the recommendations made by the Parliament, the internal auditor and the Court of Auditors.

In addition, the Commission takes into account the lessons learned, in particular on simplification measures, when designing the legal framework for new programmes. This was done, for instance, for the basic acts for the 2021-2027 programming period, and will continue when preparing the post-2027 programming period. As explained above, the impact of simplification measures such as the use of simplified cost options will increase in the years to come, when more expenditure from the 2021-2027 programming period will take place and will have been checked under the rules for this programming period.

Based on the above, the Commission considers that, in 2024, the EU budget was well protected overall. This is confirmed by the internal auditor's overall conclusion ⁽³³⁾, in which she considered that, during the year, the Commission put in place governance, risk management and internal control procedures which, taken as a whole, are adequate to give reasonable assurance over the achievement of its financial objectives, with the exception of those areas of financial management over which authorising officers by delegation have expressed reservations in their declarations of assurance.

⁽³³⁾ See Annex 2, Section 3.2 'Work of the Internal Audit Service and overall conclusion'.

Transparent reporting

The Commission reports transparently on the operational and budgetary implementation of the funds it manages. This is done through a wide range of reports and publicly accessible databases, examples of which are given below.

- The Commission's **integrated financial and accountability reporting** brings together comprehensive information on the implementation, performance, results, sound financial management and protection of the EU budget. It includes the final consolidated accounts, this *Annual Management and Performance Report for the EU Budget*, the long-term forecast of future inflows and outflows, the annual internal audit report and the report on the follow-up to the discharge.
- In their **annual activity reports**, the authorising officers by delegation of all 51 Commission departments report on the progress achieved towards their objectives in implementing the funds. They report on the control results, the weaknesses identified in the internal control systems and the measures taken to address them. They transparently mention in their declaration of assurance the reservations for high-risk expenditure or revenues.
- The **Financial Transparency System** web portal is open to those members of the public who are interested in finding out who received funding from the EU budget and the European Development Fund and how much they received under direct management, along with the commitments for entities entrusted to manage the EU budget under indirect management.
- The **NextGenerationEU green bonds dashboard** provides a real-time overview of the measures financed by the NextGenerationEU green bonds and related expenditure. These data demonstrate that the Commission is issuing green bonds in line with the highest standards and the best market practices. In December 2024, the Commission published the NextGenerationEU green bond allocation and impact report. It shows how the proceeds from green bonds have been used and presents the assessment of the climate impact of the measures financed by them, along with the level of compliance with the EU taxonomy.
- **Kohesio** ⁽³⁴⁾, **the public platform for the visibility and transparency of cohesion policy funds**, includes the lists of operations published by all the Member States in line with applicable regulatory provisions and is now available in all 24 official EU languages. In May 2024, Kohesio contained information on nearly 2 million projects and some 630 000 beneficiaries supported by the European Regional Development Fund, the Cohesion Fund and the European Social Fund, amounting to over EUR 500 billion worth of total investment. In 2023, Kohesio won the Ombudsman Award for Good Administration in the 'Open administration' category.
- In relation to **natural resources**, transparency of information is achieved at the Member State level through the development and management of national systems and, as applicable, databases accessible through the internet, for example for the identification of land parcels for the agricultural funds, and the regular publication of the beneficiaries of agriculture and maritime, fisheries and aquaculture funds. This was reinforced in 2023 with a new online catalogue of common agricultural policy initiatives ⁽³⁵⁾, which provides a transparent overview of all interventions in the strategic plans, as well as the result indicators and planned outputs dashboard, a data explorer with context indicators and a dashboard with the financial allocation to the common agricultural policy specific objectives.

⁽³⁴⁾ <https://kohesio.eu/>.

⁽³⁵⁾ [Catalogue of common agricultural policy interventions](#).

- For the **Recovery and Resilience Facility**, the centrepiece of **NextGenerationEU**, a section in the scoreboard displays the data reported by Member States on the 100 final recipients that receive the largest amount of funding under the facility. The Commission has also published methodological notes on the scoreboard to transparently explain the pillar tagging methodology and the methodology to calculate disbursements for each pillar. The scoreboard also includes a map that provides examples of reforms and investments supported by the Recovery and Resilience Facility in the different EU Member States. It is not an exhaustive database of projects supported by the Facility and is regularly updated as the implementation progresses.

For the Recovery and Resilience Facility under NextGenerationEU, control results confirm the satisfactory fulfilment of all milestones and targets for the payments made in 2024

For the Recovery and Resilience Facility, the Commission has put in place a dedicated control environment. This control set-up ensures on the one hand that the Member States put in place an effective control system for the protection of the EU's financial interests, as per the requirements of Regulation (EU) 2021/241, and on the other that the payments to the Member States are legal and regular.

All of the audit and control milestones and targets have been assessed as fulfilled for all Member States that had received a payment by the end of 2024 and for which such milestones and targets had been added to the national recovery and resilience plan. Particular attention was paid to the achievement of the milestones and targets added in relation to the Member States' arrangements to ensure the protection of the financial interests of the EU. Some Member States also made follow-up commitments to ensure compliance with the requirements in respect of management and control systems. The Commission took the opportunity of the revision of the recovery and resilience plans in 2023 to propose new audit and control milestones where this was deemed necessary ⁽³⁶⁾. The Commission did not propose further audit and control milestones in the 2024 revisions ⁽³⁷⁾. In 2025, to date one additional audit and control milestone was proposed. Significant progress has been made, with 50 audit and control milestones (out of 83) already assessed as satisfactorily fulfilled. However, the assessment of five audit and control milestones is still ongoing, and 28 remain to be assessed once the concerned Member States submit the corresponding payment requests. Member States cannot receive payments, except for pre-financing, until these milestones and targets are fulfilled.

In **2024**, the Commission has carried out **two additional system audits** on Protection of the Financial Interests of the Union (Belgium and Lithuania). Two targeted audits were also carried out in the first months of 2025 (France and Ireland), with a specific focus on public procurement and State aid. By end of May 2025, the Commission performed 33 system audits, covering all Member States and 181 entities such as ministries or agencies, selected on a risk basis. In the context of these system audits, the Commission notably verified whether Member States regularly check compliance with public-procurement and State-aid rules, including the effectiveness of such checks and covered procedures to avoid double funding between the Recovery and Resilience Facility and other EU programmes. Overall, a gradual improvement in the implementation of internal control systems was noted across the audited implementing and coordinating bodies. Member States have started to implement the necessary improvements stemming from audit findings in the audited implementing bodies. In some instances, the audit and control milestones provided an additional incentive for Member States to react to audit recommendations in a timely manner.

⁽³⁶⁾ Ten audit and control milestones and targets added in seven revised recovery and resilience plans.

⁽³⁷⁾ Seventeen recovery and resilience plan revisions were adopted, three of which included REPowerEU chapters.

The Commission also carried out an assessment of the Member States' compliance with their obligation to check regularly that the financing provided has been used in accordance with applicable rules, including compliance with rules for public procurement and State aid, where applicable.

In relation to legality and regularity, the Commission's control results confirm the satisfactory fulfilment of all milestones and targets for the payments made in 2024. These results are based on the Commission's careful assessment ⁽³⁸⁾ of the evidence provided by the Member States to substantiate the fulfilment of milestones and targets, along with the management declarations and audit summaries accompanying each payment request submitted and paid in 2024. This allowed a very small number of milestones and targets ⁽³⁹⁾ to be identified that had not been achieved at the time the payment requests were submitted, and for which suspensions of payments were applied in accordance with the methodology adopted in February 2023 ⁽⁴⁰⁾, for a total amount of EUR 461 million. This assessment was supplemented by on-the-spot audits ⁽⁴¹⁾ after the payments had taken place, and by considering, where acceptable, the ECA's audit results in the context of its Statement of Assurance 2024 ⁽⁴²⁾.

The responsible authorising officer by delegation reported that they had reasonable assurance of the legality and regularity of the payments made in 2024 for the Recovery and Resilience Facility, based on the results of the controls carried out based on clearly established criteria. The Commission concluded that all payments made in 2024 were considered to be at a low level of risk of error. In addition, regarding the compliance of the use of funding received with all applicable rules, and the obligation to correct cases of fraud, corruption, conflict of interest or serious breach of an obligation resulting from the financing and loan agreements only one Member State ⁽⁴³⁾ was found to be at a high level of risk for which a reservation was issued. All other Member States were assessed at either a medium level of risk or a low level of risk.

The conditionality regime continues to contribute to the protection of the EU's financial interests

Since 2021, with the entry into force of the Conditionality Regulation ⁽⁴⁴⁾, the EU budget has had an additional layer of protection in cases where breaches of the principles of the rule of law in a Member State affect or seriously risk affecting EU financial interests in a sufficiently direct way. The rule of law is one of the founding values of the EU, and respect for it is also key for the sound financial management of the EU budget and the effective use of EU funding. The conditionality regulation complements other tools and procedures to protect the EU budget, for example checks and audits or financial corrections under sectoral rules, including those put in place by the Recovery and Resilience Facility

⁽³⁸⁾ In its assessment, the Commission retains a margin of discretion as regards a limited number of circumstances where minimal deviations linked to the amounts, formal requirements, timing or substance can be accepted.

⁽³⁹⁾ Six milestones and targets were assessed as not being satisfactorily fulfilled at the time of payment in five Member States: Belgium, Czechia, Spain, Italy and Cyprus. In the cases of Belgium and Italy, while suspension decisions were adopted, the suspensions have since been lifted as the recovery and resilience plans were subsequently revised.

⁽⁴⁰⁾ Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council – Recovery and Resilience Facility: Two years on – A unique instrument at the heart of the EU's green and digital transformation, COM(2023) 99 final, 21 February 2023, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A52023DC0099>.

⁽⁴¹⁾ In 2024 the Commission carried out 17 audits on milestones and targets (some of them were also combined with systems audits). These audits are carried out on a risk basis, usually covering 100% of high-risk milestones and targets, along with some medium-risk milestones and targets.

⁽⁴²⁾ For clearing letters received and assessed by end of May 2025.

⁽⁴³⁾ Two individual cases of conflict of interests were detected during DG Economic and Financial Affairs audits. The financial amount at risk for the two projects amounts to EUR 17.49 million, representing 0.65% of the relevant expenditure in 2024 for this Recovery and Resilience Facility segment to Czechia.

⁽⁴⁴⁾ Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2020/2092 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 December 2020 on a general regime of conditionality for the protection of the Union budget, OJ L 433, 22.12.2020, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2020/2092/oj>.

Regulation ⁽⁴⁵⁾ and by the Common Provisions Regulation ⁽⁴⁶⁾ governing several EU funds, or investigations by the European Anti-Fraud Office.

The Conditionality Regulation allows the EU to take measures to protect the EU budget, for example through the suspension of payments or financial corrections. Where the conditions set by the regulation are met, the Commission must propose that the Council adopt appropriate and proportionate measures in relation to the Member State concerned. The Council decides on the adoption of measures by qualified majority. If measures are adopted, only the Member State concerned should be affected: the relevant EU programmes should continue to be implemented, and the Member State remains bound to fulfil its obligations, including that of paying final recipients.

In 2024, the Commission continuously monitored the situation in all 27 Member States and followed up on the ongoing case of Hungary. In December 2022, the Council adopted a decision containing protective measures under the Conditionality Regulation ⁽⁴⁷⁾, regarding Hungary, which committed to adopting a number of remedial measures. In December 2024, Hungary formally notified the Commission of some legislative amendments. However, the Commission found that these legislative amendments did not adequately address the outstanding concerns and therefore the Commission did not propose any lifting or adaptation of the protective measures ⁽⁴⁸⁾.

Management conclusion

The Commission ensures that the EU budget serves EU citizens. Thanks to the effective tools in place and the proactive management of the EU budget, the Commission has been able to deliver on its policy objectives and respond to multiple unforeseen challenges. The Commission has provided its beneficiaries, implementing partners and the Member States with the appropriate flexibility to respond to unforeseen circumstances, while ensuring sound financial management and maintaining an appropriate level of assurance on the management of the EU budget.

Flexibility and sound financial management will figure prominently in the Commission's proposals for the post-2027 multiannual financial framework. As set out in the Commission's Communication on the road to the new multiannual financial framework ⁽⁴⁹⁾, the current EU budget continues to deliver but is rapidly approaching its limits. The EU budget must continue to balance predictability for long-term investments and flexibility to respond to crises, but the current complexity and structural rigidity in the EU budget are ill-suited to a highly volatile geopolitical environment in which it is impossible to predict tomorrow's priorities today. A much more streamlined and flexible budget will be needed for the future, which

⁽⁴⁵⁾ Regulation (EU) 2021/241 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 12 February 2021 establishing the Recovery and Resilience Facility, OJ L 57, 18.2.2021, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2021/241/oj>.

⁽⁴⁶⁾ Regulation (EU) 2021/1060 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 June 2021 laying down common provisions on the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund Plus, the Cohesion Fund, the Just Transition Fund and the European Maritime, Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund and financial rules for those and for the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund, the Internal Security Fund and the Instrument for Financial Support for Border Management and Visa Policy, OJ L 231, 30.6.2021, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2021/1060/oj>.

⁽⁴⁷⁾ Council Implementing Decision (EU) 2022/2506 of 15 December 2022 on measures for the protection of the Union budget against breaches of the principles of the rule of law in Hungary, OJ L 325, 20.12.2022, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/dec_impl/2022/2506/oj.

⁽⁴⁸⁾ Commission Decision of 16.12.2024 pursuant to Article 7(2) of Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2020/2092 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 December 2020 on a general regime of conditionality for the protection of the Union budget, concerning a written notification from Hungary with regard to Article 2(2) of Council Implementing Decision (EU) 2022/2506 of 15 December 2022, C(2024) 9140 final.

⁽⁴⁹⁾ Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the European Council, the Council, the European Social and Economic Committee and the Committee of the Regions – The road to the next multiannual financial framework, COM(2025)46 final, 11.02.2025, ELI: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:52025DC0046>.

will also continue to provide the predictability and stability, as well as robust financial controls, that are the foundation stones of the EU budget.

For 2024, all authorising officers by delegation have provided reasonable assurance, qualified with reservations where appropriate. The annual activity reports demonstrate that all Commission departments have put in place solid internal control systems and provide evidence of the actions taken to address issues and weaknesses identified, improve cost-effectiveness, further simplify the rules and adequately protect the budget from fraud, errors and irregularities.

The internal auditor, in her overall conclusion, considered that, in 2024, the Commission had put in place governance, risk management and internal control procedures which, taken as a whole, are adequate to give reasonable assurance over the achievement of its financial objectives, with the exception of those areas of financial management over which authorising officers by delegation have expressed reservations in their declarations of assurance.

Based on the assurances and reservations in the annual activity reports and taking into account the opinion of the internal auditor, the College of Commissioners adopts this *Annual Management and Performance Report for the EU Budget – 2024 financial year* and takes overall political responsibility for the management of the EU budget.



EUROPEAN
COMMISSION

Strasbourg, 17.6.2025
COM(2025) 824 final

ANNEXES 1 to 3

ANNEXES

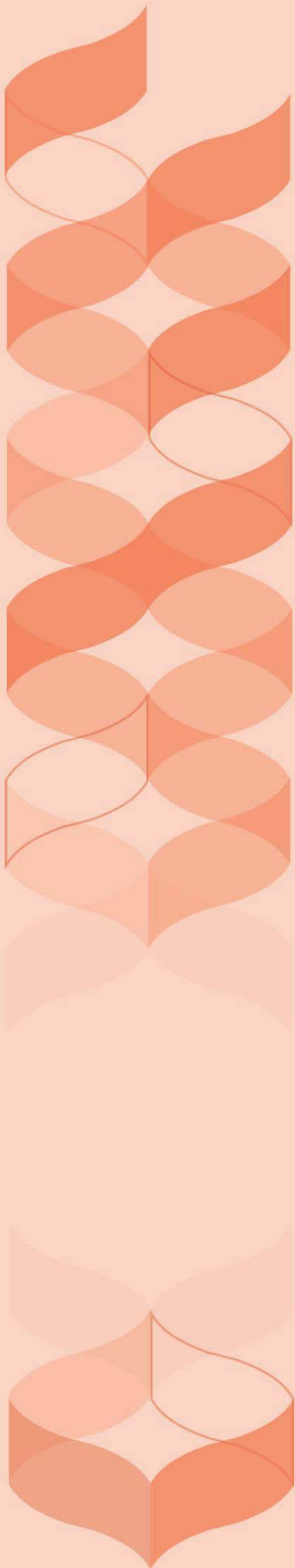
to the

REPORT FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, THE COUNCIL AND THE COURT OF AUDITORS

Annual Management and Performance Report for the EU Budget - 2024 financial year

Contents

CONTENTS	3
ANNEX 1 – PERFORMANCE ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2024	5
1. Performance of the EU budget	7
2. EU budget delivery in 2024	16
3. Horizontal policy priorities in the EU budget	42
4. Strategic technologies for Europe platform	69
ANNEX 2 – INTERNAL CONTROL AND FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT	75
1. Strong tools to manage the EU budget in a complex environment	77
2. Cost-effective controls protecting the EU budget	92
3. Management assurance	121
4. Outlook for 2025 and beyond	128
ANNEX 3 –THE RECOVERY AND RESILIENCE FACILITY UNDER NEXTGENERATIONEU	129
1. The Recovery and Resilience Facility under NextGenerationEU – an innovative and successful crisis and recovery response tool	131
2. Control results confirm the satisfactory fulfilment of all milestones and targets for payments made in 2024	138



Annex 1 – Performance achievements in 2024

1. Performance of the EU budget

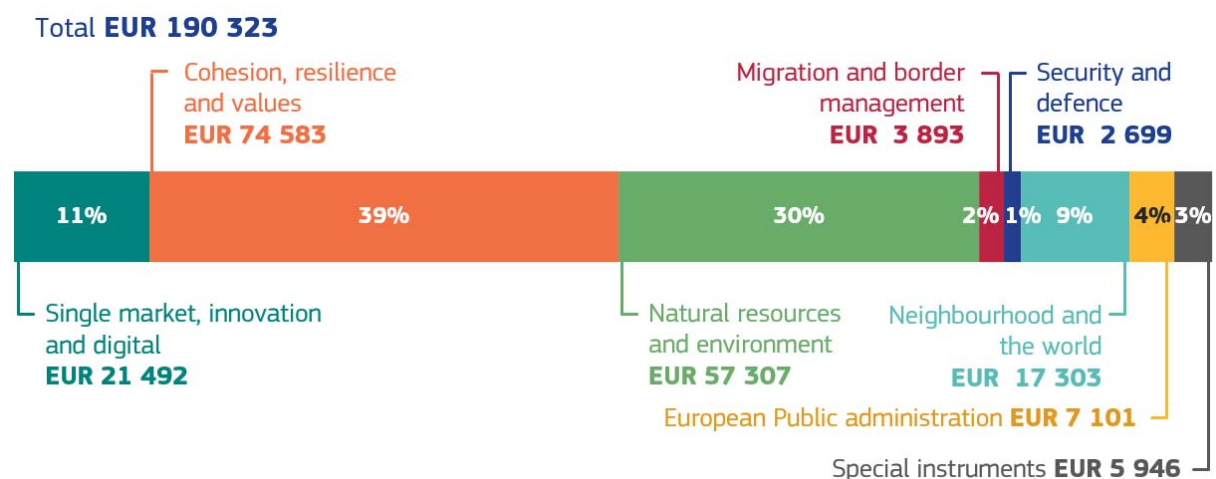
The European Union budget is at the centre of EU policy action. Over the decades, it has helped improve the quality of life and livelihoods of people within the EU and beyond. It drives investment in the future: for a clean, digital and more competitive Europe. At the same time, it has provided a vital lifeline in times of crisis: it helped to overcome a pandemic and save millions of jobs during the lockdowns, assisted people and companies in getting through energy crises and is providing vital and reliable support for Ukraine in the face of Russia's unprovoked and unjustified war of aggression.

The EU budget is an essential tool to deliver on the EU's priorities. Through its programmes, the budget supports the EU's internal and external policies. It creates EU added value by delivering results that would not be achievable through uncoordinated national spending. EU programmes are tailored to unlock synergies, catalyse private and public funding and provide a coordinated boost to the [political priorities of the von der Leyen Commission](#).

Budget implementation in 2024

In 2024 the EU's long-term budget (the multiannual financial framework) and NextGenerationEU continued to prove its capacity to act as the anchor of the EU's policy response to multiple crises – such as Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine, the energy crisis, supply chain disruptions, unprecedented natural disasters and humanitarian crises – while at the same time remaining instrumental to the delivery of the Commission's priorities. To achieve this, EUR 190 billion of commitment appropriations was implemented in 2024 from the 2021–2027 EU budget to promote the EU's sustainability, competitiveness and prosperity, in particular by investing in the green and digital transition. This investment will strengthen the resilience of the EU's social economy, foster job creation and help to build a fairer, more sustainable future for all Europeans.

Multiannual financial framework: 2024 EU budget commitment appropriations by budget heading (million EUR)



Source: European Commission.

To address urgent challenges and continue to drive the process of economic transition, the EU budget has been boosted by the temporary instrument **NextGenerationEU**. The **Recovery and Resilience Facility** is the centrepiece of NextGenerationEU and provides funding to EU Member States to carry out investment and

reforms. From 2021 to 2026, NextGenerationEU is providing **EUR 807 billion** ⁽¹⁾ of funding across several programmes and priorities, with a strong focus on the green and digital transitions. **In 2024 the Commission disbursed EUR 110.4 billion of NextGenerationEU funds**, mostly driven by the payments under the Recovery and Resilience Facility amounting to EUR 85.3 billion (EUR 55.9 billion in grants and EUR 29.4 billion in loans). This brought total disbursements by the end of 2024 to EUR 306.1 billion, of which EUR 197.5 billion was in grants (55% of the total EUR 359 billion allocated for grants under the financial envelope of the Recovery and Resilience Facility) and EUR 108.7 billion was in loans (37% of the total EUR 291 billion allocated for loans under the Recovery and Resilience Facility envelope).

Monitoring performance

In 2024 EU programmes continued to progress in achieving their key objectives and delivering value for all EU citizens. The progress towards the programme objectives is monitored most notably by means of performance indicators.

The state of implementation varies across financial programmes. In their fourth year of implementation, programmes under direct and indirect management made substantial progress towards achieving their specific objectives. For shared management programmes, such as under the cohesion policy funds, the implementation of the 2021-2027 programmes picked up significantly in 2024, with initial results already becoming available.

For those indicators that could be assessed, the vast majority were considered to be on track to reach their targets by the end of the implementation of the programmes. Detailed information at the programme level is available in the programme performance statements, Annex 4 to this report.

Breakdown of 2021-2027 core performance indicators by progress towards targets



NB: The graph displays progress as measured by the share of the core performance indicators that are on track to meet their respective targets. It does not include indicators for which the results do not allow an assessment at this stage.

Source: European Commission.

During 2024, a number of the EU programmes from the previous programming period (2014-2020) continued to be implemented and to deliver results to EU citizens. Payments totalling EUR 22.8 billion were made in relation to these programmes in 2024. The majority of these payments were associated with cohesion policy (including the European Regional Development Fund, the Cohesion Fund and the European Social Fund). The EU budget is fundamentally an investment-oriented budget, with a primary focus on generating long-term value for the EU. These programmes have continued to advance towards their respective performance targets.

At the same time, it is vitally important that the money spent actually addresses the challenges and delivers the expected results on the ground. The table below shows examples of results from the EU budget achieved under both the 2014-2020 and the 2021-2027 multiannual financial frameworks.

⁽¹⁾ EUR 807 billion in current prices, EUR 750 billion in 2018 prices.

Examples of results achieved

Climate ⁽²⁾

- **45 gigawatt-hours of estimated energy efficiency savings per year from private and public buildings** by the InvestEU programme, cohesion policy funds, the LIFE programme and the Recovery and Resilience Facility, in the 2014-2023 period.
- **98 million tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent avoided per year, of which more than half was through NextGenerationEU green bond investment.** Additionally, 452 million tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent reduction are expected from the Innovation Fund projects during the first 10 years of operations.
- **543 additional gigawatt-hours of renewable energy capacity was installed** by the InvestEU programme, cohesion policy funds, the LIFE programme and the Recovery and Resilience Facility, in the 2014-2023 period.

Digital

- **16.2 million additional dwellings were provided with internet access** via very-high-capacity networks by the Recovery and Resilience Facility by the end of 2024.
- **5 000 terabits per second of additional capacity** were created by deployed backbone networks, including submarine cables, by the Connecting Europe Facility by the end of 2024.

Employment

- **24 million individuals** were supported in obtaining skills relevant to employment and 415 000 jobs were created or maintained between 2021 and 2024 with support from the EU budget ⁽³⁾.
- **690 000 participants found a job (including becoming self-employed) and 1 million people gained a qualification** thanks to the European Social Fund Plus by the end of 2024.

The performance analysis in the next section of this annex describes how EU programmes have contributed to the political priorities of President von der Leyen. The third section of this annex, Horizontal policy priorities in the EU budget, provides information at the EU budget level on the financing of initiatives relating to climate, biodiversity, gender equality, the digital transition and the sustainable development goals ⁽⁴⁾. Lastly, Annex 4, Programme performance statements, provides a detailed analysis of the individual programmes and their performance, presented as a website to enhance reader friendliness.

⁽²⁾ Aggregated data of core performance indicators, reflecting estimated and expected impact from the EU budget project as from 2014.

⁽³⁾ Financed by the following 2021-2027 programmes: Fiscalis; customs programme; European Maritime Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund; Recovery and Resilience Facility; Euratom; European Social Fund Plus; Just Transition Mechanism; Erasmus+; European Globalisation Adjustment Fund for Displaced Workers; Creative Europe; European Solidarity Corps; justice programme; Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund; Internal Security Fund; Horizon Europe; InvestEU; single market programme; digital Europe programme; regional policy; European Agricultural Guarantee Fund.

⁽⁴⁾ As provided for in point 16(d-g) of the interinstitutional agreement for the 2021-2027 multiannual financial framework.

Making performance information more reliable

The European Commission places great importance on the reliability of its performance information and continually works to further improve its already **robust processes for performance reporting**. To maintain high standards, data on core performance indicators are recorded and managed through a dedicated SAP-based database that incorporates automatic quality control rules to strengthen data quality and reliability. In addition, climate-related contributions from the EU budget are directly estimated using data extracted from the Commission's accounting system, ensuring traceability and precision.

In 2024 the Commission continued to implement and consolidate the strengthened control approach to ensure the reliability of performance information on EU financial programmes. Commission departments continued to report in their annual activity reports for 2024 (which are an important source of information for this annual management and performance report) on the results of their controls, based on the specific **guidance and requirements developed** in 2023 in response to internal and external audit recommendations. In 2024 no major shortcomings were reported with regard to the reliability of the performance information for their respective financial programmes.

EU budget support for reforms

The EU budget supports reforms alongside investment in Member States and partner countries. While investment finances tangible projects that promote growth and development, reforms serve as enablers, helping enhance the impact and effectiveness of investment, and act as catalysts for change and for aligning policies with the EU's strategic priorities.

Within the EU, the synergy between reforms and investments is particularly embodied in the Recovery and Resilience Facility, the performance-based instrument at the core of NextGenerationEU. The Recovery and Resilience Facility requires Member States to submit recovery and resilience plans that combine investments and reforms, with funding disbursed based on the achievement of predefined milestones and targets. In addition, several EU programmes have built-in conditionalities to ensure that EU money is spent effectively and in line with broader EU objectives. This is notably the case for the cohesion funds, which require robust strategic and regulatory frameworks to be in place before money can flow. Where Member States need support, the Technical Support Instrument provides tailored expertise and guidance to design and implement complex reforms. In external action, the EU uses conditional budget support and investment facilities to promote reforms in neighbouring and candidate countries, along with other partner countries.

Recovery and Resilience Facility, the centrepiece of NextGenerationEU

The midterm evaluation of the Recovery and Resilience Facility highlighted the key role played by the Recovery and Resilience Facility in supporting reforms in Member States. The Recovery and Resilience Facility introduced new stimulus and financial incentives for implementing critical and long-awaited reforms, thanks to the regulatory requirements and the novel link between reforms and investment.

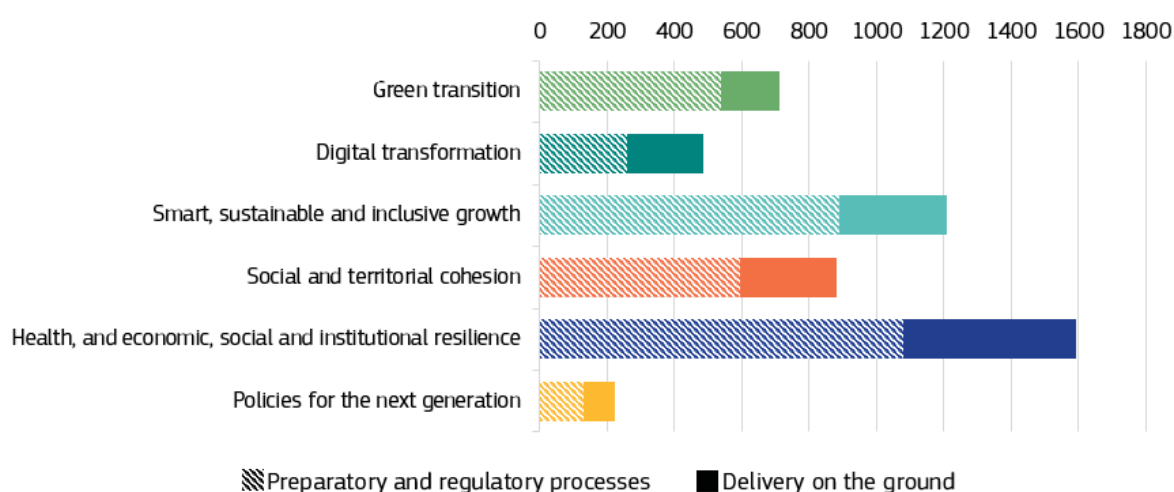
Reform measures under the Recovery and Resilience Facility are distributed across its six policy pillars, with a greater number of measures under the pillars covering growth and resilience-enhancing policies (see chart 'Milestones and targets per Recovery and Resilience Facility pillar associated with reforms' below). The pillars represent EU priorities consistent with the Council country-specific recommendations addressed to Member States in the context of the European semester.

Overall, the level of implementation has accelerated with the recovery and resilience plans in place. In the four years preceding the Recovery and Resilience Facility, the share of 2016-2017 country-specific recommendations that achieved at least 'some progress' increased from 52% after one to two years (2018

country-specific recommendation assessment), to just 58% after four to five years (2021 country-specific recommendation assessment). In contrast, during the recovery and resilience plan implementation period, the share of 2019-2020 country-specific recommendations reaching at least 'some progress' increased from 52% in 2021 to 75% in the 2024 country-specific recommendation assessment.

The graph 'Milestones and targets per Recovery and Resilience Facility pillar associated with reforms' below shows the number of reform milestones and targets per Recovery and Resilience Facility pillar, categorised as 'preparatory and regulatory process' or 'delivery on the ground'. The following two graphs show the implementation status of these milestones and targets based on the same classification: 'preparatory and regulatory process' (second graph) and 'delivery on the ground' (third graph).

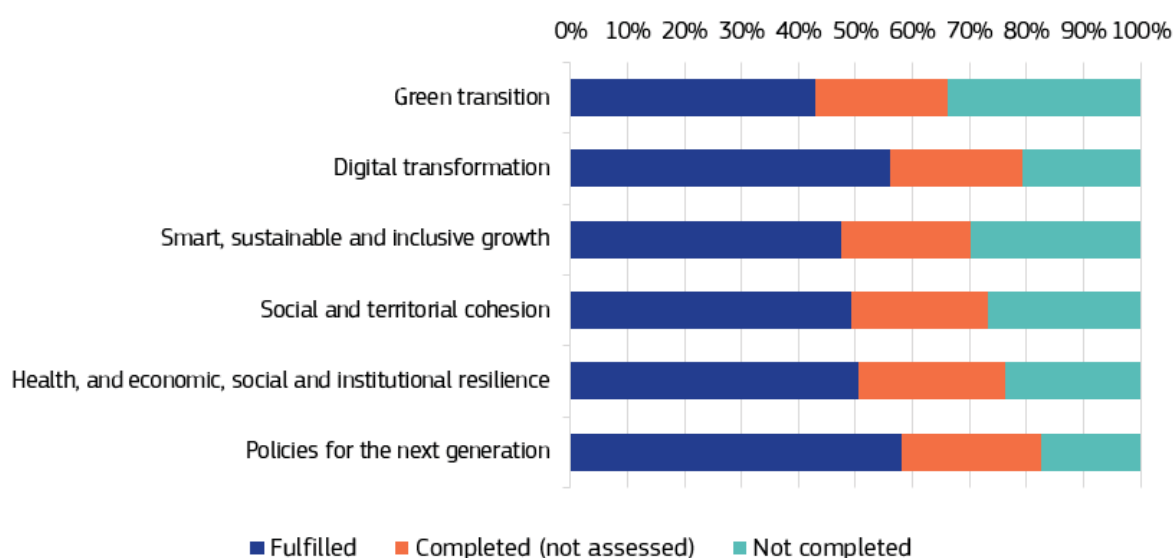
Milestones and targets per Recovery and Resilience Facility pillar associated with reforms



NB: The graph shows the number of reform milestones and targets per Recovery and Resilience Facility pillar categorised as 'preparatory and regulatory process' or 'delivery on the ground'.

Source: European Commission.

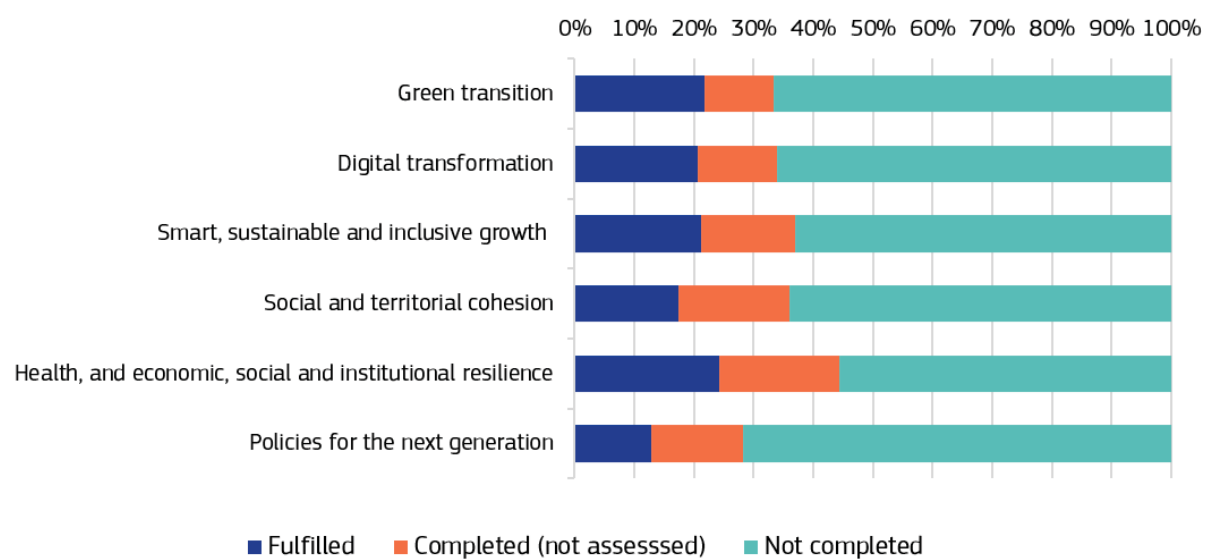
Status of milestones and targets related to 'preparatory and regulatory processes'



NB: The graph shows the percentage of reform milestones and targets related to 'preparatory and regulatory processes', based on their implementation status: 'fulfilled', 'completed (not assessed)' or 'not completed'.

Source: European Commission.

Status of milestones and targets related to 'delivery on the ground'



NB: The graph shows the percentage of reform milestones and targets related to 'delivery on the ground', based on their implementation status: 'fulfilled', 'completed (not assessed)' or 'not completed'.

Source: European Commission.

Cohesion funds

Under cohesion policy, the enabling conditions mechanism ensures that the necessary conditions for the effective and efficient use of the funds are in place in a Member State and are linked to:

- policy and strategic frameworks, to ensure that the strategic documents at the national and regional levels that underpin investment from the funds are of high quality and in line with standards commonly agreed by Member States at the EU level;
- regulatory frameworks, to ensure that the implementation of operations co-financed by the funds complies with the EU *acquis*.

The progress of the fulfilment of these conditions since the programmes were adopted in 2022 is significant: currently only 2.7% of the European Regional Development Fund, Cohesion Fund and ESF+ allocations remain blocked by unfulfilled enabling conditions.

Technical Support Instrument

In 2024 the Technical Support Instrument continued to support smart, sustainable and socially responsible reforms across a wide range of policy areas while strengthening all types of administrative capacities, especially the internal administrative mechanisms for reforms across the EU. For example, in terms of public investment and infrastructure and as a result of a Technical Support Instrument project, Romania published guidelines on public–private partnerships to help local and national authorities successfully launch and implement investment projects.

Over the years, an increasing share of Technical Support Instrument projects have helped Member States carry out reforms at the regional and local levels in line with EU priorities. In 2024 the Member States demonstrated their interest in strengthening cooperation at the regional level through various Technical Support Instrument projects, including support provided to 10 regions in five Member States to enhance EU mining in regional ecosystems to support the green transition and secure mineral raw materials supply.

Furthermore, in 2024 the Technical Support Instrument helped Member States to design reforms necessary for the implementation of their national recovery and resilience plans. Technical Support Instrument assistance has taken the form of general support, which is horizontally applicable for the smooth implementation of the plans, and thematic support, which targets specific reforms and investment in the recovery and resilience plans. As an example of a successful project, the Technical Support Instrument supported Croatia in reducing water losses by developing a national loss reduction action plan and recommendations on how to monitor the performance of water companies.

External action

The **Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance III** is designed as a performance-based instrument. This focus on performance is particularly aimed at incentivising beneficiaries to commit to fundamental reforms. The programme adjusts the scope of support based on the progress of each beneficiary, thereby encouraging continued reform efforts. The performance-based approach is embedded in the annual bilateral programming process. The assessment of performance is done as a global assessment, taking into consideration the Commission's annual enlargement reports, external expert assessments, the track record in implementing ongoing measures, reporting against the indicators set under the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance III results framework and other sources.

In the case of the plan under the **Ukraine Facility**, the Council of the European Union's implementing decision on the approval of its assessment sets out a detailed roadmap of conditions, in the form of qualitative and quantitative steps linked to reforms and investment. Fulfilment of these conditions can trigger direct EU support for Ukraine's budget (Pillar I of the Ukraine Facility). The plan includes 151 steps organised around 15 sectoral chapters. For example, in relation to the fight against corruption, Ukraine increased the

staff of the Specialised Anti-Corruption Prosecutor's Office and passed important amendments to the Criminal Code and the Criminal Procedure Code; in particular, the legal framework of plea bargaining improved significantly.

In 2024 Ukraine fulfilled a total of 23 steps across several areas:

- the fight against corruption and money laundering (5 steps);
- public financial management (4 steps);
- energy (3 steps);
- business environment (3 steps);
- agri-food (2 steps);
- the green transition and environmental protection (2 steps);
- decentralisation and regional policy; human capital; management of state-owned assets; judicial system (1 step each).

Regarding the **Reform and Growth Facility for the Western Balkans**, measures undertaken through the programme will be based on the reform agendas of each beneficiary. These agendas outline a comprehensive, coherent and prioritised set of targeted reforms and priority investment areas for each beneficiary. These include payment conditions that indicate satisfactory progress or completion of related measures, along with an indicative timetable for implementation. The reforms focus on key socioeconomic reform areas and the fundamentals of the enlargement process.

In delivering on the **Global Gateway** through the **Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument – Global Europe**, the Commission promotes investments in the five Global Gateway priority sectors as well as reforms that improve the investment climate in partner countries, in line with EU priorities in each country and with due complementarity with all Team Europe stakeholders. Reforms range from good governance (e.g. public procurement, public investment management, debt management, or institutional reforms) to enablers for successful Global Gateway flagship investments and projects (e.g. upgrading the regulatory framework for the production/commercialisation of solar or wind power, or for operators in strategic transport corridors) ⁽⁵⁾.

Incentives for reforms are provided by the favourable financing conditions offered through the European Fund for Sustainable Development Plus to back public or private investment, through budget support or due to technical assistance fostering domestic capacities for reforms. In Armenia, Egypt and soon Moldova, this effort to promote reforms is complemented by dedicated comprehensive partnerships or performance-based facilities that condition the disbursement of payments on the achievement of agreed reform steps. In the neighbourhood region of the EU, macrofinancial assistance financed by the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument – Global Europe plays an equally important role in promoting reforms.

⁽⁵⁾ For examples, see Joint communication to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee, the Committee of the Regions and the European Investment Bank – Building sustainable international partnerships as a Team Europe, JOIN(2024) 25 final of 2 October 2024, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex:52024JC0025> and European Commission: Directorate-General for International Partnerships, *2024 annual report on the implementation of the European Union's external action instruments in 2023*, Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg, 2024, <https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2841/776587>.

Current values under the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument – Global Europe from the global Europe results framework:

- 20 countries supported by the EU to strengthen revenue mobilisation, public financial management and/or budget transparency (GERF 2.19);
- 16 countries and cities with climate change and/or disaster risk reduction strategies developed or under implementation (GERF 2.5);
- 3 countries supported by the EU to strengthen the investment climate (GERF 2.16);
- 215 government policies developed or revised with civil-society organisation participation through EU support (GERF 2.29);
- 5 countries supported by the EU to conduct elections and/or improve their electoral process (GERF 2.26).

2. EU budget delivery in 2024

A prosperous and competitive EU

Europe has always been a continent of industry, enterprise and innovation ... we now need to go much faster and further to ensure competitiveness, prosperity and fairness ⁽⁶⁾.



Ursula von der Leyen

President of the European Commission

Supporting a clean, innovative and competitive industry

The EU budget has provided strong support to the EU's industrial sector, aiming to make it competitive, innovative, climate neutral and clean. This is particularly important in a context of high energy prices brought about by Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine. For example, the **REPowerEU** plan was set up to reduce the EU's reliance on Russian energy and to accelerate the clean transition. By the end of 2024, REPowerEU had provided EUR 10 billion in prefinancing to 21 Member States. Moreover, the EU's Recovery and Resilience Facility funded the installation of over 106 gigawatts in additional renewable energy capacity between 2021 and 2024 ⁽⁷⁾.

Moreover, the EU, by means of the Innovation Fund, has been contributing to bringing low-carbon technologies to the market and to supporting industry in the transition to net-zero greenhouse gas emissions. The fund built a portfolio of 200 projects supported by a total of approximately EUR 12 billion in grants. This targeted support helps to ensure that new solutions are available to decarbonise hard-to-abate sectors such as cement and steel manufacturing, while also supporting the EU-based manufacturing of low-carbon technologies from batteries to wind turbines to heat pumps.

The Innovation Fund is also helping to finance the EU's move towards greater use of renewable hydrogen. In 2024, under the [first EU-wide renewable hydrogen auction](#), with a budget of EUR 800 million to support producers of renewable energy with a fixed payment per kilogram of certified and verified renewable hydrogen produced, six projects, located in Finland, Norway, Portugal and Spain, signed grant agreements. The [second auction](#), with a budget of EUR 1.2 billion, opened in December 2024 and attracted 61 bids from 11 countries in the European Economic Area. The aim is to support the creation of a market for renewable hydrogen in Europe, contributing to the replacement of fossil fuels with a carbon-neutral alternative in heavy industry and transport.

The Modernisation Fund is another source of EU support, aimed at the modernisation of energy systems, along with the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions in industry and the energy and transport sectors. In 2024 the fund provided a total of EUR 5.6 billion in support for 77 projects in

⁽⁶⁾ von der Leyen, U., 'Europe's choice: Political guidelines for the next European Commission 2024-2029', 18 July 2024, https://commission.europa.eu/document/download/e6cd4328-673c-4e7a-8683-f63ffb2cf648_en?filename=Political%20Guidelines%202024-2029_EN.pdf.

⁽⁷⁾ European Commission: Secretariat-General and Directorate-General for Economic and Financial Affairs, 'Common indicator 2: Additional operational capacity installed for renewable energy', European Commission recovery and resilience scoreboard, 7 May 2025, https://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/recovery-and-resilience-scoreboard/RRFCIO2.html.

11 Member States. The total investment through the Modernisation Fund from January 2021 until December 2024 reached [EUR 15.4 billion](#).

Horizon Europe, the EU's flagship research programme, plays a pivotal role in fostering the EU's competitiveness. In 2024 about EUR 13 billion was committed under the programme. These budget commitments to Horizon Europe in 2024 helped to support, among other things:

- 91 projects addressing sustainable food, bioeconomy, natural resources, agriculture and the environment, with an EU contribution of over EUR 450 million ⁽⁸⁾;
- 31 projects on research infrastructure, totalling over EUR 220 million in EU contribution ⁽⁹⁾;
- EUR 678 million in grants to support outstanding scientists and scholars as they establish their independent research teams and develop their most promising scientific ideas ⁽¹⁰⁾.

Another instrument to support research under Horizon Europe is the European Innovation Council, designed to help bridge the venture capital gap in Europe. It provides funding directly to individual companies, mainly start-ups and small and medium-sized enterprises. The European Innovation Council portfolio already comprises investment in over 500 of Europe's most promising start-ups and high-growth companies. In 2024 over EUR 500 million was invested in European Innovation Council companies for research into new approaches to detect and treat cancer with breakthrough biotechnology and medical technologies ⁽¹¹⁾.

Cohesion policy also supports investments in research, innovation, digitalisation, competitiveness, skills and digital connectivity, with an aim of achieving a more competitive and smarter Europe, promoting innovative and smart economic transformation. Moreover, the Interregional Innovation Investments Instrument, under the [European Regional and Development Fund](#), supports **interregional innovation projects** in their **scale-up and commercialisation** phases. It helps overcome **regulatory and market barriers**, bringing projects to **investment level** targeting the EU value chain.

Moreover, the EU has also been investing in the development of nuclear fusion technology. By investing EUR 4.6 billion over the current multiannual financial framework, the EU is financing the construction and future operation of the ITER project, alongside its international partners, the EU leads the largest international research project in the world. The project aims to demonstrate the feasibility of fusion as a carbon-free source of energy, and thus has the potential to play a decisive role in the decarbonisation of our economies

Catalysing private investment

The InvestEU programme is a powerful driver of private investment, focusing on guarantees for higher-risk investment in key economic sectors, with the aim of supporting innovation and decarbonisation along with the EU's long-term competitiveness. The programme does so via multiple channels. It is strategically **deploying public funds to de-risk and catalyse investment**, building and shaping markets by investing in emerging technologies (e.g. space, dual-use technologies, semiconductors, the blue economy, quantum computing), pioneering new targeted financial products and offering comprehensive advisory

⁽⁸⁾ [European Commission, Horizon Europe dashboard](#)

⁽⁹⁾ [European Commission, Horizon Europe dashboard](#)

⁽¹⁰⁾ European Research Council, 'Consolidator grants: ERC awards € 678m in grants to back excellent research across Europe', European Research Council press release, 3 December 2024, <https://erc.europa.eu/news-events/news/erc-2024-consolidator-grants-results>.

⁽¹¹⁾ European Commission: European Innovation Council and SMEs Executive Agency, *Scaling Deep Tech in Europe – European Innovation Council – Impact report 2025*, Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg, 2025, <https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2826/1391424>.

services to build market and institutional capacity. The programme aims to trigger [EUR 372 billion](#). By the end of 2024, [EUR 283.4 billion^{\(12\)} had been mobilised](#), and the amount of EU guarantees provided under the programme totalled over EUR 22 billion, covering operations such as:

- EUR 30 million in counter-guarantees to help a regional German bank provide financing to small and medium-sized enterprises focused on innovation and sustainability⁽¹³⁾;
- a guarantee for a EUR 200 million loan from the European Investment Bank to a European household appliance maker aimed at the development of more energy-efficient household appliances⁽¹⁴⁾;
- a guarantee for a EUR 30 million loan from the European Investment Bank to a Spanish start-up aimed at the deployment of a low-Earth-orbit satellite constellation to improve internet connectivity⁽¹⁵⁾.

Cohesion policy also provides support to small and medium businesses, low carbon economy and climate objectives, research innovation and territorial development. Within 2021-2027 programmes, EUR 18.5 billion are committed through financial instruments for revenue generating and cost saving investments:

- nearly EUR 8.5 billion will be invested in SMEs in the form of loans or equity with the aim of improving access to finance, which is still a hurdle for many start-ups and growing businesses;
- EUR 1.7 billion for investments in research and innovation and EUR 417 million in digitisation;
- EUR 6 billion supporting investments in energy efficiency and for renewable energy.

The EU's State aid rules also support the new strategic technologies for Europe platform (STEP), in place since 1 March 2024, by allowing Member States to grant higher levels of regional aid to investment projects covered by the platform. In addition, the platform supports projects that foster the skills necessary to develop critical technologies. In total, EUR 50 billion in public and private investment is expected to benefit from coordination under STEP. More information on STEP can be found in Section 4 of this annex.

Finally, 'important projects of common European interest' are key in facilitating cross-border industrial collaboration and building novel industries through State aid control. In 2024 three new projects were approved, on hydrogen and healthcare products, in addition to six existing ones. In total, the State aid approved to be provided by Member States, along with the expected private investment into research and development of the nine integrated projects so far, [adds up to over EUR 91 billion](#).

⁽¹²⁾ EU Compartment only.

⁽¹³⁾ European Investment Fund, 'EIF supports L-Bank in offering a guarantee programme for small and medium sized companies in Baden-Württemberg', European Investment Fund press release, 12 December 2024, <https://www.eif.org/InvestEU/news/2024/eif-supports-l-bank-in-offering-a-guarantee-programme-for-small-and-medium-sized-companies-in-baden-wuerttemberg.htm>.

⁽¹⁴⁾ European Investment Bank, 'European household appliance maker Electrolux Group gets € 200 million EIB loan for greener goods', European Investment Bank press release, 23 December 2024, <https://www.eib.org/en/press/all/2024-525-european-household-appliance-maker-electrolux-group-gets-eur200-million-eib-loan-for-greener-goods>.

⁽¹⁵⁾ European Investment Bank, 'Spain: EIB finances with € 30 million Sateliot's satellite network rollout to provide IoT connectivity in low coverage areas' European Investment Bank press release, 4 December 2024, <https://www.eib.org/en/press/all/2024-486-eib-finances-with-eur30-million-sateliot-s-satellite-network-rollout-to-provide-iot-connectivity-in-low-coverage-areas>.

Making business easier in the EU

The single market programme, with over EUR 600 million allocated for 2024, is the EU funding programme to help the single market reach its full potential and ensure Europe's recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. The programme supports the design, implementation and enforcement of EU legislation underpinning the proper functioning of the single market for goods and services. It helps to drive the digitalisation of services and business operations, and to facilitate market access and international cooperation, especially in the areas of company law, contract and extra-contractual law, anti-money laundering, free movement of capital, financial services and competition, consumer protection and product safety. In 2024, 3032 entrepreneurs (including young, new and female entrepreneurs, and other specific target groups) benefitted from mentoring and mobility schemes under the Erasmus for young entrepreneurs exchange programme, financed by the single market programme.

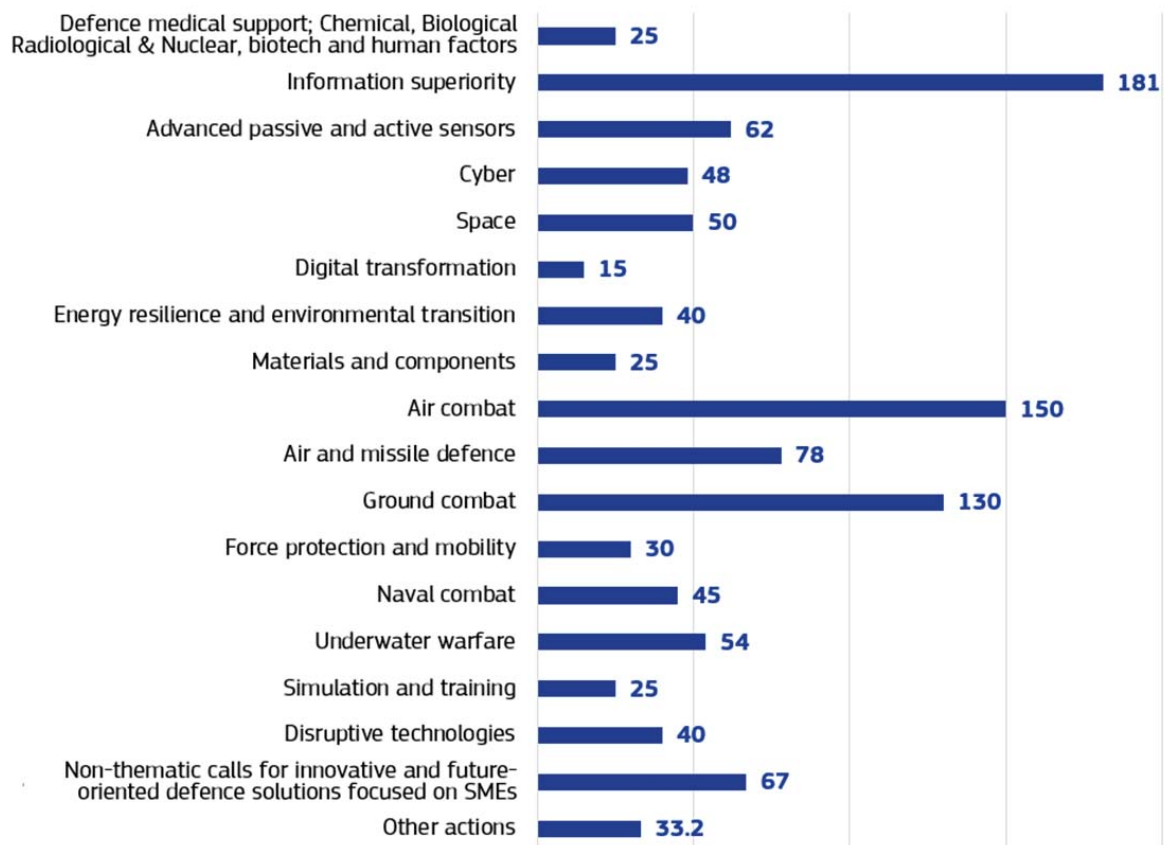
Strengthening European defence and security

In March 2024, the European defence industrial strategy provided a long-term vision on reinforcing EU defence industry readiness. This is part of the EU's work to enhance its security, resilience and strategic autonomy. To support concrete measures identified in the strategy, the EU proposed a regulation on the **European defence industry programme**. With a budget of [EUR 1.5 billion](#) over the 2025-2027 period, the programme aims to strengthen the EU's security of supply for defence equipment. It will also prolong and enlarge the scope of the European Defence Industry Reinforcement through Common Procurement Act and of the Act in Support of Ammunition Production.

The European Defence Industry Reinforcement through Common Procurement Act has been providing a key contribution to the modernisation and innovation of the EU's defence industry. In 2024 the Commission selected five projects through the act in critical areas: ammunition, air and missile defence and platforms and replacement of legacy systems. Each of these five projects will receive EUR 60 million, to support Member States to jointly procure urgent defence equipment.

Through the Act in Support of Ammunition Production, the EU is helping to increase ammunition production. Under the act, in 2024, [the Commission awarded grants to 31 project proposals](#) with a portfolio budget of EUR 500 million to ramp up EU production capabilities in ammunition.

The European Defence Fund is the EU's flagship initiative to support defence research and development. The fund boosts space- and defence-related efforts by actively supporting EU innovation on key defence priorities for Member States. In 2024 the fund calls covered a wide range of critical defence capabilities thanks to **funding awards of more than EUR 1.1 billion**. In May 2024, the Commission awarded 61 defence industrial projects under the 2023 European Defence Fund call for proposals. Small and medium-sized enterprises represented [42% of all entities selected, with 18% of the total funding](#).

European Defence Fund budget per category of action in 2024 (million EUR)

NB: SMEs = small and medium-sized enterprises.

Source: [European Commission](#).

In 2024 the Commission continued implementing the EU space strategy for security and defence, and launched the European partnership for globally competitive space systems, aiming at fostering the competitiveness of the EU's space industry. In total, [EUR 100 million](#) of EU funding will be allocated to the topics proposed by the partnership in the domains of satellite communication, Earth observation and space transportation. Private partners are expected to co-invest [EUR 120 million](#), mainly through in-kind contributions.

Supporting people



If we want to lead in the industries of tomorrow – we need workers with the right skills. That means investing in education, particularly in science, technology, engineering and maths. And encouraging more girls and women into these subjects. It also means investing in training and upskilling. The motivation and the need for action are there ⁽¹⁶⁾.

Ursula von der Leyen

President of the European Commission

Investing in people

The European Social Fund Plus is the EU's main instrument for investing in people. With a budget allocation of **EUR 96.6 billion for 2021-2027**, the fund provides an important contribution to the EU's employment, social, education and skills policies. The European Social Fund Plus brings together four funding instruments that were separated in the 2014-2020 programming period: the European Social Fund, the Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived, the youth employment initiative and the European programme for employment and social innovation. Thanks to the European Social Fund Plus, the following results were achieved by the end of 2024:

- 690 000 people had found a job;
- 320 000 people were in education or training, and 1 million people had gained a qualification;
- 620 000 individuals received material assistance, and 2.3 million benefited from food assistance.

Moreover, to support the labour market, the EU introduced EUR 23 million in new funding through the **European Social Fund Plus for innovative projects** aimed at reducing long-term unemployment and helping people find work ⁽¹⁷⁾. This is complemented by the **European Regional Development Fund**, which invests EUR 22 billion in supporting a better life for people in the places that are most in need all across Europe. Through public infrastructure development, equipment, and cross-border cooperation, ERDF supports equal access to quality and inclusive services in employment, education and training, housing, health-, social- and long-term care.

The EU has also been investing in people via the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund for Displaced Workers. It is a special EU instrument, outside of the multiannual financial framework ceilings, to assist workers or the self-employed who were displaced due to restructuring, and to help them find new jobs. As an example, in 2024, over EUR 7.5 million from the fund were mobilised to offer support to some 1,600 workers laid off in Belgium, Denmark and Germany.

The EU has also equipped people to better face the transition towards a climate-neutral economy via the Just Transition Mechanism. The mechanism aims to ensure that nobody is left behind, providing

⁽¹⁶⁾ European Commission: Directorate-General for Communication, 'Press statement by President von der Leyen on the signing of the European Social Dialogue', European Commission press statement, 5 March 2025, https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/statement_25_689.

⁽¹⁷⁾ European Commission: Directorate-General for Communication, *The EU in 2024 – General report on the activities of the European Union*, Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg, 2025, p. 108, <https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2775/1406446>.

targeted support to alleviate socioeconomic impacts in the most negatively affected regions. It does so by means of the following three pillars.

- The Just Transition Fund, which provides EU budget contributions to territorial just transition plans implemented in all Member States. By the end of 2024, the fund was supporting 70 different plans covering 96 territories across the EU, with EUR 10.2 billion allocated to selected projects.
- The just transition scheme under the InvestEU programme, which provides a budgetary guarantee to help mobilise private sector investment. By the end of 2024, the InvestEU Fund implementing partners reported a total of EUR 6.76 billion of mobilised investment under the Just Transition Mechanism.
- The Public Sector Loan Facility, which combines grants financed from the EU budget with loans from the European Investment Bank. The grant component has a total budget of EUR 1.3 billion, with a contribution of up to EUR 8 billion from the bank. By the end of 2024, seven grant agreements totalling more than EUR 120 million had been signed in Czechia, Greece, France and Sweden, mobilising EUR 1.5 billion in public investment.

Fostering mutual discovery via Erasmus+

The EU budget also invested in people in 2024 by supporting mobility and cooperation in the fields of education, training, and youth and sports via the Erasmus+ programme. This programme, which has a history spanning almost four decades, has been helping to nurture skills, foster cooperation and exchange of practices among organisations, and facilitate mutual discovery across the EU. In 2024 Erasmus+ continued to support transnational learning mobility and to promote cooperation between different kinds of organisations.

Supporting mobility opportunities for all, with a lifelong learning perspective remains the essence and the backbone of Erasmus+. In this regard, the programme supported 1.3 million participants ⁽¹⁸⁾, including students, learners, professors, teachers, young people and trainers in all sectors, to participate in mobility activities in 2023. ⁽¹⁹⁾

Regarding its international dimension, Erasmus+ international measures have, in 2024, provided support to around 1 200 international credit mobility projects aiming to provide opportunities to more than 50 000 higher-education students and staff. Through Erasmus Mundus measures, around 147 higher education institutions from 38 countries have been involved in the development of joint international master's degree programmes. Additionally, 2 765 Erasmus Mundus scholarships were granted to students from more than 75 countries. Furthermore, 270 capacity-building projects were selected in 2024 to promote cooperation among institutions and organisations engaged in higher education, vocational education and training, and youth and sport ⁽²⁰⁾.

Since the start of Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine, the Erasmus+ programme has supported educational activities and facilitated the integration of people fleeing the war in Ukraine. Participating organisations have been encouraged to tailor their activities to address these challenges effectively. In 2024 this included funding student and staff mobility, cooperation projects and the printing of 1.5 million schoolbooks for 11-13-year-old pupils.

⁽¹⁸⁾ The total number of people who have benefitted from Erasmus+ since its inception in 1987 exceeds 16.6 million (including provisional data for 2024). More detailed information can be found here: [Programme level overview of project data - Erasmus+](#)

⁽¹⁹⁾ [Erasmus+ Annual Report 2023](#)

⁽²⁰⁾ Provisional data. The Erasmus+ Annual Report 2024 is due to be published in Q4 2025.

Fostering solidarity through volunteering

The **European Solidarity Corps** provides young people aged between 18 and 30 years (35 in case of humanitarian aid activities) with the opportunity to take part in volunteering and solidarity activities either abroad or in their own country. The programme provides support to young people wishing to engage in solidary activities in a variety of areas, from **helping the disadvantaged and delivering humanitarian aid to contributing to health and environmental action across the EU and beyond**.

The programme focuses, via support for projects and for specific activities, on four priorities: promoting inclusion and diversity; contributing to the green and digital transitions; contributing to democratic participation; and contributing to EU values. In 2024, special emphasis was put on 'fostering positive learning experiences and outcomes for young people with fewer opportunities' and 'relief for people fleeing armed conflicts and other victims of natural or human-made disasters'.

Examples of the impact of the programme on young people, including those with fewer opportunities, include:

- more than 886 000 have registered since the launch of the new-generation programme in 2021, with almost 250 000 registrations in 2023 alone;
- close to 10 000 projects have received programme grants since 2021;
- more than 50% of participants in volunteering activities have been people with fewer opportunities since 2021.

Supporting rural Europe

National plans are the basis for the implementation of the new common agricultural policy, which has been in force since 2023. The Commission continued to work closely with Member States to guarantee the smooth implementation of the plans in 2024. Moreover, the Commission put forward measures to ease the administrative burden on farmers, and proposed targeted legislative changes aimed at simplification, while maintaining the overall orientation of the policy and its role in supporting the transition of European agriculture to sustainable farming.

The common agricultural policy contributes broadly to the wider rural economy, especially in less-developed regions. It also helped to support and stabilise farm income as markets continued to be volatile in 2024. The policy's strategic plans support the socioeconomic development of rural areas by facilitating the establishment of young and new farmers and business development, by promoting employment, business development and basic services for rural populations, and by encouraging participatory local development tools. By 2024, the policy achieved several milestones, such as:

- around 200 000 jobs were created, with the largest contribution coming from interventions supporting the establishment of young farmers;
- over 17 million people who benefited from improved access to various services.

The policy also helped farmers cope with dramatic losses in production and production potential as a result of natural disasters in 2024. Throughout the year, EUR 233 million was provided in support to farmers affected by natural disasters and extreme weather events in Bulgaria, Czechia, Germany, Estonia, Greece, Italy, Austria, Poland, Romania and Slovenia ⁽²¹⁾.

Last year, the Commission also moved ahead with the implementation of the Long-term vision for the EU's rural areas, in particular the EU rural action plan, for which 21 actions were on-going (including facilitating the rural pact) and 9 completed, using funds from a variety of EU policies from and beyond the common agricultural policy (e.g. Cohesion funds, Horizon Europe, ERASMUS +, Connecting Europe Facility, Single market programme). This contributed to amplify rural voices of an ever-growing community, enable networking and collaboration and encourage action from national and regional governments to improve rural well-being.

Furthermore, **Cohesion policy supports rural development as part of its mission to reduce regional disparities.** Cohesion policy support is wide-ranging (innovation, infrastructure, support for SMEs, renewable energies and biodiversity conservation) and it targets predominantly less developed and transition regions. This support is channelled through integrated territorial development strategies, including community-led local development, designed and implemented by respective territorial authorities and local partnerships, strengthening the economic and social fabric of rural areas.

Research and innovation supporting people

Horizon Europe is the EU's main science programme, which aims to promote scientific excellence and generate new knowledge and technologies. For 2024, a total of **over EUR 16 billion** was allocated to the programme. Research and innovation support people by investigating, analysing and providing solutions to current and future challenges, helping to improve people's lives.

A key feature of Horizon Europe is the introduction of strategic plans as programming instruments to steer research and innovation funding, developed by the Commission together with the Member States, associated countries and the European Parliament with input from stakeholders and citizens ⁽²²⁾. The strategic plans help to steer research and innovation funding within and beyond Europe to tackle key global challenges such as climate change, pollution and loss of biodiversity, the digital transition and an ageing population. The second strategic plan for the period 2025-2027 was adopted in 2024.

In 2024 grants totalling EUR 2.3 billion were awarded by the European Research Council to projects selected based on their scientific excellence, and the Marie Skłodowska-Curie actions made available over EUR 1.25 billion to fund cutting-edge research through excellent doctoral and postdoctoral programmes, collaborative research and innovation projects and research fellowships, which will support and provide jobs to about 10 000 talented researchers from all over the world at all stages of their career ⁽²³⁾.

Moreover, still under Horizon Europe, the European research area talent platform was launched in June 2024. The platform aims to improve conditions for career development and attract and retain researchers in Europe, providing a central hub for accessing career development, funding and international collaboration tools, boosting mobility and career progression across Europe. Additionally, the Commission

⁽²¹⁾ European Commission: Directorate-General for Communication, *The EU in 2024 – General report on the activities of the European Union*, Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg, 2025, p. 73, <https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2775/1406446>.

⁽²²⁾ European Commission: Directorate-General for Communication, *The EU in 2024 – General report on the activities of the European Union*, Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg, 2025, p. 114, <https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2775/1406446>.

⁽²³⁾ EU in 2024, p.114

launched the **Critical Medicines Alliance** and the **European Health Data Space**, to address respectively industrial dimension of shortages and digital challenges related to health data protection.

The European Regional Development Funds seeks to foster a more competitive and smarter Europe by promoting innovative and smart economic transformation. In this context, it is crucial for regions to have a workforce with the right set of skills to deliver this transformation successfully. The fund thus provides targeted support for developing the specific skills needed for smart specialisation, industrial transition and entrepreneurship. Until the end of 2024, the total value of projects selected under cohesion policy funds and the policy objective amounted to **EUR27.3billion**, including **EUR10.47billion** for **enhancing research and innovation**, **EUR11.88billion investments for growth and competitiveness of small and medium-sized businesses** and **EUR253million for smart specialisation**. This investment is, among others, expected to support over 51000 enterprises in their research and innovation activities, around 24500 enterprises introducing new product or process innovation, almost 19600 enterprises investing in new skills, and around 4800 start-ups.

Investing in European culture

The Creative Europe programme is the EU's flagship programme to support the culture and audiovisual sectors, with a budget for the 2021-2027 period amounting to EUR 2.44 billion, with EUR 344.8 million for 2024 alone. The programme is structured in three strands:

- the culture strand, focusing on initiatives promoting and enhancing artistic cooperation at the European level, which published 11 calls in 2024;
- the media strand, aimed at encouraging competitiveness, innovation and sustainability of the European audiovisual sector, which launched 15 calls last year;
- the cross-sectoral strand, fostering innovative measures and collaboration across the audiovisual and cultural sectors as well as support for news media, which carried out 4 calls in 2024.

Under the culture strand, new selections took place for cultural prizes (music, literature, architecture, heritage), for the European networks for cultural and creative organisations, and for the European platforms for emerging artists and the pan-European cultural organisations, **totalling over EUR 85 million**. It also provided about EUR 5 million to translate 530 books originating from 37 different original languages to 29 target languages to facilitate the circulation of European literary works.

Under the media strand, the programme awarded EUR 167 million to audiovisual projects such as films and television series, and the transnational distribution of content across borders and platforms. Thanks to grants to distributors signed in 2021 under European Film Distribution, 554 films reached their audiences across borders by 2024.

The cross-sectoral strand awarded EUR 20 million to projects aimed at innovation (such as innovative approaches to content creation, access and distribution), media literacy and support for the news media sector, including support for cross-border collaborations and for funds that help media of special relevance to democracy, such as local media in news deserts and investigative reporting.

Concrete results of the Creative Europe programme

The Creative Europe programme yielded many positive impacts in 2024, such as:

- by the end of 2024, 6 366 artists and cultural professionals benefited from mobility measures;
- 62 grants for multiannual measures were signed in 2024 to cover the 2025-2027 period for the European networks of cultural and creative organisations, the European platforms for emerging artists and the pan-European cultural entities;
- the 2024 Latvian film Flow, financed by the media strand, won (in 2025) both an Academy Award and a Golden Globe.

In addition, by the end of 2024, the **cohesion policy funds** secured **EUR 1.8 billion of financial support** for **around 3 300 culture and sustainable tourism sites**.

Improving health in the EU

The EU4health programme was adopted as a response to the COVID-19 pandemic and to reinforce crisis preparedness in the EU. The programme aims to address long-term health challenges by building stronger, more resilient and more accessible health systems. It has been allocated EUR 4.4 billion for the 2021-2027 period, with EUR 752 million programmed for 2024. By the end of 2024, the results of the programme included:

- over 2.2 million patients with rare conditions benefited from access to diagnosis and treatment in 24 European reference networks;
- 21 health data access bodies set up or improved;
- 215 000 mpox vaccine doses donated to the Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention, amid an urgent outbreak;
- 778 healthcare and public health professionals trained on preparedness and response to cross-border health threats and addressing medical countermeasures.

In 2024 the EU continued to implement the EU cancer plan, the EU's political commitment to turn the tide against cancer. By 2024, 10 direct grants to Member States (six of which were awarded in 2024) were under implementation, supporting cancer-related measures with funds provided via the EU4health programme ⁽²⁴⁾. The EU4health's programmed budget for measures related to cancer in 2024 amounted to EUR 115.1 million ⁽²⁵⁾.

So far during the current 2021-2027 programming period, the **cohesion policy funds** have contributed with **an investment of EUR 2.83 billion** to the **improved access to healthcare services** benefitting an estimated **19.98 million people** in the EU. The total investment over the entire programming period should amount to EUR 7.42 billion benefitting the total of 59 million people.

⁽²⁴⁾ Commission staff working document – Review of Europe's beating cancer plan, SWD(2025) 39 final of 4 February 2025, p. 8, https://health.ec.europa.eu/publications/review-europes-beating-cancer-plan_en.

⁽²⁵⁾ Annex to the Commission Implementing Decision amending Implementing Decision C(2023) 8524 final on the financing of the programme for the Union's actions in the field of health ('EU4health programme') and the adoption of the work programme for 2024, C(2024) 7871 final of 15 November 2024, p. 8, https://health.ec.europa.eu/document/download/4fb8f72b-eac7-484f-9bab-03c945f59032_en?filename=c2024_7871_annex_en.pdf.

A Europe fit for the digital age

For us to be competitive, Europe must be home to the next wave of frontier technologies ⁽²⁶⁾.



Ursula von der Leyen

President of the European Commission

The EU's digital transformation

The EU has been working to ensure that society benefits from technology and innovation amid the rapidly evolving global digital landscape. With the [2030 digital compass](#) and the [Digital Decade Policy Programme](#), the EU has set a vision and framework to enhance competitiveness and technological leadership as well as human centric digital transformation. As part of this effort, the EU is working to improve citizens' basic and advanced digital skills, to improve the uptake of new technologies (such as artificial intelligence, data analytics and cloud) by EU businesses, to further advance connectivity in the EU, computing and data infrastructure, and to make public services and administration interoperable and available online.

Digital Europe is the main EU programme supporting the EU's digital transformation. It provides **funding for projects** in supercomputing, artificial intelligence, cybersecurity and advanced digital skills, semiconductors and projects promoting the wider use of digital technologies and interoperability across the economy and society. Over **EUR 1.3 billion** was allocated to this programme in 2024.

Budget commitments for the digital Europe programme (million EUR)

Total **EUR 2 311 million**



Source: European Commission.

The digital Europe programme has also supported the development of the network of cybersecurity competence centres across Europe, which will help to build capacity and expertise in cybersecurity and improve collaboration between Member States. The programme supports the implementation of the EU Cybersecurity Act and the development of cybersecurity certification schemes for ICT products, services and processes. The programme has supported the implementation of various pieces of legislation on cybersecurity, such as the cybersecurity resilience act, the cyber solidarity act, the network and information security directive and the cybersecurity act. The programme has also supported the deployment of innovative cybersecurity solutions, also based on AI and other key digital technologies, paying special attention to public authorities and SMEs. The programme has facilitated the collaboration with Member States

⁽²⁶⁾ European Commission: Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations, 'Speech by President von der Leyen at the European Parliament Plenary on the new College of Commissioners and its programme', European Commission news article, 27 November 2024, https://enlargement.ec.europa.eu/news/speech-president-von-der-leyen-european-parliament-plenary-new-college-commissioners-and-its-2024-11-27_en.

to support them through the procurement of advanced cybersecurity equipment, tools and data infrastructures such as the those building up crossborder and national cyber hubs.

Moreover, the digital Europe programme has been providing a key contribution to the [European High-performance Computing Joint Undertaking](#), which aims to develop and deploy world-class supercomputing and data infrastructure in Europe, supporting the procurement and operation of supercomputers, along with the development of associated applications and services.

Supercomputers under the European High-performance Computing Joint Undertaking

Computer	Location	Applications
LUMI	Kajaani, Finland	Artificial intelligence, especially deep learning, and traditional large-scale simulations combined with massive-scale data analytics.
Leonardo	Bologna, Italy	Modular and scalable computing applications and data analysis, and interactive, urgent and cloud-computing applications
MareNostrum 5	Barcelona, Spain	Multipurpose computer, with a special focus on medical applications, drug discovery and digital twins (earth and human body).
MeluXina	Bissen, Luxembourg	Artificial intelligence, digital twins, traditional computational workloads and quantum simulation.
Karolina	Ostrava, Czechia	Artificial intelligence, traditional computational workloads and big data.
Discoverer	Sofia, Bulgaria	Various applications, such as drug discovery, structure-property predictions, material design and drug development, climate forecasting, environmental modelling and machine learning.
Vega	Maribor, Slovenia	Traditional computational workloads, artificial intelligence, big data and large-scale data processing.
Deucalion	Guimarães, Portugal	Traditional computational workloads, artificial intelligence and big data.
Jupiter	Jülich, Germany	Already one of the world's fastest supercomputers, although not all of its modules have been assembled. Upon completion, it will tackle demanding simulations and compute-intensive artificial intelligence applications, such as training large neural networks like language models in artificial intelligence, simulations for developing functional materials, digital twins of the human heart or brain for medical purposes, validating quantum computers and high-resolution simulations of the climate encompassing the entire Earth system.

Source: [European High-performance Computing Joint Undertaking](#).

The digital Europe programme has also supported the development and deployment of advanced digital skills through initiatives such as the [EU skills agenda](#), the [digital education action plan](#) and the [European Alliance for Apprenticeships](#), with an aim of improving digital skills and competences for the digital transformation. The programme is aligned with the [Digital Decade policy programme](#), which sets ambitious targets for the digital transformation of the EU by 2030, providing a framework for the EU and Member States to work together. [Targets](#) include ensuring that all citizens have basic digital skills, increasing the share of ICT specialists in the workforce and ensuring that 75% of European businesses make use of cloud services.

Examples of projects funded by the digital Europe programme

The **digital Europe** programme has provided funding to several **impactful projects**, such as:

- two digital twins of the Earth launched in 2024, making it possible to improve the EU's response to major natural disasters, and helping it to adapt to climate change by simulating extreme weather events and long-term climate change;
- **835 new training programmes** (bachelor's and master's programmes, along with short training courses) in highly specialised fields such as artificial intelligence, cybersecurity and robotics, with over 20 000 students benefiting from them by the end of 2024;
- **26 security operation centres, including crossborder cyber hubs** established in 2024 across the EU, helping to ensure cross-border cooperation and to enhance situational awareness of cyber threats and incidents in the EU;
- the **first exascale supercomputer in Europe**, Jupiter, which gained its second module in 2024, making it already one of the fastest supercomputers in the world, even though it is running at one twelfth of the power it will have upon its completion.

Research funding has also been spent to help the EU move forward with its digital transformation.

Horizon Europe, the EU's key funding programme for science and innovation, has been playing a pivotal role in advancing Europe's digital transformation. Between 2021 and 2024, Horizon Europe funding in digital technologies reached over EUR 11.6 billion.

Furthermore, cohesion policy allocated EUR 40 billion for the 2021-2027 period in support of digital transition efforts across all 2030 Digital Compass vectors via national and regional programmes ⁽²⁷⁾. In addition, by the end of 2024, **cohesion policy funds** ensured financial support for 1.8 million dwellings and enterprises to access very high-capacity broadband.

Investing in artificial intelligence

The EU has also been funding research and development of artificial intelligence in Europe. Under the digital Europe programme, the EU has allocated **EUR 2.5 billion** for investment in artificial intelligence in the 2021-2027 period. Moreover, by the end of 2024, the digital Europe programme launched and closed two calls for proposals targeting models for artificial intelligence and cloud-computing technologies, totalling circa EU 55 million. In total, the EU invested over EUR 65 million in artificial intelligence in 2024 ⁽²⁸⁾.

In May 2024, the Commission established the European Artificial Intelligence Office, as set up in the AI act. It is a centre for expertise in artificial intelligence that will help to support the development and use of trustworthy artificial intelligence, and to protect against its related risks. In January 2024, the office launched the **AI innovation package** to support artificial intelligence start-ups and small and medium-sized enterprises through measures, initiatives, increased funding and legislative changes.

⁽²⁷⁾ [Cohesion policy supporting the digital transition 2021-2027 | Cohesion Open Data](#)

⁽²⁸⁾ European Commission: Directorate-General for Communication, *The EU in 2024 – General report on the activities of the European Union*, Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg, 2025, p. 86, <https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2775/1406446>.

AI innovation package

Alliance for Language Technologies aimed at using artificial intelligence to better understand and use European languages.

AI factories to develop trustworthy cutting-edge generative AI models.

The Citiverse European Digital Infrastructure Consortium aimed at using artificial intelligence to help cities run more smoothly.

GenAI4EU initiative, now included in the ApplyAI strategy, to support the development of novel use cases and emerging applications.

The creation of Common European Data Spaces to give researchers and developers access to pools of data to train and refine AI models.

Financial support via Horizon Europe and the digital Europe programme, providing additional public and private investment of around EUR 4 billion until 2027.

As part of the [AI continent action plan](#), at least **13 artificial intelligence factories** will be established in **2025-2026**, providing a dynamic ecosystem that fosters innovation, collaboration and development in the field of artificial intelligence. These factories will bring together computing power, data and talent to create cutting-edge artificial intelligence models and applications, and will foster collaboration across the EU, by linking supercomputing centres, universities, small and medium-sized enterprises, industry and financial stakeholders. In this context, nine new AI optimised supercomputers will be procured and deployed across the EU in **2025/26**. Over the 2021-2027 period, the Commission's, Member States' and associated countries' overall investment in supercomputing infrastructure and artificial intelligence factories in the EU will reach EUR 10 billion.

Artificial intelligence factories – Hosting countries



Artificial intelligence factories			
AIF Austria (Austria)	JAIF (Germany)	Meluxina-AI (Luxembourg)	MIMER (Sweden)
BRAIN++ (Bulgaria)	HammerHAI (Germany)	PIAST AIF (Poland)	
LUMI AIF (Finland)	Pharos (Greece)	BSC AIF (Spain)	
AIF2 (France)	IT4LIA (Italy)	SLAIF (Slovenia)	

Source: [European Commission](#).

Connecting Europeans: enhancing digital connectivity

The EU supports the improvement of digital connectivity through the digital strand of the Connecting Europe Facility. The facility has set aside **EUR 1.6 billion** to be implemented between 2021–2027, with EUR 325 million programmed for 2024. The digital strand of the facility helps to support and mobilise public and private investment in digital connectivity infrastructure of common European interest. In October 2024, the [Commission published a set of calls for proposals worth EUR 323 million](#) under the strand to speed up the deployment of fast, secure and sustainable advanced infrastructure, contributing to the development of backbone connectivity, 5G networks and quantum communication, and includes:

- **EUR 128 million under the ‘backbone connectivity for digital global gateways’** call for studies and for work will support the deployment of backbone connections, mainly via submarine and terrestrial cables;
- **EUR 105 million for ‘5G large-scale pilots’** call for smart communities and for corridors, funding the deployment of 5G standalone infrastructure;
- **EUR 90 million under the ‘European quantum communication infrastructures’** call to finance the interconnection of national quantum communication infrastructure networks across Member States, along with connections between the ground and space segments of these infrastructures by deploying optical ground stations.

Still under the digital strand of the Connecting Europe Facility, the Commission signed, in December 2024, **grant agreements totalling EUR 142 million**, covering 21 projects that will upgrade or deploy new connectivity backbone cables, including submarine cables. These projects will contribute to improving global connections between Europe and other countries, between Member States and between Europe and its outermost regions and overseas countries and territories.

Investing in space activities

Space operations strengthen Europe’s resilience and are crucial to our connected economy, including innovative services like environmental and climate monitoring, as well as for defence and security. Over **EUR 2.5 billion** were committed to the Union space activities in 2024 under the [EU Space programme](#), the [EU secure connectivity programme](#) and the space cluster of Horizon Europe. These activities were implemented in the field of Earth observation, satellite navigation, satellite communication, and in support of space research and innovation through six space flagships. These programmes delivered a range of services that improved the quality of life for people across the EU.

EU space flagships



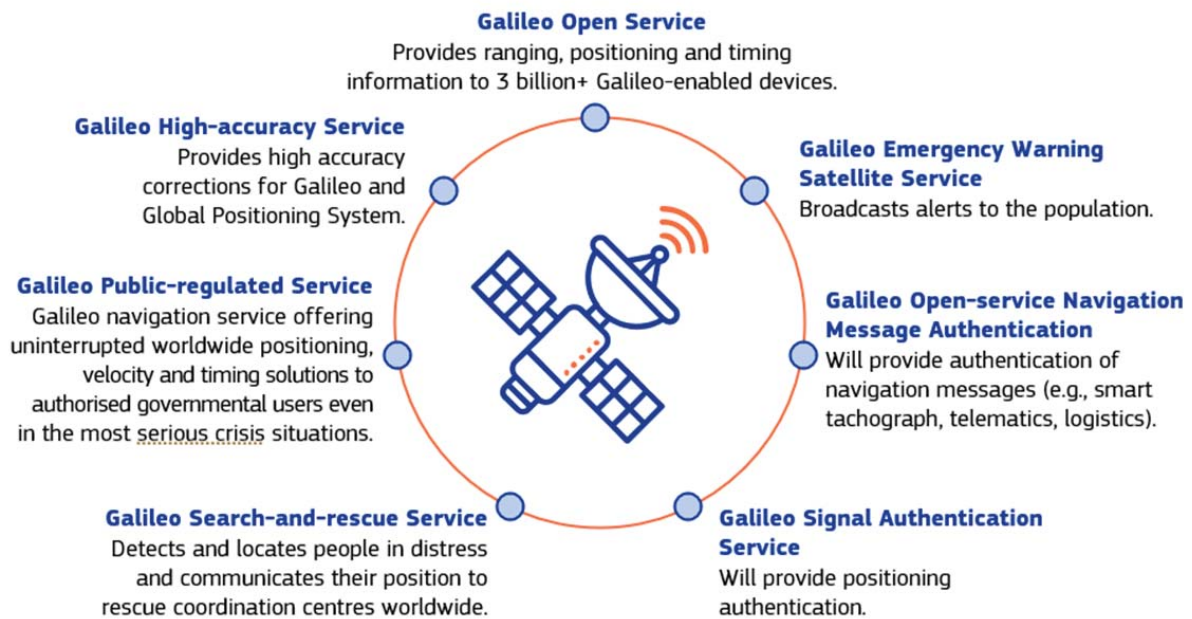
Source: [European Commission](#).

Copernicus, Europe’s eyes in the sky, provides six different services, supporting atmosphere, marine environment and land monitoring, along with climate change policies, emergency management and security, drawing from satellite and *in situ* (non-space) data. **Two new Copernicus Sentinel satellites** were launched in 2024. Copernicus’s emergency management service was instrumental in disaster response, and was activated about 100 times throughout the year, helping to address incidents such as the floods in Spain

in October 2024. Moreover, there were over 320 000 registered users of the Copernicus climate change service, all of whom had access to about 140 terabytes of quality-controlled climate data per day in 2024.

Galileo, Europe's global positioning and satellite navigation system, has been providing various services since 2016. In 2024 two dual-satellite launches added four satellites to the system, overcoming delays caused by Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine and the consequent unavailability of the Soyuz launcher. By the end of 2024, Galileo had 32 satellites in orbit.

Overview of Galileo services



GOVSATCOM is the space programme's component focused on governmental satellite communications. The deployment of its system infrastructure allowed for pooling existing satellite communication resources and sharing them with authorised European governmental actors. In 2024, the Commission determined the locations of the [GOVSATCOM hub](#), and initial services are expected by 2025, with full operational capability expected by 2027. Building upon GOVSATCOM, and pursuing an innovative and sustainable space policy with a focus on strengthening the EU's sovereignty and security with the [Union Secure Connectivity Programme](#), a significant milestone was marked with the signature of a concession contract with the SpaceRISE consortium in December 2024. On the basis of a strong and innovative public private partnership, the concessionaire will develop, deploy and operate the '**IRIS²**' **satellite constellation** (Infrastructure for Resilience, Interconnectivity and Security by Satellite).

The [Space Situational Awareness component](#) ⁽²⁹⁾, **Europe's eyes on space**, provides space surveillance and tracking collision avoidance to an increasing number of users worldwide. Preparatory activities towards the provision of an operational Space Weather service by 2025 were continued focusing on user needs and impacts. In 2024, the Commission and the European External Action Service progressed with the **EU approach on space traffic management**.

⁽²⁹⁾ The SSA component will cover EU SST, Space Weather and Near-Earth Objects, as well as an overall strengthening of security requirements when developing EU space systems)

A stronger Europe in the world



The world around us is changing at lightning speed. Geopolitical shifts are shaking alliances. Decades-old certainties are crumbling. And we still have a brutal war raging at our borders. Despite these turbulent times, this Commission has hit the ground running ⁽³⁰⁾.

Ursula von der Leyen

President of the European Commission

Providing support to Ukraine

Humanitarian and financial assistance for Ukraine

The EU remains committed to supporting Ukraine in the face of Russia's unprovoked and unjustified war of aggression against the country. It is also working with Ukraine to help it on its path towards closer alignment with the EU single market and potential EU membership.

In 2024 the EU provided substantial humanitarian assistance to Ukraine. This included, among other things, cash assistance, civil protection aid, healthcare, emergency and winterproof shelter, medical supplies, food, water, demining equipment and training, and education. From 2022 to 2024, the EU provided **EUR 950 million** in humanitarian aid to Ukraine, and EUR 76 million to Moldova (to help it weather the consequences of Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine) ⁽³¹⁾.

Further humanitarian assistance to Ukraine in 2024 was also provided via the EU Civil Protection Mechanism. All 27 Member States, together with six non-EU countries, have offered in-kind assistance through the EU Civil Protection Mechanism. In 2024 over 55 000 tonnes of life-saving assistance were deployed to Ukraine under the mechanism, covering items such as medical supplies, vehicles and energy equipment ⁽³²⁾.

The Civil Protection Mechanism also facilitated the medical evacuation of over 900 patients from Ukraine to hospitals across the EU in 2024. These evacuations included vulnerable paediatric patients who were victims of Russia's vicious attack against the Okhmatdyt children's hospital in Kyiv in July 2024 ⁽³³⁾.

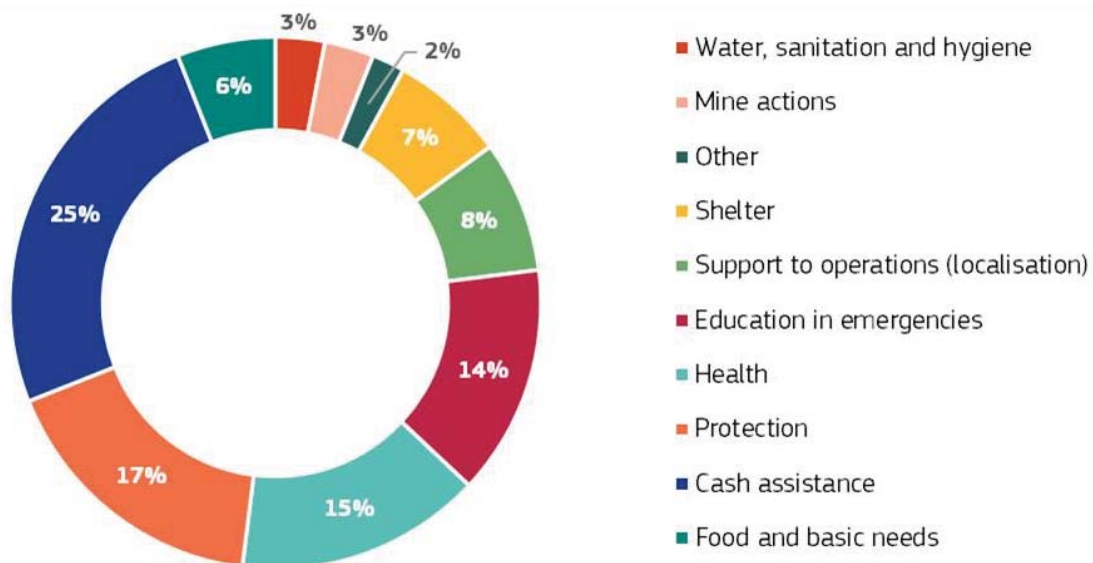
⁽³⁰⁾ European Commission: Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations, 'Press remarks by President von der Leyen on the first 100 days of the 2024-2029 Commission', European Commission news article, 10 March 2025, https://enlargement.ec.europa.eu/news/press-remarks-president-von-der-leyen-first-100-days-2024-2029-commission-2025-03-10_en.

⁽³¹⁾ European Commission: Directorate-General for Communication, *The EU in 2024 – General report on the activities of the European Union*, Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg, 2025, p. 15, <https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2775/1406446>.

⁽³²⁾ European Commission: Directorate-General for Communication, *The EU in 2024 – General report on the activities of the European Union*, Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg, 2025, p. 16, <https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2775/1406446>.

⁽³³⁾ European Commission: Directorate-General for Communication, *The EU in 2024 – General report on the activities of the European Union*, Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg, 2025, p. 17, <https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2775/1406446>.

EU humanitarian support for Ukraine (per sector)



Source: [European Commission](#).

The EU has also been providing vital financial assistance to Ukraine, helping the country to stand on its feet and weather the economic impacts of Russia's aggression. In March 2024, the [Ukraine Facility](#) was launched, offering up to EUR 50 billion in stable and predictable financial support from 2024 to 2027, to bolster Ukraine's resilience, foster its recovery and facilitate its path towards EU membership. Out of this EUR 50 billion, EUR 33 billion will be provided as loans to Ukraine, with the funds raised on the financial market via the [issuance of EU bonds](#). Moreover, in October 2024, the Ukraine Loan Cooperation Mechanism entered into force, implementing additional USD 50 billion loans to Ukraine under the G7 Extraordinary Revenue Acceleration Loans initiative, leveraging revenues from immobilized Russian sovereign assets. The EU's contribution to this initiative consists of an EUR 18.1 billion macrofinancial assistance loan to be disbursed in the course of 2025."

Military assistance for Ukraine

To address Ukraine's pressing military and defence needs, the EU implemented the European Peace Facility. Between 2022 and 2024, the EU mobilised [EUR 6.1 billion](#) under the European Peace Facility, with the aim of strengthening Ukraine's armed forces capabilities and resilience and protect the civilian population. It finances the provision of lethal and non-lethal military supplies such as ammunition, missiles and fuel. In March 2024, the EU decided to increase the financial ceiling of the European Peace Facility by **EUR 5 billion, establishing a dedicated Ukraine Assistance Fund**. Together with the military support provided by Member States, the total **EU support for the Ukrainian army is estimated at [EUR 49.6 billion](#)**. In 2022, the EU launched the EU military assistance mission for Ukraine. It was extended for two additional years in November 2024, with a budget allocation of nearly [EUR 409 million](#). Individual, collective and special training sessions are delivered to Ukraine's armed forces. There have been [73 000 Ukrainian soldiers](#) trained since the launch of the mission. Moreover, in June 2024, the EU and Ukraine signed joint commitments to support Ukraine's long-term security and defence.

The EU has also been fostering innovation in the defence sector together with Ukraine. In September 2024, the Commission established the **European Defence Innovation Office in Kyiv**, with its role to strengthen the cooperation between the EU and Ukrainian defence industries. The office will, among other things, help to identify Ukrainian needs and capacities on defence innovation and facilitate joint initiatives and cooperation between innovative and industrial stakeholders of the EU and Ukraine. The office will also promote defence innovation activities in and with Ukraine. It will also foster joint initiatives and bring together EU start-ups and innovators with Ukraine's industry and armed forces. This was an important milestone in the advancement of the European defence industrial strategy, adopted in March 2024.

Collecting windfall profits from immobilised Russian sovereign assets to support Ukraine

On 28 October 2024, the [regulation establishing the Ukraine Loan Cooperation Mechanism](#) and a new macro-financial assistance programme for Ukraine came into force. The mechanism collects windfall profits from immobilised assets of the Central Bank of Russia held by financial institutions in the Member States and uses them to support Ukraine in repaying up to EUR 45 billion in loans to be provided to Ukraine by the Global 7 partners. The purpose of the Global 7 initiative is to provide Ukraine with sufficient and continuous financial support to address the immediate needs inflicted on the country by Russia's ongoing aggression.

Restrictive measures

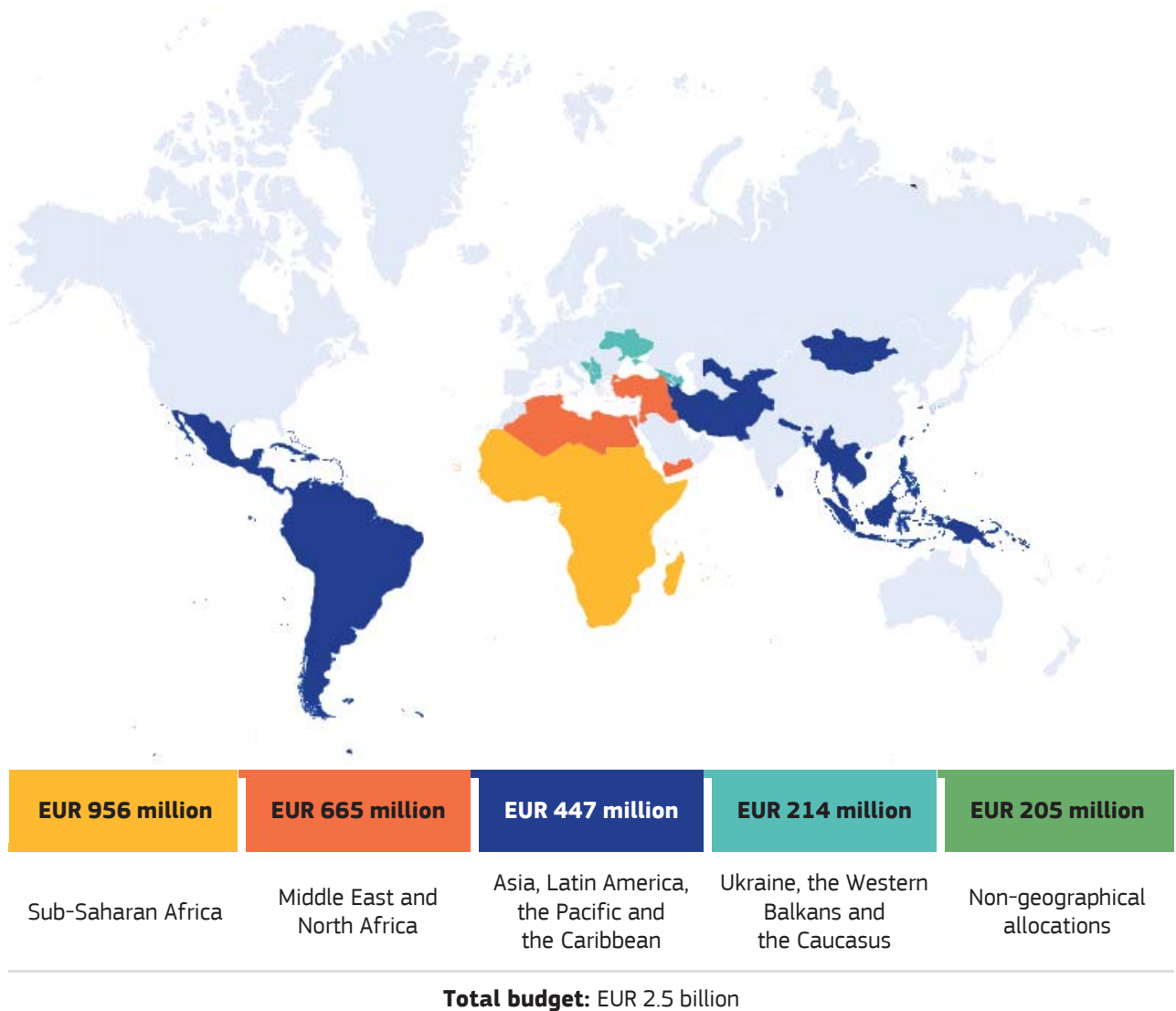
The EU continued to provide support to Ukraine, stepping up its sanctions on Russia in response to its war of aggression against Ukraine. In 2024 the EU aimed to weaken Russia's economy further with three robust sanctions packages, focusing on cutting access to critical technology, industrial goods and financial services, and reducing Russia's revenue streams, in particular from energy. In order to increase effectiveness and impact of the sanctions, the EU put even greater emphasis on anti-circumvention measures in the area of trade and energy, including the targeting of the shadow fleet used by Russia to evade the oil price cap. In parallel, the EU reinforced its cooperation and outreach to non-EU countries.

Humanitarian support for victims of conflicts outside of Europe

The EU has provided humanitarian assistance to help address several crises. Following Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine and the dramatic escalation of hostilities in Gaza and other ongoing conflicts, such as in Sudan, the [United Nations](#) estimated that 323.4 million people were in need of humanitarian assistance in 2024.

The EU committed EUR 237 million of humanitarian aid in 2024, along with 2 622 tonnes of humanitarian supplies for [people in need in Gaza](#). Since the terrorist attack by Hamas against Israel in October 2023 and the country's ensuing response, the humanitarian situation in Gaza has drastically worsened. In September 2024, [1.9 million people had been displaced](#) in Gaza, with approximately 88 000 people injured and 40 000 deaths. As a result, 2.2 million people have been affected by the crisis, creating massive shortages of basic necessities such as water, food and shelter. Additionally, the Gaza Strip suffered severe damage to its public infrastructure, such as schools and hospitals. The EU Civil Protection Mechanism was activated 10 times in 2024 to coordinate evacuations and support neighbouring countries, also working directly from the ground.

EU's humanitarian aid in 2024



Source: European Commission.

The EU has also been providing humanitarian support to Syria and Lebanon, amid the deterioration of the situation in the region. In May 2024, the EU and its Member States pledged [EUR 3.8 billion](#) in grants to Syria and the region, while 16.7 million people remained in need of humanitarian assistance inside Syria. For Lebanon, the EU allocated an additional EUR 25 million in humanitarian funding to provide crucial support to populations affected by the conflict between Hezbollah and Israel, which led to large-scale displacement.

In 2024 the EU also provided lifesaving assistance to those affected by the crisis in Sudan and its neighbouring countries. In total, it allocated close to EUR 260 million in response to the Sudan crisis (including over EUR 147 million in Sudan alone). Between 2023 and 2024, Sudan became the location of the world's largest displacement crisis, with 11.5 million internally displaced people, about 30% of the entire population and 15% of all internally displaced people worldwide. The conflict came with massive violations of international humanitarian law and human rights, including war crimes and likely crimes against humanity.

Overall, the EU and its Member States were the largest global providers of official development assistance in 2024. In addition to assisting those affected by conflicts, the EU also provides needs-based humanitarian assistance to people hit by human-induced disasters and natural hazards, with particular

attention to the most vulnerable victims. In 2024 16 crises affecting 17 countries were addressed through the **European Humanitarian Response Capacity**.

Promoting international partnerships

The EU supports projects and activities across the globe in areas such as climate, energy, transport, health, education and research, primarily via its Global Gateway strategy. Through a mix of public and private investment, it aims to mobilise EUR 300 billion between 2021 and 2027. In 2024 the EU moved forward with this strategy, designed to reinforce Europe's position in the world. In December 2024, Member States endorsed [46 additional Global Gateway flagship](#) projects. The EU also continued implementing the **EU Global Health strategy and the EU Gender Action Plan**.

Global Gateway partnerships based on six principles



The EU has been particularly active in support of projects and activities in Africa. The **Africa–Europe investment package**, representing 119 out of 264 Global Gateway projects, aims at leveraging approximately [EUR 150 billion](#) of investment to bolster cooperation with African partners. In line with its flagship initiative on manufacturing and access to vaccines, medicines and health technologies in Africa, the EU also announced, in June 2024, a contribution of EUR 220 million to the African Vaccine Manufacturing Accelerator, with the objective of helping to expand the manufacturing of commercially viable vaccines in Africa.

Under the 2021–2027 financial framework, the EU finances most of its development programmes and Global Gateway projects and investments for partner countries in Africa, Latin American and the Caribbean, and Asia and the through the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument – Global Europe, with a total initial financial envelope of around EUR 79.5 billion. Beyond the Global Gateway, the instrument has also contributed to action in a range of areas such as democracy, human rights, gender equality, environmental protection and economic support. For instance, since 2021, the EU has assisted almost 137 000 victims of human rights violations. Additionally, almost 1.8 million people around the world have gained access to clean water and/or sanitation, and more than 43 000km² of marine, terrestrial and freshwater ecosystems have been protected or sustainably managed. Furthermore, the EU provided targeted and tailor-made support to migration origin, transit and destination countries in the Sub-Saharan African and Asian regions to improve migration and forced displacement governance, guided by dedicated EU Action Plans covering the key migratory routes towards Europe, in a whole-of-route approach. Moreover, the EU4business initiative, funded by the instrument, supported 67 000 small and medium-sized enterprises in the Eastern Neighbourhood during 2023–2024, resulting in the creation of nearly 80 000 new jobs.

The partnership between the EU and its Member States and the Members of the Organisation of African, Caribbean and Pacific States, the **Samoa Agreement**, entered in provisional application in January 2024 and a total of 77 out of the 79 OACPS Member States signed the Agreement.

The European Fund for Sustainable Development Plus, under the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument, has been helping the EU to deliver on the Global Gateway, including by covering a share of the risks faced by development finance partners when investing in partner countries. It thereby attracts additional investors, notably from the private sector. Between 2021 and 2024, the Commission made EUR 13.3 billion of guarantees available through the fund. Since 2021 the implementation of the 'Economic and investment plan in the Southern Neighbourhood' has led to the commitment of EUR 5.7 billion of grants funded by the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument – Global Europe. It mobilised an estimated EUR 26.6 billion of investment through blending grants with concessional loans in the clean energy, water and sanitation, education and digital sectors.

A highlight of 2024 was the inclusion of the Lobito Corridor as a Global Gateway flagship project. This corridor connects Angola, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Zambia, enhancing regional infrastructure and economic potential. The EU committed EUR520million in grants to support growth in climate-smart energy, agriculture and skills development. Stakeholder engagement also played a key role, with significant involvement from businesses, civil society, women and youth, exemplified by high-level events and partnerships across multiple African countries.

Furthermore, the Commission made significant progress in developing the Trans-Caspian Transport Corridor in 2024. The Global Gateway EU–Central Asia Transport Investors Forum, held in January, convened over 600 stakeholders and secured EUR 10 billion in commitments for sustainable transport in Central Asia, including EUR 1.47 billion from the European Investment Bank and EUR 1.5 billion from the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development. Additionally, the EU and Uzbekistan signed a memorandum of understanding launching a strategic partnership on **critical raw materials**.

Supporting our neighbourhood and candidates for enlargement

In light of the current geopolitical tensions, notably Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine, the EU enlargement process entered a new phase in 2024. In June 2024, negotiations for accession to the EU were opened at the first intergovernmental conferences with **Moldova and Ukraine**. The Commission started bilateral screening meetings with both countries, which must show how they plan to adopt and implement EU rules and policies and outline plans for further alignment. Moreover, the EU recognised **Montenegro's** progress in its accession path, although some improvements in the rule of law and the judiciary are still needed. The EU continued its assessment of **Albania, North Macedonia and Serbia**, all of which need to further implement key reforms in specific areas. In addition, the European Council decided to open accession negotiations with **Bosnia and Herzegovina** in March 2024.

To foster its enlargement process, the EU adopted the [Reform and Growth Facility Regulation](#) in May 2024, to help Western Balkan partners ⁽³⁴⁾ reform their political, legal and economic systems with a view to their future EU membership. The facility is expected to provide up to [EUR 2 billion in grants and EUR 4 billion in loans](#) from 2024 to 2027. In exchange, each partner must prepare a **reform agenda**. The reform agendas of Albania, Kosovo ⁽³⁵⁾, Montenegro, North Macedonia and Serbia were approved by the Commission in October 2024, with pre-financing payments expected in the first half of 2025. The **EU–Western Balkans Summit** was organised in December 2024, shortly after the **Berlin Process Summit**, enhancing integration through the growth plan.

⁽³⁴⁾ Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Montenegro, North Macedonia and Serbia.

⁽³⁵⁾ This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244/1999 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence.

Strengthening democracy

The vision of a continent united by democracy, the rule of law and respect of fundamental freedoms will always drive our work. Because the people of these countries deserve a future of peace, progress and prosperity. And we will make sure that that future can be in Europe ⁽³⁶⁾.



Ursula von der Leyen

President of the European Commission

Promoting the rights and values of the EU

The citizens, equality, rights and values programme aims to protect and promote EU rights and values as enshrined in the EU treaties and the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union. The programme aims to contribute to sustaining and further developing open, rights-based, democratic, equal and inclusive societies based on the rule of law. For 2024, EUR 219 million was allocated to the programme, helping to finance civil-society initiatives aimed at increasing citizens' engagement, supporting equality for all and advancing the protection and promotion of rights and EU values. There were 13 calls for proposals under the programme launched in 2024, with 2 865 project applications received, of which 279 were awarded funding.

The programme also supported the implementation of the European citizens' initiative. The European citizens' initiative allows citizens to call on the Commission to propose new laws. Once an initiative has reached 1 million signatures, the Commission will decide on what action to take. In 2024 the citizens, equality, rights and values programme provided more than EUR 2 million in funding to support the implementation of European citizens' initiatives. In total, 11 new initiatives were registered in 2024, covering areas such as the protection of European agriculture, food security and water resilience, the provision of EU financial support for the protection of women's reproductive health, and the protection of consumer rights in relation to video games.

The Commission has also continued to implement the [Conditionality Regulation](#). The mechanism provides an additional layer of protection to the EU budget, being triggered in cases when breaches of rule-of-law principles affect or risk affecting EU financial interests. Measures under the mechanism may include, among other things, the suspension of payments and the prohibition of entering into legal commitments. In December 2024, the Commission decided to maintain a prohibition on new legal commitments with public interest trusts in Hungary for EU funding implemented under direct or indirect management, as well as suspensions of three operational programmes in shared management, aboth measures in place since 2022. More information on this is available in Annex 2 to this report.

⁽³⁶⁾ European Commission: Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations, 'Speech by President von der Leyen at the European Parliament Plenary on the new College of Commissioners and its programme', European Commission news article, 27 November 2024, https://enlargement.ec.europa.eu/news/speech-president-von-der-leyen-european-parliament-plenary-new-college-commissioners-and-its-2024-11-27_en.

Defending democracy

The European democracy action plan aims to build more resilient democracies across the EU by promoting free and fair elections, strengthening media freedom and countering disinformation. Its measures are supported via a range of instruments, such as:

- promoting election integrity and boosting citizen participation, civic engagement and trust in democracy through funding from the Citizens, Equality, Rights and Values programme, the Creative Europe programme, the Erasmus+ programme, Horizon Europe and cohesion funds;
- strengthening funding to news media organisations within the EU and beyond through the Creative Europe programme, the digital Europe programme and the global Europe human rights and democracy programme;
- fighting disinformation with the view to promoting media literacy and helping citizens identify disinformation through funding from the Erasmus+ programme and the European Solidarity Corps.

The EU also supports democracy via its communication campaigns, for which EUR 109 million was allocated in 2024. For instance, the 'You are EU' campaign has helped to raise awareness about EU values such as democracy and freedom. Moreover, anti-disinformation web pages maintained by the EU received over 115 000 visits in 2024.

3. Horizontal policy priorities in the EU budget

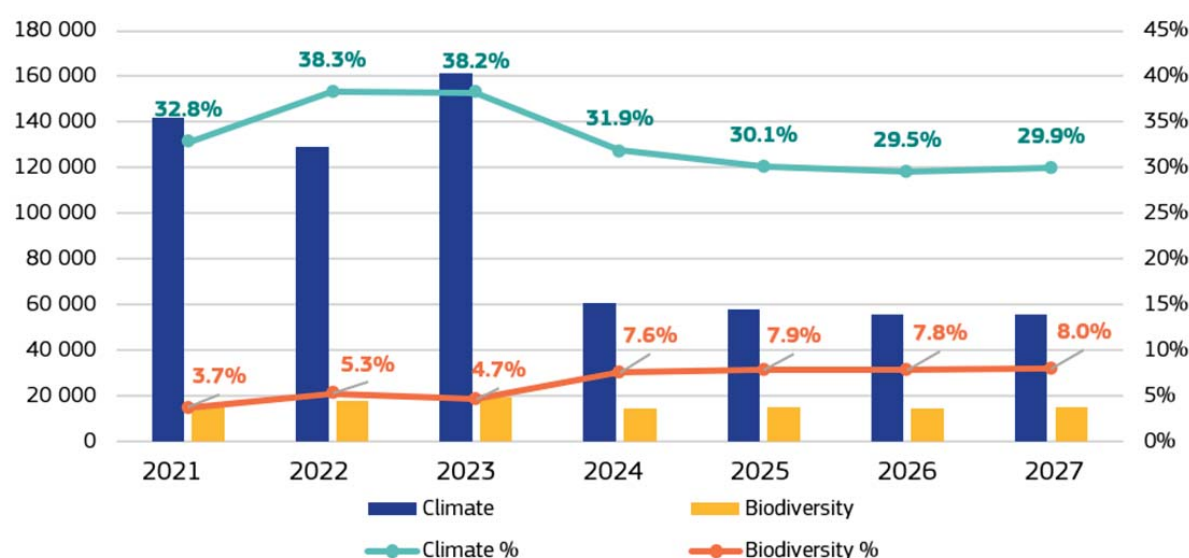
This section provides information on the financing of initiatives related to the objectives of climate, biodiversity, gender equality and sustainable development goals, as provided for in point 16(d–g) of the interinstitutional agreement of 16 December 2020 ⁽³⁷⁾. Information on the contribution of the EU budget to the Commission's priority of promoting the digital transition is also provided.

Green budgeting

The Commission uses green budgeting to enhance the transparency of the EU funding to support climate and environmental objectives, in line with the Paris Agreement and the European Green Deal. In March 2022, the Commission committed to further pursuing its work on green budgeting, together with the French Presidency of the Council and several Member States.

To underscore its commitment to its climate and environmental goals, the EU has set quantitative spending targets for its 2021–2027 multiannual financial framework and NextGenerationEU funding. In particular, **the EU has committed to dedicating at least 30% of its multiannual financial framework and NextGenerationEU budget to climate-relevant expenditure, and 7.5% of the 2024 annual budget and 10% of the 2026 and 2027 annual budgets, to protecting and enhancing biodiversity.**

Expected climate and biodiversity contribution (budgetary commitments) in the 2021–2027 period (million EUR)



NB: As the same action can contribute to more than one objective, it is important to recall that horizontal priorities (e.g., climate and biodiversity figures) cannot be summed up to avoid double counting.

Source: European Commission.

⁽³⁷⁾ Interinstitutional Agreement between the European Parliament, the Council of the European Union and the European Commission on budgetary discipline, on cooperation in budgetary matters and on sound financial management, as well as on new own resources, including a roadmap towards the introduction of new own resources Interinstitutional Agreement of 16 December 2020 between the European Parliament, the Council of the European Union and the European Commission on budgetary discipline, on cooperation in budgetary matters and on sound financial management, as well as on new own resources, including a roadmap towards the introduction of new own resources (OJ L 433I, 22.12.2020, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/agree_interinst/2020/1222/oj).

The data available for the 2021-2027 period show that the **EU budget, including NextGenerationEU, is on track to reach its 30% target for climate mainstreaming**, thanks to the strong performance of the Recovery and Resilience Facility and the REPowerEU plan. The figures presented in this report use past commitments for years 2021-2024 and expected commitment appropriations for 2025-2027.

For biodiversity mainstreaming, while the 2024 ambition was achieved, the 2026 and 2027 targets are projected to fall below the initial ambitions. More details are available in the dedicated biodiversity section below.

In line with their sectorial regulations, the Ukrainian Ukraine Facility and Western Balkans Facility contribute to climate and biodiversity mainstreaming. The contributions included in the programme performance statements are preliminary and will be further refined and updated in upcoming years.

It is important to note that other funds managed by the Commission also contribute to the green budget priority, despite not being part of the multiannual financial framework, such as the Innovation Fund, the Modernisation Fund and the Social Climate Fund. The revenues from these funds come from the EU emissions trading system.

The amounts above are calculated based on commitment appropriations, as shown below.

- For direct management, estimates are prepared by each service based on the most updated data available. For future estimates, work programmes, sectoral targets and historical values are used.
- For shared management, past and future figures are presented on the basis of the programmes and common agricultural policy strategic plans agreed with the Member States and updated in accordance with the annual reports.
- For indirect management, the figures are based on the existing targets and agreements with implementing partners, along with their annual reports.
- Past expenditure is revised annually following a quality review conducted by Commission departments, incorporating additional information available on the selected project.

Focus on results ⁽³⁸⁾

45 gigawatt-hours of estimated energy efficiency savings per year from private and public buildings.	98 million tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent avoided per year, of which more than half was through NextGenerationEU green bond investment. Additionally, 452 million tonnes of carbon dioxide reduction are expected from the Innovation Fund over the first 10 years of operation.	543 additional gigawatt-hours of renewable energy capacity installed.

⁽³⁸⁾ Aggregated data of core performance indicators reflecting estimated and expected impact from the EU budget programmes during the 2014-2024 period (contributions from the regional policy, the LIFE programme, the InvestEU programme, the Innovation Fund and the Recovery and Resilience Facility).

A focus on results is fundamental for green budget action and the EU budget in general. The results stemming from available indicators can be used to achieve more targeted spending and to improve steering of the EU budget. It can also make the green transition more efficient by improving accountability. The latter is also important in view of the need to contribute to multiple international commitments.

The focus on emission reductions through energy efficiency and renewable energy expansion is crucial for achieving the EU's climate neutrality goals and achieving the 2030 targets. The above results show that the EU budget is helping Member States to diversify their energy mix and gradually reduce their reliance on fossil fuels. This results in lower energy costs and decreased emissions of greenhouse gases and air pollutants, helping combat climate change.

Measuring the impact of NextGenerationEU investment

In November 2024 the Commission published the second impact report for NextGenerationEU green bonds, following up on the 2023 report presented at the United Nations Climate Change Conference in Dubai. Both reports mark a major achievement in transparency, enabling the measurement of the **concrete climate impact of the investment** financed by NextGenerationEU green bonds.

Building on the robust EU green bond framework, the report is based on detailed analyses of the milestones and targets for green-bond-financed investment under the Recovery and Resilience Facility. This provides the basis for calculating their climate impact, allowing the measuring of progress on the path to a sustainable future and ensuring a direct link between funding and climate impact. Notably, the 2024 report also takes into account the investment supported by REPowerEU.

The analysis shows that after full implementation, NextGenerationEU **green bond investment has the potential to avoid greenhouse gas emissions by a total of 55 million tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent per year** – equivalent to 1.5% of the EU's total emissions in 2022. This figure currently represents approximately half of the investment financed by green bonds, meaning that future reports are expected to provide a more complete picture of the actual climate impact. At the current early stage of project implementation, the emissions reduction is naturally smaller. The report estimates a current annual reduction of 1.5 million tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent, a figure that will continue to increase as the implementation of the Recovery and Resilience Facility accelerates.

EU-supported activities and the EU taxonomy for sustainable finance

For the second consecutive year, the 'programme performance statements' (Annex 4 to this report) of several key EU budget programmes include an analysis of how their supported activities relate to the EU taxonomy for sustainable activities. This addition provides an important starting point for future analyses of how EU spending contributes to a greener future ⁽³⁹⁾.

While the analysis of the relationship between the supported activities and the taxonomy in the Recovery and Resilience Facility has been detailed previously in the context of NextGenerationEU green bond reporting, the scope has been broadened to cover additional programmes that may invest in activities covered by the EU taxonomy. This approach offers a more comprehensive view of the EU's commitment to sustainable financing across its various initiatives.

⁽³⁹⁾ Taxonomy alignment is not a prerequisite for funding.

Climate mainstreaming

Achievements

The **Horizon Europe** mission ‘100 Climate-Neutral and Smart Cities by 2030’ aims to make cities inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable. It supports 112 cities in achieving climate neutrality and becoming smart by 2030, with a particular focus on energy transition and the development of renewable energy projects.

The **Ukraine Facility** contains a chapter on the green transition and environmental protection and other chapters also refer to green priorities. In order to meet the steps of the plan, for example, in 2024 Ukraine adopted a new law on the prevention, reduction and control of industrial pollution, an integrated national energy and climate plan, and a new strategy for thermal modernisation of buildings until 2050.

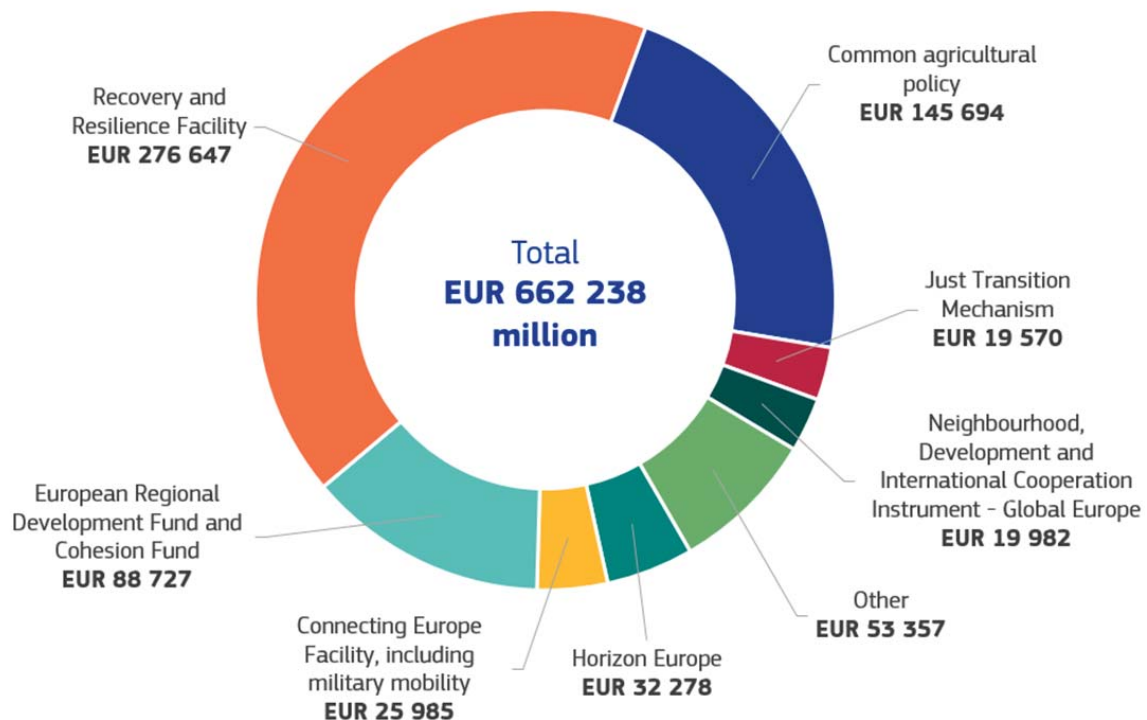
Under the **LIFE programme**, more than 1 400 000 tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent are expected to be avoided thanks to projects awarded in 2022 and 2023 and 7 799 gigawatt-hours per year of primary energy savings are expected from the 2022-2023 projects.

About 2.55 million hectares of agricultural and forest land were covered by **the common agricultural policy** management commitments contributing to carbon sequestration or conservation in 2023⁽⁴⁰⁾.

⁽⁴⁰⁾ Management commitments under 2014-2022 rural development programmes.

How much do we spend?

Climate contribution in the 2021-2027 period (million EUR)



Source: European Commission.

For the 2021-2027 period, the EU budget – including NextGenerationEU – is projected to contribute EUR 662 billion to climate mainstreaming objectives, representing 34% of the budget envelope, surpassing the initial target of 30%. Additionally, through the InvestEU programme the EU budget is expected to help mobilise over EUR 110 billion in investment to meet EU climate goals.

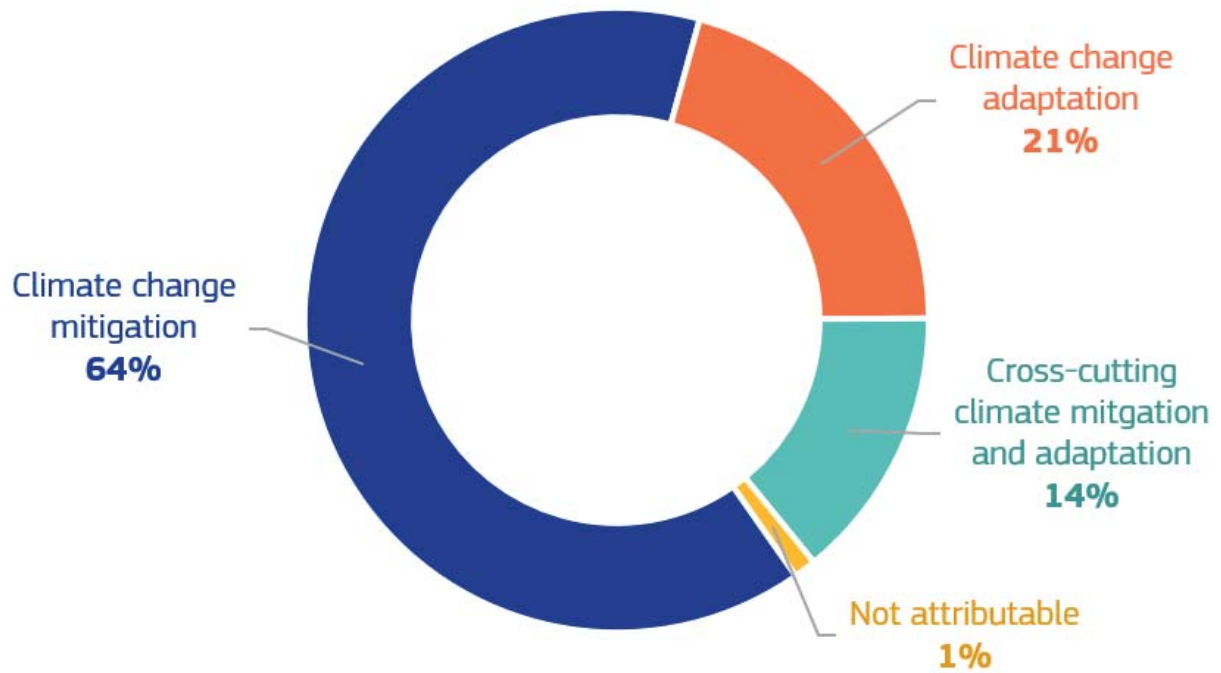
Using the percentage of climate spending per programme calculated for budgetary commitments, it is possible to estimate the amount of climate-related spending at the payment level, which currently stands at 32.6%. On this basis, Member States contributing to the EU budget can calculate their share of green budget contributions for the EU budget. This estimate excludes the Recovery and Resilience Facility, as this is financed by EU bonds instead of Member State contributions.

Differentiating between climate change mitigation and adaptation expenditure

Under the interinstitutional agreement of 16 December 2020, the Commission committed to report on climate expenditure, differentiating between climate change mitigation and adaptation, where feasible. To allow for such reporting, an external study was commissioned to assist in developing a methodology to disaggregate climate expenditure across these two dimensions.

The methodology was designed to avoid creating additional administrative burdens by building on the existing system of intervention fields used under the [Common Provisions Regulation](#) for cohesion funds and the Recovery and Resilience Facility. For external action programmes, existing methodologies were used, while for the common agricultural policy, the methodology was developed as a part of a specific study commissioned for this policy.

Climate contribution in the 2021-2024 period disaggregated by climate mitigation and climate adaptation



Source: European Commission. Figures do not include the Ukraine Facility and the 'Reform and growth facility for the Western Balkans'. Figures for the common agricultural policy refer only to the 2023-2024 period.

Biodiversity mainstreaming

Achievements

21 million hectares are covered by selected projects to protect against wildfires under **cohesion policy funds**. In addition, the **Copernicus** atmosphere monitoring service uses near-real-time observations of the location and intensity of active wildfires to estimate the emissions of pollutants that may impact biodiversity in the affected areas.

176 species of which the loss is expected to be halted or reversed thanks to **LIFE** nature and biodiversity projects in 2022 and 2023.

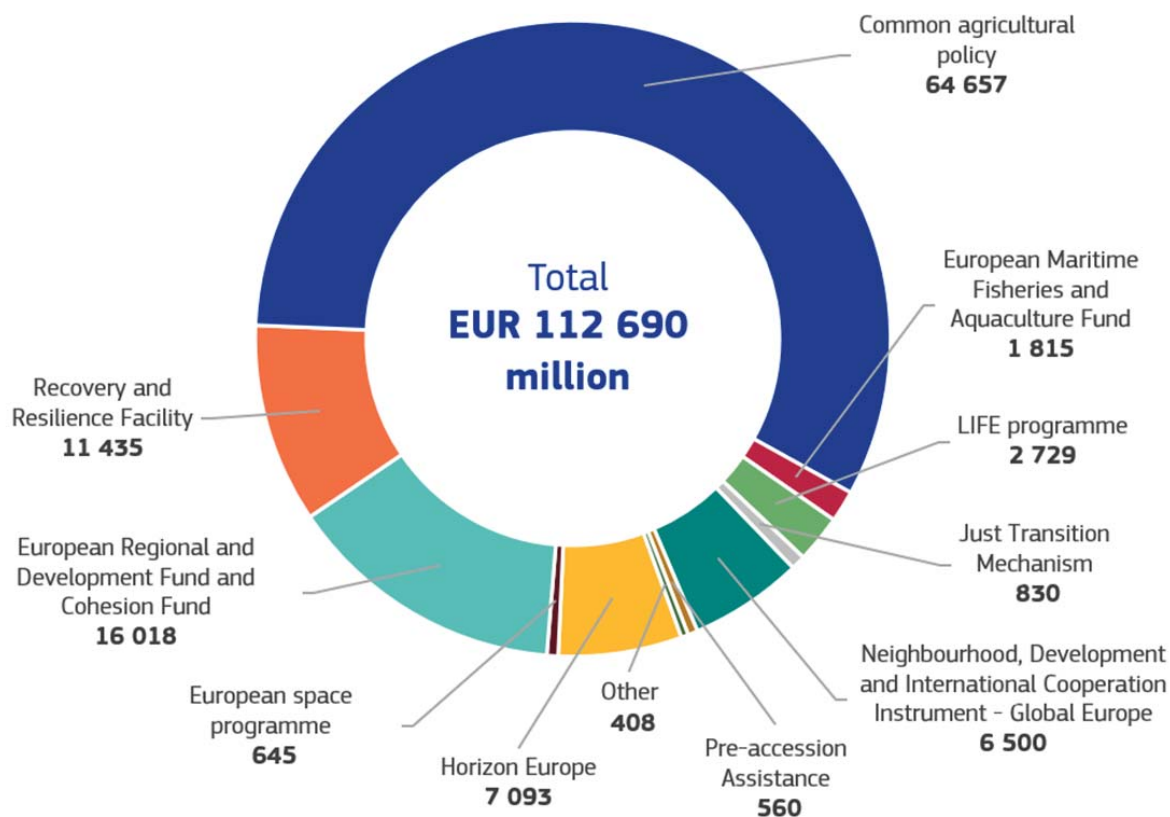
915 measures contributing to 'good environmental status' were selected between 2022 and 2023 under the **European Maritime, Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund**.

Through the **common agricultural policy**, 21% of agricultural land was covered by management contracts contributing to biodiversity in 2023 ⁽⁴¹⁾.

⁽⁴¹⁾ Management commitments under 2014-2022 rural development programmes

How much do we spend?

Biodiversity contribution in the 2021-2027 period (million EUR)



Source: European Commission.

For the 2021-2027 period, the EU budget – including NextGenerationEU – is contributing almost EUR 113 billion, or 5.8% of the total budget, to biodiversity mainstreaming objectives. While the ambition of allocating 7.5% of the EU budget to biodiversity in 2024 was achieved, the 10% targets for 2026 and 2027 are projected to fall below the initial ambitions.

It is worth noting that the common agricultural policy methodology for the 2023-2027 period has a higher level of granularity and ambition compared to the methodology used in 2014-2022, allowing for more precise and conservative estimates compared to the past. As from the 2024 draft budget, the contribution of the common agricultural policy to biodiversity is estimated by the Commission through the application of EU coefficients (100%, 40% and 0%) and weighting factors (100%, 70% and 50%) that aim to reflect the differentiated contribution of each type of intervention towards the biodiversity objectives. Furthermore, given the design of the common agricultural policy and the cohesion policy – and the financial programming of the two programmes – it is not possible to assign resources to specific years, as projects have a multiannual nature that cannot be attributed to a single year. Contribution of the recently created Ukraine Facility and Western Balkan Facility towards biodiversity objectives is currently missing and will be updated once the data are available in the upcoming years.

Gender equality mainstreaming

In response to persistent gender gaps and intersecting inequalities, the EU has intensified efforts to make its budget and policymaking more inclusive. Challenges such as the cost-of-living crisis, care burden disparities and unequal access to digital and green jobs have highlighted the need for sustained investment in gender equality.

As a result, gender mainstreaming is now embedded across major EU policies and funding programmes, including the European Social Fund Plus, the European Regional Development Fund, the Just Transition Fund, Horizon Europe, the common agricultural policy, and NDICI-Global Europe. These tools promote equal access to resources, economic participation and social protection – particularly for women and underrepresented groups.

Looking ahead, President von der Leyen announced a new gender equality strategy beyond 2025 as part of her 2024 political guidelines for the 2024-2029 Commission. This upcoming strategy will build on the progress achieved so far and address emerging challenges, ensuring that equality remains a driving force in the EU's future policy and budgetary decisions.

Achievements

The **citizens, equality, rights and values programme** supported gender equality by funding Member States in transposing the Pay Transparency Directive, strengthening organisations fighting gender-based violence through long-term projects and providing financial support to local grassroots groups via intermediaries. In 2024 around 25% of the programme's committed funds focused primarily on promoting gender equality.

Under **Horizon Europe**, the 'Realising girls' and women's inclusion, representation and empowerment' project aims to prevent and reverse gender inequalities across the political, social, economic and cultural spheres by identifying and dismantling the root causes of gender discrimination through a multidisciplinary approach. It involves collaboration across several European countries and South Africa, focusing on institutional, experiential and symbolic dimensions to promote transformative equality.

With EUR 3.9 million in funding, the **European Social Fund Plus** supports a project involving organisations from Germany, Greece, Iceland, Italy, Portugal and Romania, which promotes a holistic and intersectional approach to combating homelessness among women. The project's objectives include empowering marginalised women to overcome homelessness by providing access to tailored treatment pathways, integrating gender-specific approaches in trauma-informed care and influencing policy changes towards gender-sensitive and inclusive strategies.

Thanks to the Recovery and Resilience Facility, the centrepiece of NextGenerationEU, by the end of 2024, Estonia rolled out a digital gender-pay-gap tool for employers to provide the necessary information about the gender pay gap, its possible causes and solutions to address it. In addition, Italy provided financial support to the creation and/or growth of 700 enterprises led by women, supporting female entrepreneurship and strengthening women's participation in business activities. These crucial investments are complemented by **structural reforms**, including reforms to combat gender inequalities in Portugal, to better regulate the profession of nursing assistants in Sweden and to improve prenatal and neonatal health screening in Bulgaria.

Under the **Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance**, the Commission has supported the empowerment of women with minority backgrounds. Specific projects such as 'Romani women power of change in the Western Balkans and Türkiye' (with an EU contribution of EUR 1 million) and 'EU regional action for Roma education: increased education support and opportunities for Roma students in the Western Balkans and Türkiye' (EUR 4 million) aimed to increase the participation of Roma women in local decision-making and education.

Under the **Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument – Global Europe**, the Commission funded gender responsive investments under the Global Gateway strategy, such as the Africa Connected programme implemented by FINNFUND and targeted actions to support women's rights, such as the WYDE and ACT Programmes with the UN Women. Another UNWOMEN project 'Promoting the Agenda on Women, Peace and Security supported military actors in the Central African Republic and Mozambique. The project works to enhance women's inclusion and integration among military actors, and to ensure that armed forces are better prepared to integrate a gender perspective in the planning and conduct of operations and activities.

How much do we spend?

In line with the 2020-2025 gender equality strategy, the 2021-2027 multiannual financial framework and NextGenerationEU support a range of initiatives promoting women's labour market participation, work-life balance, care infrastructure, female entrepreneurship and gender balance in education and professions. Dedicated funding also supports civil-society and public institutions tackling gender-based violence.

The Commission developed a methodology to track gender-related spending at the programme level, in collaboration with the European Institute for Gender Equality and informed by the European Court of Auditors' 2021 report on gender mainstreaming in the EU budget.

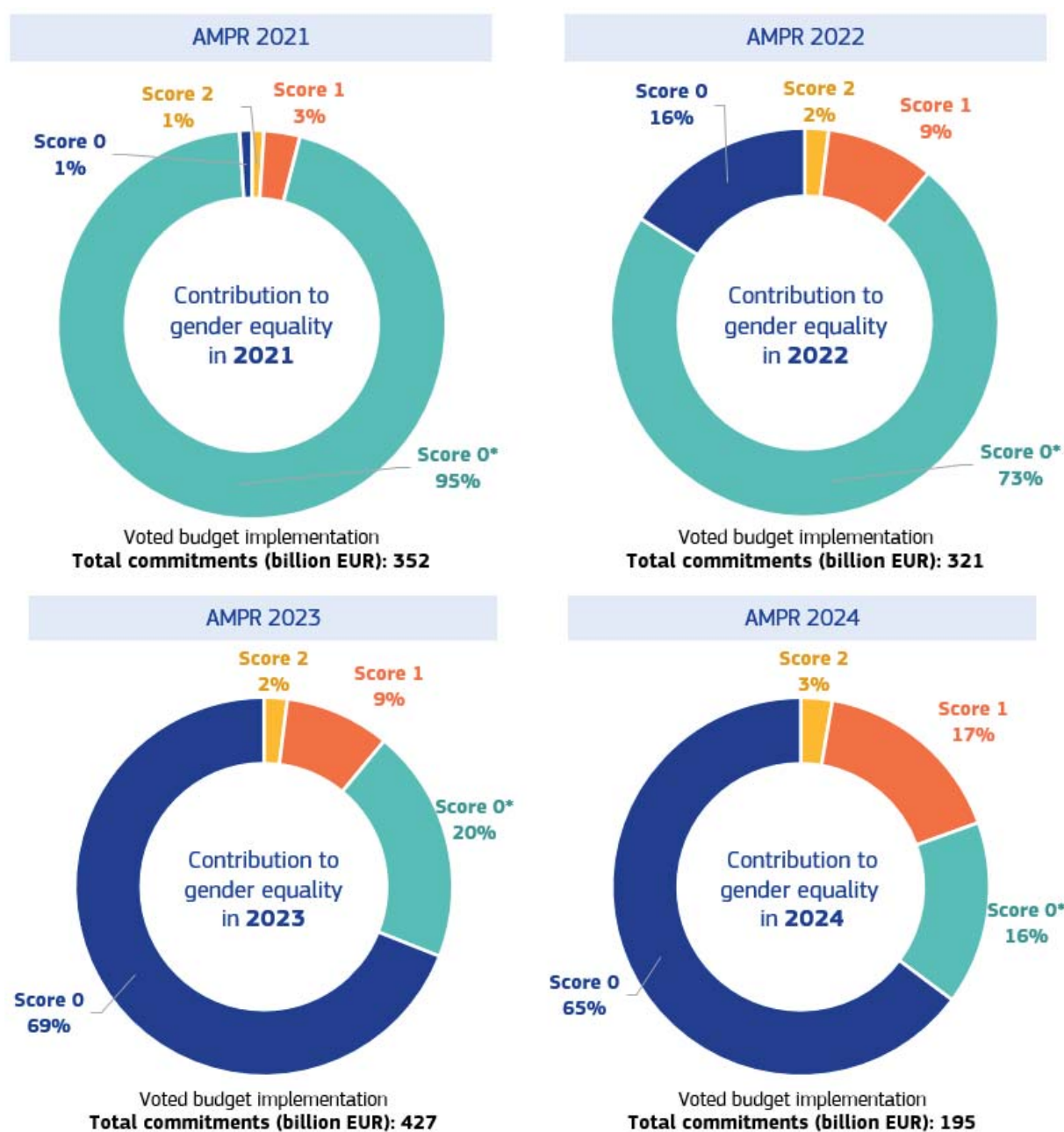
Since the 2023 financial year, the monitoring of gender expenditure has been enhanced with the inclusion of the gender-disaggregated data available per programme in the programme performance statements (Annex 4 to the present report).

The EU budget allocation to gender equality scores, based on the aggregation of the 2024 interventions qualifying for each score, is outlined below. In line with the methodology, a programme may qualify for one or more gender scores based on the objectives pursued by its respective interventions.

- **Score 2:** interventions whose principal objective is to improve gender equality corresponded to 2.7% of the EU budget implemented in 2024 and were included in 13 programmes.
- **Score 1:** interventions that have gender equality as an important and deliberate objective (but not as the main reason for the intervention) corresponded to 16.8% of the EU budget implemented in 2024 and were included in 22 programmes.
- **Score 0*:** interventions that have the potential to contribute to gender equality corresponded to 15.7% of the EU budget implemented in 2024 and were included in 8 programmes.
- **Score 0:** interventions that do not have a significant bearing on gender equality corresponded to 64.8% of the EU budget implemented in 2024 and were included in 45 programmes.

In 2024 19.5% of the EU budget contributed to promoting gender equality (scores 2 and 1), representing a significant increase from previous years. This notable progress underscores the EU's firm commitment to integrating gender mainstreaming into the EU budget, ensuring that budget allocations actively support policies advancing gender equality.

Contribution to gender equality as reported in 2021, 2022, 2023 and 2024



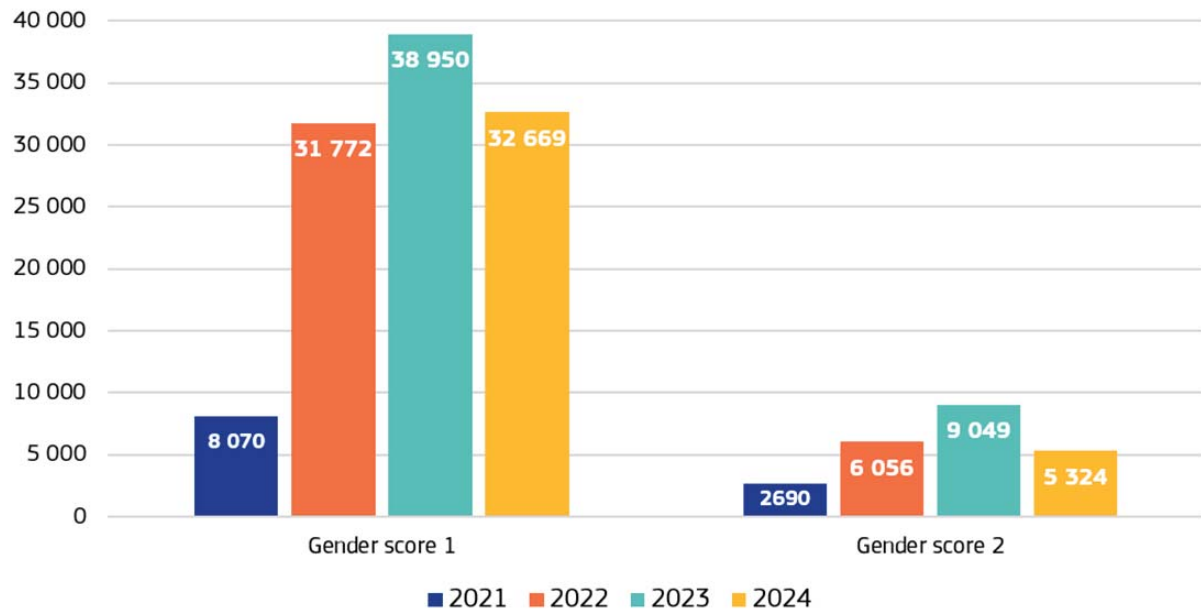
NB: Each graph is based on the percentages reported at the time of the publication of the annual management and performance reports for the 2021, 2022, 2023 and 2024 financial years, respectively.

Source: European Commission.

The 2024 results reflect the progress achieved by various programmes in terms of both implementation and reporting capacity, allowing the capture of the contribution of the EU budget to gender equality at a more granular level. In particular, the sustained reduction in 0* demonstrates the ongoing efforts to refine budget assessments and enhance gender-focused allocations. A key example in 2024 is the common agricultural policy. Following a reassessment of the measures financed by the policy that include a focus on gender equality, in 2024 the EU budget commitments for this programme from 2021 to 2024 were assigned scores of 1 and 0, from the previous 0* score. This adjustment reflects a more accurate recognition of the policy's gender-relevant components and highlights the EU's ongoing efforts to improve how gender considerations are measured within its financial programmes.

In concrete terms, the EU allocated overall EUR 38 billion to projects promoting gender equality in 2024 (gender scores 2 and 1). This figure is lower than the EUR 48 billion reported for 2023, mainly due to the phasing out of the Recovery and Resilience Facility commitments in 2024, which accounted for EUR 8.4 billion under scores 1 and 2 in 2023. While the total expenditure supporting gender equality is lower in 2024, the proportion of funding directed towards gender equality increased.

Contribution to gender scores 1 and 2 for 2021, 2022, 2023 and 2024 (million EUR)



NB: Based on the amounts reported in the annual management performance reports for the 2021, 2022, 2023 and 2024 financial years, respectively.

Source: European Commission.

It is important to note that in 2024, the Ukraine Facility and the Western Balkan Facility entered into force. Given the recent start of their operations, only beginning in the second half of 2024, budgetary commitments under both programmes were attributed a gender score of 0*. Excluding these programmes, the share of the EU budget contributing to gender equality would have shown a further increase to 21.5% in 2024, compared to the reported 19.5%, whereas 0* would have shown a decrease to 6.6%, compared to the reported 15.7%.

2021-2024 aggregate results

Past expenditure is revised annually through a quality review conducted by the Commission departments, incorporating additional information available on the selected projects. This is particularly the case for measures that were assigned a gender score of 0* in previous years. In this context, the reassessment concluded that, over the 2021-2024 period, a total of 12% of the EU budget expenditure contributed to the promotion of gender (gender scores 1 and 2), amounting to a significant EUR 158.4 billion over these four years.

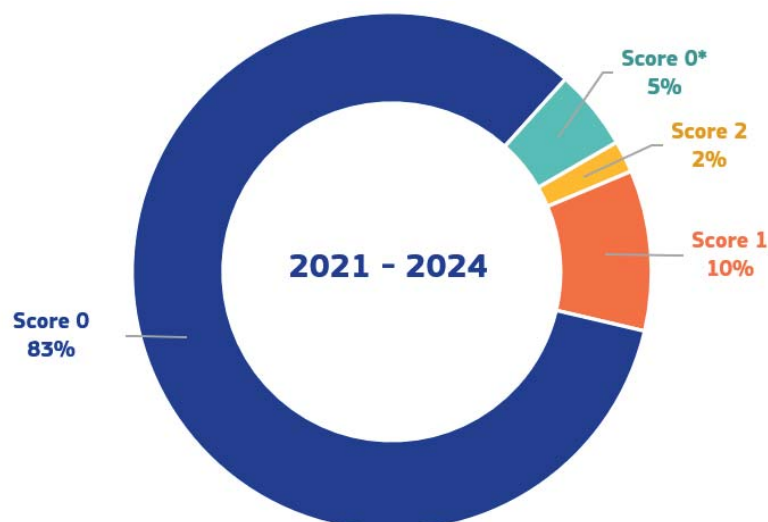
At the same time, the share of EU budget under gender score 0* has steadily declined and now stands at just 5% for the four-year period ⁽⁴²⁾. This reflects the effectiveness of the Commission's ongoing reassessment efforts, which have contributed to a more precise and clearer understanding of the EU

⁽⁴²⁾ 4% without taking into account the Ukraine Facility and the Western Balkan Facility, which were temporarily attributed a 0* give their recent creation.

budget support for gender equality. For the 2021-2024 period, 83% of allocations were assigned a score of 0, due to the systematic reassessment of 0* expenditure from 2021 to 2024.

The financial commitments made over this four-year period had a tangible impact across various domains, including employment, social protection and economic empowerment, reinforcing the EU's role as a global leader in gender equality financing.

Gender scores as a percentage of the total EU budget (2021-2024)



NB: These percentages include the revised figures for 2021, 2022, 2023 and 2024 following the reassessment of score 0* and were aggregated to calculate the overall percentages of the gender scores over the 2021-2024 period.

Source: European Commission.

Gender-disaggregated data

This year, for the second time, the programme performance statements (Annex 4 to this report), which provide detailed performance information at the programme level, were enhanced to include the relevant gender-disaggregated information available for each programme. This includes a wide array of gender-disaggregated data aimed at improving the monitoring of the performance of the programme in relation to gender equality. For some programmes, particularly those under shared and indirect management, the availability of gender-disaggregated data is constrained by the programme regulations and the implementation agreements.

Looking ahead to the post-2027 multiannual financial framework, the co-legislators have agreed to include in the Financial Regulation ⁽⁴³⁾ a requirement to ensure that all data collected in relation to performance indicators of the financial programmes will be gender-disaggregated where appropriate. This is a significant step towards improving gender equality monitoring in EU programmes and complements the updated better regulation guidelines, which will ensure that future *ex ante* impact assessments of all relevant spending programmes duly consider the effects on gender equality from the start.

⁽⁴³⁾ Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2024/2509 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 September 2024 on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union, OJ L, 2024/2509, 26.9.2024, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2024/2509/oj>.

Examples of gender-disaggregated data reported in the programme performance statements (Annex 4 to this report)

- Under **the Recovery and Resilience Facility**, participants in education and training supported by the Recovery and Resilience Facility amounted to a total of 4.29 million across all age groups in 2024. Of this total, 2.37 million were female, 1.92 million were male and 499 were non-binary. Moreover, the number of young people aged 15–29 receiving support in 2024 amounted to 969 960 were male, 848 584 were female and 204 were non-binary.
- Under **Horizon Europe**, as of January 2024, women project coordinators represented 31% of Horizon Europe projects. This reflects a notable increase in the share of women-led consortia, up from 23% for Horizon 2020. Moreover, women make up 51.4% of participants in Horizon Europe boards and expert groups, with 74 women (52.9%) in official expert groups and 38 women (48.7%) in special groups. Similarly, among researchers in Horizon Europe, 37.8% are women (75 114), 62.1% are men (123 472), and 0.1% (189) are non-binary.
- Under **Erasmus**, in 2023, 60% of the provided mobility opportunities were taken up by women. The gender distribution varied depending on the field of education: adult education had the highest percentage of women (70%), followed by school education (67%), higher education (61%), youth education (58%) and vocational education and training (54%).
- Under the **common agricultural policy**, the total number of farmers receiving direct support (provisional data for 2024) was 5 713 335. This included 1 796 858 women (31.45%), 3 612 428 men (63.23%) and 1 841 non-binary individuals (0.03%), 229 833 non-prevalence responses ⁽⁴⁴⁾ (4.02%) and 72 232 prefer-not-to-say responses (1.26%).
- Under the **Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance**, 628 418 people directly benefitted from EU-supported interventions that aim to reduce social and economic inequality. Available sex-disaggregated data indicates that at least 202 532 were female and 191 068 were male ⁽⁴⁵⁾.
- Under the **humanitarian aid programme**, the percentage of beneficiaries disaggregated by gender in 2024 is as follows: 48% female, 39% male, and 13% unknown ⁽⁴⁶⁾.

Digital tracking

The digital transition is a core element of the Commission's competitiveness agenda. Beyond enhancing EU competitiveness, including leadership in artificial intelligence innovation, it serves as a vital catalyst for prosperity, economic recovery and resilience while enabling innovative solutions to tackle global challenges.

In 2021, the Commission presented its vision for the EU's digital transformation by 2030, with a digital compass for the EU's Digital Decade that evolves around four digital dimensions:

- skills
- secure and sustainable digital infrastructure
- digital transformation of businesses and
- digitalisation of public services.

⁽⁴⁴⁾ For cases where a perfect gender balance in the decision-making power occurs between different genders

⁽⁴⁵⁾ The reported values are aggregates of data collected at the intervention level. Some of these datasets included sex-disaggregated information, while others did not. As a result, the sum of male and female beneficiaries does not match the overall total.

⁽⁴⁶⁾ Number of beneficiaries by age and sex reached by humanitarian aid operations available in EVA actions operational data (such data reflect information encoded in Fiche Opérationnelle and in the European Hospital and Healthcare Federation).

On 14 December 2022, the co-legislators adopted the Digital Decade policy programme, taking up the digital compass and its vision, setting quantitative EU targets for the four cardinal points to be reached by 2030, and establishing a cooperation mechanism with the Member States to progress towards these targets.



Skills

Information and communication technology

specialist: 20 million specialists and gender balance.

Basic digital skills: at least 80% of the population.



Digital transformation of businesses

Technology uptake: 75% of EU companies using cloud / artificial intelligence / big data.

Innovators: grow scale-ups and finance to double the number of EU unicorns.

Late adopters: more than 90% of small and medium-sized enterprises reach at least a basic level of digital intensity.



Secure and sustainable digital infrastructure

Connectivity: gigabit speed for everyone, 5G everywhere.

Cutting-edge semiconductors: double the EU share in global production.

Data – edge and cloud: 10 000 climate-neutral, highly secure edge nodes.

Computing: first computer with quantum acceleration.



Digitalisation of public services

Key public services: 100% online.

e-health: 100% of citizens having access to medical records.

Digital identity: 80% of citizens using digital identification.

Achievements

Almost 16.2 million dwellings gained access to very-high-capacity internet networks, including 5G networks and gigabit speed, through measures under the **Recovery and Resilience Facility** by the end of 2024.

First exascale supercomputer (one quintillion calculations per second) was launched in Europe to support researchers, industry and artificial intelligence development. Jedi – the first module of the Jupiter exascale supercomputer – ranked first on the list of the world's top 500 greenest supercomputers in June 2024.

Under the Connecting Europe Facility, 5 000 terabits per second of additional capacity were created in 2024 by deployed backbone networks, including submarine cables.

Under the space programme, 4 billion Galileo-enabled devices were in use in 2024. The positioning accuracy performance of Galileo is three times better when compared to other global navigation satellite systems, with excellent availability.

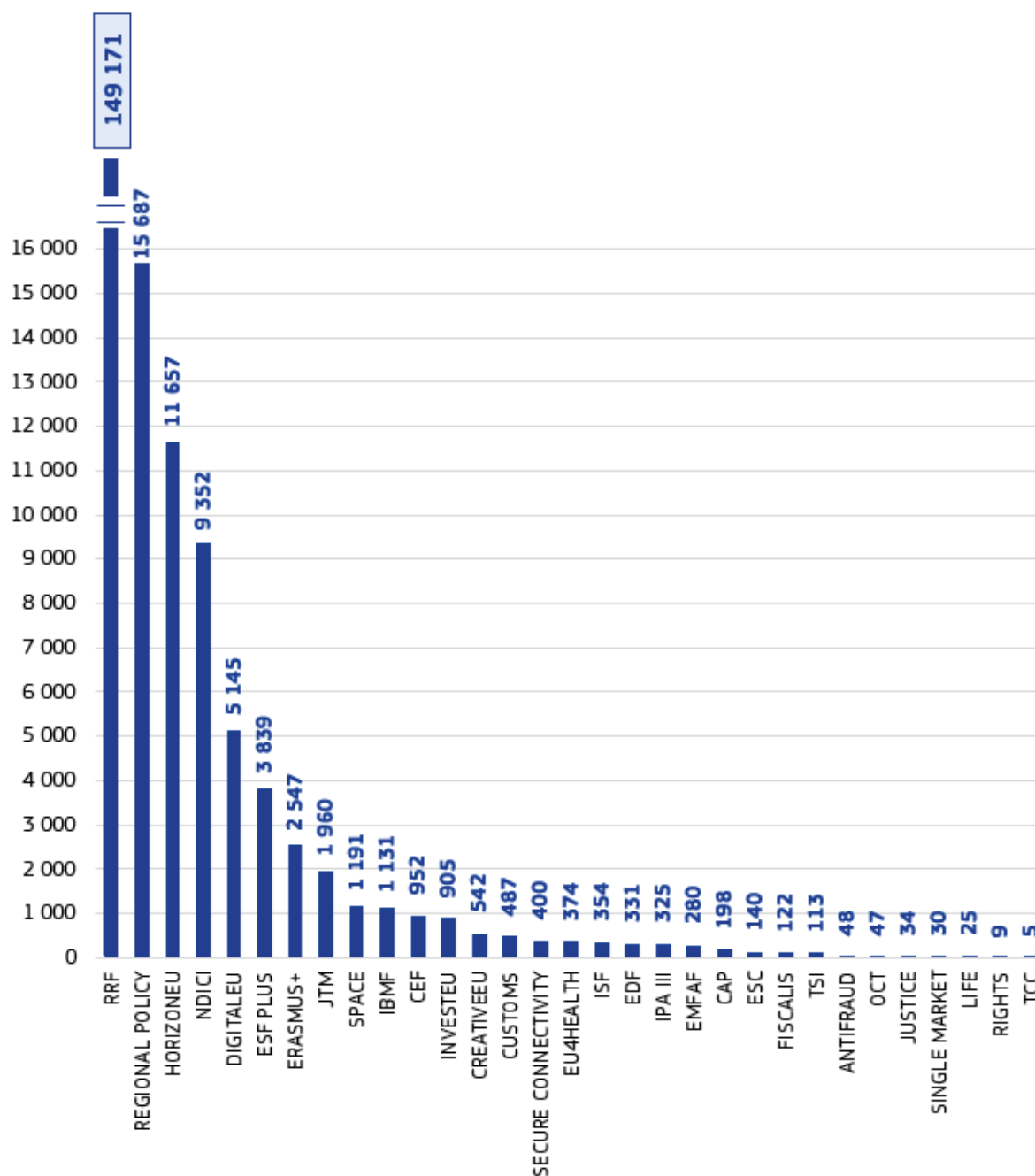
How much do we spend?

The 2025 stocktaking exercise to estimate EU spending on the digital transition was conducted for the implementation of the 2021-2027 EU budget over the 2021-2024 period. The findings show that the EU budget, including NextGenerationEU, is channelling significant contributions to all of the digital transition's key dimensions. The Commission's ambition is to build on the findings to develop a comprehensive and robust methodology for measuring the EU budget's overall contribution to the digital transition across all programmes.

Based on the results of the stocktaking exercise, **EUR 208.1 billion of the EU budget (including NextGenerationEU) was dedicated to the digital transition between 2021 and 2024, representing almost 15.1% of the total EU budget for that period** ⁽⁴⁷⁾. A significant share of this amount came from the Recovery and Resilience Facility, which dedicated EUR 149 billion towards the digital transition during the same period.

⁽⁴⁷⁾ Given that a fully-fledged tracking methodology for the digital contributions of the EU budget has not yet been established, any aggregation of the contributions of individual programmes at this stage should be interpreted with caution. This is because the methodologies employed by individual spending programmes may not be strictly comparable. Despite this, such aggregation can still provide a general estimate of the total digital contribution from the EU budget.

Estimated contributions to the digital transition of the EU budget programmes, in 2021-2024



(*) Including NextGenerationEU, in EUR billion.

NB: For readability purposes, the scale is broken, as the Recovery and Resilience Facility provides more than 10 times more support to the digital transition than the next most contributing programme. The abbreviations used stand for: **RRF** – Recovery and Resilience Facility;

HORIZONEU – Horizon Europe; **NDICI** – Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument – Global Europe;

DIGITALEU – digital Europe programme; **ESF PLUS** – European Social Fund Plus; **JTM** – Just Transition Mechanism; **SPACE** – EU space

programme; **CEF** – Connecting Europe Facility; **IPA III** – Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance III; **IBMF** – Integrated Border

Management Fund; **ISF** – Internal Security Fund; **CREATIVEEU** – Creative Europe programme; **CAP** – common agricultural policy;

EMFAF – European Maritime, Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund; **SECURE CONNECTIVITY** – EU secure connectivity programme; **TSI** –

Technical Support Instrument; **ESC** – European Solidarity Corps; **OCT** – Decision on the Overseas Association, including Greenland;

RIGHTS – citizens, equality, rights and values programme; **TCC** – Turkish Cypriot community; **EDF** – European Defence Fund.

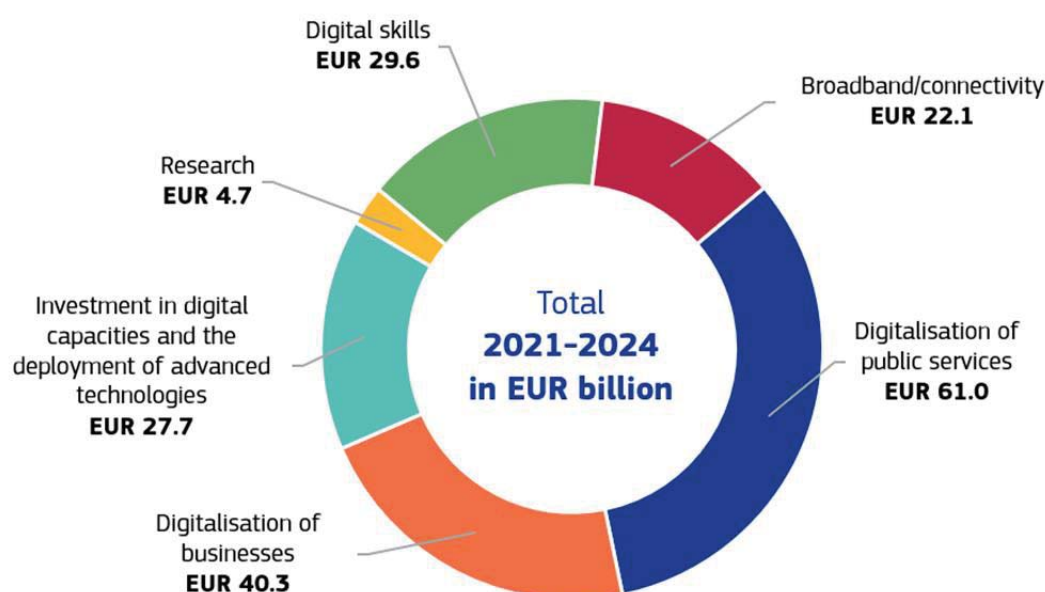
Source: European Commission.

Almost all EU budget programmes contribute to the digital transition. However, due to data limitations, digital-related expenditure for the 2021-2024 period could only be tracked for 31 out of the 53

spending programmes implemented in 2024. The Ukraine Facility and the Reform and Growth Facility for the Western Balkans entered into force in 2024. As the implementation of operations under these two programmes only began in the second half of the year, budgetary commitments contributing to the digital transition were not included in this year's reporting exercise.

In terms of thematic concentration, 89% of the reported digital expenditure this year could be attributed to the four categories of the digital compass. Significant efforts are being made to support the digitalisation of public services (in particular government ICT solutions, e-services and applications, and the digitalisation of healthcare) and businesses, with strong support directed towards small and medium-sized enterprises. More information is provided in the following sections.

Estimated contributions to the digital transition by key digital dimensions (2021-2024) (*)



(*) Including NextGenerationEU, in billion EUR.

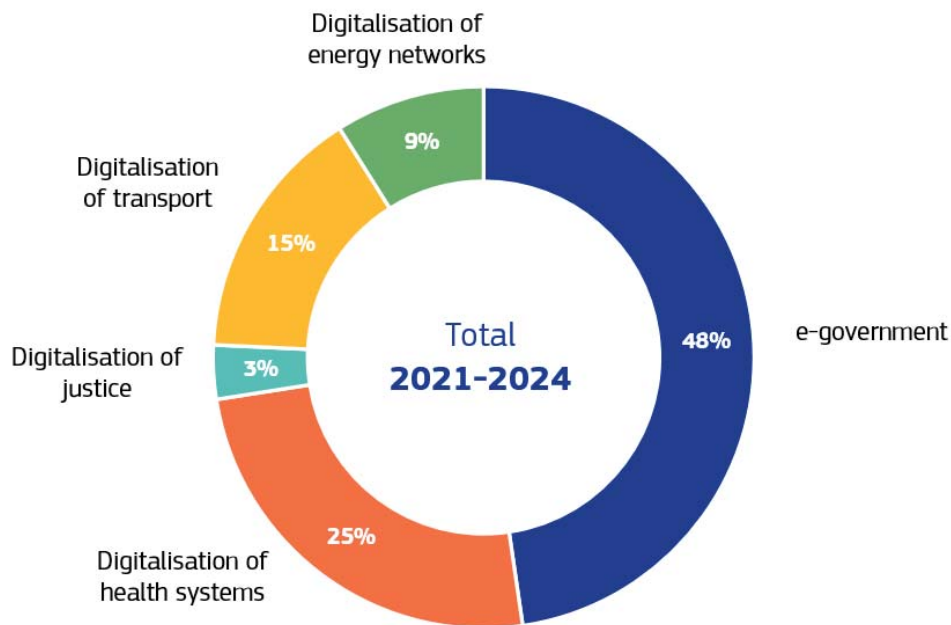
NB: Not all programmes could be taken into account due to methodological limitations. Approximately 89% of the reported expenditure could be disaggregated into the above categories.

Source: European Commission, based on the 2025 stocktaking exercise.

Digitalisation of businesses and public services

The EU budget (including NextGenerationEU) is making a significant contribution to the digitalisation of the private and public sectors. Estimates for 2021 to 2024 are that EUR 61.0 billion was dedicated to the support of the EU budget to e-government (including the digitalisation of health and justice systems) and EUR 40.3 billion for the support of the digitalisation of businesses. The Recovery and Resilience Facility, the European Regional Development Fund and the Cohesion Fund are important contributors to this investment. From 2021 to 2024, 11.6% of the amounts from the European Regional Development Fund and the Cohesion Fund were used to finance interventions that advance the digital transition, in particular supporting small and medium-sized enterprises and public services.

Estimated contributions of the EU budget to the digitalisation of public services (2021-2024) (*)



(*) Including NextGenerationEU.

NB: These amounts are the result of the stocktaking exercise conducted for 2021 to 2024 and exclude the external action programmes and the common agricultural policy due to methodological limitations.

Source: European Commission, based on the 2025 stocktaking exercise.

Supporting the development and deployment of digital technologies and research

From 2021 to 2024, estimates indicate that the EU contributed EUR 27.7 billion to investment in digital capacities and the deployment of advanced technologies, and EUR 4.7 billion to research. These numbers are lower than those reported during the last reporting cycles, mainly because of an updated methodology applied under Horizon Europe. These figures are not yet final and will be updated as more information from funded projects becomes available.

The main contributing programmes towards investment in digital capacities and the deployment of advanced technologies, and research are the Recovery and Resilience Facility, Horizon Europe, the EU space programme, the European Regional Development Fund, the Cohesion Fund, the Just Transition Mechanism and the Digital Europe programme.

Investing in digital skills

From 2021 to 2024, the EU budget, including NextGenerationEU, made a significant contribution to both basic and advanced digital skills, with an estimated investment totalling EUR 29.6 billion. In addition to supporting the development of digital skills at all levels, along with information technology services and applications for digital skills and digital inclusion, particular emphasis was placed on supporting young people. The main programmes contributing to this dimension are the Recovery and Resilience Facility (EUR 23.6 billion) and the European Social Fund Plus (EUR 3.8 billion), providing support to youth employment and the socioeconomic integration of young people.

Enhancing digital connectivity

The EU budget, including NextGenerationEU, is contributing to enhancing digital connectivity, which will give citizens and businesses new opportunities to benefit fully from the digital single market and accelerate economic growth. Between 2021 and 2024, investment in digital connectivity, including investment in very-high-capacity broadband networks and 5G network coverage, is estimated to have reached EUR 22.1 billion. The main programmes contributing are the Recovery and Resilience Facility (EUR 13.3 billion), the cohesion policy funds (EUR 1.2 billion) and the Connecting Europe Facility.

The common agricultural policy plays a key role in improving broadband access in rural areas by supporting broadband infrastructure and improved access to e-government services. The first results on the implementation of the common agricultural policy show that almost 8% of the rural population has benefited from improved access to services and infrastructure through support from the programme.

Under the Connecting Europe Facility, 5 000 terabits per second of additional capacity were created by deployed backbone networks, including submarine cables. A total of EUR 500 million was awarded to 43 projects to support the digitalisation of the trans-European transport network, notably through support for the European Railway Traffic Management System technology. The programme also aims to modernise energy grids and deploy digital connectivity infrastructure to support the EU's digital transition. Specifically, the programme will support the deployment of 5G systems and high-capacity digital networks to transform various sectors, including healthcare, education and manufacturing. This will enhance digital readiness, competitiveness and inclusiveness, particularly in the outermost regions, and contribute to the EU's economic recovery and growth.

The European Investment Fund allocated EUR 3.64 billion to support small and medium-sized enterprises in innovation and digitalisation through a dedicated guarantee supported by InvestEU. This guarantee supports various digitalisation efforts, including innovative business models and digital skills acquisition. Additionally, the fund's equity product for small and medium-sized enterprises and research includes a sub-product that specifically supports investment in digital, cultural and creative industry solutions.

The twin transition: exploiting synergies

The twin green and digital transitions are deeply interconnected, offering the potential to create significant synergies. The EU budget is instrumental in this process, acting as a key enabler in unlocking these synergies. It provides the necessary financial support for initiatives that align with the objectives of both transitions, thereby ensuring that the potential benefits can be fully realised. The table below provides illustrative examples of some of the synergies that are being achieved with the support of the EU budget.

- Financed by Horizon Europe, **the TwinPolitics project explores the socio-technical challenges of creating a digital twin of the ocean to aid in climate change mitigation and ocean data management.** By addressing development, access and legal challenges, the project aims to enhance the use of digital twins of the ocean in national and international contexts. This initiative supports informed decision-making to protect marine environments.
- Supporting **smart grids**, such as those under the Connecting Europe Facility energy strand, contributes to sustainable development by the **integration of energy from renewable sources** and the development of smart energy grids. An example is the completion of one of the internal lines that is part of the Finland–Sweden interconnection, which aims at increasing the transmission capacity between the Member States.
- In addition, the **cohesion policy funds** earmarked EUR 5 billion for the investments in **smart energy systems** through the entire 2021-2027 programming period, of which **EUR 1.44 billion** have been allocated to selected projects that should result in an **additional 1.94 million end users connected** to the smart energy systems.
- As part of the EU's broader efforts to **modernise and innovate agricultural practices and rural development** under the common agricultural policy, the support for the implementation of digital technologies, such as precision farming, contributes to the EU's goal for a more **sustainable agricultural sector**.
- **The EU's Galileo satellite system** supports technologies that are key enablers for smart and sustainable transport, and in particular for connected and autonomous driving. In road transport, using navigation and positioning services from Galileo leads to a range of innovative applications that enable smart mobility and multi-mode transport digitalisation with optimised travel routes, in turn allowing for a reduction of carbon dioxide emissions. In air transport, using the European Geostationary Navigation Overlay Service for the efficient definition of flight routes helps reduce fuel consumption and carbon dioxide emissions.

The EU budget and the sustainable development goals

What do we do?

The United Nations' 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, with its 17 sustainable development goals and 169 targets, has given new impetus to global efforts to achieve sustainable development. The EU has played an important role in shaping the agenda, through public consultations, dialogue with partners and in-depth research. The EU is committed to playing an active role to maximise progress towards the sustainable development goals, as outlined, for example, in the Commission communication 'Next steps for a sustainable European future', in the Commission staff working document 'Delivering on the UN's Sustainable Development Goals – A comprehensive approach' and recently in the first-ever EU voluntary review on progress in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, adopted on 15 May 2023. Moreover, Eurostat publishes a report annually on monitoring progress towards the UN sustainable development goals in an EU context.

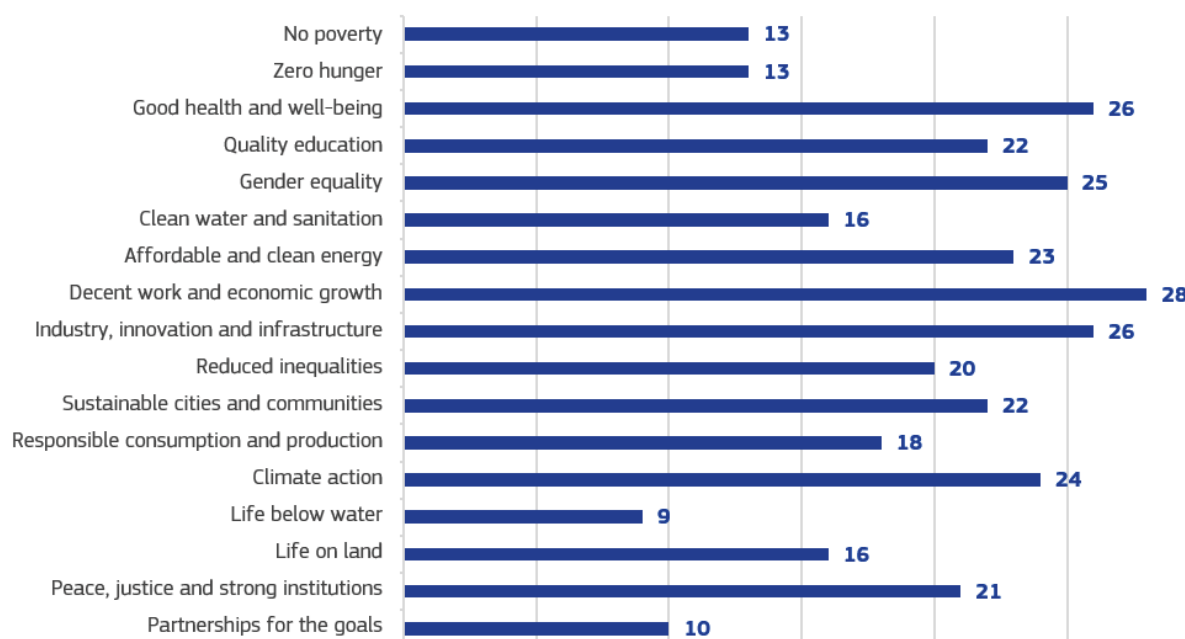
The von der Leyen Commission has maintained a consistent focus on the UN sustainable development goals throughout its work. Since 2020, several major policy initiatives have been introduced, including the European Green Deal, the Climate Law, and the 2023 Green Deal industrial plan. More recent measures include the clean industrial deal, the 2025 Annual Sustainable Growth Survey, the updated European skills agenda, and the competitiveness compass.

In line with the 2021 Commission communication on the better regulation agenda and the objectives of the current multiannual financial framework, the Commission further strengthened the integration of the sustainable development goals into the EU's policy and budgetary cycle. Overall, this mainstreaming ensures that all major legislative and financial proposals are assessed for their contribution to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, thereby reinforcing the EU's commitment to sustainability, strategic foresight and evidence-based policymaking.

To this end, since 2021 the Commission has been systematically identifying the relevant sustainable development goals for each proposal and examining how the initiative supports their achievement. In addition, links to the sustainable development goals will be included throughout evaluations and impact assessments.

At the EU level, sustainable development challenges are addressed through policies and regulatory instruments. As far as the former are concerned, the EU budget, through its spending programmes, provides a significant contribution to sustainable development by complementing national budgets, in line with the principle of subsidiarity. In doing so, the design and implementation of the EU spending programmes aim to deliver on the objectives in each policy field, while promoting sustainability through the initiatives and interventions of the relevant programmes in a connected and consistent way. In particular, 47 out of 52 of the 2021-2027 EU spending programmes contributed towards at least one sustainable development goal in 2024.

Number of 2021-2027 programmes contributing to individual sustainable development goals in 2024



Source: European Commission.

In light of the cross-cutting nature of the sustainable development goals, and to ensure a holistic approach in addressing sustainable development, 99% of the EU budget contributes to sustainable development goals. In addition, the vast majority of the 2021-2027 programmes (42 out of 52) are designed to address multiple sustainable development goals through their policy measures. In the programme performance statements' (Annex 4 to this report), the Commission presents the sustainable development goals to which each EU funding programme contributes, along with examples of their contribution. The infographic below provides, in a non-exhaustive manner, examples illustrating how EU programmes contribute to the sustainable development goals.

The 2023 publication *EU voluntary review on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*, together with *Sustainable Development in the European Union – Monitoring report on progress towards the SDGs in an EU context – 2024 edition*, reaffirmed the **EU budget as a key driver for delivering substantial progress on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development** ⁽⁴⁸⁾. Looking ahead, the EU has reinforced its commitment to systematically integrate and report on the implementation of the sustainable development goals across all relevant EU programmes, ensuring policy coherence and sustained momentum towards achieving all goals.

⁽⁴⁸⁾ European Commission, *EU voluntary review on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*, Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg, 2023, <https://commission.europa.eu/system/files/2023-06/SDG-Report-WEB.pdf> and European Commission: Eurostat, *Sustainable Development in the European Union – Monitoring report on progress towards the SDGs in an EU context – 2024 edition*, Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg, 2024, <https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2785/98370>.



In Czechia, the **European Social Fund Plus** is helping people in need to rebuild their lives, starting with a roof over their head. Through the social housing initiative, individuals and families in need can access dedicated housing points in the city of Ostrava, while social workers make regular visits to the new residents to ensure stability. This sustained support has a high success rate, with over 85% of participants maintaining their housing stability. The city's proactive approach has already changed many lives, with 59 households benefiting from housing and a renewed sense of opportunity.



In Yemen, **EU humanitarian funding** averted a serious food security crisis and none of the country's districts experienced famine throughout 2024. EUR 30 million supported the resumption of the World Food Programme's emergency assistance in areas controlled by the de facto authorities after nearly one year of pause in general food distributions. In this context of limited resources, the Cash Consortium of Yemen remained a key EU partner. More than half a million people were able to meet their food and basic needs thanks to the multipurpose cash assistance provided by the consortium.



The **EU4health programme** delivered measures in 2024 to implement the healthier together initiative, Europe's beating cancer plan and mental health initiatives, and to address selected health risk factors and health determinants. The programme also funded measures that are producing guidance to improve healthcare access.



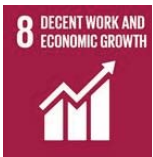
Financed by **Erasmus+**, the 'Share the music for inclusive learning in education' project supported teachers by providing a practical framework and showcasing best practices for managing inclusion and diversity in education. Its primary goal is to offer pre-primary and primary school teachers new knowledge, key competencies and ready-to-use educational materials to effectively use music as a pedagogical tool for inclusive education. Additionally, the project aims to help teachers develop their social and digital skills through its digital repository and online training resources.



In 2024, under the **Ukraine Facility**, Ukraine adopted the new demographic development strategy up to 2040. The new law on the corporate governance of state-owned enterprises, and the national strategy for mining action up to 2033 also include measures that encourage gender equality.



By the end of 2024, the **Recovery and Resilience Facility** had supported the construction or reconstruction of at least 517 km of the public water supply network in Croatia.

	In Poland, the Just Transition Fund helped reduce energy bills and allowed citizens to benefit from stable, ecological and affordable energy sources. The fund invested in Western Małopolska in the energy efficiency of public buildings and of housing, including by supporting the installation of home insulation, rooftop solar installations and heat pumps. The fund invested EUR 2.4 billion in Silesia and Western Małopolska.		Under the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance, in the area of employment and social inclusion, 21 300 people (out of which 10 870 were women) participated in the youth guarantee scheme in North Macedonia in 2024. With 8 152 people having a successful and timely result, for example 6 672 were employed within four months upon entry, and 1 480 participating in one of the active programmes and measures, the success of the youth guarantee scheme in 2024 rose to 38.2%. The operational plan for active employment programmes and measures and labour market services, and the youth guarantee scheme were implemented, covering 11 194 people, especially young people. 47.4% of the beneficiaries of active employment measures were women, 1.5% were people with disabilities, 67.7% were young people and 4.4% were Roma.
	Through Horizon Europe, the European partnership on innovative small and medium-sized enterprises helps innovative businesses increase their research and innovation capacity and productivity and successfully embed themselves in global value chains and new markets.		Under the Asylum Migration and Integration Fund, phase 7 of the regional development and protection programme for North Africa is running from 2025 to 2028 with a budget (EU grant amount maximum) of EUR 37.5 million. The main objective of the proposed action is to support non-EU countries in North Africa and across the Atlantic and Mediterranean migration route to consolidate their migration and asylum systems and build their capacity to provide adequate reception, protection and durable solutions for vulnerable migrants, asylum seekers and refugees.
	The LIFE programme SeedNEB project applied solutions from the new European Bauhaus and nature-based solutions in three municipalities: Dunaújváros, Hungary; Potenza, Italy and Lorquí, Spain. The project will demonstrate urban strategies and on-site interventions based on nature such as green roofs and facades. These strategies and interventions can foster biodiversity, reduce the impact of heat waves and improve the well-being of their residents.		By the end of 2024, the Recovery and Resilience Facility supported Malta in adopting construction industry standards to reduce waste and improve its treatment according to the waste hierarchy.

	The Innovation Fund is designed to answer this goal and take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts. The Grey2Green-II project will install a 200 MW electrolyser for the production of renewable hydrogen. Equally, the eMETHANOLxWSolution – a next-generation tanker vessel powered by e-methanol and wind-assisted propulsion – aims to contribute to the decarbonisation of the maritime industry by demonstrating an innovative combination of foldable suction sails and a dual-fuel engine for a new hybrid tanker vessel.		Regional fisheries management organisations promote the conservation and sustainable use of the oceans, seas and marine resources by improving management measures adopted following scientific advice and by promoting healthy tuna stocks in the Atlantic and Indian Oceans, and through the governance framework established by sustainable fisheries partnership agreements with a number of non-EU countries.
	The European Regional Development Fund planned EUR 9.5 billion to support this goal. For instance, project ARIEM+ aims to support regions in northern Portugal and Spain where wildfires in the last five years have devastated nearly one million hectares of land. Managed from an emergency centre in the Galicia region, in collaboration with the Castilla and León region and the North of Portugal, the project has created an emergency plan to prevent and respond to major disasters such as floods, heavy storms and wildfires. The project aims to benefit around 600 000 people. Through coordinated communications, training and new technology equipment, Spain and Portugal will now be able to join forces when an emergency strikes. The cohesion policy funds provided 75% of the EUR 4 million ARIEM+ budget, while the rest was funded by the regions of Galicia, Castilla and León and the North of Portugal.		The Common Foreign and Security Policy measures contribute to the preservation of peace, conflict prevention, strengthening of international security, consolidating and supporting democracy, the rule of law and human rights by advising and building capacity on security sector reforms, the rule of law and border management, by supporting mediation and conflict resolution initiatives or by supporting the universalisation and effective implementation of international treaties and conventions addressing the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction or conventional weapons.
	The EU Space programme, in particular via Copernicus services, has developed numerous partnerships at the global, regional, national and local levels with institutional, non-governmental and private stakeholders.		

4. Strategic technologies for Europe platform

Introduction

The strategic technologies for Europe platform (STEP) ⁽⁴⁹⁾ was established by the EU as part of its response to the **urgent need to underpin its technological leadership and enhance its resilience in strategic sectors**.

The platform was set up to steer EU financial resources towards achieving the following two objectives (see Article 2 of the [STEP regulation](#)).

1. Support the **development or manufacturing of critical technologies** throughout the EU, or safeguard and strengthen their respective value chains, in the following sectors: digital and deep-innovation technologies, clean and resource-efficient technologies and biotechnologies.
2. Address **shortages in labour and skills** across these strategic industries, ensuring Europe has the workforce necessary for innovation and production.

Given the tight budget outlook, STEP operates according to a novel approach by reorienting resources towards STEP-relevant investment from 11 existing EU programmes, including:

- five programmes directly managed by the Commission for the internal market (Horizon Europe, the Innovation Fund, the European Defence Fund, the digital Europe programme and EU4health);
- five programmes implemented by Member States but still funded by the EU through national envelopes (the European Regional Development Fund, the Cohesion Fund, the Just Transition Fund, the European Social Fund Plus and the Recovery and Resilience Facility);
- one programme (InvestEU) implemented by the Commission's partners (e.g. the European Investment Bank, other national development banks).

STEP also came with a budgetary reinforcement of EUR 1.5 billion specifically for STEP-related projects to be supported by the European Defence Fund.

The main implementation tool of STEP is the reprogramming of the mentioned EU funding programmes, supported in some cases by financial incentives. These include specific measures to encourage Member States to reallocate cohesion policy resources to STEP priorities/objectives. Article 19 of the STEP Regulation also permitted a 6% increase in Recovery and Resilience Facility transfers to InvestEU Member State compartments if these are destined to fund STEP-relevant projects.

When it comes to the five funds directly managed by the Commission (i.e. 'direct management') in the remit of STEP, the STEP Regulation introduced a new quality label, the **STEP (Sovereignty) Seal**. This is to be awarded by the Commission to high-quality projects that align with STEP objectives. Its purpose is to help these projects attract public and private investment, i.e. by facilitating cumulative or alternative funding across EU funding programmes. In 2024 the Commission awarded a total of **162 STEP Seals** across five Innovation Fund topics (149), two Horizon Europe (Pillar II – Space) topics (6) and three EU4health topics (7).

⁽⁴⁹⁾ European Commission: Directorate-General for Budget, 'Strategic technologies for Europe platform', European Commission website, https://strategic-technologies.europa.eu/index_en.

Overview of the 11 STEP programmes



(*) Performance-based programme managed by the European Commission and implemented by the Member States.

(**) Implemented through the European Investment Bank group and other implementing partners – not awarded the seal.

Source: European Commission.

Additionally, the STEP Regulation required the launch of a **STEP (Sovereignty) Portal** ⁽⁵⁰⁾ to simplify project promoters' access to integrated information on EU funding opportunities, thus overcoming the existing fragmentation across multiple websites and platforms. In addition to providing project promoters with information on relevant EU funding opportunities across all EU funding programmes in the STEP remit (i.e. including those published by managing authorities in the Member States), this new Commission hub provides useful information to managing authorities and to private investors, including for example a dashboard of the projects awarded the STEP Seal and an interactive map, along with various guidance and interpretation documents.

Finally, the implementation of STEP is supported outside of the Commission by a **network of STEP national contact points**, appointed by all Member States (except Ireland) and chaired by DG Budget's Director for Revenue and Multiannual Financial Framework.

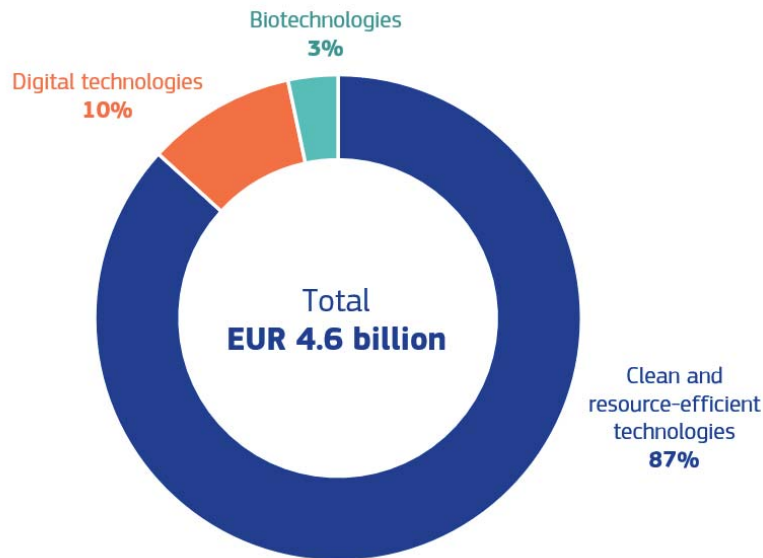
For additional information on the STEP Seal, the STEP Portal and the network of national contact points, please refer to the 2024 annual report on STEP.

⁽⁵⁰⁾ https://strategic-technologies.europa.eu/index_en.

Steering EU funding for strategic technologies

Programmes under direct management

Sectoral breakdown of the resources earmarked for STEP in 2024



Source: European Commission.

Despite being adopted midway through the multiannual financial framework period, STEP was swiftly implemented by the Commission, which reprogrammed EU funds under the five programmes it directly manages to support STEP objectives across the EU. While these programmes pursue broader goals beyond STEP, in 2024 over **EUR 4.6 billion was allocated to calls for proposals** catering to STEP-relevant technologies. By year end, **more than EUR 4.9 billion was awarded** ⁽⁵¹⁾.

In 2024 one call for proposals specifically targeted the development of skills and competencies in STEP-relevant sectors: the *specialised* education programmes in key capacity *areas* under the digital Europe programme.

Driving clean innovation

Clean and resource-efficient technologies are one of the key technological focuses of STEP, including a broad spectrum of innovations, from **renewable technologies to sustainable fuels, carbon capture, and decarbonisation technologies** ⁽⁵²⁾.

⁽⁵¹⁾ This amount corresponds to the total amount awarded to the projects selected for funding under the Innovation Fund, Horizon Europe and EU4health. It may be adjusted upon the signing of the grant agreements, which could modify individual contributions and cannot be reconciled with the EUR 4.6 billion of the introductory paragraph that refers to budget allocated (versus funding awarded) under the STEP calls closed in 2024 under all five directly managed programmes in the STEP remit.

⁽⁵²⁾ A detailed but non-exhaustive list of technologies covered by the STEP Regulation is available in the Communication from the Commission – Guidance note concerning certain provisions of Regulation (EU) 2024/795 establishing the strategic technologies for Europe platform (STEP), C(2024) 3148 final of 8 May 2024, https://strategic-technologies.europa.eu/document/download/e204ce9e-0407-4f03-82f8-6f518ce12886_en?filename=C_2024_3148_F1_COMMUNICATION_FROM_COMMISSION_EN_V6_P1_3408774.PDF.

The Innovation Fund, funded by the emissions trading system, was the largest contributor to STEP objectives. Its 2024 calls resulted in awards for EUR 4.8 billion in grants to 85 projects, covering up to 60% of capital and operating expenses. Supported initiatives included biomass-based chemical production in Slovakia (L1X), large-scale thermal storage in Austria (*ScaleUp*) and carbon dioxide storage in Denmark (*Greensand Future*). Three cross-border projects, including the *Energy Observer 2 hydrogen cargo ship* (France–Netherlands), received EUR 150.6 million. Entities established in Germany and Belgium led in funding received (EUR 661 million and EUR 604 million, respectively), followed by France, Spain and Denmark.

Accelerating digital and deep-tech innovations

STEP support for digital and deep technologies was channelled through Horizon Europe, the digital Europe programme and the European Defence Fund in 2024, with EUR 461 million earmarked in support of **advanced computing, artificial intelligence, cybersecurity, microelectronics and quantum technologies**. By the end of 2024 ⁽⁵³⁾, applications to the calls for topics of the European Defence Fund and of the digital Europe programme had not yet been evaluated ⁽⁵⁴⁾. Six projects under Horizon Europe were selected, receiving EUR 18.2 million in total under Cluster 4 ('Digital, industry and space'). All these projects were promoted by consortia across countries, including participants from non-EU countries such as Iceland and Norway. Entities from France and Germany were the largest recipients of funds (EUR 9.6 million and EUR 4.4 million, respectively). Examples of projects include *the planning urban mobility actions project*, a collaboration between German, French and Italian promoters that addresses EU strategic dependencies in the field of microelectronics for space applications, and *OpticalSpaceLink*, where entities from Belgium, Germany, Greece and France will collaboratively develop components for space-grade optical communications.

Empowering biotechnologies

For biotechnologies – vital for medical innovation and EU health resilience – a budget over EUR 150 million in STEP funding was earmarked through EU4health and the European Defence Fund, in support of a broad spectrum of cutting-edge fields, including **genomics and pharmacogenomics, DNA synthesis, cell and tissue engineering, bioinformatics and nano-biotechnologies**. By the end of 2024, EUR 130 million had been awarded under EU4health to seven projects, in grants that cover between 60% and 80% of their eligible costs. Four projects were multi-beneficiary, including three consortia across countries. Examples include *PharmSD 3.0* in Portugal for the development of a continuous pharmaceutical spray-drying process and *RoboPharma*, an artificial-intelligence- and robotics-driven platform developed by partners from Germany, Estonia, France, Finland and Sweden. Beneficiaries from Germany and Italy led in terms of grants awarded (EUR 47 million and EUR 34 million, respectively), followed by France (EUR 19 million).

Cohesion policy funds

The cohesion policy has emerged as one of the main contributors to STEP objectives and to the competitiveness and resilience of the European economy – especially remarkable given that STEP was launched midway through the multiannual financial framework period. Many Member States had already signalled their intention to allocate cohesion policy funds to STEP even before the formal adoption of the STEP Regulation.

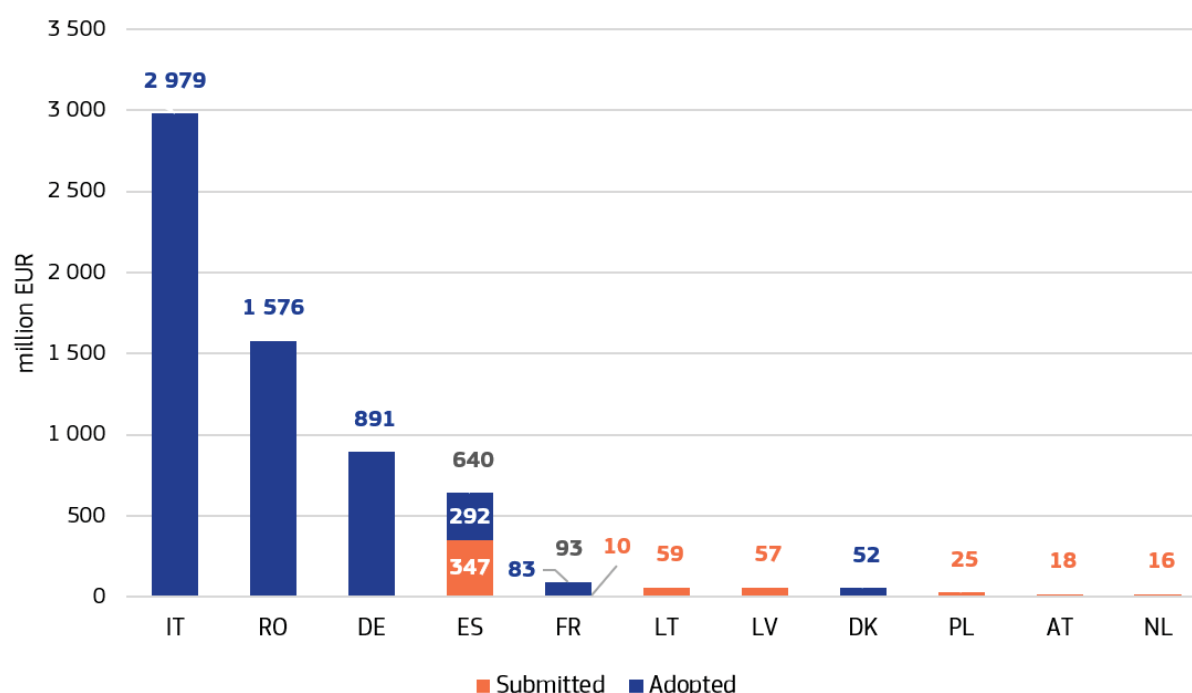
STEP introduced several means of flexibility and incentives for cohesion policy, including the possibility to finance productive investment in enterprises other than small and medium-sized enterprises under the

⁽⁵³⁾ The 2024 annual report covers the calls for proposals closed by 31 December 2024, regardless of whether the results were announced by the end of the year.

⁽⁵⁴⁾ By March 2025, the evaluation was concluded under the three topics of the digital Europe programme and 17 STEP Seals were awarded. They will be reported in the 2025 annual report.

European Regional Development Fund's STEP priorities, **higher co-financing rates of up to 100% at the level of the STEP-dedicated priority** and **30% of the allocation to STEP priorities paid by the Commission as a one-off 30% pre-financing** ⁽⁵⁵⁾. The first wave of programme amendment requests was submitted by the 31 August 2024 deadline to benefit from an exemption from the cohesion midterm review in 2025. By the end of December 2024, **41 amendments from six Member States had been submitted, amounting to EUR 6.4 billion in cohesion policy funds**: EUR 4.8 billion under the European Regional Development Fund, EUR 838 million under the European Social Fund Plus and EUR 764 million under the Just Transition Fund. More amendments are expected in 2025.

Financial volume of STEP amendments per Member State (submitted versus adopted, descending by amount)



NB: Only for programmes with dedicated priorities or known amounts dedicated to the platform based on intervention fields allocations.
Source: Member State reporting.

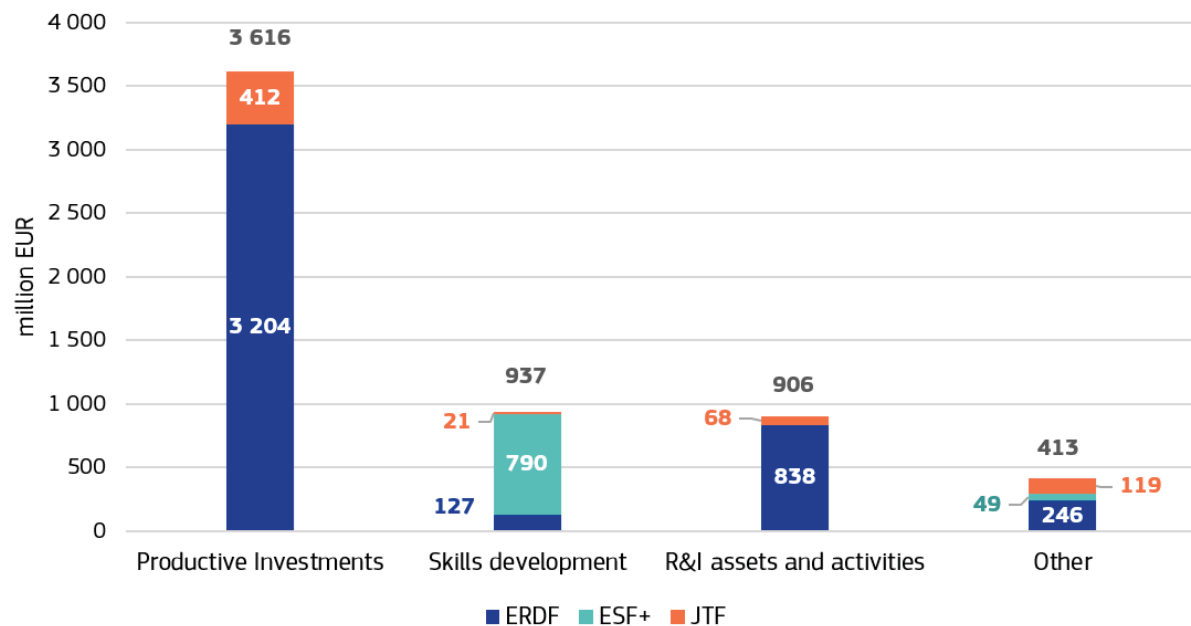
Analysis of the use of the strategic technologies for Europe platform in cohesion policy

As of 31 December 2024, **29 amendments had been approved by the Commission, totalling nearly EUR 5.9 billion**. The majority of STEP-relevant investment was proposed through regional programmes in Germany, Spain, France and Italy – 23 of the 29 approved programmes – amounting to EUR 3.7 billion. The remaining six national programmes accounted for EUR 2.2 billion. Importantly, national-level programming does not preclude eligible regions from benefiting.

Productive investment accounts for around 60% of the redirected allocations, followed by 15% for skills development and research and innovation. Another 10% supports technology transfer, business incubation, start-ups, and services linked to the low-carbon economy and climate resilience. Within productive investment, amounts are rather evenly split across STEP sectors, with significant use of the new European Regional Development Fund's flexibility to finance enterprises other than small and medium-sized enterprises.

⁽⁵⁵⁾ 30% pre-financing was also paid to the whole Just Transition Fund upon the adoption of the STEP Regulation.

Financial volume of STEP amendments by sector (only for programmes with dedicated priority axes or known amounts dedicated to STEP)



Source: European Commission.

Based on the main output and result indicators selected by Member States in the amended programmes – and in line with STEP objectives – it is expected that this investment will benefit approximately 7 200 enterprises and generate around 9 800 jobs within the supported entities.

Call for proposals under cohesion policy and selected projects

Following the approval of the first STEP amendments, Denmark and Germany ⁽⁵⁶⁾ published (and reported to the Commission, as required by the STEP Regulation) four STEP calls by the end of 2024, amounting to EUR 244 million ⁽⁵⁷⁾. Five Member States – Denmark, Germany, Spain, France and Italy – have already selected projects under STEP.

The Recovery and Resilience Facility (the centrepiece of NextGenerationEU) and InvestEU

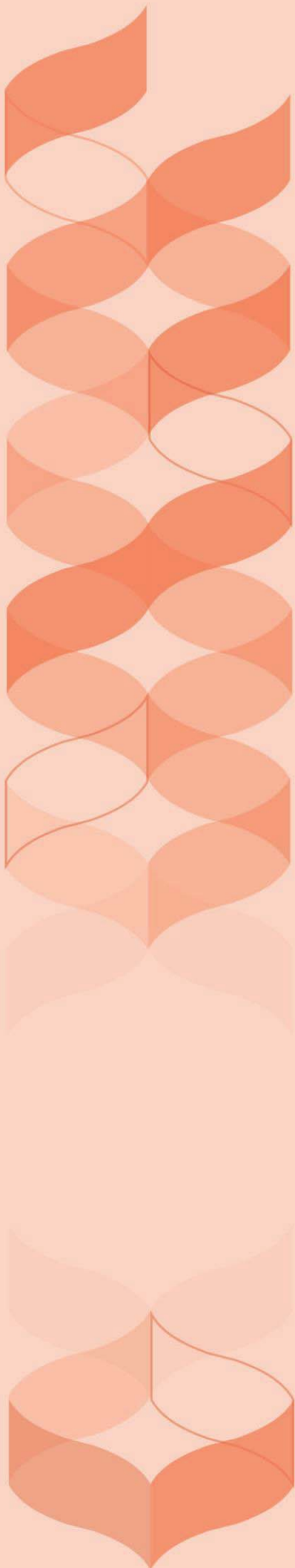
To support uptake of projects awarded a STEP Seal, the Commission issued updated guidance in July 2024 clarifying the process for amending recovery and resilience plans to include STEP objectives. It also maintained regular engagement with STEP national contact points and recovery and resilience plan national authorities, sharing relevant information, including the list of STEP Seals awarded in each country.

As of 31 December 2024, implementation of STEP under the Recovery and Resilience Facility remained limited. In particular, no Member State had amended its recovery and resilience plan to include a STEP priority or support a project awarded a STEP Seal nor had any Member State allocated Recovery and Resilience Facility resources to the InvestEU Member State compartment for STEP-relevant investment ⁽⁵⁸⁾.

⁽⁵⁶⁾ Germany launched a further five calls, not entirely STEP-dedicated, which might result in STEP projects.

⁽⁵⁷⁾ Germany, Italy and Latvia reported further calls at the beginning of 2025.

⁽⁵⁸⁾ Article 19 of the STEP Regulation amends the regulations governing the Recovery and Resilience Facility, allowing Member States to direct up to 6% of their Recovery and Resilience Facility funds towards the InvestEU Member State compartment in support of financial investment in STEP-related technologies, on top of the pre-existing 4% transfer possibility, bringing the total potential transfer to 10%.



Annex 2 – Internal control and financial management

1. Strong tools to manage the EU budget in a complex environment

The European Commission must fulfil its crucial role in shaping and implementing the European Union's policies while making the best possible use of taxpayers' money. It is therefore essential to ensure that EU spending is effective, efficient and economical, while also complying with the applicable rules. The Commission strives to achieve the highest standards of financial management while striking the right balance between a low level of error, prompt payments and reasonable control costs.

1.1. The EU budget: a wide variety of areas, recipients and spending in a complex environment

In 2024 the expenditure managed by the Commission amounted to EUR 179.0 billion (see figures below) ⁽⁵⁹⁾. This encompasses the share of the EU budget managed by the Commission, along with the European Development Fund ⁽⁶⁰⁾ and the EU trust funds. This expenditure was made through more than 296 000 payments, ranging from a few hundred euro per beneficiary (for Erasmus+ mobility grants) to hundreds of millions of euro (for large projects such as the ITER thermonuclear reactor or Galileo and Copernicus, along with budgetary support for partner countries) and even billions of euro (for the Ukraine Facility). This shows that the recipients of EU funds are very diverse and numerous. This expenditure concerns both the 2014–2020 and the 2021–2027 programming periods. In 2024, the number of payments related to the latter started to increase, and is expected to reach significant levels in the years to come.

Relevant expenditure of the EU budget implemented by the Commission in 2024, by policy area

Single market, innovation and digital	Cohesion, resilience and values	Natural resources and environment	Migration and border management	Security and defence	Neighbourhood and the world	European public administration EUR 11.6 billion (6.5%)
EUR 24.2 billion (13.5%)	EUR 62.0 billion (34.6%)	EUR 57.4 billion (32.0%)	EUR 3.5 billion (2.0%)	EUR 0.3 billion (0.2%)	EUR 20.0 billion (11.2%)	
						
More than 4 500 Horizon Europe grants were signed in 2024.	Around 4.4 million enterprises have been supported and almost 63 million people have been covered by improved health services since 2014.	Some 5.7 million beneficiaries were supported by agricultural funds under a variety of different schemes in 2024.	A total of 4 971 non-EU nationals were resettled under EU schemes in 2024.	The European Defence Fund awarded total EU support of EUR 1.12 billion to 61 defence industrial cooperation projects by December 2024.	Humanitarian aid, sustainable development, stability and EU economic and political cooperation with 130 non-EU countries across the world.	

Source: European Commission annual activity reports.

⁽⁵⁹⁾ The amount of the Commission's relevant expenditure corresponds to the payments made in 2024 minus the pre-financing paid out in 2024, plus the pre-financing paid out in previous years and cleared in 2024 (for definitions and more details, see Annex 5). This amount does not include the payments made in the context of the Recovery and Resilience Facility, which are covered in Annex 3.

⁽⁶⁰⁾ It should be noted that the European Development Fund has been incorporated into the EU's general budget for the 2021–2027 multiannual financial framework.

Under the EU budget, shared management with Member States (especially expenditure on cohesion policy and agriculture), whereby Member States' bodies selected projects, distributed funds and managed expenditure in accordance with EU and national law and reported back to the Commission about the results achieved represents the biggest share of the total expenditure. The rest of the budget was implemented either directly by the Commission or indirectly through entrusted entities such as international organisations, the European Investment Bank and national promotional banks. The table that follows describes the three management modes.

2024 expenses by management mode – Recovery and Resilience Facility excluded and included

(excluding Recovery and Resilience Facility)	Examples of programmes/spending	Other actors involved, in cooperation with the Commission	(including Recovery and Resilience Facility)
41%	Direct management		54%
	Funds are implemented by the Commission.		
	Horizon programmes; Connecting Europe Facility; administrative expenditure.	n/a (funding goes directly to the beneficiaries).	
9%	Indirect management		7%
	Funds are implemented in cooperation with entrusted entities.		
50%	Erasmus+; part of development and humanitarian aid; pre-accession assistance; external action	Agencies, joint undertakings, United Nations, World Bank, European Investment Bank, European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, non-EU countries, etc.	40%
	Shared management		
	Funds are implemented in cooperation with Member States’ national and/or regional authorities, which have the first level of responsibility for budget implementation.		
	Agricultural funds; Maritime and Fisheries Fund; European Regional Development Fund; Cohesion Fund; European Social Fund and youth employment initiative; migration, border management and security funds.	Paying agencies for the common agricultural policy: 72; operational programmes for cohesion policy funds: 431, in all Member States for the 2014–2020 programming period (380 for 2021–2027).	

Source: European Commission draft annual accounts 2024 – Statement of financial performance.

In 2024, Russia's war of aggression in Ukraine, emerging international conflicts and global uncertainty at the geopolitical level continued to put pressure on the Commission's capacity to deliver with its already scarce resources. More than ever, this requires effective internal control to ensure the strict application of the principles of economy, efficiency and effectiveness when spending the EU budget.

1.2. A robust governance system underpinning the College's responsibility

As the authorising officer of the Commission, the College of Commissioners is politically responsible for the management of the EU budget and thus accountable for the work of the Commission's departments. The EU budget's governance is built on a clear division of responsibilities between the political and management levels; an independent internal audit supported by the Audit Progress Committee, which includes external experts; an independent accountant; a strong commitment to performance management and compliance with the legal framework; transparency and high ethical standards; and transparent reporting.

The Commission's governance system and chain of accountability are tailored to its unique model of decentralised decision-making in budget implementation. The College of Commissioners delegates the day-to-day operational management to 51 authorising officers by delegation ⁽⁶¹⁾ who manage and steer their departments to deliver on the objectives in their strategic plans, taking into account available resources. Each authorising officer by delegation is accountable for the share of the EU budget implemented in their department.

In their annual activity reports, the authorising officers by delegation report in a transparent way on the performance and results achieved, on the functioning of their internal control systems and on the financial management of their share of the EU budget – taking account of the assurance provided by Member States under shared management and the implementing partners in indirect management. Each annual activity report contains a declaration of assurance. It may be qualified with a reservation if an authorising officer by delegation identifies weaknesses with a significant impact.

The annual management and performance report synthesises the annual results for the EU budget at the Commission level, on the basis of the assurance and reservations contained in all the annual activity reports. This report is part of the Commission's integrated financial and accountability reporting package, which is adopted by the College of Commissioners ⁽⁶²⁾.

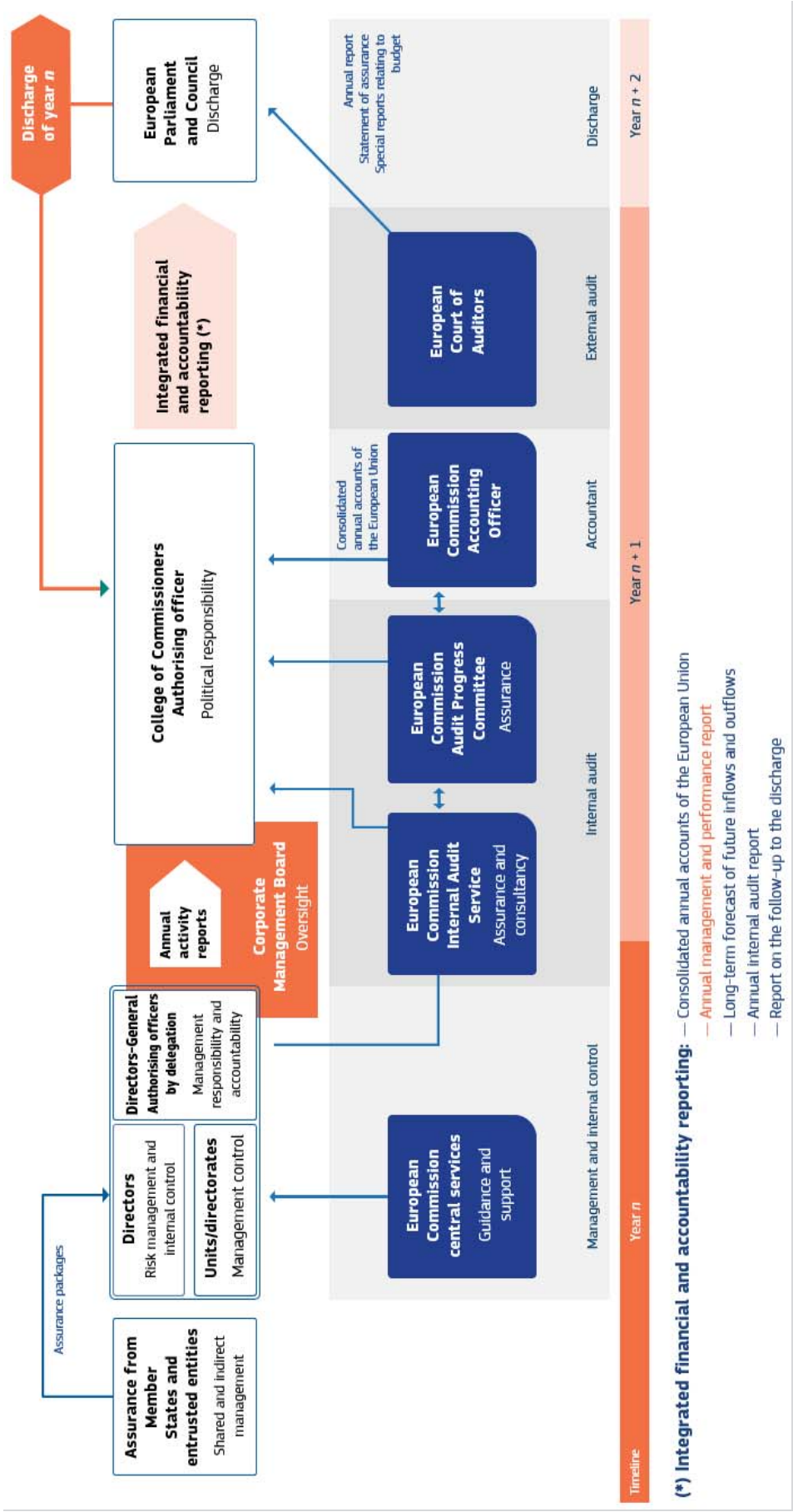
The ensuing annual budgetary discharge procedure allows the European Parliament and the Council of the European Union to hold the Commission politically responsible for the implementation of the EU budget. The Parliament's decision takes into consideration the Commission's integrated financial and accountability reporting; the annual and special reports of the Court of Auditors, along with the latter's statement of assurance on the reliability of the accounts and the legality and regularity of underlying transactions; the hearings of Commissioners and Directors-General; and a recommendation from the Council.

These robust governance arrangements help the College of Commissioners to deliver on the Commission's objectives, to use resources efficiently and effectively and to ensure that the EU budget is implemented in accordance with the principles of sound financial management. An overview is presented in the chart below.

⁽⁶¹⁾ The term 'authorising officers by delegation' covers Directors-General of the Commission and heads of executive agencies, offices, services, task forces, etc. Article 74(1) of the Financial Regulation (Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2024/2509 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 September 2024 on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union (OJ L, 2024/2509, 26.9.2024, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2024/2509/oj>) states that: 'The authorising officer shall be responsible in the Union institution concerned for implementing revenue and expenditure in accordance with the principle of sound financial management, including through ensuring reporting on performance, and for ensuring compliance with the requirements of legality and regularity and equal treatment of recipients.'

⁽⁶²⁾ As required by Article 253 of the Financial Regulation, the integrated financial and accountability reporting package also includes the final consolidated annual accounts of the EU, the report on the follow-up to the budgetary discharge for the previous financial year, the annual report to the discharge authority on internal audits carried out and the long-term forecast of future inflows and outflows of the EU budget covering the next five years.

Commission’s assurance-building and accountability for the EU budget: clear roles and responsibilities



1.3. A reinforced internal control framework contributing to the achievement of the Commission's objectives in an evolving environment

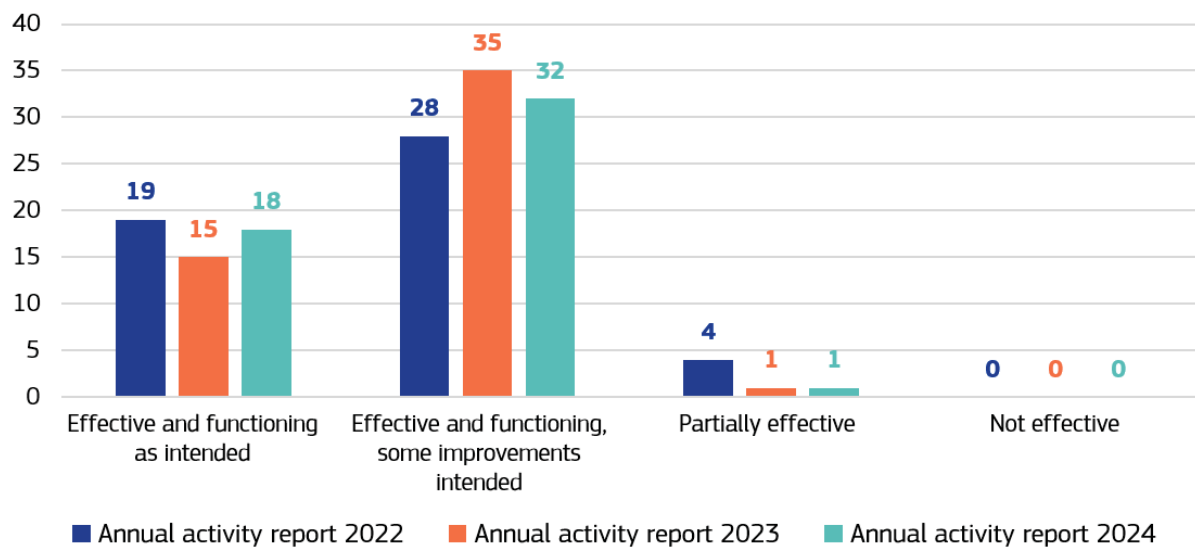
1.3.1. A mature internal control framework further adapted to new instruments

The Commission relies on a strong corporate internal control framework based on the highest international standards. It also employs a robust risk management policy to identify, assess and manage risks at every level of the organisation, in order to provide assurance about the achievement of its objectives. In 2024, the Commission continued to ensure that the amounts allocated from the EU budget were invested for their intended purpose in strict compliance with the financial rules, in order to minimise, detect and prevent errors, avoid double funding, prevent fraud, enhance transparency and pave the way to the discharge.

Overall, in 2024, the Commission departments concluded that the internal control principles underlying their internal control systems were present and working as intended and stable over the years (see graph below) even if minor improvements are needed in some areas. This overall assessment confirmed that the Commission departments continued their efforts to address the deficiencies in their internal control systems identified in 2023. Progress made in 2024 resulted from, among other things, improvement of payment time and average time to reply to requests to access to documents, adoption of local strategies in various areas (e.g. human resources, anti-fraud), better participation in learning activities in some departments, adoption of a business continuity plan and relocation plan, and improvement of the quality of some information provided on local intranets.

For some internal control principles, improvements are still needed, corresponding mostly to minor deficiencies. Similarly to previous years, these are mainly due to ongoing audit recommendations for which action plans have been developed and implementation has already started, producing mitigating effects to varying degrees but not yet fully (e.g. further improvement of control strategies the specificities of some programmes). The departments concerned as well as the areas for improvement vary from one year to another. This is the reason why variations over the years remain maginal. An overview of these areas is provided by the Internal Audit Service (see annex 6).

The principles that are considered 'partially effective' are related to external factors. This assessment is inherent to the instable political situation in certain non-EU countries and regions where the operations are taking place. This heightened volatility prevents the full implementation of standard monitoring, evaluation and control activities without discontinuing urgent and essential delivery of financial assistance.

Assessment of the functioning of the components and internal control principles (*)

(*) The number of Commission departments reporting that internal control components and principles were upheld and functioned properly in 2023 and 2024.

Source: European Commission annual activity reports.

Commission departments, with the support of the Central Financial Service, continued to enhance, update and fine-tune their internal control systems where necessary.

As part of the EU's digital agenda, and to streamline internal processes, the Commission has developed a Central Register of Internal Control Systems that brings together most of the information on the functioning of the internal control systems of its departments. Building on its successful roll-out in 2023, the Commission enhanced the effectiveness and efficiency of the tool by introducing new features to improve security and efficiency. Other EU organisations seeking to strengthen their own internal control environments have also started to use the tool.

In 2024, DG Budget reinforced the operational excellence of its **treasury** function with the successful implementation of the new ISO 20022 banking industry standard applicable to bank messaging solutions.

In February 2024, the Commission adopted an enhanced corporate strategy for the management of its debtors. Going beyond previous measures to prevent, as far as possible, doubtful or even bad debts, the strategy introduced four strategic measures to speed up the recovery process: recovery performance standards; transparent compliance monitoring and reporting; reinforced accountability with corporate escalation mechanisms; and synergies and efficiencies brought about by partial centralisation (including combined waiver decisions). Efficiencies were brought about by the partial centralisation of processes linked to waivers, with the adoption of one combined waiver decision in 2024 covering 99 debts.

1.3.2. An enhanced framework for the risk management of financial operations

In parallel, the Commission also enhanced the efficiency and effectiveness of the borrowing and lending operations underpinning the financing of policy programmes, such as NextGenerationEU, support for Ukraine through the macrofinancial assistance programme (macrofinancial assistance plus and Ukraine Loan Cooperation Mechanism) and ongoing support for other neighbouring countries. The launch of a unified funding approach in January 2023 enabled the Commission to extend the benefits of the more flexible and cost-efficient debt management strategy used for financing NextGenerationEU to other borrowing and lending programmes. The Commission completed its funding programme for 2024, raising a total of EUR 318.1 billion over the course of the year. The 2024 issuance brought the total outstanding amount of EU bonds to EUR 578.2 billion by year end, with EUR 68.2 billion issued in the form of NextGenerationEU green bonds.

Since the NextGenerationEU borrowing programme was launched at the end of 2021, the EU's financial operations have expanded significantly – in volume and in scope. Budgetary guarantees and loans to achieve the EU's policy objectives, funded through the issuance of debt securities, have been used on a large scale to tackle emerging challenges and successive crises. In this context, the Commission has appointed a Chief Risk Officer to devise and implement an appropriate risk management and compliance framework to protect the financial interests of the EU and to ensure that the various risks stemming from the borrowing operations are adequately identified, managed and mitigated. This framework has been continually enhanced by putting in place processes, control points and risk oversight across all the core borrowing and lending activities, including funding planning, execution of borrowing transactions, liquidity management, cost calculation and allocation.

Taking into account the increased complexities and scale of all EU financial operations, the Commission needed to evolve quickly towards a more comprehensive and sophisticated risk management framework, aligned with best practices. This was achieved at the beginning of 2025 by extending the Chief Risk Officer's role beyond the EU's borrowing and related lending and debt management operations to asset management operations, budgetary guarantees and financial assistance to non-EU

countries ⁽⁶³⁾. In line with best practices, the Commission has implemented the ‘three lines of defence’ risk management model:

- the first line of defence is composed of the directorates-general responsible for the EU’s financial operations in line with the Financial Regulation, which should implement sound financial risk management processes and ensure compliance with the risk management framework;
- the Chief Risk Officer acts as the second line of defence at the corporate level and is responsible for establishing a common financial risk management framework for all of the EU’s financial operations and independent risk assessment and reporting;
- the third line of defence is the Internal Audit Service, which exercises its role in line with Article 118 of the Financial Regulation.

The Commission is now developing the framework governing financial risk management and compliance for the various categories of the EU’s financial operations.

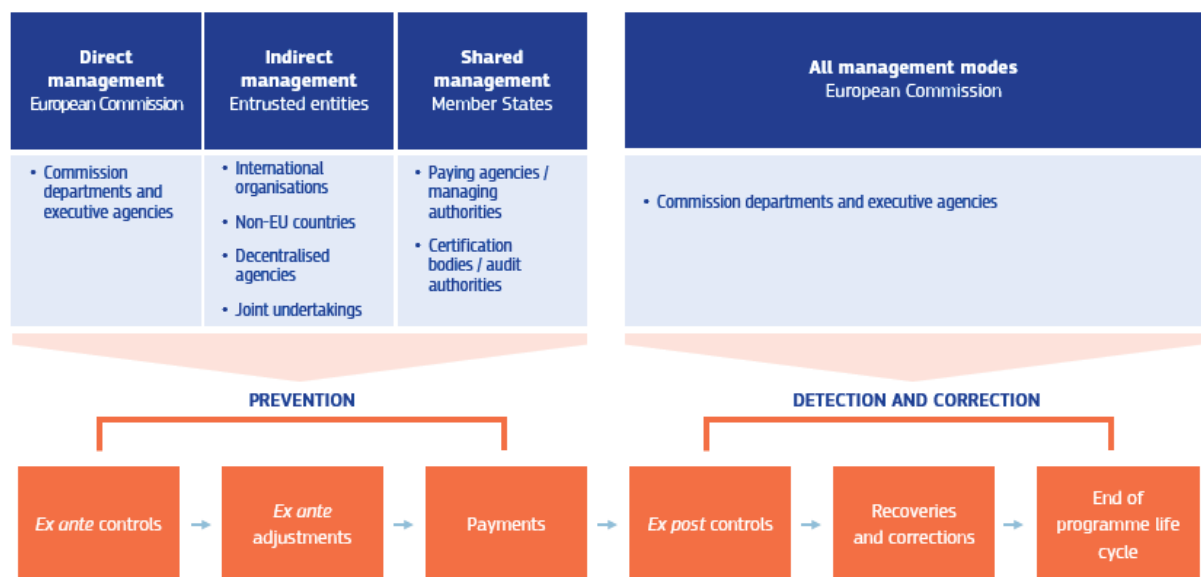
⁽⁶³⁾ Commission Decision (EU, Euratom) 2025/369 of 21 February 2025 establishing the role of the Chief Risk Officer overseeing the financial risks arising from the Union’s financial operations, OJ L, 2025/369, 25.2.2025, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/dec/2025/369/oj>.

1.4. Multiannual control strategies to ensure that expenditure is legal and regular

Authorising officers, as managers of the EU budget, put in place multiannual control strategies to prevent, detect and correct errors. In line with their responsibility to carry out individual payments, they need to build their assurance from the bottom up and in detail (i.e. by programme or other relevant segment of expenditure). This allows the Commission to detect weaknesses and errors in a detailed and differentiated manner for each programme or segment of expenditure; to identify the root causes of systemic errors (e.g. the complexity of rules in certain policy areas, such as research or cohesion); to take targeted and proportionate corrective measures; and to ensure that lessons learned are used to improve the management and control systems and the design of future financial programmes.

EU spending programmes are multiannual by design, and so are the related control strategies. This implies that the detection and correction of errors may take place continually, until programme closure. Moreover, the control strategies are risk differentiated (i.e. they are adjusted to the characteristics and risks associated with different management modes, actors involved, policy areas and/or funding arrangements). Control strategies usually entail preventive controls (*ex ante* controls) carried out before the Commission payment takes place and corrective controls (*ex post* controls) carried out after the payment has been made. The approach for cost-based expenditure, and for expenditure where an error rate is determined, is presented in the visual below. The Commission's key preventive and corrective mechanisms are detailed in Annex 5.

The European Commission's multiannual control cycle



Source: European Commission.

For cost-based instruments, risk at payment and risk at closure are determined at different points in time, as explained in the visual below.

Risk at payment and risk at closure

For additional information regarding the 2024 risk at payment and at closure, see Section 2.1 below and Annex 5, Sections 5.1 and 5.2.

For performance-based payments, representing most of the support provided under the common agricultural policy 2023-2027, the sequence of controls remains similar to the one described above, with a focus on the functioning of the systems in place in the Member States and systems audits, both from the national audit authorities and from the Commission.

Regarding the other funding programmes for the 2021-2027 multiannual financial framework, the Commission has further adjusted control strategies in relation to programme specificities.

For example, the increase in the use of lump-sum grants in the research and innovation programme has triggered a necessary adaptation of the Horizon Europe control strategy. The Commission's Central Financial Service has supported the Commission departments in these initiatives.

1.5. Fight against fraud: the Commission's anti-fraud strategy and further proposals

1.5.1. Implementation of the Commission's anti-fraud strategy action plan

The Commission has zero tolerance for fraud. Pursuant to Article 325 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, the Commission and the Member States protect the EU budget from fraud and other illegal activities. The Commission's 2019 **anti-fraud strategy** ⁽⁶⁴⁾ plays a significant role in preventing the possible misuse of EU money. The strategy is accompanied by an action plan, revised in 2023 ⁽⁶⁵⁾, including 44 measures under seven themes that cover the Commission's priorities in fighting fraud. The European Anti-Fraud Office coordinates and monitors the implementation of the plan, and leads approximately half of the measures. Throughout 2024, Commission services and the European Anti-Fraud Office made progress in the implementation of measures under each objective.

In 2024 the European Anti-Fraud Office further supported **Commission services** in the design of their anti-fraud strategies and ensured coordination and cooperation across services on anti-fraud matters through the Fraud Prevention and Detection Network.

The European Anti-Fraud Office continued its **strategic analytical work**, notably through analyses of the detection and reporting of irregularities and fraud in different sectors and of the impact of and vulnerability to fraud in the various areas of cohesion policy. The 2023 annual report on the protection of the EU's financial interests ⁽⁶⁶⁾, adopted on 25 July 2024, included for the first time a qualitative assessment of the national anti-fraud strategies. The European Anti-Fraud Office also continued to cooperate with Member States on anti-fraud matters in the context of the Advisory Committee for the Coordination of Fraud Prevention and with the Anti-Fraud Coordination Services of EU Member States, candidate countries and potential candidate countries.

The European Anti-Fraud Office also continued to perform **investigative activities**, reporting on them in its annual report ⁽⁶⁷⁾. As a result of its investigative work, in 2024 the European Anti-Fraud Office recommended the recovery of EUR 871.5 million, and EUR 43.5 million was recommended to be prevented from being unduly spent.

1.5.2. Other tools to increase the efficiency of the fight against fraud

As part of the fight against fraud, cybersecurity is very high on the Commission's agenda. EU entities are required to establish, by 8 April 2025, a cybersecurity risk management, governance and control framework, based on an initial cybersecurity review ⁽⁶⁸⁾.

⁽⁶⁴⁾ Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee, the Committee of the Regions and the Court of Auditors – Commission anti-fraud strategy action plan – 2023 revision, COM(2023) 405 final, 11 July 2023, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/ALL/?uri=CELEX:52023DC0405>.

⁽⁶⁵⁾ Commission staff working document – Action plan – 2023 revision, SWD(2023) 245 final, 11 July 2023, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A52023SC0245&qid=1747126601079>.

⁽⁶⁶⁾ Report from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament – 35th annual report on the protection of the European Union financial interests and the fight against fraud, COM(2024) 318 final, 25 July 2024, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A52024DC0318&qid=1747055395142>.

⁽⁶⁷⁾ European Commission: European Anti-Fraud Office, 'Annual OLAF reports', European Anti-Fraud Office website, https://anti-fraud.ec.europa.eu/about-us/reports/annual-olaf-reports_en.

⁽⁶⁸⁾ Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2023/2841 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 December 2023 laying down measures for a high common level of cybersecurity at the institutions, bodies, offices and agencies of the Union, OJ L, 2023/2841, 18.12.2023, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2023/2841/oj> (entry into force January 2024).

This initial cybersecurity review, based on the existing cybersecurity governance, monitoring and reporting framework in the Commission, has confirmed the good cybersecurity posture of the Commission: attack attempts have so far been successfully contained and their impact has been limited, despite the increased number of incidents. Nevertheless, the Commission remains an attractive target. The current geopolitical context creates new motives for cyber-threat actors who exploit technical and human vulnerabilities in increasingly sophisticated ways. This requires continuous improvement and upscaling of the Commission's capabilities and awareness to ensure appropriate levels of protection. The resulting priorities are integrated into the recently endorsed 2025-2026 corporate cybersecurity strategy.

In September 2024, the recast Financial Regulation introduced several changes regarding the early detection and exclusion system, which is part of the framework for fraud prevention and the fight against fraud. These changes aim to (1) promote the use of the early detection and exclusion system; (2) enhance its effectiveness; and (3) make the system more efficient. Improvements include the introduction of an expedited procedure; new exclusion grounds, such as the refusal to cooperate in investigations; and the possibility to exclude affiliated entities and beneficial owners of a primary excluded entity from bidding for public contracts, and ultimately from obtaining EU funds for a number of years. The Financial Regulation (recast) extends the application of the early detection and exclusion system to beneficiaries under shared management and to future instruments in direct management with Member States, with a proportionate and targeted approach. **As from 1 January 2028, Member States will have the obligation to check the early detection and exclusion system database with regard to direct applicants, participants and beneficiaries.**

1.6. The conditionality regime is being implemented

The regulation on a general regime of conditionality for the protection of the EU budget ⁽⁶⁹⁾ (**Conditionality Regulation**), adopted in December 2020, protects the budget from breaches of the principles of the rule of law that affect or seriously risk affecting the financial interests of the EU in a sufficiently direct way. The Conditionality Regulation came into effect on 1 January 2021 and complements other procedures established by EU legislation for the protection of the EU budget. The validity of the Conditionality Regulation was fully upheld by the Court of Justice of the European Union in two judgments from 2022 ⁽⁷⁰⁾. Following those judgments, the Commission adopted its guidelines on the application of the Conditionality Regulation ⁽⁷¹⁾.

The Commission has been monitoring the situation across all Member States under the Conditionality Regulation since January 2021. The Commission will trigger the procedure under the Conditionality Regulation if all its conditions are fulfilled.

On 15 December 2022, following a proposal from the Commission, the Council adopted measures for the protection of the EU budget under the Conditionality Regulation in the case of Hungary.

The Council decided to suspend 55% of the budgetary commitments for three programmes ⁽⁷²⁾ under cohesion policy, corresponding to an amount of approximately EUR 6.4 billion in total for the 2021-2027 period, and prohibited the Commission from entering into new legal commitments with public interest trusts or entities maintained by them (many of which are universities) under any EU programme directly or indirectly managed by the Commission. The prohibition regarding the second measure has been challenged before the General Court of the European Union (the case is still pending).

In line with the Conditionality Regulation, **in the absence of any written notification from Hungary on new remedial measures to address the outstanding concerns, the Commission reassessed the situation on 13 December 2023.** It concluded that the EU budget remained at the same level of risk and that the budgetary measures taken at the end of 2022 by the Council should not be adapted or lifted. In a parallel process under the rules of the Common Provisions Regulation ⁽⁷³⁾, the Commission considered that Hungary had adequately addressed some of the issues that led to Hungary's non-compliance with one of its horizontal enabling conditions as regards issues of judicial independence. Therefore, this resulted in the unblocking of a portion of the funds for Hungary under the Common Provisions Regulation.

On 2 December 2024, Hungary formally notified the Commission about specific legislative amendments regarding public interest trusts and entities maintained by them, formally requesting that the Commission propose the adapting or lifting of the protective measure regarding public interest trusts to the Council.

⁽⁶⁹⁾ Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2020/2092 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 December 2020 on a general regime of conditionality for the protection of the Union budget, OJ L 433, 22.12.2020, p. 1, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2020/2092/oj>.

⁽⁷⁰⁾ See judgments of the Court of Justice of 16 February 2022, *Hungary v Parliament and Council*, C-156/21, ECLI:EU:C:2022:97, and *Poland v Parliament and Council*, C-157/21, ECLI:EU:C:2022:98.

⁽⁷¹⁾ Communication from the Commission – Guidelines on the application of the Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2020/2092 on a general regime of conditionality for the protection of the Union budget, 2022/C 123/02, 18 March 2022, [https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:52022XC0318\(02\)](https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:52022XC0318(02)).

⁽⁷²⁾ The environmental and energy efficiency operational programme plus, the integrated transport operational programme plus and the territorial and settlement development operational programme plus.

⁽⁷³⁾ Regulation (EU) 2021/1060 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 June 2021 laying down common provisions on the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund Plus, the Cohesion Fund, the Just Transition Fund and the European Maritime, Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund and financial rules for those and for the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund, the Internal Security Fund and the Instrument for Financial Support for Border Management and Visa Policy, OJ L 231, 30.6.2021, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2021/1060/oj>.

The Commission concluded that the legislative amendments did not adequately remedy the grounds that had led to the adoption of the measure and therefore did not propose any lifting or adaptation of the protective measures to the Council in its Decision of 16 December 2024 ⁽⁷⁴⁾.

The Commission reported on the application of the regulation on 12 January 2024. The report focused on (1) the measures taken by the Commission in the application of the regulation, including the procedure opened in the case of Hungary; (2) the complementarity of the regulation with other relevant instruments, such as the Common Provisions Regulation; (3) the Commission's evaluation of the effectiveness of the measures adopted so far; and (4) the overall effectiveness of the procedure set out by the Conditionality Regulation. The report preliminarily confirmed the effectiveness and the potential of the protective measures adopted under the Hungarian case.

In January 2024, **the Court of Auditors published an audit on the rule of law in the EU**, focusing on the Conditionality Regulation, its interplay with the Recovery and Resilience Facility and conditionality under cohesion policy rules. The audit report ⁽⁷⁵⁾ made positive observations overall on the handling of the Conditionality Regulation and the proceedings regarding Hungary. Most of the Court's recommendations were accepted and are being implemented, for instance finishing its development of a case-management system, CASE@EC, to manage and document the workflow for the decisions and measures taken.

⁽⁷⁴⁾ Commission Decision of 16.12.2024 pursuant to Article 7(2) of Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2020/2092 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 December 2020 on a general regime of conditionality for the protection of the Union budget, concerning a written notification from Hungary with regard to Article 2(2) of Council Implementing Decision (EU) 2022/2506 of 15 December 2022, C(2024) 9140 final.

⁽⁷⁵⁾ European Court of Auditors, *The Rule of Law in the EU – An improved framework to protect the EU's financial interests, but risks remain – Special report 03/2024*, Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg, 2024, <https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2865/00087>.

1.7. The Financial Regulation (recast) entered into force in 2024

The Financial Regulation (recast) was adopted on 23 September 2024 and entered into force on 30 September 2024. The changes adapt the EU's financial rules to a changed world by introducing clearer and more flexible rules for procurement in crisis situations; provide a centralised website for transparency on the use of EU budget, which will cover all management modes as from 2028; bring simplification in the form of very-low-value grants (under EUR 15 000); and protect the EU budget against fraud, corruption or conflicts of interest by extending the early detection and exclusion system to shared management as from 2028. Several provisions will apply only as from 2028. To reflect the changes in the Financial Regulation, the revised internal rules of the Commission were adopted on 30 September 2024 ⁽⁷⁶⁾.

Use of the single data-mining and risk-scoring tool – Arachne

Following the adoption of the Financial Regulation (recast) in September 2024, Article 36 of the Financial Regulation requires a modernised data-mining and risk-scoring tool, to be used in all management modes. The existing data-mining and risk-scoring tool, Arachne, on which the future tool will be based, is already used by Commission services and by a number of Member States on a voluntary basis in shared management and for the Recovery and Resilience Facility. Compulsory feeding of the tool with data will be required from all Member States as from the next financial framework, starting in 2028.

In 2024 the Commission continued with preparatory work for the new system, e.g. looking at users' needs and data protection. To prepare for the possibility of compulsory use by Member States of this modernised data-mining and risk-scoring tool after 2027, the Commission set up a group of experts, including at least one representative per Member State, to provide assistance and support in designing the modernised tool. It should, in particular, assist with the preparation of a readiness assessment of the tool, which is to be presented by the Commission by 2027. On that basis, the possibility of compulsory use of the tool by Member States may be discussed again by the co-legislators.

⁽⁷⁶⁾ Commission Decision of 30.9.2024 on the internal rules for the implementation of the Commission section of the general budget of the European Union, C(2024) 6814 final, 30 September 2024.

2. Cost-effective controls protecting the EU budget

To ensure that controls remain cost-effective, the Commission aims to strike the right balance between the following.



- **Effectiveness.** The level of error found, based on the controls carried out, which allows the expenditure to be grouped into different risk categories.
- **Efficiency.** The average time taken to make a payment. Beyond this, the Commission is also constantly looking for and developing new ways to increase efficiency, notably by creating synergies wherever possible.
- **Economy.** The proportionality between the costs of controls and the funds managed.

Cost-effectiveness is obtained through differentiation of the controls: riskier areas trigger a higher level of scrutiny and/or frequency of controls, whereas low-risk areas should lead to controls that are less intensive, less costly and less burdensome. Other ways to ensure the cost-effectiveness of controls include reducing the risk of errors through simplified rules and processes, such as simplified cost options (i.e. lump sums, flat rates and unit costs), cross-reliance on existing assessments, and audits and controls performed by other entities and achieving economies of scale by pooling the control functions.

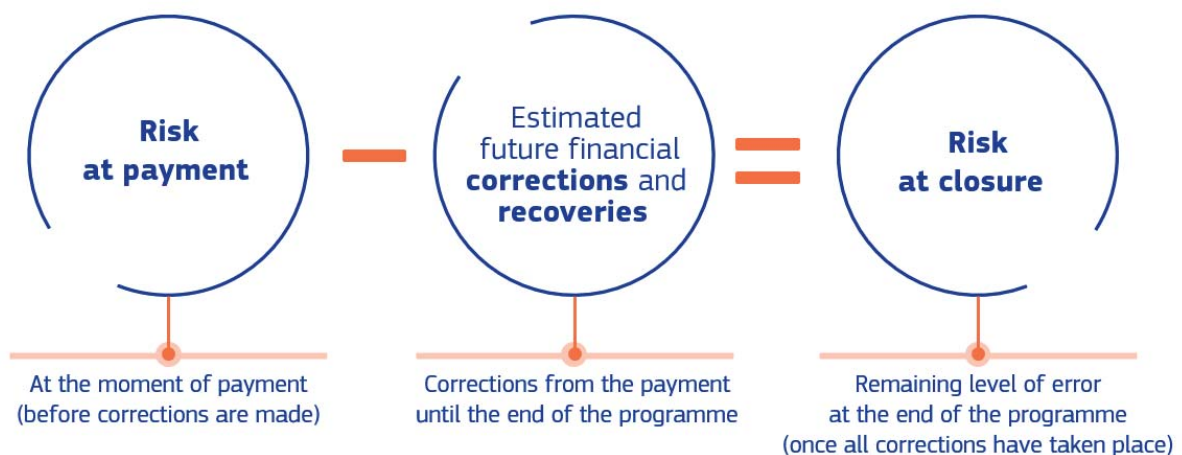
2.1. The Commission's control results confirm that the EU budget is well protected

2.1.1. Overall results for 2024

In 2024, with most of the common agricultural policy expenditure implemented under a performance-based policy framework, the Commission used a new indicator for the control results for this type of expenditure: the share of low-risk expenditure.

In addition, and as a consequence of the change for agriculture, control results are now presented at the level of the individual multiannual financial framework headings and not for the entire EU budget, and there is no longer an indicator at the level of the Commission as a whole.

For cost-based payments, the Commission considers that the budget is effectively protected when, at the latest by the closure of the programmes (i.e. when all controls, corrections and recoveries have been implemented), the risk at closure is below 2%. This is the same materiality threshold as used by the Court of Auditors. For more details on these concepts and the methodology used to determine these estimates, along with the control results for each policy area, see Annex 5. Based on the audits and controls carried out, each year the Commission departments estimate the level of risk for the legality and regularity of EU spending at two stages of the multiannual control cycle: at payment and at closure of the programmes.



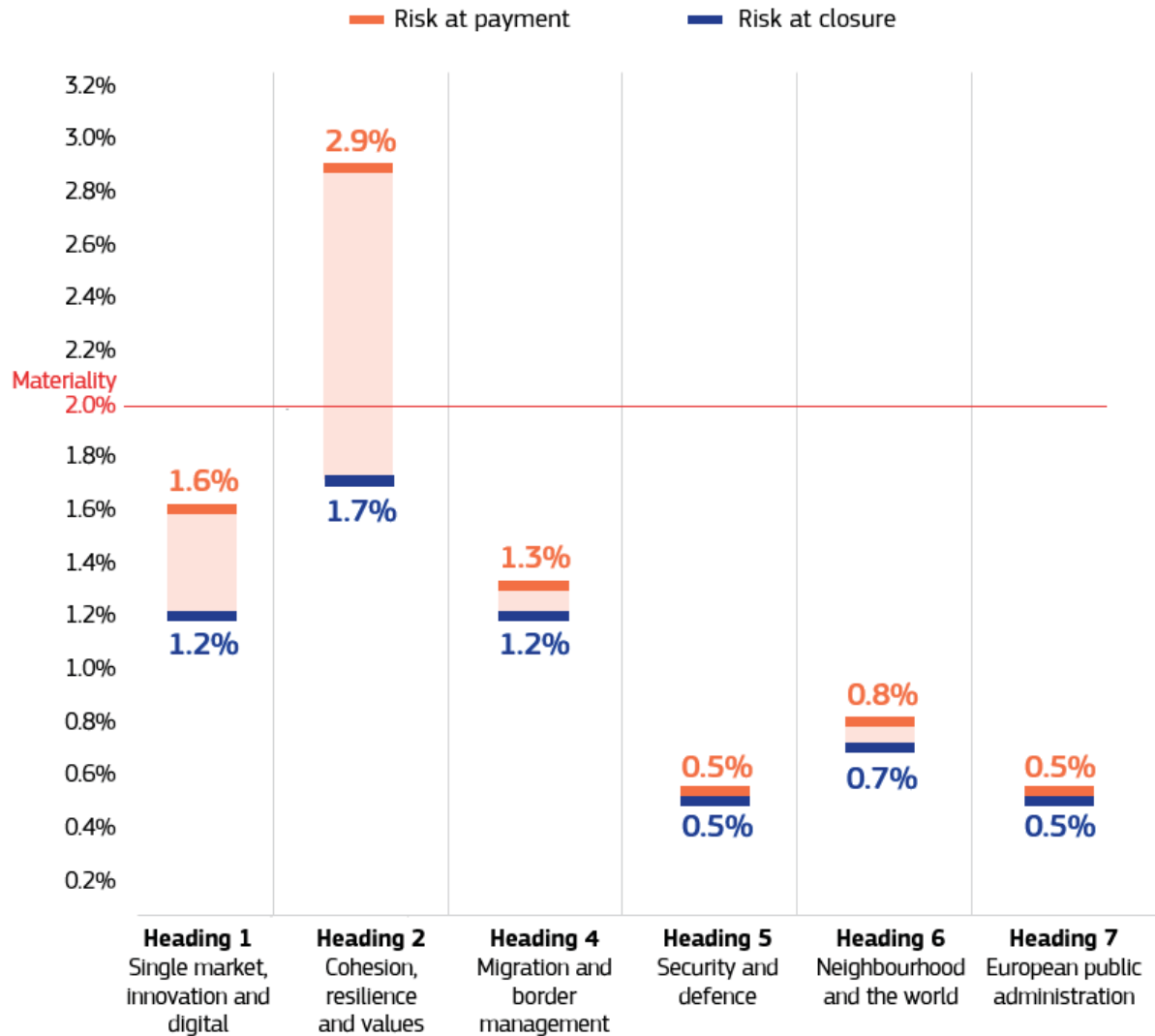
Source: European Commission.

Until 2023, this was the only indicator used to measure the level of protection of the EU budget that was also used for the entire Commission. This indicator will continue to be applied wherever payments are cost based and for those headings under which payments are cost based, thus for 2024 headings 1, 2, 4, 5, 6 and 7.

Regarding the new CAP 2023-2027, for performance-based expenditure, the focus is on performance, based on the achievement of results, and on the proper functioning of the governance systems in the Member States. Member States no longer report to the Commission on control statistics at the beneficiaries' level. Instead of determining an error rate and a risk at payment, the Commission groups the corresponding expenditure in three categories of risk (low, medium and high), based on the assessment of the functioning of the systems in place in the Member States to ensure both the

legality and regularity of the underlying transactions and the quality of performance results. Because of this new approach, no risk at payment can be determined for the multiannual financial framework heading 'natural resources and environment', since 74.8% of the expenditure of the heading now corresponds to performance-based expenditure. Also, because of this change, no risk at payment may be determined for the whole Commission anymore. The reporting is done per multiannual financial framework heading.

Overview of risk at payment and risk at closure for compliance-based expenditure



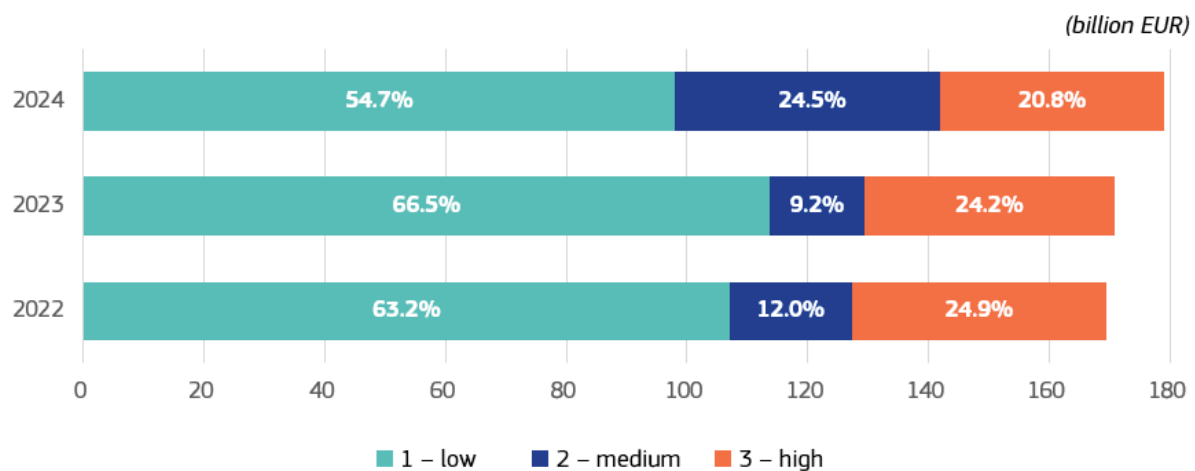
Source: European Commission annual activity reports for 2024.

For 2024, all headings, except for cohesion, have a risk at payment and a risk at closure below 2%, and heading 3 on natural resources and environment, including the agriculture payments, has a share of low-risk payments of 77%, above the average for 2018-2023 of 64%. The corresponding expenditure is thus well protected.

The cohesion heading has a risk at payment above 2% and a risk at closure below 2%. For this heading, the Commission is continuing its efforts to further reduce the level of risk at the time of payment.

To allow for comparability and to have an overview, the information is presented for each heading by level of risk (low, medium or high – see Section 2.1.2), and for the entire Commission (see next visual).

Overview of expenditure per risk category



Source: European Commission annual activity reports for 2024.

This new approach has no impact on preventive and corrective measures that continue to be applied.

Total preventive and corrective measures (Commission and Member States): EUR 2.6 billion (EUR 3.8 billion in 2023).

Reservations: 18 (14 in 2023), of which 17 related to expenditure from the EU budget with a total financial impact of EUR 330.9 million (EUR 1 290.6 million in 2023) and one related to expenditure from the Resilience and Recovery Facility with a financial impact of EUR 17.5 million. See Section 3.1 and Annex 5, Section 5.3 for more details.

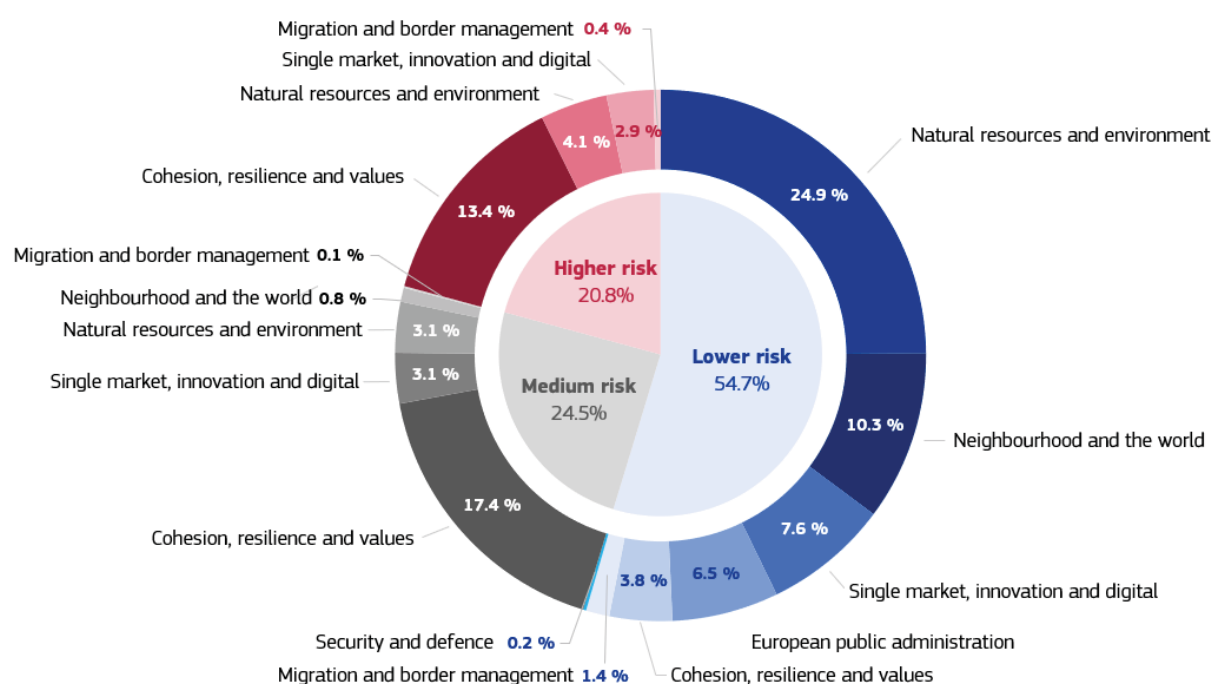
2.1.2. Control results by lower-, medium- and higher-risk programme segments

The Commission has reliable, evidence-based information showing the diversified situation of the funds it manages. It identifies which programmes or segments of expenditure are higher risk, allowing it to efficiently provide its support and address specific weaknesses even for policies that, taken globally, are lower risk, such as the common agricultural policy.

For cost-based expenditure, the split between the categories of risk is based on the risk at payment (i.e. before any future correction is implemented): lower risk – risk at payment below 2.0%; medium risk – risk at payment between 2.0% and 2.5%; and higher risk – risk at payment above 2.5%. For cohesion, this analysis is also applied at the level of the individual programmes in the Member States.

Performance-based expenditure is split between the low-, medium- and high-risk categories according to the assessment of the functioning of the systems in the paying agencies at the intervention level. As a result, the new approach for common agricultural policy expenditure allows for an enhanced granularity of the control results for this expenditure, since information on the weaknesses and deficiencies is at a lower than paying-agency level.

The European Commission's categorisation of expenditure into lower-, medium- and higher-risk segments, as a percentage of the total relevant expenditure for 2024



Source: European Commission annual activity reports for 2024.

- Lower risk.** Expenditure in this category amounted to EUR 97.2 billion in 2024 representing 54.8% of the total expenditure, compared to 66.6% of expenditure in 2023). The decrease of the amount in the lower risk category compared with 2023 is related to cohesion programmes that have been, conservatively, set at a medium risk (2%) even when their error rates were lower. This prudent approach was taken due to Member States using the possibility to deliver their final assurance after 2024 (see below). This lower risk category includes the majority of expenditure managed under the new performance-based model in place for the common agricultural policy 2023-2027 (1 306 interventions out of a total of 1 526) and, outside the new common agricultural policy, expenditure managed by 50 out of 70 paying agencies for rural development. Similarly to previous years, it also includes expenditure relating to the European Research Council grants under Horizon 2020 and the Connecting Europe Facility – transport and Connecting Europe Facility – energy programmes; Erasmus+; the Marie Skłodowska-Curie actions; contributions to other EU bodies (the European Union Agency for the Space Programme, the European Space Agency, Fusion for Energy joint undertaking, etc.); the Asylum Migration and Integration Fund; the Internal Security Fund;

humanitarian aid; Horizon Europe financial instruments; expenditure in the neighbourhood and the world policy area; and administrative expenditure in general.

- **Medium risk.** Expenditure in this category amounted to EUR 43.7 billion in 2024 (24.4% of expenditure compared with 9.2% in 2023). This increase is mainly due to the cohesion policy funds, where a conservative flat rate of 2% was applied for many programmes, even if the estimated error rates were lower. This was done as a prudent approach, in response to the fact that only a limited number of assurance packages for the 2014-2020 period were received (as Member States were granted an extra year to submit them by the Strategic Technologies for Europe Platform Regulation), as well as for the 2021-2027 period, where programmes are still in the early stages of implementation. This category also included expenditure in research and innovation in particular in relation to grants under the new Horizon Europe, and under the Connecting Europe Facility – transport programme for the 2021-2027 period, expenditure from the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (six programmes out of 27), as well as expenditure related to the common agricultural policy (152 interventions out of a total of 1 526 for performance-based expenditure).
- **Higher risk.** Expenditure in this category amounted to EUR 38.2 billion in 2024 (21.3% of expenditure, similar to 2023, 24.2%). This includes mainly and some expenditure declared under cohesion policy funds with a higher risk at payment or with serious deficiencies ⁽⁷⁷⁾ and some expenditure declared under the common agricultural policy.

The Commission's detailed analysis confirms that the level of error and share of high-risk expenditure are closely related to the nature of the funding. Most programmes or segments of expenditure, corresponding to more than 50% of the year's relevant expenditure, are estimated in the lower-risk category because they encompass more entitlement-based payments. On the other hand, some programmes or segments of expenditure with complex reimbursement-based rules appear to have a relatively higher risk at payment (as is typically the case under cohesion policy, with many applicable national, regional or programme rules in addition to EU rules). Nevertheless, the control systems in place allow the risks related to some of the more complex programmes to be mitigated and, as a result, the level of risk at payment to be reduced.

The Commission is closely monitoring the risks at payment and at closure for the various programmes and segments of expenditure and is taking further action to reduce them. For the medium- and higher-risk categories in particular, the Commission is continually looking for ways to further decrease them by raising beneficiaries' and implementing partners' awareness of issues, adjusting the control strategies where necessary, applying the lessons learned to future programmes and simplifying rules wherever possible.

⁽⁷⁷⁾ In the case of the European Regional Development Fund, the Cohesion Fund and the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund, the level of risk has also been considered high, irrespective of the risk at payment, when the audit opinion issued in the annual activity reports on the functioning of the management and control system of the programmes was either adverse or qualified.

2.1.3. Control results by policy area

The *Annual Management and Performance Report for the EU Budget* is a summary of the annual activity reports of the 51 Commission departments. The spending covered in each of these reports is allocated in full to one of the seven headings of the multiannual financial framework. Since 2022, considering its size, the spending for 'security and defence' of DG Defence Industry and Space was divided between heading 1 and heading 5. The situation for each policy area is described below.

Heading 1 – single market, innovation and digital

Total relevant expenditure: EUR 24.2 billion (2022: EUR 19.1 billion).

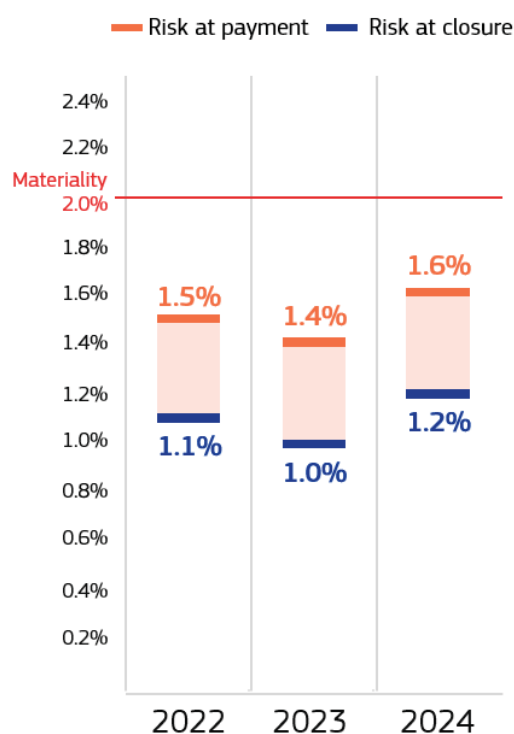
Risk at payment: 1.6% (2023: 1.4%).

Risk at closure: 1.2% (2023: 1.0%).

Total preventive and corrective measures: EUR 348.5 million (2023: EUR 149.8 million):

- preventive measures: EUR 244.7 million (2023: EUR 121.1 million);
- corrective measures: EUR 103.8 million (2023: EUR 28.6 million).

Reservation: one reputational reservation without financial impact (same as in 2023) ⁽⁷⁸⁾.



In 2024, the risks at both payment and closure **increased slightly, by 0.2 percentage points**, compared to 2023, to reach 1.6% for the risk at payment and 1.2% for risk at closure. This is due to the increase in the risk at payment for grants under Horizon 2020, from 2.57% in 2023 to 3.55% in 2024, as the corresponding expenditure still represents one third of the total expenditure under this heading, even if the share of expenditure from the 2014-2020 multiannual programming period (all programmes together) is decreasing (from 56% in 2023 to almost 40% in 2024). The risk at closure for this expenditure remains below the 2% materiality threshold (at 1.59%).

It should be noted that the increase in the risk at payment for this heading is also explained by the **increase in the share of expenditure from the 2021-2027 programming period** (from less than 6% in 2023 to more than 21% in 2024), and **in particular of Horizon Europe** (from 1.9% in 2023 to 17.8% in 2024). For this expenditure there was no representative error rate for 2024 as the *ex post* audit campaign was only launched in the second half of

2024, once a meaningful number of payments was available. As a result, **the conservative approach applied in 2023 was maintained in 2024 by using a flat rate of 2% for the risk at payment**. To a lesser extent, the same holds true for the digital Europe programme. The incidence of this approach is particularly visible in the graph below, with an increase of the share of the medium-risk segment of expenditure in 2024 (segment between 2% and below 2.5%).

⁽⁷⁸⁾ The concerned programme (The Promotion of Agricultural products) is funded by European Agricultural Guarantee Fund which is currently under Budget Heading 3 – Natural resources and environment, however it is reported under Heading 1 – Single market, innovation and digital for consistency with previous reports.

For Horizon 2020, as in previous years, and despite ongoing efforts and improvements, the risk at payment remained above 2% because of the inherent complexity of the rules. More specifically, in 2024, there was an increasing share of final payments for Horizon 2020, which are more error prone than interim payments as they often correspond to larger and more complex projects. Similar to previous years, the research departments did not qualify their declarations of assurance with a reservation in relation to the Horizon 2020 programme ⁽⁷⁹⁾.

For Horizon Europe, structural improvements leading to fewer errors are expected in the medium term from the a higher share of grants using lump sums or simplified cost options. The objective is to use lump-sum funding for 50% of the budget for calls for proposals by the end of 2027. Given the cycle of payments, it is likely that the impact on the level of risk at payment will start to show modestly in the coming years and will be more significant as from 2029.

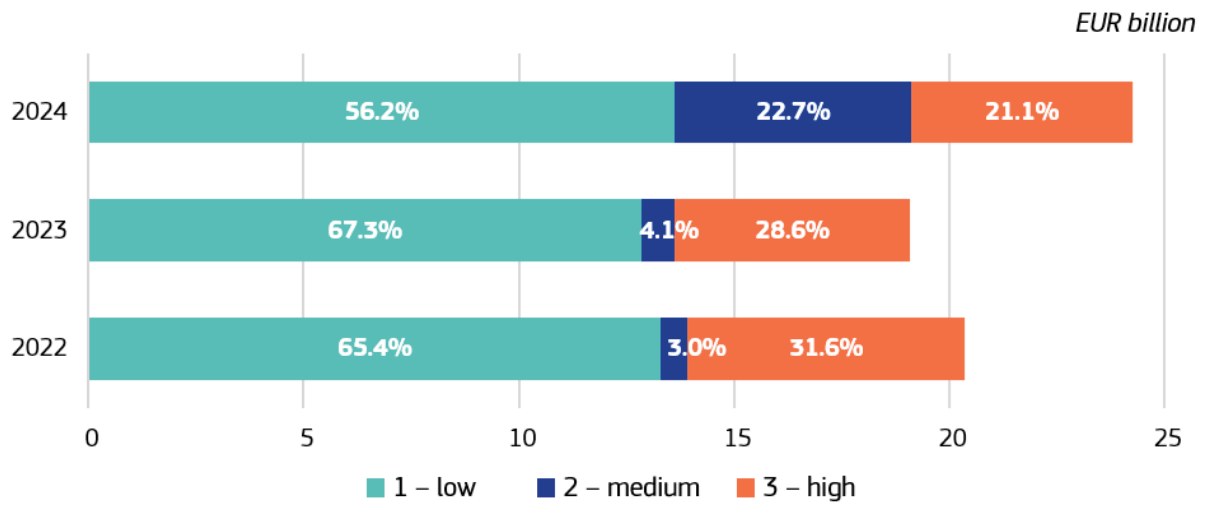
The Commission has defined and is implementing other measures to simplify the rules with a view to reducing the error rates in Horizon Europe. Beyond the use of simplified forms of funding (lump sums and unit costs), these measures include targeting more 'error-prone' types of beneficiaries (such as small and medium-sized enterprises and newcomers) with communication campaigns and improving the training provided to external audit firms performing audits on behalf of the Commission. By focusing on the most common errors, these measures should have a positive impact while remaining cost-effective.

The only reservation issued in 2023 was maintained in 2024. This reservation concerns the promotion of agricultural products programmes and was issued due to irregularities in the subcontracting process. As anticipated in 2023, the financial risk has now materialised, as shown in the control results with an error rate of 3.89% (2.32% after deduction of the corrections already made). Additional audits and European Anti-Fraud Office investigations are ongoing. Mitigating measures have been taken and are being implemented to prevent similar situations from happening in the future. However, it will still take time for the all the necessary corrections to be implemented.

As far as preventive and corrective measures are concerned, the increase is mainly due to the increased number and amount of interim and final payments, and to a limited number of high-value cases, notably a one-off, particularly important recovery in the Connection Europe Facility programme following a Commission audit.

⁽⁷⁹⁾ Proposal for a Council decision establishing the specific programme implementing Horizon 2020 – The framework programme for research and innovation (2014-2020), COM(2011) 811 final, 30 November 2011, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A52011PC0811&qid=1747145040788>. The risk at payment minus corrections implemented remains within the agreed materiality threshold of between 2% and 5% envisaged in the legislative financial statement accompanying the Commission's proposal, which states that 'The Commission considers therefore that, for research spending under Horizon 2020, a risk of error, on an annual basis, within a range between 2-5 % is a realistic objective taking into account the costs of controls, the simplification measures proposed to reduce the complexity of rules and the related inherent risk associated to the reimbursement of costs of the research project. The ultimate aim for the residual level of error at the closure of the programmes after the financial impact of all audits, correction and recovery measures will have been taken into account is to achieve a level as close as possible to 2 %.'

Multiannual financial framework heading 1 – single market, innovation and digital – overview of risk segmentation for 2022-2024



Source: European Commission annual activity reports for 2024.

Heading 2 – cohesion, resilience and values

Total relevant expenditure: EUR 62.0 billion (2023: EUR 67.3 billion).

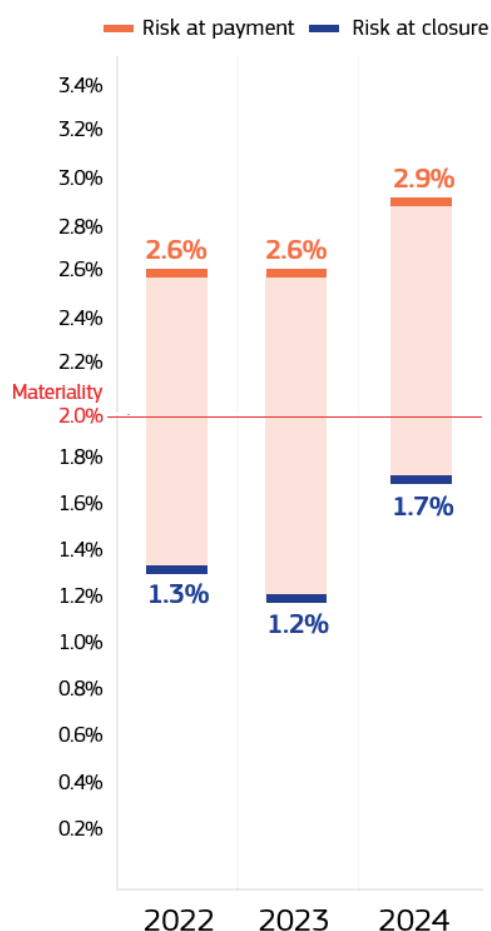
Risk at payment: 2.9% (2023: 2.6%).

Risk at closure: 1.7% (2023: 1.2%).

Total preventive and corrective measures (Commission and Member States): EUR 1 028.6 million (2023: EUR 2 370.9 million):

- preventive measures: EUR 579.9 million (2023: EUR 1 643.7 million);
- corrective measures: EUR 448.7 million (2023: EUR 727.2 million).

Reservations: five reservations with a financial impact of EUR 73 million (2023: three reservations with a financial impact of EUR 583 million).



The risk at payment for this heading increased from 2.6% to 2.9%, while the risk at closure increased from 1.2% to 1.7%. The risk at payment and risk at closure were mostly driven by the amounts paid for the cohesion policy funds⁽⁸⁰⁾ managed under shared management, which represented around 92% of the total relevant expenditure for this heading.

For all the cohesion policy funds, the risk at payment remained material in the range of 2.3% to 3.2%⁽⁸¹⁾, an increase from the range observed in 2023 of 1.9% to 2.8%. The increase is mainly due to the prudent approach taken by the Commission for expenditure corresponding to the 2014–2020 programming period (still comprising 80% of the total payments in 2024), in response to the fact that only a limited number of assurance packages were received by 1 March 2025, following the amendment of the Common Provisions Regulation by the Strategic Technologies for Europe Platform Regulation, which extended the submission period for the final assurance packages (and therefore the audit results) to

⁽⁸⁰⁾ These include the European Regional Development Fund, the Cohesion Fund, the European Social Fund, the youth employment initiative and the Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived. See detail in Volume III, Annex 5, Section 5.2.2.

⁽⁸¹⁾ For the second consecutive year, the Commission's risk at payment is outside the error-level range of between 6.4% and 12.2%, estimated by the Court of Auditors in its [2023 – Annual reports on the implementation of the EU budget for the 2023 financial year and on the activities funded by the 9th, 10th and 11th European Development Funds \(EDFs\) for the 2023 financial year](#) (p. 238). The higher level of error estimated by the Court can be explained by divergences in the interpretation of breaches of applicable rules that, in some cases, do not constitute irregularities in the sense of the Common Provisions Regulation, for which the Commission has assessed that it would not have legal grounds to impose financial corrections, and by differences in the methods used to quantify some errors.

15 February 2026 ⁽⁸²⁾. As a result, the Commission used a flat rate of 2% for all the programmes where an assurance package was not submitted and the estimated error rate, based on incomplete audit results, was under 2%. Similarly, a flat rate of 2% was used for the lower value of the risk at payment for all 2021-2027 programmes, due to the very limited audit results received for the accounting year 2022-2023 ⁽⁸³⁾.

Overall, the Commission has reasonable assurance that the management and control systems function sufficiently well for 91.5% of the programmes ⁽⁸⁴⁾. Nevertheless, the risk at payment for cohesion remained above the 2% materiality threshold. This is mainly due to the inherent complexity of the projects financed by these funds, the variety of actors concerned and the difficulty of tackling some complex rules at both the national and the EU level, in particular those related to public procurement and State aid. Weaknesses remain mainly at the level of managing authorities or their intermediate bodies. The main categories of irregularities identified by the Member States' audit authorities and the Commission are similar to those identified by the Court of Auditors: ineligible expenditure, ineligible projects or beneficiaries, errors in public procurement procedures and missing supporting information or documentation.

In 2022 and 2023, the difference between the Commission's risk at payment and the Court of Auditors' estimated level of error has significantly increased. This is mostly explained by divergences in the interpretation of breaches of applicable rules. Following this growing difference, a study has been commissioned by the Committee on Budgetary Control of the European Parliament to compare the Commission's risk at payment and closure and the Court of Auditors' estimated level of error, focusing on cohesion funds. The recently published study makes a balanced and factual assessment of respective methodologies, and the reasons why they lead to different outcomes in the reporting of error rates by both institutions, notably for cohesion. It fairly reflects the work performed by both institutions, the respective expectations their roles entail and the usefulness of the two approaches. It states that both the Commission and the Court of Auditors use state-of-the-art methodologies, based on international audit standards. Each methodology satisfies each institution's needs and expectations. The study concludes that the error rate and risk at payment are not directly comparable.

For the cohesion funds, the Commission applied additional financial corrections for those programmes where it confirmed individual error rates above 2%, so that the risk at closure will be ultimately below 2% for all the programmes. Estimated future corrections corresponded to a range of 0.5-1.4%, leading to an estimated risk at closure of 1.8%.

Preventive measures were mostly driven by operational programmes under the 2021-2027 programming period and corrective measures by operational programmes under the 2014-2020 programming period. In relation to the cohesion funds for the 2014-2020 programming period, Member States implemented preventive and corrective measures ⁽⁸⁵⁾ attributed to the Member States' own controls for a total amount of EUR 211 million, which is much lower than the amount for those implemented last year, at EUR 598 million. This is explained by the limited number (i.e. 96 out of 431) of final assurance packages submitted by the Member States to the Commission by 1 March 2025. For the same programming period, the Member States also implemented corrective measures attributed to the Commission's controls, follow-ups to investigations of the European Anti-Fraud Office and audits of the Court of Auditors for an amount of EUR 70 million. In addition, for the 2007-2013 programming period, the Commission implemented corrective measures for an amount of EUR 154 million. The implementation of the operational programmes for 2021-

⁽⁸²⁾ Article 14(4) 'Amendments to Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013' of Regulation (EU) 2024/795: 'in Article 138, the following subparagraph is added: "By way of derogation from the deadline set out in the first subparagraph, Member States may submit the documents referred to under points (a), (b) and (c) for the final accounting year by 15 February 2026."'

⁽⁸³⁾ A total of 11 packages for cohesion.

⁽⁸⁴⁾ This concerns 398 out of 435 programmes for the 2014-2020 programming period.

⁽⁸⁵⁾ For the last accounting year, the corrections cannot be classified as preventive or corrective, as this distinction cannot be made in the final accounts (no further action possible after the submission of the final accounts in next payment applications or subsequent accounts).

2027 programming period accelerated in 2024, reaching EUR 8 368 million, or 15% of the total expenditure for cohesion funds. As such, it was the first year in which the Member States implemented preventive measures for this programming period, for a total value of EUR 565 million. As it is still early, the corrective measures for 2021-2027 were rather low (EUR 8 million).

One specific feature of the 2021-2027 multiannual financial framework for the programmes under the European Regional Development Fund, Cohesion Fund and European Social Fund Plus is the need for Member States to comply with a set of thematic and horizontal enabling conditions to allow for the effective implementation of the funds. **At the end of 2024, around 96% of the applicable thematic enabling conditions were assessed as fulfilled for the European Regional Development Fund, Cohesion Fund and European Social Fund Plus programmes that had been adopted.** By the end of April 2024, all Member States except Hungary fulfilled the horizontal enabling conditions ⁽⁸⁶⁾.

At the end of 2024, four reservations were issued in relation to cohesion policy funds (two per programming period): one for the European Regional Development Fund and Cohesion Fund and one for the European Social Fund, the youth employment initiative and the Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived. These reservations concern operational programmes that presented significant weaknesses in their management and control systems or for which the error rate was above the materiality threshold, or, less frequently, for which the audit work at the Member State level was deemed insufficient or unsatisfactory.

- Two reservations for the 2014-2020 period: the number of programmes under reservation (26) was lower than the number of programmes under reservation in 2023 (53). The financial impact decreased from EUR 583 million to EUR 68 million because only 20% of the final assurance packages had been submitted by 1 March 2025. As a result, fewer cases met the criteria for issuing reservations. To prevent any assurance gap, the Commission applied appropriate flat rates and qualifications to relevant cases. These include situations where no assurance package was submitted, but where deficiencies in the functioning of the management and control systems were already known to the Commission from the prior years' exercise or through its own audit work. Furthermore, the absence of accounts for 80% of the 2014-2020 programmes has impacted the relevant expenditure (the basis under which the financial impact is calculated). This resulted in non-quantified reservations and a corresponding reduction in the financial impact of the reservations.
- Two reservations for the 2021-2027 period, in relation to seven programmes, with a total financial impact of EUR 3 million.

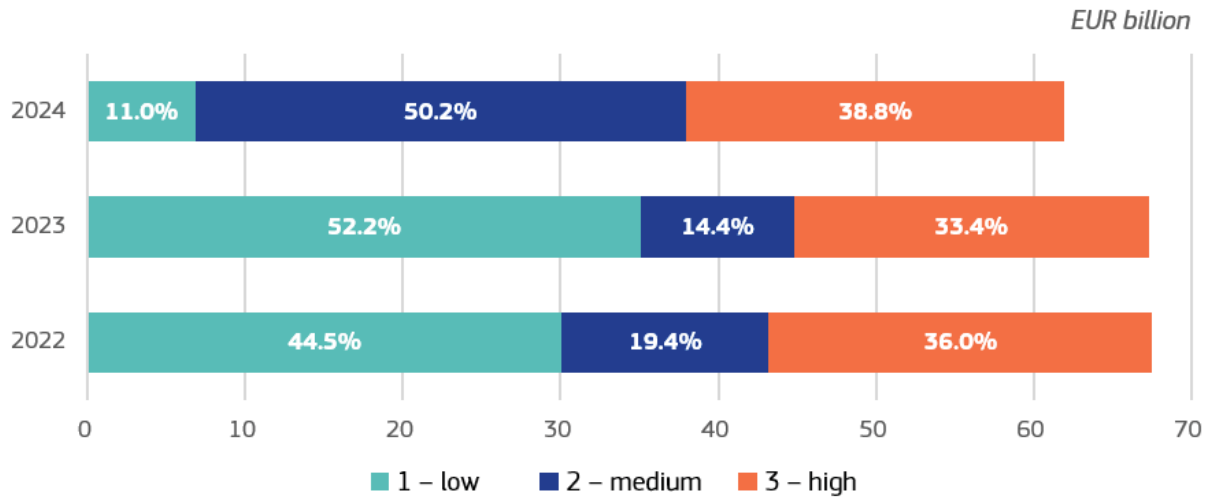
Reservations are only lifted once the system weaknesses have been addressed and the error rate is below 2%. Usually, the reasons for the reservations are not structural, and it takes one to two years for a reservation to be lifted. For more details on reservations, see Volume III, Annex 5.

The Commission continues to take action to support programme authorities in improving their management and control systems and to bring the risk at closure for cohesion below 2%. In December 2024, following a participative debate with both audit and managing authorities, the **Commission established a jointly agreed action plan comprising 22 measures** covering the following categories: dissemination of information to beneficiaries to improve their understanding of their obligations and rules; analysis of errors detected, and in particular additional errors reported by EU audits; enhanced use of information technology tools; staff training; enhanced preventive role of auditing; use of complete and updated audit checklists; and effective audit practices in line with audit standards (e.g. documentation of

⁽⁸⁶⁾ There are four horizontal enabling conditions linked to overarching, horizontal aspects of programme implementation, ensuring compliance with general EU principles and effective programme management (Annex 3 to the Common Provisions Regulation).

verifications/checks done). The implementation of these measures will be subject to continuous monitoring by the Commission, along with each Member State's audit authority.

Multiannual financial framework heading 2 – cohesion, resilience and values – overview of risk segmentation for 2022-2024



Note: In 2024, for cohesion, no programme is in the low-risk segment following the prudent approach of using flat rates of 2% for both programming periods.

Source: European Commission annual activity reports for 2024.

Heading 3 – natural resources and environment

Total amount of relevant expenditure: EUR 57.4 billion (2023: EUR 58.3 billion).

- *Compliance-based assurance model:* EUR 14.5 billion (2023: EUR 58.1 billion).
- *Performance-based assurance model:* EUR 42.9 billion (2023: EUR 0.2 billion).

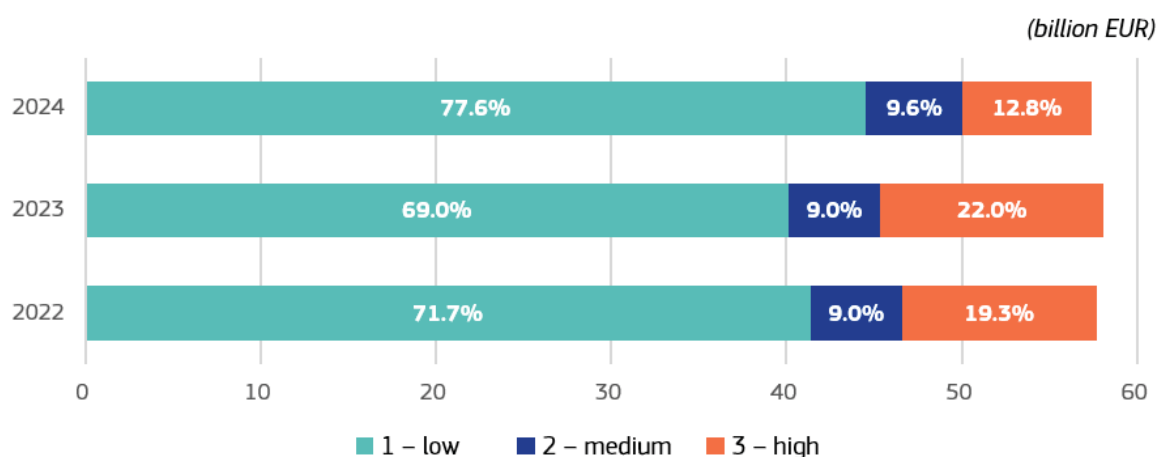
Share of low-risk expenditure: 77 % (2024), 69% (2023).

Total preventive and corrective measures (Commission and Member States): EUR 1 069.8 million (2023: EUR 1 157.6 million).

- *preventive measures:* EUR 178.4 million ⁽⁸⁷⁾ (2023: EUR 490.3 million);
- *corrective measures:* EUR 891.4 million (2023: EUR 667.4 million).

Reservations: seven reservations with a financial impact of EUR 254 million (2023: five reservations with a financial impact of EUR 705 million).

Multiannual financial framework heading 3 – natural resources and environment – overview of risk segmentation for 2022-2024



Source: European Commission annual activity reports for 2024.

In 2024, for natural resources and environment, 77.7 % of the expenditure was considered low risk. This corresponds to expenditure with a risk at payment below 2%, for compliance-based payments, and expenditure for which the systems in place in the Member States have been assessed as low risk, functioning well or at least functioning, for performance-based payments. This is very similar to the share of low-risk expenditure for agriculture (77,4 %), which represents the bulk of the expenditure in this policy area (97%), the rest corresponding to maritime and fisheries ⁽⁸⁸⁾, environment and climate expenditure. This is an increase compared to the share of low-risk expenditure in 2023 (69%), in 2022 (72%) and for 2018-2023 (an average of 64%).

⁽⁸⁷⁾ Preventive measures for performance-based expenditure are not included in 2024 amounts.

⁽⁸⁸⁾ European Maritime and Fisheries Fund expenditure, although included under the natural resources and environment heading, follows the same delivery mechanism as cohesion expenditure.

The CAP 2023–2027 represents a shift from a compliance-based policy to a greater focus on performance and results achieved. The new CAP confers more flexibility, but also more responsibility, on Member States. In general, Member States set the rules to be complied with by final beneficiaries in their National Plans, in accordance with the EU general framework. The Commission focuses on evaluating the progress towards the achievement of the results and on the functioning of the systems Member States put in place to ensure the respect of those conditions. The Commission no longer looks at individual transactions benefitting individual recipients. The reporting obligations for the Member States reflect these changes: in contrast to the previous programming period, the Member States no longer report to the Commission control statistics at the beneficiary level. Without receiving control statistics established at the beneficiary level, the Commission is not in a position to establish an error rate at paying agency level and thus neither for the whole CAP.

Accordingly, the Commission's new assurance model concentrates on performance and on the proper functioning of the Member States' governance systems set up to ensure both the legality and regularity of the underlying transactions and the quality of performance results. To conclude on the proper functioning of the Member States' governance systems, the Commission considers all available relevant information, notably the assessment by the Certification Bodies, resulting in a grading of the governance systems at paying agency and intervention level, as well as the results of its own audit findings and those of the Court of Auditors. This may prompt the Commission to adjust the Certification Bodies' gradings on a case-by-case basis at the appropriate level (Paying Agency and intervention level). In parallel, risks of serious deficiencies in the Member States' governance systems are identified and reported.

Governance systems are the governance bodies, including competent authorities, paying agencies, coordinating bodies and certification bodies, that manage the common agricultural policy in the Member States. These systems include the basic EU requirements, Member States' obligations to protect EU financial interests, the implementation of approved common agricultural policy strategic plans and a reliable reporting system to monitor performance.

Intervention refers to a specific support instrument with defined eligibility conditions, outlined in a Member State's common agricultural policy strategic plan, which covers interventions under both the European Agricultural Guarantee Fund and the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development. These interventions include a range of support types, such as basic income support for sustainability, complementary income support for young farmers, eco-schemes, and sectoral support for fruit and vegetables, apiculture and wine, along with environmental, climate-related and other management commitments, and support for natural or area-specific constraints, among other things.

For the expenditure under the new assurance model, the Commission groups the corresponding expenditure into three categories of risk – low, medium and high – based on the final grading (see box below) of the systems put in place by the Member States. Certification bodies determine the grading annually based on their qualitative assessment of the proper functioning of the systems in place (governance systems) per intervention per paying agency to ensure that final beneficiaries comply with the applicable rules. This grading may be adjusted by the Commission on a case-by-case basis, taking into account its own audit findings and those of the Court of Auditors. Based on the above, expenditure is grouped into low risk, where the final, adjusted grading is 3 or 4; medium risk, where the final, adjusted grading is 2; and high risk, where the final, adjusted grading is 1. The Commission will issue reservations either where risks of serious deficiencies in the Member States' governance systems have been identified (grading 1) or where a Member State is behind on its milestones.

There are four grades describing the functioning of the governance systems of the interventions:

- 4 – functioning well, for governance systems for which no or very few exceptions in the tests of controls were found;
- 3 – functioning, for governance systems for which few exceptions in the tests of controls were found;
- 2 – partially functioning, for governance systems for which some exceptions in the tests of controls were found;
- 1 – not functioning, for governance systems for which several systemic exceptions in the tests of controls were found, substantially affecting the effectiveness of controls

Reliance on the certification bodies plays a crucial role under the single audit principle that is applied by the Commission. As a result, it only audits paying agencies if the work of the certification bodies cannot be relied upon. In 2024, the Commission performed 48 audits, targeting the governance systems in place in the Member States. The same audits, where relevant, also covered the legality and regularity of expenditure under the 2014-2022 programming period.

The corrective measures implemented in 2024, amounting to EUR 891 million, still relate to the previous common agricultural policy system. No net financial corrections have yet been decided for expenditure under the common agricultural policy strategic plans. The 2024 audits showed that Member States generally established proper governance systems for the new common agricultural policy. Some potentially serious deficiencies were found for which conformity procedures have been opened to confirm the deficiencies and to assess the risk to the EU budget. Conformity procedures need time to offer the Member States the opportunity to contradict the Commission's findings. As of the end of 2024, no conformity procedures had been finalised for the expenditure under the common agricultural policy strategic plans.

For the expenditure implemented outside the strategic plans for rural development, market measures and direct payments (22% of this heading's expenditure), the risk at payment was similar to that in 2023, with 2.79% for rural development, 1.99% for market measures and 5.95% for direct payments. The higher rates in line with the historical rates for the measures with expenditure in 2024 are due to the higher complexity of the rules.

Expenditure relating to fisheries, the environment and climate initiatives – 3% of this heading's expenditure – continued to be low risk. The estimated risk at payment for the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund, for the 2014-2020 programming period, is 0.59% (compared to 1.37% in 2023). Although one programme is currently under reservation, the corresponding financial corrections and safeguard measures are being implemented. The estimated risk at payment for the 2021-2027 European Maritime, Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund was 1.11%. Overall, the risk level has remained stable since 2021, at around 1%, which is considered a low-risk type of expenditure. Similarly, DG Environment and DG Climate Action, with risks at payment of 0.25% and 0.40% respectively, have low-risk expenditure profiles. Both departments mostly have inherently low-risk types of payments (e.g. procurements, subsidies to decentralised agencies, contribution agreements with international organisations).

At the end of 2024, there were seven reservations for this heading, as described below.

Five recurrent reservations for segments of expenditure or programmes where control weaknesses and/or error rates are above 2%:

- European Agricultural Guarantee Fund market measures in relation to six aid schemes in four Member States, quantified;
- direct payments (programme of options specifically relating to remoteness and insularity) in relation to one Member State, quantified;
- European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development measures in relation to 12 paying agencies in 10 Member States, quantified;
- European Maritime and Fisheries Fund, for management and control system weaknesses in one Member State, non-quantified;
- EU emissions trading system registry, reservation related to IT risks, non-quantified.

Two new reservations for expenditure under the common agricultural policy strategic plans for interventions in Member States where potential serious deficiencies were identified in the functioning of the governance systems. Given the qualitative assessment, no financial impact can be determined, and the reservations are not quantified. This lack of quantification explains the significant decrease in the financial impact compared to 2023:

- for expenditure that falls under the integrated administration and control system (10 reservations in 10 paying agencies for nine Member States affecting 28 interventions);
- for expenditure that does not fall under the integrated administration and control system (six reservations in six paying agencies for five Member States affecting nine interventions).

In all cases where the deficiencies identified have led to reservations, close follow-up measures are in place, including conformity clearance procedures to ultimately protect the EU budget, monitoring of the implementation of remedial measures taken by Member States and, where necessary, interruption or reduction/suspension of payments to the Member States (for more details, see Volume III, Annex 5).

Heading 4 – migration and border management

Total amount of relevant expenditure: EUR 3.5 billion (2023: EUR 3.0 billion).

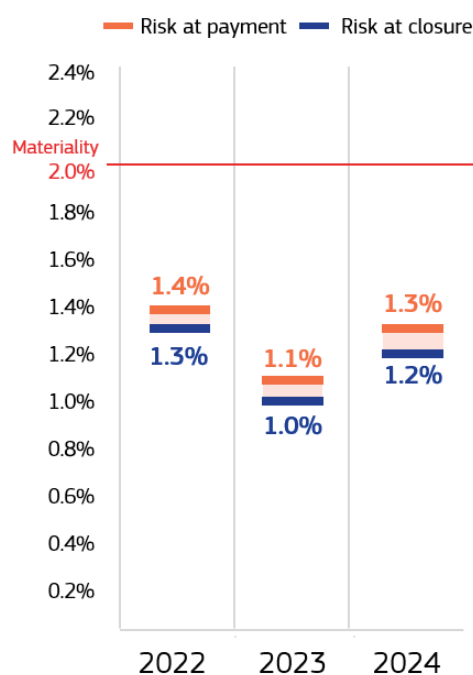
Risk at payment: 1.3% (2023: 1.1%).

Risk at closure: 1.2% (2023: 1.0%).

Total corrective and preventive measures (Commission and Member States): EUR 45.5 million (2023: EUR 2.5 million):

- preventive measures implemented by the Commission: EUR 13.6 million (2023: EUR 1.3 million);
- corrective measures implemented by the Commission: EUR 1.1 million (2023: EUR 1.1 million).

Reservations: two reservations with a financial impact of EUR 3.4 million (2023: two reservations with a financial impact of EUR 0.8 million).



For migration and border management ⁽⁸⁹⁾, the risk at payment (1.3%) and the risk at closure (1.2%) increased slightly compared to 2023, with both remaining below 2%. In 2024, the amount of corrective measures remained stable, while the amount of preventive measures was significantly higher compared to 2023, at EUR 13.6 million. This is partially explained by the time gap between decisions taken in 2023 but implemented in the Commission's accounting system in 2024 for an amount of EUR 5.3 million.

This policy area consisted mostly of low-risk segments of expenditure. For a share of 87% of the relevant expenditure, the risk at payment is below 2%. These include the payments to decentralised agencies voted by the budgetary authority, which were considered an error-free type of expenditure and represented 40%. The implementation of the Internal Security Fund, the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund and the Border Management and Visa Policy Instrument, under the shared management mode, representing 44% of the relevant expenditure, is also

low risk, with an overall risk at payment of 1.1% and 0.8%, respectively, for the programmes in the 2014-2020 and 2021-2027 periods.

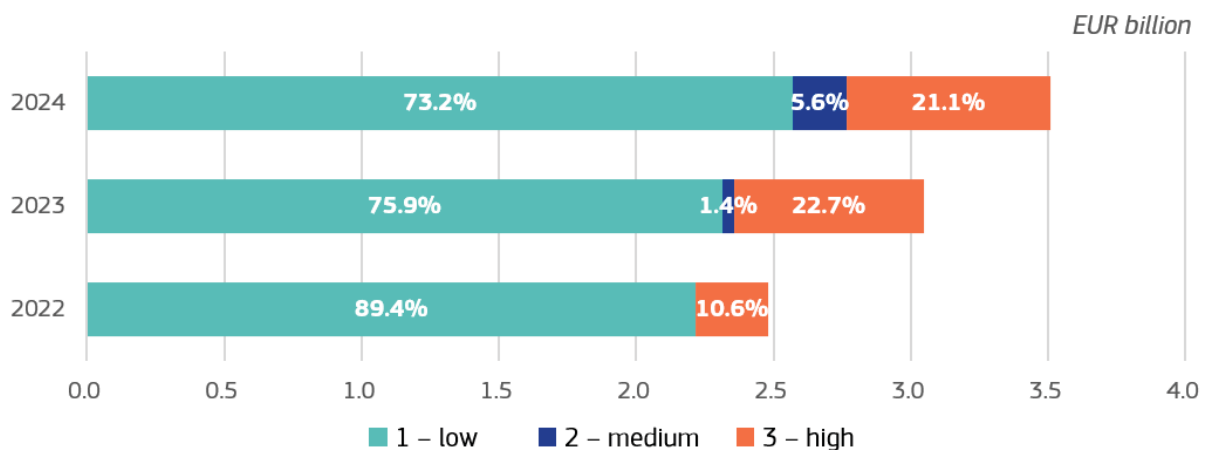
⁽⁸⁹⁾ Heading 4 also includes the Internal Security Fund of heading 5, since all the funds managed by DG Migration and Home Affairs are audited and controlled on the basis of the management mode and the type of payment, and the risks thus determined cannot be split between the budget headings.

The only high-risk expenditure segment that was implemented directly by the Commission reached a risk at payment of 6.64% in 2024 (up from 4.04% in 2023). This segment represented only 13% of the relevant expenditure for 2024 and corresponded to grants for EU actions and emergency assistance to support Member States in the fields of migration and border management.

At the end of 2024, two reservations were identified:

- one reservation concerning the Border Management and Visa Policy Instrument, Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund and the Internal Security Fund for the 2021-2027 programming period, quantified for two Member States and non-quantified for one Member State.
- one reservation concerning the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund and the Internal Security Fund for the 2014-2020 programming period, quantified for one Member State and one Schengen-associated country and non-quantified for six Member States.

Multiannual financial framework heading 4 – migration and border management – overview of risk segmentation for 2022-2024



Source: European Commission annual activity reports for 2024.

Heading 5 – security and defence

Total amount of relevant expenditure: EUR 318.7 million (2023: EUR 136.7 million).

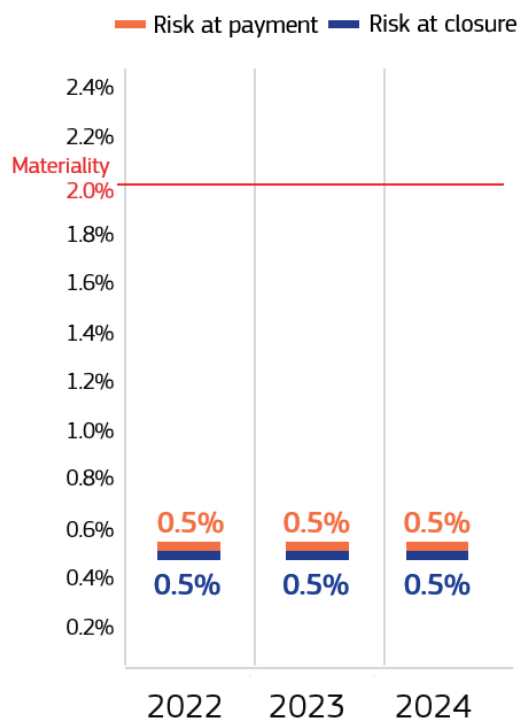
Risk at payment: 0.5% (2023: 0.5%).

Risk at closure: 0.5% (2023: 0.5%).

Total corrective and preventive measures: EUR 7.5 million (2023: EUR 1.9 million):

- preventive measures: EUR 7.2 million (2023: EUR 1.9 million);
- corrective measures: EUR 0.3 million (2023: EUR 0 million).

Reservations: none (2023: none).

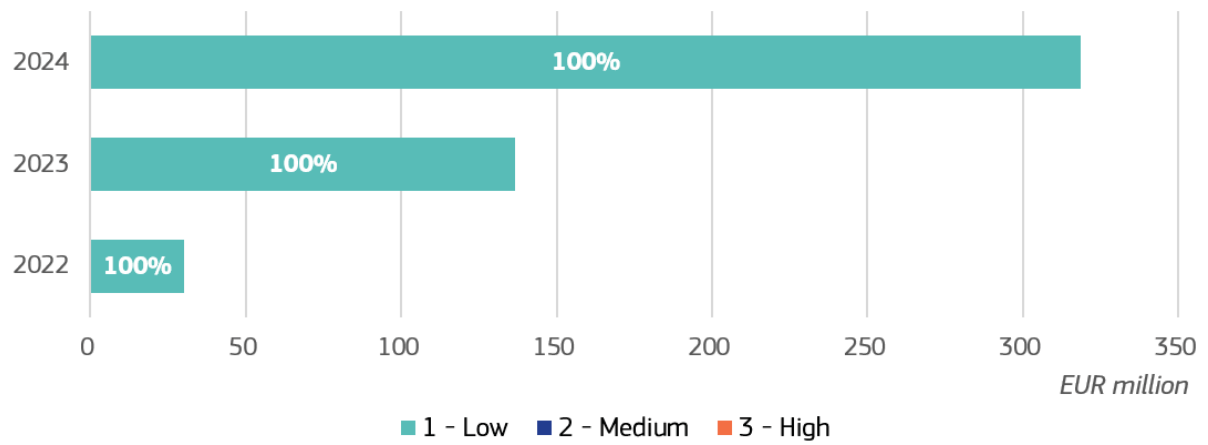


Under this heading, the risk at payment remained stable, and very low, between 2023 and 2024. This is explained by the low inherent risk profile of the beneficiaries, the means of funding of the different programmes and the performance of the related control systems. Overall, the relevant expenditure increased by 133% from 2023 to 2024. This is mostly due to the advancement of projects under the European Defence Funds and the ammunition production programme that have started since the beginning of the programming period, leading to more payment after a few years.

Almost 76% of the expenditure is linked to defence initiatives (i.e. the European Defence Fund and its precursor programmes, the Act in Support of Ammunition Production programme and the European defence industrial development programme) that are largely implemented through direct management by the Commission, through grants and procurement. The remaining expenditure, including part of the preparatory action on defence research, was implemented through indirect management by the European Defence Agency

and the Organisation for Joint Armament Cooperation.

The increase in preventive measures, resulting from *ex ante* controls that are carried out before the payments take place, is mostly explained by the increase in payments that are checked *ex ante*. Very few errors were detected post-payment as a result of *ex post* controls, and thus corrective measures remained low, which is consistent with the inherent low risk for this expenditure.

Multiannual financial framework heading 5 – security and defence – overview of risk segmentation for 2022-2024

Source: European Commission annual activity reports for 2024.

Heading 6 – neighbourhood and the world

Total amount of relevant expenditure: EUR 20.0 billion (2023: EUR 14.2 billion).

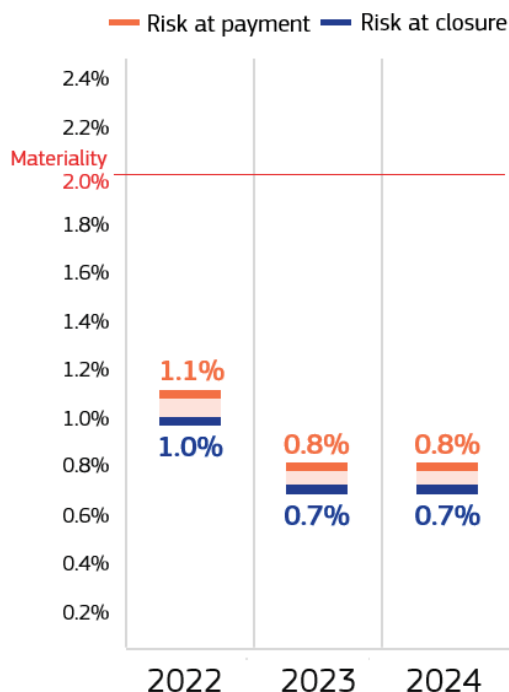
Risk at payment: 0.8% (2023: 0.8%).

Risk at closure: 0.7% (2023: 0.7%).

Total corrective and preventive measures: EUR 153.1 million (2023: EUR 150.5 million):

- preventive measures: EUR 125.5 million (2023: EUR 138.1 million);
- corrective measures: EUR 27.6 million (2023: EUR 12.4 million).

Reservations: one reservation without financial impact (2023: one reservation).



In 2024, the risk at payment (0.8%) and the risk at closure (0.7%) remained stable compared to 2023 and were well below 2%. The expenditure increased by EUR 5.8 billion – more than 30% compared to 2023 – mostly relating to the Ukraine Facility, which started in 2024 (EUR 3.6 billion under the EU budget and EUR 13.1 billion of loans outside the EU budget), and the contributions to the Global Fund (EUR 1.16 billion).

The new Ukraine Facility was launched in March 2024. In total, it will provide EUR 50 billion of financial support to Ukraine over the 2024-2027 period, combining non-repayable support (borne by the EU budget) and highly concessional loans (from borrowings). Payments are performance based and depend on the achievement of predefined steps.

Despite the low level of error in most of the expenditure segments, the Commission continued to look into possibilities to improve its financial management of programmes that are sometimes governed by complex funding procedures. This is also necessitated by the

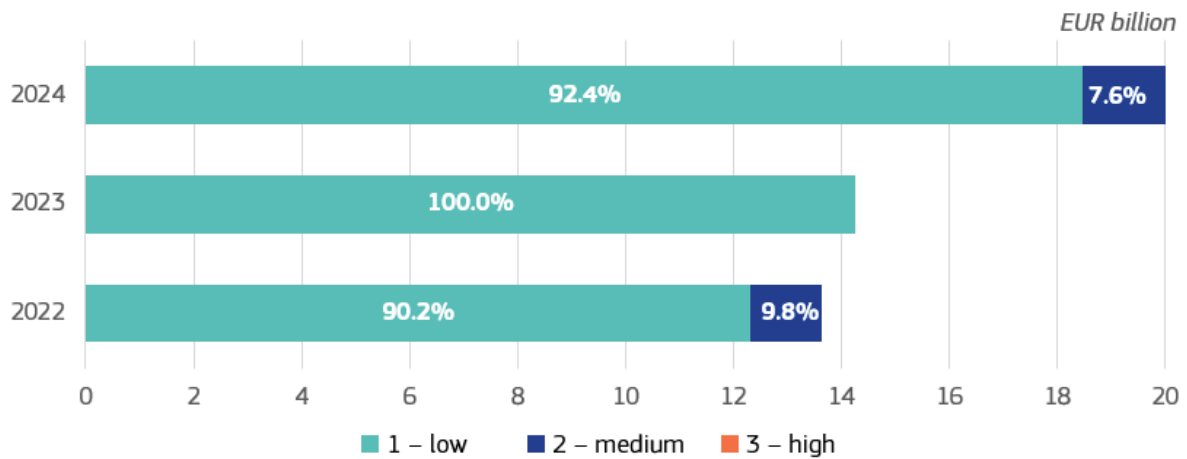
complex operational environment, characterised by unpredictability, volatility and insecurity.

The main causes for errors in grants and indirect management are missing supporting documents, procurement issues and excess clearing. The Court of Auditors concludes that there is excess clearing when the Commission pays for more than the actual cost incurred by the implementing partners. Commission services do not consider such a situation to be an error since this is in any case regularised at the end of the project, where the final payment is based on the actual costs incurred. Still, Commission services have taken mitigation measures, such as strengthening the dialogue and verification processes to increase transparency in cooperation with international organisations, to address the weaknesses and deficiencies. Moreover, DG International Partnerships concluded the review of its control strategy in 2024, and is now considering the measures to be taken as a follow-up. The report recommends enhancing the effectiveness of controls and simplifying and reducing the administrative burden, and suggests measures in indirect management and grants to prevent and reduce errors.

The reservation concerning projects in Libya, Syria and Ukraine was maintained in 2024. In these countries, the EU delegations cannot implement standard monitoring and control activities due to security and political constraints on the ground. Mitigating measures have been put in place, including remote monitoring and cross-checking information from various sources. Still, they do not allow to fully address the impact on

the assurance of the corresponding expenditure. Without a Commission presence on the ground, the objective of these measures is to mitigate the systemic risks related to the operations to the extent possible, even if the countries remain active conflict zones.

Multiannual financial framework heading 6 – neighbourhood and the world – overview of risk segmentation for 2022-2024



Source: European Commission annual activity reports for 2024.

Heading 7 – European public administration

Total amount of relevant expenditure: EUR 11.6 billion (2023: EUR 8.9 billion).

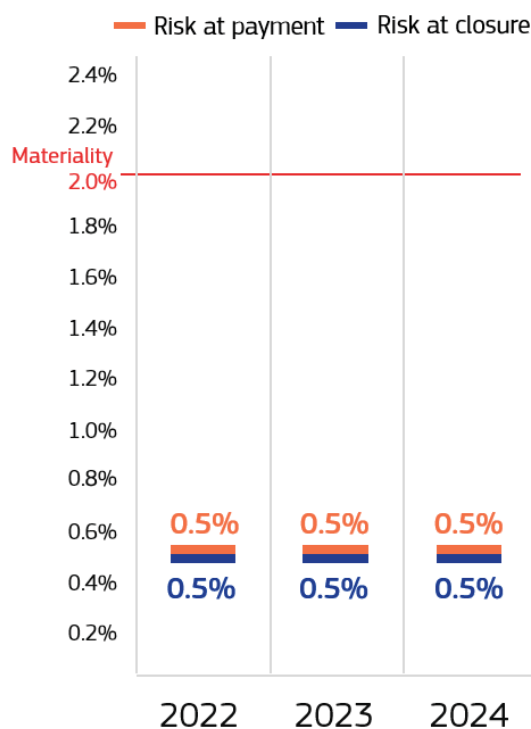
Risk at payment: 0.5% (2023: 0.5%).

Risk at closure: 0.5% (2023: 0.5%).

Total corrective and preventive measures: EUR 5.9 million (2023: EUR 3.5 million):

- preventive measures: EUR 4.3 million (2023: EUR 2.7 million);
- corrective measures: EUR 1.6 million (2023: 0.8 EUR million).

Reservations: one reputational reservation (2023: one reputational reservation).



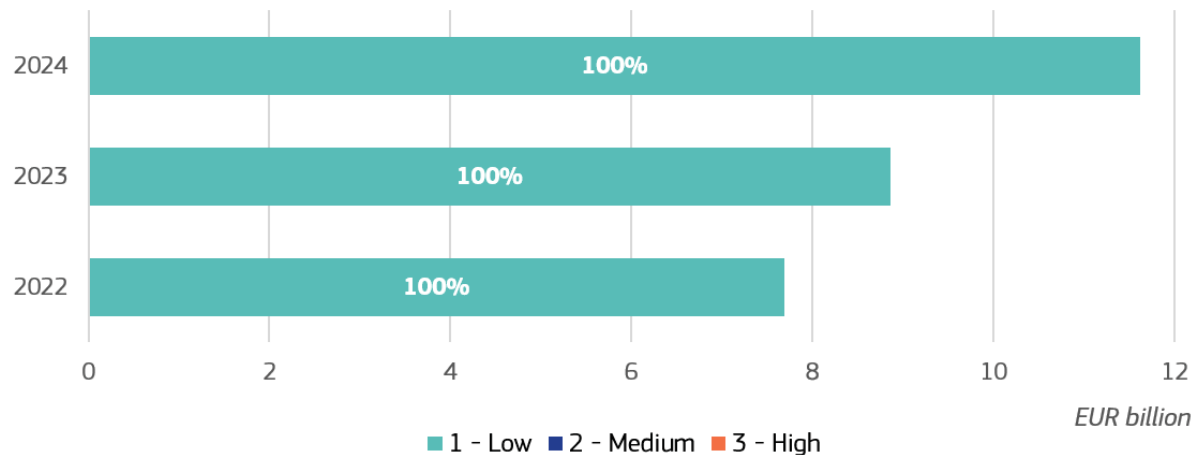
This heading groups together all of the Commission services and departments that mostly provide services to other Commission services and departments but have no operational policy objectives. These entities thus mostly manage administrative expenditure under the direct management mode, such as the Office for the Administration and Payment of Individual Entitlements, which represents approximately 61% of the expenditure for this heading. The increase in the relevant expenditure compared to 2023 corresponds mainly (EUR 2.54 billion) to the interest rate subsidy paid under the European Union Recovery Instrument and the Ukraine macrofinancial assistance plus programme.

The risk at payment was prudently set at 0.5% for this low-risk type of expenditure. As most of the corresponding control systems involve predominantly *ex ante* controls, the estimated future corrections were often set at a prudent 0.0%. Thus, the risk at closure is equal to the risk at payment, and remained very low at 0.5%. In 2024, the Commission's preventive measures amounted to EUR 4.3 million, more than last year's

EUR 2.7 million. The corrective measures amounted to EUR 1.6 million (EUR 0.8 million in 2023). For heading 7, the increase in recoveries reflects the adjustment of advance payments following the first full year of implementation of a new contractual framework. Similar to previous years, these recoveries are related to the standard regularisation of payments and do not correspond to the correction of irregularities.

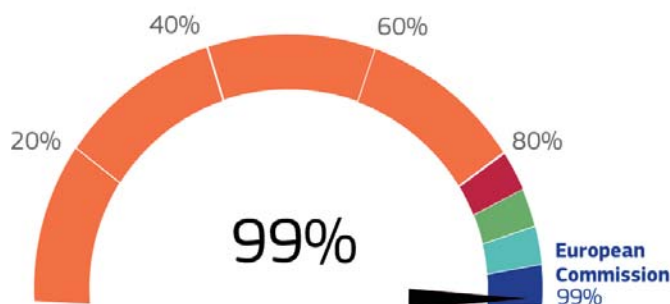
In this policy area, the European Personnel Selection Office maintained the reputational reservation that was raised in 2023 on the issues encountered in implementing new selection procedures and competitions. The measures taken starting in 2023 have not yet delivered their full mitigating impact.

Multiannual financial framework heading 7 – European public administration – overview of risk segmentation for 2022-2024



Source: European Commission annual activity reports for 2024.

2.1.4. Efficiency measures have been taken



One indicator used to measure the efficiency of procedures and controls in place for making payments is the time to pay. In 2024, 99% of payments (in value) were made within the legal payment deadline (see graph), despite the fact that the working environment was still significantly impacted by various crises. This is of paramount importance, as many beneficiaries rely on these payments to carry out their activities and projects, which, in turn, contribute to the Commission's objectives.

The Commission is continually striving to improve the efficiency of its operations so as to deliver on its objectives under tight budgetary constraints and to achieve the objectives set in its digital agenda. Processes are being streamlined to ensure the most efficient use of limited resources.

Against a backdrop of unprecedented challenges, **the Commission's digital transformation is moving forward** by continuing the development of more efficient corporate information technology tools to increase the efficiency of its business processes and offering increasing data management and reporting capabilities.

An important milestone in the business-driven digital transformation is the go-live of the Commission's new financial and accounting system (SUMMA) (see box below).

SUMMA – the go-live of the Commission's new-generation corporate financial system

In 2024, in line with the EU's digital strategy, the Commission continued to implement and deploy its new corporate financial platform, SUMMA. The platform went live in the Commission departments and executive agencies in January 2025, fully replacing the former central accounting, budgetary and treasury system, and will be further deployed to all the entities using it by 2027. This offers a significant increase in business efficiency, along with flexibility through integrated real-time analytics and decreased costs relating to ownership and future maintenance.

SUMMA is a modern financial system, designed in close cooperation with the business owners, based on the best industry standards and fully integrated into the Commission's corporate information technology landscape.

The integration with the main corporate and local systems during 2024 increased the overall level of automation of the Commission's operations. The SUMMA program has a strong governance framework and uses a thorough quality assurance system, based on regular tests on SUMMA processes and integrations. Following a comprehensive assessment, which confirmed the readiness of SUMMA and the integrated systems, along with the organisational readiness to go live, the SUMMA Supervisory Board agreed to deploy the platform in November 2024, starting with the operations on the anticipated budget for 2025. Since January 2025, SUMMA has been used for all financial operations by the Commission and the executive agencies.

Other examples of economy and efficiency are presented in the box below.

Examples of economy and efficiency

- One of the measures that is expected to have the widest and longest-term effect is the **increased use of simplified cost options funding, in particular lump sums and unit costs**, in several policy areas. **In the area of research**, the use of lump sums is increasingly important, with an additional significant wave of lump-sum funding in the work programmes for 2024 accounting for 27% of the total call budget, with an objective of 50% of the total call budget by 2027. Also, since May 2024, optional unit costs for personnel have been introduced. Following an in-depth analysis of lump-sum grants, they continue to be popular with users and are perceived as reducing the administrative burden.
- Still in the same area, the European Research Executive Agency has developed **automated checks for lump-sum proposals**. These checks help evaluators in assessing budgets. This pre-analysis has helped pinpoint key budget items requiring further attention.
- **In external action policies** during 2024, the **number of indicators** for the Service for Foreign Policy Instruments' results framework **was reduced by 68%** (from 512 to 166 indicators). This concrete work on simplification was inspired by the better regulation process, responding to an Internal Audit Service recommendation on the performance management framework of 2020. With this revised performance framework, implementing partners will have clearer, more streamlined and more transparent means of reporting on the results of EU investment in external action in the coming years. This will thus also contribute to reducing their administrative burden.
- Several Commission departments continued to report in 2024 on significant progress made in the eProcurement programmes. An important milestone was achieved by the Joint Research Centre at the end of September 2024 with the complete phase-out of eTendering, which has been replaced by the Public Procurement Management Tool and the Funding and Tenders Portal. Practically all Commission departments have at least one of their framework contracts fully onboarded on **eContracting** or are able to use the framework contracts of another department. A full solution has been put into production that can now also be used by all Commission departments for their new direct contracts. The eProcurement solution is undergoing continual improvement, and this will continue in 2025. These improvements aim to give users more flexibility and greater efficiency.
- DG Digital Services provides the **Reusable Solutions Platform**, a set of software building blocks, to other Commission departments so that they do not have to procure or develop the respective functionality themselves. This platform avoids cost and improves the economy and efficiency of information technology activities at the corporate level. It also improves information technology security and fosters the principle of reuse across the institution.
- Kohesio, the public platform for the visibility and transparency of cohesion-policy-funded projects, was further updated and enriched in 2024. It covers data from all Member States and is available in all 24 EU languages. At the end of the year, Kohesio contained nearly 2 million projects and 630 000 beneficiaries supported by the European Regional Development Fund, the Cohesion Fund and the European Social Fund, including Interreg. Projects from the 2021–2027 programming period have started to arrive, and a new map is being developed to enhance the exploration of thematic fields across geographic dimensions. The EU Knowledge Graph continues to serve as the backbone of Kohesio, publishing all data in a linked and open format. It allows researchers and citizens to export data, promoting transparency on cohesion funds.

The impact of artificial intelligence

In January 2024, the Commission issued its **communication on artificial intelligence in the Commission** (AI@EC) ⁽⁹⁰⁾, laying down a strategic vision to foster the development and use of lawful, safe and trustworthy AI systems in the Commission. With this, the Commission anticipated and prepared internally for the implementation of the EU AI Act ⁽⁹¹⁾, which was adopted and entered into force in August 2024. This act is the world's first comprehensive law on AI. It includes concrete measures about how the Commission will build institutional and operational capacity to ensure safe, transparent and human-centred use of AI in its work. It also bans certain AI practices that pose **significant threats and sets strict obligations for high-risk AI systems. This has been accompanied by the launching of GPT@EC, an AI platform for use within the Commission.**

In research and innovation, a substantial increase in the number of proposals received for many calls has been noted, which is likely due, at least in part, to the rapid adoption of generative AI by applicants. This has increased the workload and the pressure on resources during the evaluation and selection of proposals. There are also risks associated with the use of AI tools by experts and Commission staff, along with the ethical implications of using AI tool within projects. Examples are as follows: a possible positive bias in evaluations towards AI-assisted proposals due to better drafting quality, at the cost of overlooking scientific excellence in other proposals; possible manipulation of researchers' CVs, requiring an increase in checks and verifications by evaluation experts; lower quality and success rates of AI-drafted projects; and project reports and deliverables with unreliable content. To address both these risks and the increase in applications, an AI Task Force is exploring emerging issues and designing measures to address them, collated into the '[Guidance note – Use of artificial intelligence tools in the submission and evaluation of HE proposals](#)'.

Regarding the new European approach to AI, guidelines on the use of generative AI in science were published in 2024 through the European Research Area Forum, in collaboration with Member States and relevant stakeholders, to support the European research community in their responsible use of generative AI and research integrity ⁽⁹²⁾.

2.1.5. The costs of controls are proportionate to the associated risks

In 2024, following the combined assessment of their effectiveness, efficiency and economy, all Commission departments reached a positive conclusion on the cost-effectiveness of their controls. The resources allocated to controls are aligned with the risks relating to the nature of the programmes and/or the context in which they are implemented. The cost of controls remains generally stable over time. The variety of spending

⁽⁹⁰⁾ Communication to the Commission – Artificial intelligence in the European Commission (AI@EC) – A strategic vision to foster the development and use of lawful, safe and trustworthy artificial intelligence systems in the European Commission, C(2024) 380 final, 21 January 2024, <https://commission.europa.eu/system/files/2024-01/EN%20Artificial%20Intelligence%20in%20the%20European%20Commission.PDF>.

⁽⁹¹⁾ Regulation (EU) 2024/1689 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 June 2024 laying down harmonised rules on artificial intelligence and amending Regulations (EC) No 300/2008, (EU) No 167/2013, (EU) No 168/2013, (EU) 2018/858, (EU) 2018/1139 and (EU) 2019/2144 and Directives 2014/90/EU, (EU) 2016/797 and (EU) 2020/1828 (Artificial Intelligence Act), OJ L, 2024/1689, 12.7.2024, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2024/1689/oj>.

⁽⁹²⁾ European Commission: Directorate-General for Research and Innovation, 'Guidelines on the responsible use of generative AI in research developed by the European Research Area Forum', European Commission website, 20 March 2024, https://research-and-innovation.ec.europa.eu/news/all-research-and-innovation-news/guidelines-responsible-use-generative-ai-research-developed-european-research-area-forum-2024-03-20_en.

programmes and their different features do not allow for a meaningful comparison of their control costs. However, some common cost drivers can be identified, as shown in the following text box.

Examples of common cost drivers

The intrinsic complexity of the programmes managed. Grants based on the reimbursement of real costs imply labour-intensive controls as opposed to financing based on lump sums, simplified cost options or financing not linked to costs, such as performance-based instruments.

The complexity of the environment in which programmes are implemented. The cost of controls is likely to be higher in the case of a multisite organisational structure or when partners and/or beneficiaries are located outside the EU's jurisdiction.

The volumes and amounts to be processed. A high number of low-value payments will generate higher control costs than recurrent mass payments, while the regulatory framework requires certain incompressible controls. This results in diseconomies of scale.

The type of budget implementation mode. Under indirect and shared management mode, the cost of controls is shared between the Commission and its implementing partners, while for direct management mode the burden is entirely borne by the Commission.

The life cycle of the programme: Towards the final stage of programmes (e.g. in direct management mode), despite the low level of expenditure, a minimum level of controls still has to be carried out, which results in an increase in the ratio of cost of controls to expenditure controlled.

The increase in the average standard staff costs, driven by salary adjustments and fluctuations in currency exchange rates. In the last several years, inflation has led to significant increases in staff costs, whereas the overall budget managed and controlled every year has remained stable. In external action, an additional factor relates to currency exchange rates.

For the sake of transparency and completeness, departments dealing with shared and/or indirect management have also reported on the cost of controls in Member States and entrusted entities separately from the Commission's own cost of controls in their annual activity reports.

3. Management assurance

As part of the governance system explained above, overall management assurance is ensured through the assurance given by the Directors-General, the Internal Audit Service and the Audit Progress Committee. It is supplemented by the opinion of the Court of Auditors and points on the 2023 discharge given by the budgetary authority and the follow-up of the discharge and external audit recommendations.

3.1. Assessments, assurance and reservations declared by authorising officers

For the 2024 reporting year, in their respective annual activity reports ⁽⁹³⁾, all 51 authorising officers by delegation ⁽⁹⁴⁾ declared they had reasonable assurance that (1) the information contained in their reports presents a 'true and fair view' (i.e. reliable, complete and correct) of the state of affairs in their departments; (2) the resources assigned to their activities were used for their intended purpose and in accordance with the principle of sound financial management; and (3) the control procedures put in place give the necessary guarantees concerning the legality and regularity of the underlying transactions, taking into account the multiannual character of some programmes and the nature of the payments concerned.

Within their overall assurance-building process, and from their management perspective, the authorising officers by delegation use all information available during the year, especially the results of their controls, to spot any potential significant weakness in quantitative or qualitative terms for each programme or segment of their portfolio. At the end of each financial year, they determine whether the financial impact of such a weakness is likely to be above the materiality threshold of 2% and/or whether the reputational impact is significant. If so, they qualify their declaration of assurance with a reservation for the specific segment affected.

For 2024, 11 authorising officers issued a qualified declaration of assurance, resulting in a total of 18 reservations, as follows. Similarly, in 2023, 10 authorising officers had reported 14 reservations.

- A total of **14 reservations have been maintained** from previous years, six of which are entirely or partially non-quantified. These reservations have been maintained mainly because the root causes of the material level of error can be partially mitigated but not fully eradicated under the current programmes' legal frameworks. Most of the recurrent reservations concern segments under shared management covering weaknesses that are identified at the level of a Member State, paying agency or programme and usually vary every year.
- **Four reservations are new**, three not quantified concerning programmes under the 2021-2027 multiannual financial framework and one quantified related to the Resilience and Recovery facility with a financial impact of EUR 17.5 million, 0.02% of the total expenditure under the Facility in 2024.
- **In nine further cases**, a reservation was not issued by virtue of the *de minimis* rule, whereby cases with a residual error rate above the 2% materiality threshold for segments that represent less than 5% of the department's total payments and have a financial impact of less than EUR 5 million are deemed not substantial enough to issue a reservation. The total financial impact of these cases

⁽⁹³⁾ European Commission, 'Annual activity reports', European Commission website, https://commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/strategy-documents/annual-activity-reports_en.

⁽⁹⁴⁾ The term 'authorising officer by delegation' covers Directors-General of Commission departments and heads of executive agencies, offices, services and task forces.

in 2024 was very limited, at EUR 8.6 million ⁽⁹⁵⁾, though it had increased compared to 2023 (EUR 6.4 million).

For reservations related to expenditure from the EU budget, the total financial impact was EUR 330.9 million for 2024, representing 0.2 % of the relevant expenditure, and had decreased. This is a decrease compared to 2023's EUR 1 290.6 million which is partially linked to the implementation of the 2023-2027 common agricultural policy. For this expenditure, in the case of serious deficiencies in governance systems leading to a reservation, it is not possible to determine the amount of the financial impact because it is the result of a qualitative assessment and not based on an error rate. The decrease in the financial impact is also linked to the policy areas of cohesion, where only a limited number of assurance packages were submitted by the Member States by 1 March 2025, since the amendment of the Common Provisions Regulation by the Strategic Technologies for Europe Platform Regulation allows Member States' final assurance packages to be submitted by 15 February 2026.

Annex 5 in Volume III provides a complete list of the reservations for 2024, along with further explanations and details.

⁽⁹⁵⁾ It should be noted that the *de minimis* rule for reservations is not applied to cohesion policy funds, since reservations are made for individual (parts of) programmes and then aggregated by programming period.

3.2. Work of the Internal Audit Service and overall conclusion

The Commission's Directorates-General and services also base their assurance on the work done by the Internal Audit Service.

As required by its mission charter, the Internal Audit Service issues an annual overall conclusion on the Commission's financial management. This is based on the audit work in the area of financial management in the Commission covering the past three years (2022 to 2024). The overall conclusion also takes into account information from other sources, namely the reports of the European Court of Auditors. The overall conclusion is issued at the same time as this report and covers the same year.

Based on this audit information, the Internal Auditor considered that, in 2024, the Commission had put in place governance, risk management and internal control procedures which, taken as a whole, are adequate to give reasonable assurance over the achievement of its financial objectives, with the exception of those areas of financial management over which authorising officers by delegation have expressed reservations in their declaration of assurance as listed in the annex.

Without further qualifying the overall conclusion for 2024, the Internal Audit Service drew the attention of the Commission to the need to respond to the high cross-cutting risks for the institution and the EU budget by building on the lessons learned from managing its financial resources in a challenging context. This is further detailed in Annex 6 to this report.

The Internal Audit Service audits the management and control systems within the Commission and the executive agencies, providing independent and objective assurance on their adequacy and effectiveness. The resulting recommendations concern aspects relating to performance management, EU policy implementation, legality and regularity in relation to internal control systems, preparedness for and early implementation of the EU budget, cooperation with third parties implementing policies and programmes, and information technology. For all accepted recommendations, the auditees drafted action plans that were submitted to the Internal Audit Service, which subsequently assessed them as being satisfactory or requested a revised action plan. Finally, the Internal Audit Service pursued its strict follow-up policy and assessed the actual implementation of its recommendations by the Commission's departments on a regular basis. The audit work confirmed that almost all of the recommendations issued between 2020 and 2024 and followed up by the Internal Audit Service had been adequately and effectively implemented by the auditees. This result indicates that the Commission services are diligent in implementing the recommendations and mitigating the risks identified by the Internal Audit Service.

Annex 6 includes more information on the assurance provided by the Internal Audit Service. In addition, a report on the internal auditor's work is forwarded by the Commission to the discharge authority, in accordance with Article 118(4) of the Financial Regulation, as part of the integrated financial and accountability reporting package.

3.3. Assurance obtained through the work of the Audit Progress Committee

The Audit Progress Committee oversees audit matters within the Commission and reports annually to the College of Commissioners. It ensures the independence of the Internal Audit Service, monitors the quality of internal audit work, and ensures that internal and external (i.e. from the European Court of Auditors) audit recommendations are properly taken into account by the Commission's Directorates-General and services and that they receive appropriate follow-up.

During this reporting period, which continued to be affected by the consequences of the **succession of unprecedented challenges** impacting the EU since 2020, the committee maintained its important role in enhancing governance, organisational performance and accountability across the entire organisation. Despite the time required for the appointment of new internal members to the Audit Progress Committee following the transition period between the two Commission mandates, it held four rounds of meetings, focusing on the key objectives set out in the 2024 and 2025 work programmes. The committee also welcomed the broad convergence between the critical risks identified by management and the high risks identified by the Internal Audit Service.

The committee discussed very important audit findings raised by the Internal Audit Service with relevant auditees and urged the completion of mitigating actions as soon as possible. The committee held discussions on important topics such as data protection, HR and IT security, especially relevant in the current cybersecurity environment.

The committee was satisfied with the independence and quality of the internal audit work and welcomed the internal auditor's reassurances that the planning provides sufficient coverage for delivering the overall conclusion on the Commission's financial management. The effective implementation rate of the internal auditor's recommendations remained very high (i.e. covering 95% of recommendations issued and followed up during 2020-2024), and only six very important audit recommendations were overdue by more than 6 months as of January 2025.

The committee continued its exchanges with the European Court of Auditors and held a discussion with the external auditor on its annual work programme for 2025. The committee also continued to monitor the progress in implementing the Court's recommendations, and was satisfied when, for the 17th time in a row, the Court gave a clean opinion on the reliability of the EU consolidated accounts.

Annex 7 to this annual management and performance report includes more information on the work and conclusions of the committee.

3.4. The opinions of the Court of Auditors on the 2023 accounts and on the legality and regularity of transactions

The Court of Auditors' 2023 – *Annual reports on the implementation of the EU budget for the 2023 financial year and on the activities funded by the 9th, 10th and 11th European Development Funds (EDFs) for the 2023 financial year*, published in October 2024, gave a clean opinion on the EU accounts for the 17th year in a row. Revenue also continued to be free from material error.

As regards the legality and regularity of expenditure, under the multiannual financial framework, the Court maintained its adverse opinion. It estimated the overall level of error for the EU budget to have increased (5.6% compared to 4.2% in 2022).

The Court explains its adverse opinion through both the reported level of error and the fact that material errors remain in what the Court considers to be high-risk expenditure. The Court considers as such expenditure that is often subject to complex rules and is mainly based on reimbursement of costs, in particular in the areas of cohesion, research, rural development, market measures under the European Agricultural Guarantee Fund and some parts of external initiatives. It concludes that high-risk expenditure represented 64% of the audited population for 2023 (against 66% in 2022).

On the other hand, the Court confirmed again that the risk of error is lower for expenditure subject to simpler rules, mainly entitlement-based payments (as opposed to reimbursement-based payments). This concerns, for instance, direct payments to farmers, but also administrative expenditure (mostly salaries and pensions in the EU civil service). Both these types of expenditure continue to be free from material error.

The Court also issued an audit opinion on the Recovery and Resilience Facility for the third time. It considered that the overall effects of its findings are material but not pervasive to this year's Recovery and Resilience Facility expenditure. Based on these quantitative and other qualitative findings, the Court of Auditors issued a qualified opinion ⁽⁹⁶⁾.

⁽⁹⁶⁾ Where the Court of Auditors finds a material level of error and determines its impact on a given audit opinion, the Court must determine whether the errors are 'pervasive' to the audit population. When errors are material and pervasive, the Court issues an adverse opinion. This was not the case for Recovery and Resilience Facility, where the overall effects of findings are material, but not pervasive to the year's accepted Recovery and Resilience Facility expenditure, thus leading to a qualified opinion.

See European Court of Auditors, *2023 annual reports on the implementation of the EU budget for the 2023 financial year and on activities funded by the 9th, 10th and 11th European Development Funds (EDFs) for the 2023 financial year*, p. 51.

3.5. Discharge of the budget for 2023

The Parliament granted the discharge to the Commission for the 2023 financial year on 7 May 2025, after having examined the reports of the Court of Auditors, the Commission's integrated financial and accountability reporting package and the Council's discharge recommendation. The Parliament's Committee on Budgetary Control also invited selected Commissioners and Executive Vice-Presidents for discharge hearings structured according to the headings of the multiannual financial framework, after having held exchanges of views with selected Directors-General (focused on the respective annual activity reports).

During the procedure, the key stakeholders – the Parliament, the Council and the Court of Auditors – focused on how to ensure transparency in the use of the EU budget, how to improve its results and how to further reduce the level of errors. The Recovery and Resilience Facility was again one of the key elements of the discharge discussions due to its financial magnitude and the specific nature of its delivery mode, which is performance based rather than based on costs incurred. Importantly, the 2023 financial year marked the midpoint of the Recovery and Resilience Facility's delivery period.

The discussions on discharge also touched upon issues such as:

- the financing of non-governmental organisations;
- the rule of law and fundamental rights;
- the importance of the EU budget in achieving the EU's priorities and responding to crises;
- the need for smoother implementation and absorption of EU funds and for the simplification of rules and procedures;
- the growing cost of repayment of the debt under NextGenerationEU,
- drawing conclusions from the implementation of the Recovery and Resilience Facility in the light of the next multiannual financial framework;
- cooperation among various stakeholders in the EU anti-fraud architecture;
- the methodologies to estimate the level of error and the level of risk, and cases where the Court of Auditors and the Commission reached different conclusions on the eligibility of expenditure;
- the review of the funding provided to Palestine ⁽⁹⁷⁾ and to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees;
- the use of information technology tools for the management, control and audit of EU funds.

Within the annual discharge procedure, the Commission informs the Parliament and the Council (as the two arms of the budgetary and discharge authorities) about the implementation of their recommendations through two reports: (1) an overview follow-up report (published in the summer); and (2) a more detailed report with replies to specific requests from the Parliament and the Council (sent in the autumn).

Regarding recommendations issued by the Court of Auditors, the Commission's replies are published together with the Court's reports, stating which recommendations are accepted, partially accepted or rejected. The follow-up to the accepted recommendations is tracked in an information technology tool, ensuring the traceability of each step of the implementation. Each Commission department reports on the implementation of these recommendations in its annual activity report. Moreover, the state of play of the implementation of these recommendations is presented on a regular basis to the Audit Progress Committee in the context of its mandate.

The Court of Auditors also monitors the Commission's implementation of its recommendations and provides feedback, helping the Commission to enhance its follow-up activities. In its 2023 annual report, the Court of Auditors reviewed the extent to which the Commission had pursued the implementation of 185 audit

⁽⁹⁷⁾ This designation shall not be construed as recognition of a State of Palestine and is without prejudice to the individual positions of the Member States on this issue.

recommendations addressed to it in 26 special reports published in 2020. Eight recommendations were not yet due for implementation at the time of the Court's follow-up review. Of the remaining 177 recommendations, the Commission had implemented 92 (52%) in full, 27 (16%) in most respects and 34 (19%) in some respects. In two cases (1%), no assessment of the implementation status was required, as the Court of Auditors considered the recommendation no longer relevant. In two other cases (1%), the Court was unable to reach a conclusion as it was too early to assess the recommendation's level of implementation. Of the 20 recommendations (11%) that the Court considered not to have been implemented, the Commission had not accepted nine, whereas it had partially accepted four. These results were similar to those of previous years.

4. Outlook for 2025 and beyond

4.1. A new strategic planning and programming cycle for 2025-2029

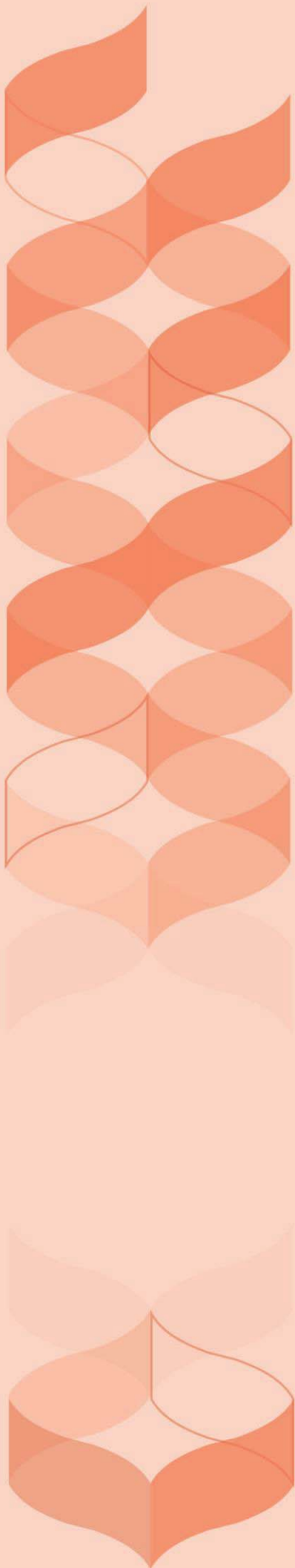
The Commission has streamlined its strategic planning and programming for 2025-2029, moving from one strategic plan per department towards a single strategic plan for the whole organisation. This new single strategic plan will cover a period of five years (2025-2029), and will include, among other things, the Commission's general objectives, based on the [2024-2029 political guidelines](#), along with long-term impact indicators. In addition to a single strategic plan, the departments' management plans will be shortened and more focused on the outputs and deliverables planned by the Commission departments for the year ahead.

4.2. The preparation of the post-2027 multiannual financial framework

With a view to the next multiannual financial framework – the EU's long-term budget – that will start in 2028, the Commission launched in 2024 the preparatory work for the proposals due in 2025.

This next long-term budget needs to square the circle: the expectations on the EU to act are steadily increasing. For the EU budget to be fit for its ambitions, ensure the repayment of the borrowing for NextGenerationEU and, at the same time, provide stable national financial contributions from Member States, the EU needs to introduce new own resources. **The status quo is not an option.** The EU must maximise the impact of every euro it spends, focusing on EU priorities and objectives where EU action is most needed.

As far as internal control and financial management are concerned, particular attention is being paid to striking the right balance between the administrative burden for the beneficiaries and the added value of strong controls and audits to preserve the EU's financial interests and to prevent fraud.



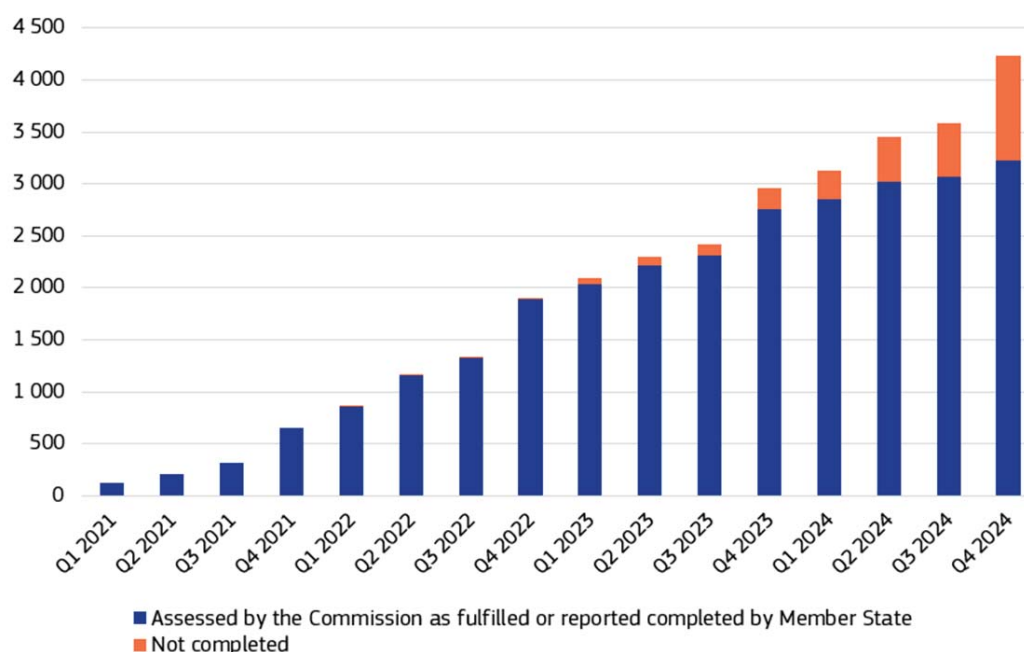
Annex 3 –The Recovery and Resilience Facility under NextGenerationEU

1. The Recovery and Resilience Facility under NextGenerationEU – an innovative and successful crisis and recovery response tool

The Recovery and Resilience Facility ⁽⁹⁸⁾ is the centrepiece of the **NextGenerationEU** recovery plan for the EU and was established in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic to help EU Member States recover faster and become more resilient. It provides a powerful tool at the EU level to support an accelerated and ambitious green and digital transition. In 2022, it was expanded to accommodate the REPowerEU plan, the European Commission's response to the economic hardship, high inflation and energy crisis triggered by Russia's unprovoked full-scale invasion of Ukraine. The discussions on the revision of the national plans, most of which were targeted amendments, continued in 2024.

The implementation had made progress as of end-2024, most milestones and targets planned to be achieved by the end of 2024 were either assessed as fulfilled by the Commission (47%) or reported by the Member States to be completed (29%). A minor part was marked as not complete (24%) ⁽⁹⁹⁾.

Implementation of Recovery and Resilience Facility milestones and targets



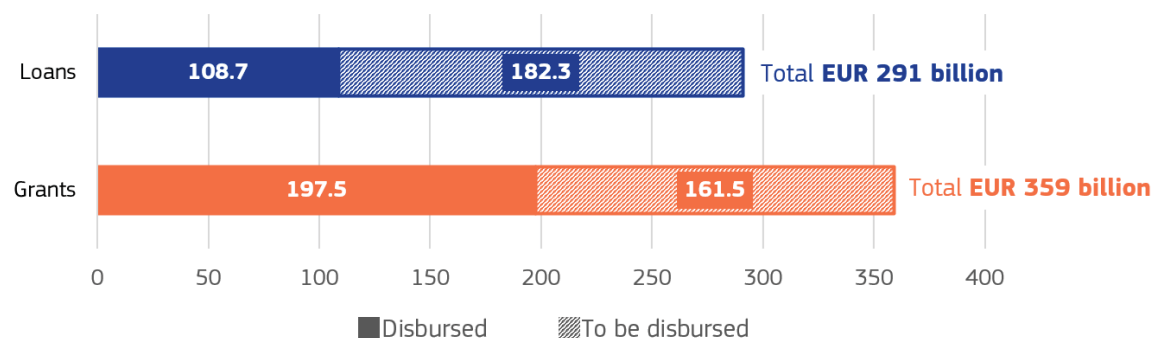
Source: European Commission.

⁽⁹⁸⁾ Regulation (EU) 2021/241 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 12 February 2021 establishing the Recovery and Resilience Facility, OJ L 57, 18.2.2021, p. 1, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2021/241/oj> (Recovery and Resilience Facility Regulation).

⁽⁹⁹⁾ This includes milestones and targets reported as delayed, on track or not completed based on October 2024 Member State reporting.

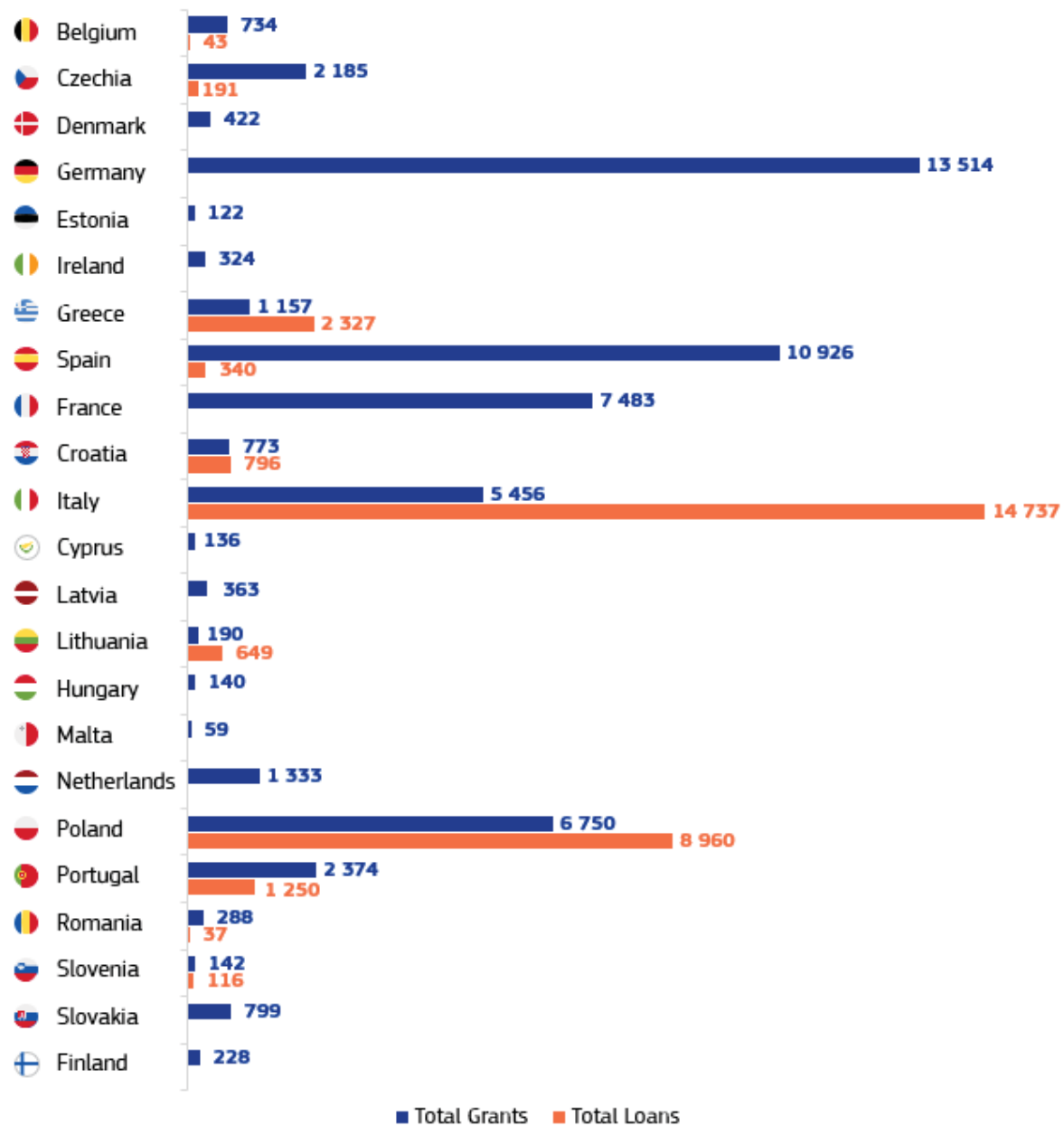
In 2024 the Commission disbursed a total amount of EUR 85.3 billion (out of which EUR 29.4 billion was in loans), including additional prefinancing payments of EUR 3.32 billion. This brings the total disbursements by the end of 2024 to EUR 306.1 billion, divided into EUR 197.5 billion in grants (55% of the total EUR 359 billion Recovery and Resilience Facility envelope) and EUR 108.7 billion in loans (37% of the total EUR 291 billion Recovery and Resilience Facility envelope). The milestones and targets related to the disbursements pertain to a large range of measures covering the six pillars of the Recovery and Resilience Facility Regulation.

Total Recovery and Resilience Facility disbursements made and amounts to be disbursed



Source: [Recovery and resilience scoreboard](#).

Disbursements made in 2024 per Member State for grants and loans, including pre-financing



Source: European Commission.

1.1. Future-proofing through revised plans

In 2024 the implementation of the plans continued to progress on the ground, and the Commission focused on facilitating and accelerating the implementation of recovery and resilience plans. **There were 17 revised plans submitted to and assessed by the Commission.** The amendments were primarily based on Article 21 of the Recovery and Resilience Facility Regulation, which allows for revisions when objective circumstances render it impossible to achieve milestones and targets. Most of the revisions were targeted amendments where commitments that were no longer achievable due to objective circumstances were adjusted and, in many cases, replaced by more suitable alternatives, while maintaining the original ambition of the recovery and resilience plans. In revising their recovery and resilience plans, Member States paid particular attention not only to the quality of the measures but also to their degree of maturity and their implementation horizon, given the time-bound nature of the Recovery and Resilience Facility (until 2026). The Recovery and Resilience Facility's broad scope has provided the necessary flexibility for Member States to allocate resources in accordance with their evolving priorities, in line with the Recovery and Resilience Facility objectives.

The Commission adopted an updated guidance on recovery and resilience plans, to enhance the efficiency of implementing the facility and simplify the reporting requirements for Member States ⁽¹⁰⁰⁾. The updated guidance further clarifies the scope for amendments that can be made to a recovery and resilience plan in case of objective circumstances, including to provide support to measures addressing the objectives of the strategic technologies in Europe platform (STEP) ⁽¹⁰¹⁾. The guidance also simplifies reporting requirements for Member States and provides greater clarity regarding the conditions under which support from the Recovery and Resilience Facility and other EU funds can be combined to enhance synergies.

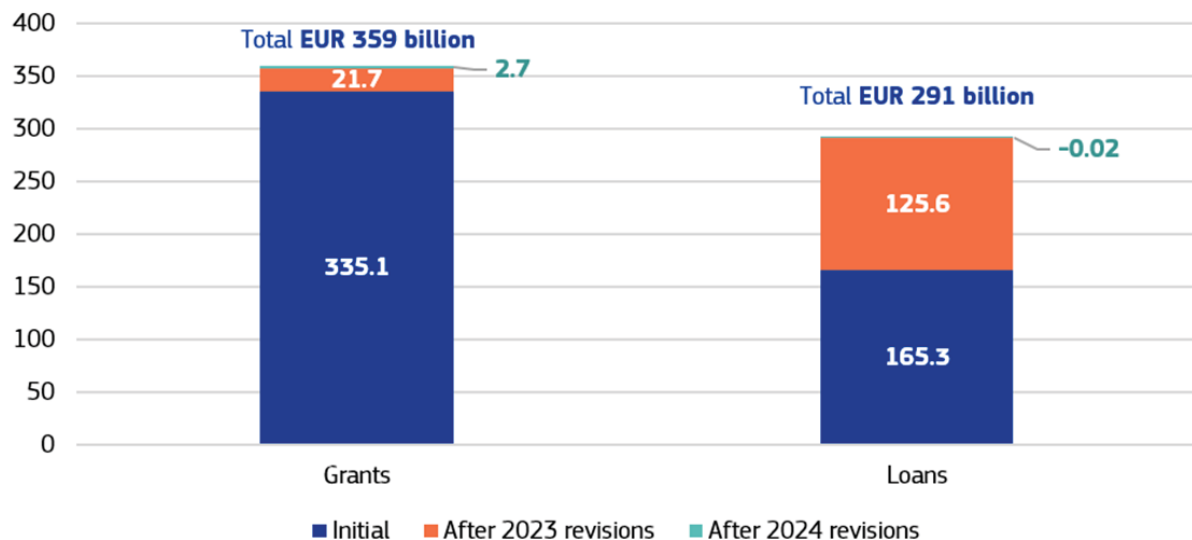
In 2024 three more Member States (Germany, Ireland and Luxembourg) introduced REPowerEU chapters into their recovery and resilience plans, thus benefiting from additional resources and boosting reforms and investment that diversify the EU's energy supplies, accelerate the green transition and support vulnerable households. In total, 26 Member States now have REPowerEU chapters in their plans, accounting for a total amount of additional funding of EUR 64.75 billion for all plans, rising from EUR 62 billion at the end of 2023. The last outstanding REPowerEU chapter (for Bulgaria) is currently under assessment and the adoption is planned for 2025.

The REPowerEU chapters further increased the ambitions in the green dimension. As of the end of 2024, more than 42.6% (EUR 277 billion) of the total Recovery and Resilience Facility allocation was set to finance investment and reforms supporting the green transition, including energy efficiency, renewable energy, electricity grids and other green investment.

⁽¹⁰⁰⁾ Commission notice – Guidance on recovery and resilience plans, C/2024/4618 of 22 July 2024, https://commission.europa.eu/publications/updated-guidance-recovery-and-resilience-plans_en.

⁽¹⁰¹⁾ Regulation (EU) 2024/795 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 29 February 2024 establishing the Strategic Technologies for Europe Platform (STEP), OJ L 2024/795, 29.2.2024, p. 1, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2024/795/oj> (STEP Regulation). The STEP Regulation allows Member States to introduce measures supporting investment operations that contribute to the objectives of STEP in their recovery and resilience plans.

Evolution of Recovery and Resilience Facility funding ⁽¹⁰²⁾



Source: European Commission.

The total financial envelope under the Recovery and Resilience Facility has stood at EUR 650 billion, split into EUR 359 billion in grants and EUR 291 billion in loans. Of this, NextGenerationEU supports EUR 338 billion of Recovery and Resilience Facility grants and the entirety of the loan support. Additional grant support of EUR 19.5 billion from auctions of emissions trading system allowances and EUR 2 billion in voluntary transfers from the Brexit Adjustment Reserve have been made available to Member States to fund the measures included in the REPowerEU chapters.

1.2. Achieving performance results

Member States use the funds provided by the Recovery and Resilience Facility to implement ambitious reforms and investment that will make their economies and societies more sustainable, resilient and prepared for the green and digital transitions.

The results obtained by the end of 2024 indicate that the facility is making a key difference in the lives of EU citizens. The common indicators demonstrate the progress of the implementation of the recovery and resilience plans towards common objectives and the overall performance of the facility.

Common indicator	Results by end 2024
Savings in annual primary energy consumption	33 388 511 MWh/year
Additional operational capacity installed for renewable energy	110 655 MW and 18 MW for hydrogen
Alternative fuels infrastructure (refuelling/recharging points)	915 995
Population benefiting from protection measures against floods, wildfires and other climate-related natural disasters	31.1 million
Additional dwellings with internet access provided via very-high-capacity networks	16.2 million
Enterprises supported for developing or adopting digital products, services and application processes	1.2 million

⁽¹⁰²⁾ For the loans part, the impact of the 2024 revisions is limited to a EUR 20 million reduction for Belgium.

Common indicator	Results by end 2024
Users of new and upgraded public digital services, products and processes	1 584 million ⁽¹⁰³⁾
Researchers working in supported research facilities	164 000
Enterprises supported (small (including micro), medium and large)	4.5 million
Number of participants in education or training	29.0 million
Number of people in employment or engaged in job-searching activities	2.8 million
Capacity of new or modernised healthcare facilities	49.8 million
Classroom capacity of new or modernised childcare and education facilities	2.7 million
Number of young people aged 15–29 receiving support	10.7 million

Furthermore, the Recovery and Resilience Facility helped to deliver some key reforms during the first three years of implementation, including reforms:

- adopting the Report on Green Budget to map green expenses in the annual budget law, facilitating building renovation works and improving access to finance (Spain) and facilitating the use of energy performance contracts to promote energy efficiency investment in public and private projects (Poland);
- implementing a new framework law to improve the living conditions of non-self-sufficient elderly people (Italy) and supporting universal free access to quality mental health units (Greece);
- implementing the Open Government Act that helped enhance the transparency and accessibility of public administrations' information (the Netherlands) and adopting the digital health strategy to help develop and implement digital solutions in the healthcare sector (Latvia);
- connecting companies with regulatory bodies through a certification platform for the medical devices and aerospace industries (Czechia) and expanding upskilling and reskilling opportunities for all adults via an e-college (Malta);
- setting higher, modernised standards for key learning goals in primary and lower-secondary schools (Slovakia) and strengthening the educational system by tackling learning disparities created by the COVID-19 crisis (Germany);
- utilising a funding model supporting equal chances for all kids and helping carers to find full-time jobs (Croatia) and developing a digital gender pay-gap tool for employers (Estonia);
- simplifying administrative rules and procedures linked to public action (France) and creating a growth-friendly business environment through the De-bureaucratisation Act (Slovenia).

In addition, the Recovery and Resilience Facility has contributed to unlocking the full potential of structural reforms by complementing them with key investment. Some of the major investment, which is part of the measures, with key steps already completed, includes:

- improving the resilience of more than 172 out of 1 162 km of railways in the south, which includes the renewal of railway lines on six different routes (Italy, EUR 2.4 billion ⁽¹⁰⁴⁾);
- at least 3 500 households and businesses gaining access to high-speed internet (Denmark, EUR 13.5 million);

⁽¹⁰³⁾ The indicator counts the total number of uses rather than the number of unique individuals.

⁽¹⁰⁴⁾ The cost refers to the measure, while the completion refers to key steps (milestone or target level). One measure (reform or investment) is usually composed of numerous milestones and targets.

- funding granted to EU-wide research projects carried out by universities and research institutes that have agreed to focus on results, changing the way public research is funded towards rewarding successful outcomes (Croatia, EUR 59 million);
- accelerating healthcare digital infrastructure and tools by improving the interoperability of information systems and software with at least 30.5 million electronic health records, an enhancement of 'My health space' with 12 million new digital documents and the establishment of 410 000 active electronic medico-social records (France, EUR 2 billion);
- awarding contracts for the procurement of an e-pharmacy system and building and configuring an integrated financial management system for hospitals (Ireland, EUR 75 million);
- providing 600 000 laptops to pupils and teachers in primary and secondary public schools on a lending basis, supporting digital education and teaching (Portugal, EUR 609 million).

An overview of how the implementation of the Recovery and Resilience Facility and the national recovery and resilience plans are progressing is provided through the [recovery and resilience scoreboard](#) and the map of projects supported by the Facility.

Each recovery and resilience plan is required to contribute at least 37% and 20%, respectively, to climate and digital objectives. This is reflected in the significant budgetary contribution to both the green and digital transitions of the facility.

- **Climate contribution:** EUR 276.6 billion from 2021 to 2024 (42.6% of the total envelope, including grants and loans).
- **Digital contribution:** EUR 149.2 billion from 2021 to 2024 (25.45% of the total envelope, including grants and loans).

2. Control results confirm the satisfactory fulfilment of all milestones and targets for payments made in 2024

2.1. A dedicated control environment to ensure the protection of EU funds

The Recovery and Resilience Facility Regulation sets out the respective roles and responsibilities of Member States and of the Commission for protecting the EU budget. The facility is a fully performance-based instrument, and, unlike the majority of other EU funding programmes, the Commission does not reimburse Member States based on actual costs incurred for the reforms and investment included in their recovery and resilience plans. Instead, the Commission pays pre-defined instalments solely when agreed milestones and targets are satisfactorily fulfilled. The funds of the Recovery and Resilience Facility, once disbursed, enter each national budget with no direct link to the expenditure incurred to finance the reforms and investment. As per the regulation, Member States are responsible for ensuring that the facility is implemented in compliance with EU and national rules and with the principles of sound financial management. The Commission should be able to receive sufficient assurance from them in that regard.

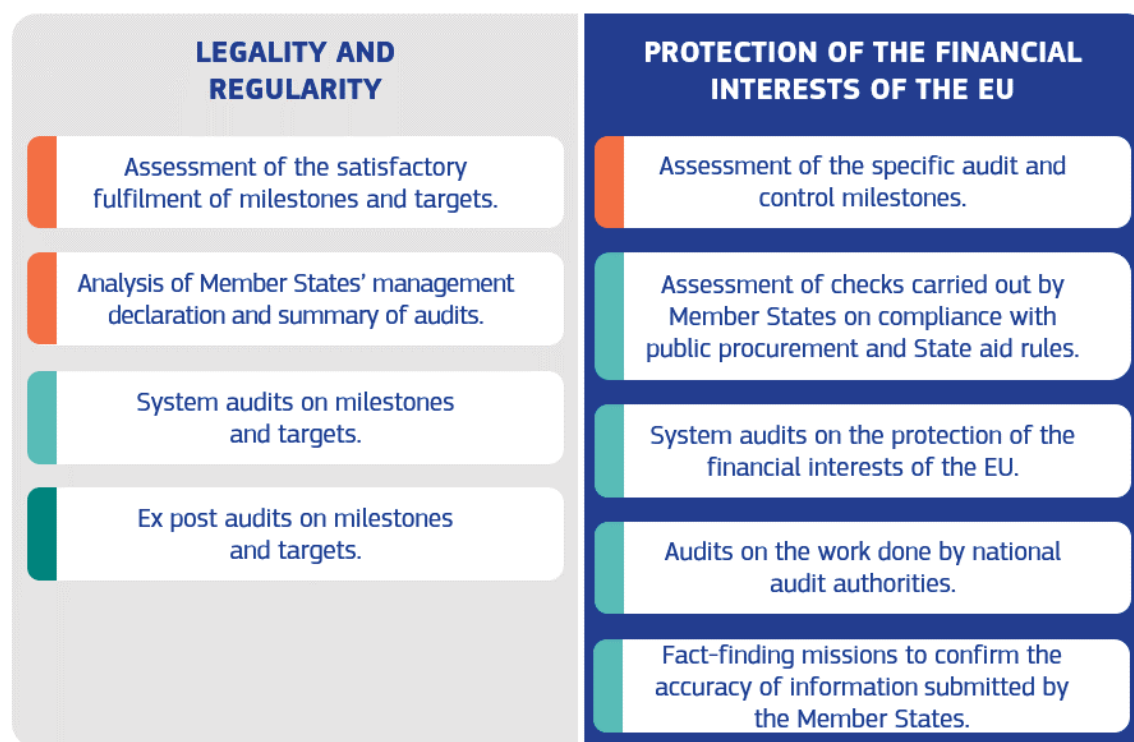
Member States must put in place suitable monitoring and control systems to protect the financial interests of the EU and to ensure that the use of funds complies with EU and national law. These systems are described in detail in the recovery and resilience plans and were assessed by the Commission before each plan was adopted. During the lifetime of the facility, Member States must ensure the effectiveness of these control systems. Notably, they must undertake systematic work to ensure that the systems prevent, detect and correct irregularities. If a Member State detects any specific irregularities, it must take action to correct them and inform the Commission of them. If a Member State does not undertake the necessary corrections in cases of fraud, corruption or conflict of interest, the Commission will reduce or recover the affected amounts from the Member State. Moreover, if a Member State seriously breaches its obligations under the financing or loan agreements, the Commission will reduce or recover funds depending on the circumstances of the case (for example, the Commission may apply a flat-rate correction of that Member State's facility funds). **The Commission has designed its control strategy to fully comply with its responsibilities stemming from the Recovery and Resilience Facility Regulation.**

- **The Commission must ensure the legality and regularity of payments to the Member States, which are solely linked to the satisfactory fulfilment of the milestones and targets.** For this purpose, the Commission carries out *ex ante* assessments of all the payment requests received from the Member States; on-the-spot *ex post* audits for a selection of payment requests, milestones and targets; **system audits on milestones and targets**; and the **analysis of the Member States' management declarations and summaries of audits**
- **The Commission has the right to reduce and recover any amount, or ask for early repayment of the loan,** in cases of fraud, corruption or conflicts of interest affecting the financial interests of the EU that have not been corrected and recovered by the Member State, or for a serious breach of an obligation resulting from the financing and/or loan agreement signed with the Member State. For this purpose, the Commission makes an **assessment of the control systems described in the plans** (and subsequent revisions) submitted to the Commission before their adoption. In addition, the Commission carries out **system audits on the protection of the financial interests of the EU** in the Member States over the entire duration of the facility and

audits on the work done by the national audit authorities. It also assesses the checks carried out by the Member States on compliance with public procurement rules and State aid rules including the effectiveness of these checks.

The figure below presents an overview of the Commission's control strategy regarding the facility.

Overview of the Recovery and Resilience Facility control environment at the Commission level



- Takes place before the Commission makes the payment to the Member State
- Can take place anytime during the implementation of the plan
- Takes place after the Commission makes the payment to the Member State

Source: European Commission.

The Commission makes a qualitative assessment of the control results and the level of risk associated with the operations. Unlike other EU programmes, this assessment cannot be quantified with an error rate. Error rates reflect a quantitative assessment, which is pertinent when the expenditure can be directly attributed to a quantitative criterion. Payments in the context of the Recovery and Resilience Facility are based on a qualitative assessment of the fulfilment of milestones and targets, which is difficult to translate into quantitative terms. Even when milestones and targets have not been satisfactorily fulfilled and a reduction will be made, this reduction cannot correspond to an amount of ineligible expenditure. In addition, the investments and reforms included in the recovery and resilience plans are very diverse, both within a Member State and between Member States, which prevents any statistical extrapolation. In this context, a meaningful error rate cannot be determined.

Following the recommendations from the Internal Audit Service, the Court of Auditors and the European Parliament, the Commission has continued to strengthen its audit and control framework for the Recovery and Resilience Facility in 2024 with a view to making qualitative improvements, namely by:

- implementing **enhanced** controls on how Member States' internal control systems ensure compliance with EU and national rules through the use of comprehensive checks on public procurement and State aid, **including the effectiveness of such checks; in all types of Commission audits;**
- **further refining the approach on how to address risks of reversals during *ex post* audits on milestones and targets;**
- **increasing the number of compliance audits** to get further assurance that it can rely on the audits conducted by national audit authorities;
- **revising the methodology for the selection of additional audit work regarding the protection of the financial interests of the EU to ensure that risks are adequately monitored and addressed throughout the lifetime of the Recovery and Resilience Facility.**

In 2024 the Commission continued to bring improvements and clarifications to the way the design of the facility is interpreted with its 'Guidance on recovery and resilience plans', entailing the following main points ⁽¹⁰⁵⁾.

- **A framework for reductions and recoveries under the Recovery and Resilience Facility** that covers the grounds for reductions and recoveries under the Recovery and Resilience Facility Regulation, including three different situations: (1) cases of fraud, corruption or conflict of interests affecting the financial interests of the Union not corrected by the Member State; (2) cases of a serious breach of an obligation of the financing agreement or loan agreement; (3) cases where the information and justification underlying a payment request is found to be incorrect (for example during *ex post* audits).
- **A guidance on how to identify and avoid any risk of double funding** was provided to ensure the continued adequacy of controls. This clarified that, where it is established that an *ex-ante* cost delineation is not feasible or excessively burdensome, combining support from the Recovery and Resilience Facility and other EU funds on a pro-rata basis is possible as a last resort and in exceptional cases, provided specific conditions are met.

In Annex II to the Recovery and Resilience Facility 2024 annual report ⁽¹⁰⁶⁾, the Commission provided more precision regarding the **eligibility of measures under the Recovery and Resilience Facility and specifically the application of the retroactivity clauses included in the Recovery and Resilience Facility Regulation** (Article 17(2)). The Commission clarified the rationale underpinning the guidance already provided by the Commission to Member States on how to determine, during the assessment of the recovery and resilience plans, when a measure has started. In Annex V of the report, the Commission gave clarifications on the provisions regarding reporting on the 100 largest final recipients that aim at further strengthening transparency thanks to the REPowerEU regulation, which introduced a requirement for the

⁽¹⁰⁵⁾ Commission notice – Guidance on recovery and resilience plans, C/2024/4618 of 22 July 2024, https://commission.europa.eu/publications/updated-guidance-recovery-and-resilience-plans_en.

⁽¹⁰⁶⁾ Report from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council on the implementation of the Recovery and Resilience Facility, COM(2024) 474 final of 10 October 2024, https://commission.europa.eu/publications/recovery-and-resilience-facility-annual-report-2024_en.

Member States to publish information on the 100 final recipients receiving the highest amounts of Recovery and Resilience Facility funding.

2.2. Control results are predominantly positive

2.2.1. Full approval of the revised plans following their assessment

In the context of the revision of the recovery and resilience plans, the audit and control system of the respective Member States were reassessed in 2024, taking into account all the new and additional information obtained since the original assessment took place through the different audits carried out by the Commission. In light of this information, the Commission considered whether the arrangements for the audit and control system put forward by the Member States in the modified recovery and resilience plans were (still) adequate. The Commission did not propose further audit and control milestones in the 2024 revisions ⁽¹⁰⁷⁾. In 2025, to date one additional audit and control milestone was proposed. All 17 plan revisions submitted in 2024 were adopted.

2.2.2. *Ex ante* controls at the payment stage

Positive assessment before payment of the satisfactory fulfilment of milestones and targets

In 2024 the Commission assessed and paid 27 payment requests submitted by 22 Member States, corresponding to 839 milestones and targets (600 milestones, 239 targets) ⁽¹⁰⁸⁾. Based on these assessments, 6 milestones and targets, out of 839 in total, were assessed as not satisfactorily fulfilled and resulted in a suspension decision. These concerned the payment requests submitted by Belgium, Czechia, Spain, Italy and Cyprus. In the cases of Belgium and Italy, while a suspension decision was adopted, no suspensions occurred as the recovery and resilience plan was subsequently revised.

In 2024, the Commission partly lifted the suspensions of payments to Lithuania and Romania and fully lifted that of Portugal in recognition of the progress made in the corresponding non-fulfilled milestones.

In the context of the assessment of milestones and targets the Commission has systematically introduced checks regarding eligibility when approving the plans, where doubts arise regarding individual pieces of evidence submitted by Member States, and when assessing payment requests. In order to further clarify the application of the current provisions ⁽¹⁰⁹⁾, in Annex II to the Recovery and Resilience Facility 2024 annual report, the Commission provided more precision regarding the eligibility of measures under the Recovery and Resilience Facility ⁽¹¹⁰⁾ and specifically the application of the retroactivity clauses included in the Recovery and Resilience Facility Regulation ⁽¹¹¹⁾.

⁽¹⁰⁷⁾ Seventeen recovery and resilience plan revisions were adopted, three of which included REPowerEU chapters

⁽¹⁰⁸⁾ In 2024, the Commission disbursed 41 payments, comprising 27 payments following a payment request, three resulting from the lifting of previously suspended amounts, and 11 pre-financing. In the context of *ex ante* controls, it is more relevant to refer to the 27 payments made following a payment request.

⁽¹⁰⁹⁾ Commission staff working document – Guidance to Member States – Recovery and resilience plans, SWD(2021) 12 final of 22 January 2021, <https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-5538-2021-INIT/en/pdf>.

⁽¹¹⁰⁾ Report from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council on the implementation of the Recovery and Resilience Facility, COM(2024) 474 final of 10 October 2024, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/ALL/?uri=CELEX:52024DC0474>.

⁽¹¹¹⁾ Article 17(2) of the Recovery and Resilience Facility Regulation.

Positive assessment of the specific milestones on audit and control for all Member States

Since the beginning of the Recovery and Resilience Facility implementation, a total of 83 audit and control milestones have been incorporated into the recovery and resilience plans for 24 Member States. Out of these 83 audit and control milestones (out of which 10 were added in the revisions that took place in 2023 and one in 2025), **50 were assessed by the Commission as satisfactorily fulfilled**, (by end of May 2025), in the context of the assessment of the payment requests submitted by 21 Member States. The Commission assessed the achievement of these milestones based on desk reviews and in-depth analysis of the evidence provided by the Member States. Still, by end of May 2025, five audit and control milestones for three Member States were under assessment as part of either the first or second payment request submission. The recently added milestone in 2025 will be assessed as part of the next payment request. The remaining 27 audit and control milestones were related to Hungary, which has yet to submit its first payment request.

Examples of such milestones are:

- putting in place and implementing a repository system for monitoring the implementation of the Recovery and Resilience Facility before the first payment is made;
- entry into force of laws or decrees setting out legal mandates or defining audit and control procedures;
- creating and implementing an action plan regarding the prevention of conflict of interest in the context of the Recovery and Resilience Facility and adopting an audit strategy ensuring independent and effective auditing of the Recovery and Resilience Facility implementation.

In addition, as a follow-up to the positive assessment of the implemented audit and control milestones, thirteen commitments were made by eleven Member States (Belgium, Ireland, Spain, France, Italy, Greece, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Poland, Romania and Finland) to ensure continuous fulfilment of the related audit and control milestones. The Commission assessed the implementation of those commitments when assessing the next payment request made after the expiration of the timeline for the commitment. To date, 11 of the 13 commitments have been implemented – three in 2022, two in 2023, three in 2024, and three in 2025, based on the Commission's preliminary assessment published alongside the respective payment requests. Two remaining commitments are under assessment, as the related payment requests are under analysis.

Analysis of management and audit summaries confirms the Commission's initial assessment

The Commission reviewed the management declarations and audit summaries accompanying the payment requests submitted in 2024. For the five payments where funding was suspended in 2024 due to milestones and targets not satisfactorily fulfilled, the review of management declarations and summaries of audits had previously raised doubts about their fulfilment, which were then confirmed by the assessment of the Commission.

2.2.3. *Ex post* audits on milestones and targets confirm the satisfactory fulfilment of milestones and targets

In 2024, the Commission carried out 17 audits ⁽¹¹²⁾ on milestones and targets.

These audits are carried out on a risk basis, usually covering 100% of high-risk milestones and targets, along with some medium-risk milestones and targets. The payment requests not audited included milestones and

⁽¹¹²⁾ The first payment for Belgium, the Netherlands and Poland; the second payment for Denmark, Germany, Estonia, Cyprus, Latvia and Malta; the third payment for Czechia, France and Lithuania; the fourth payment for Greece (grants) and Spain; the fifth payment for Portugal; and the fifth and sixth payments for Italy.

targets that were either low risk, related to measures audited in previous years, and/or had been audited by national audit authorities providing reasonable assurance to the Commission. By end of May 2025, the Commission had audited 60 milestones and targets in total, comprising of 46 high-risk milestones and targets included in payment requests paid out in 2024, 13 medium-risk ones, and one with a low-risk.

In addition to verifying whether the respective milestone or target was satisfactorily fulfilled at the time of the payment request assessment, ex-post audits also served to verify, when applicable, whether Member States regularly check compliance with public procurement and State aid rules, including the effectiveness of such checks. To this end, the Commission continued to use the enhanced comprehensive checklists on public procurement and State aid which were rolled out since April 2023 ⁽¹¹³⁾.

Based on its audit work, for the payments assessed in 2024 the Commission found no evidence that the audited milestones and targets were not satisfactorily fulfilled. Any other discrepancies identified between the data declared and the data audited remained within the margin of 5% considered by the Commission for its assessment ⁽¹¹⁴⁾. In case the Commission considers *ex post* that a milestone or a target was not reached, it will initiate financial corrections to recover the undue part of the payment made. This has not happened for the payments made in 2024.

2.2.4. System audits on the protection of the financial interests of the EU confirm the adequacy of systems in place

By the end of 2023, the Commission had audited all Member States through system audits on the protection of the financial interests of the EU. In 2024, the Commission carried out two additional system audits on Protection of Financial Interests of the Union (Belgium ⁽¹¹⁵⁾ and Lithuania ⁽¹¹⁶⁾).

In line with its revised Audit Strategy, the Commission has developed a risk assessment methodology to be applied annually to select Member States for further system audits on PFIU. Priority was given to Member States where controls on public procurement and State aid were not carried out using the new comprehensive checklists. On this basis, the Commission aims to carry out system audits on PFIU in six Member States in 2025. By end of May 2025, two audits were already performed (in France and Ireland).

By end of May 2025, the Commission performed 33 system audits, covering all Member States and 181 entities such as ministries or agencies, selected on a risk basis. In the context of these system audits and other audit work, the Commission notably verified whether the Member States regularly check compliance with State aid and public procurement rules, including the effectiveness of such checks. System audits also covered procedures to avoid double funding between the Recovery and Resilience Facility and other EU programmes.

Based on its ongoing audit work, the Commission observes a gradual overall improvement in the implementation of the internal control systems across the audited implementing and coordinating bodies. Member States are taking corrective measures in response to audit findings at the implementing body level and the Commission continues to monitor its implementation. Good practices were identified, such as procedures for the detection of possible fraud, corruption, conflict of interest and double funding, often supported by the use of data mining tools such as ARACHNE. Other positive examples include staff training programmes designed to raise awareness of fraud and corruption risks. Notable progress has also been made regarding data collection in line with Article 22(2)(d) of the RRF Regulation. Nevertheless, areas for further improvement remain, including strengthening fraud risk assessment, improving *ex ante* controls

⁽¹¹³⁾ Approved in September 2023.

⁽¹¹⁴⁾ A minimal deviation from amounts specified in a milestone/target is defined as around 5% or less.

⁽¹¹⁵⁾ The system audit in Belgium specifically concerned the system of a particular federated entity that was not covered by the first system audit on the PFIU.

⁽¹¹⁶⁾ The main objective of the system audit performed in Lithuania was to follow-up on the PFIU audit already made in 2022, and assess additional elements of the Member States' internal control systems in their capacity to ensure compliance with EU and national law, as well as to prevent, detect and correct cases of conflict of interest, fraud, corruption, and double funding.

aimed at preventing conflicts of interest, reinforcing procedures for verifying the absence of double funding, compliance with publicity obligations, increasing participation in fraud-awareness training and enhancing the reporting of irregularities to the European Anti-Fraud Office.

The Commission can give reasonable assurance regarding the protection of the EU's financial interests from fraud, corruption and conflicts of interest based on the outcomes of the system audit work carried out in 2024 and considering the results of the analysis of the management declarations and audit summaries mentioned above, with the exception of one Member State ⁽¹¹⁷⁾.

2.2.5. Controls on Member State obligation to ensure compliance with public procurement and state aid rules

In line with the expanded scope of its audit work in response to the Court of Auditors 2023 Annual Report (Chapter 11), the Commission has verified in all types of audits, where applicable, Member States' compliance with their obligation under Article 22(2)(a) of the Recovery and Resilience Facility regulation. This includes ensuring that the financing provided is properly used in accordance with all applicable EU and national rules, particularly in the areas of public procurement and State aid, including the effectiveness of such checks. To support this work, the Commission has applied comprehensive checklists on public procurement and State aid across all its audit activities. These checklists were introduced in April 2023 ⁽¹¹⁸⁾. Furthermore, in September 2024, the Commission enhanced its audit methodology by introducing specific sampling requirements for procurement procedures to be reviewed during audits, per implementing body.

In March 2025, the Court of Auditors issued its Special report 09/2025 on systems for ensuring compliance of Recovery and Resilience Facility spending with public procurement and State aid rules. The Court of Auditors acknowledged the positive developments as regards the enhanced checks on public procurement and State aid with the use of comprehensive checklists and provided some targeted recommendations for further improvement. The Commission is further finetuning its audit work in accordance with the accepted recommendations. So far, the Commission has already implemented five out of the nine accepted or partially accepted sub-recommendations.

With respect to State aid, checks on compliance remain the primary responsibility of Member States through their internal control systems. The Commission's audits assess whether Member States have verified compliance with the conditions of relevant schemes, such as the General Block Exemption Regulation (GBER) or State aid framework for Research and Development and Innovation (RDI), and whether such schemes have been properly notified to the relevant Commission services. To address the Court of Auditors' observations, the Commission's audit checklist on state aid was amended in early 2025 to reflect this more clearly and rolled out immediately.

The Commission builds its assurance on Member States' compliance with their obligation under Article 22(2)(a) of the Recovery and Resilience Facility regulation through its own audit work. In 2024 and the first quarter of 2025, the audit work performed by the Commission included checks on public procurement and State aid, where relevant, for all Member States that received a payment during 2024. These checks were performed across all audit activities (system audits, mainly PFIU, compliance audits of national audit bodies, ex-post audits on milestones and targets).

⁽¹¹⁷⁾ Two individual cases of conflict of interests identified in Czechia.

⁽¹¹⁸⁾ And they were formally approved in September 2023

2.2.6. Audits of the national audit authorities

In 2024, the Commission performed an increasing number of compliance audits, which assess the reliability of the work performed by the national audit authorities ⁽¹¹⁹⁾, encompassing two key areas: 1) the audits of national control systems, to ensure that national and EU rules are complied with, including public procurement and State aid rules, and that the Union budget is protected, and (2) the audits of milestones and targets. Furthermore, these audits include checks to verify that the national audit authorities are adequately addressing the risk of double funding. This effort is aimed to strengthen further the effectiveness of the audit work performed at national level while, in the spirit of the single audit approach, minimising the duplication of audits and increasing the audit work efficiency overall.

Since January 2024, the Commission has conducted twelve compliance audits or combined audits with compliance parts. Since the start of the facility to date, 20 Member States have undergone a compliance audit or have been subject to an audit that included a compliance dimension. By the end of 2025, the Commission plans to conduct compliance audits in the remaining Member States, with the objective of achieving coverage of all Member States by year-end.

In many instances, findings regarding the work of the audit authorities identified areas for further improvements. Examples of recommendations addressed to the national audit bodies relate to the need of including deadlines for the implementation of their recommendations, better defining follow-up procedures, improving audit manuals, checklists or documentation, improving verifications on public procurement procedures or State aid rules and addressing staffing issues or issues with the assignment of audit staff.

In early 2025, the methodological framework defining the conditions under which the Commission can rely on national audit work for ex-post audits of milestones and targets was refined. Under this framework, reliance by the Commission on the work of national audit bodies is possible where Commission compliance audits result in either an unqualified opinion or a qualified opinion with limited impact. In such cases, Commission auditors may rely on the national audit bodies' assessments and are not required to include in their *ex post* audit selection any high-risk milestones and targets already assessed as satisfactorily fulfilled by those national bodies.

2.2.7. Annual audit and management opinions

Based on the audit work described above, the Commission issued 22 annual audit opinions for the 22 Member States that received payments, following the submission of a payment request in 2024 ⁽¹²⁰⁾. These audit opinions were then used in addition to any other available information to issue a management opinion for each of the payments made in 2024 ⁽¹²¹⁾.

⁽¹¹⁹⁾ Four dedicated compliance audits were conducted to Czechia, Bulgaria, Poland, and Finland. Additionally, compliance audit parts were integrated in a system audit to Cyprus and in audits on milestones and targets to Germany, Estonia, Greece, Croatia, Italy, Lithuania, and Latvia.

⁽¹²⁰⁾ The audit opinion is a formal assessment by the Commission's responsible audit units on the Commission's internal control systems for the Recovery and Resilience Facility and is supported by detailed assessments per Member State containing a summary of the information from the Commission's own audits, the audits of other bodies, national audit bodies, the Court of Auditors and the results of enquiries by the European Anti-Fraud Office.

⁽¹²¹⁾ The audit opinions are used by the Commission's operational units together with other sources of information at their disposal (such as annual implementation meetings and reports) as a basis for the management opinion, which they are required to provide to the authorising officer by delegation in charge of the Recovery and Resilience Facility.

Both audit opinions and management opinions are used to support the conclusion on the overall declaration of assurance. The audit opinions provide an opinion on the level of risk in relation to the legality and regularity of the payment, on compliance with Article 22(2)a ⁽¹²²⁾ and Article 22(5) ⁽¹²³⁾ of the Recovery and Resilience Facility Regulation. The management opinions give an opinion on the level of risk in relation to the legality and regularity of the payments. Detailed information on the level of risk of each payment request is presented in the table of Section 2.2.9.

2.2.8. Ongoing work of the Court of Auditors in the context of the 2024 statement of assurance

The Commission's assessment of the Court's findings to conclude on the level of risk for the payments made in 2024 is currently ongoing. By 30 April 2025, the Commission had received the clearing letters from the Court of Auditors covering the 27 grant payments ⁽¹²⁴⁾ made to 21 Member States in 2024. Since the Court of Auditor's findings may be used to determine the level of risk of the payments, the Commission assessed them when determining the level of risk for each payment made in 2024.

With respect to the concerned clearing letters, the Commission, after careful analysis, maintained its position (based on its *ex ante* and *ex post* controls) that the milestones and targets included in the corresponding payment requests had been satisfactorily achieved. Following one of these clearing letters, the Commission sent a draft review report to a Member State on 20 May 2025 requesting additional information and justification regarding the satisfactory fulfilment of the milestones and targets in a payment request, pursuant to Article 12 of the RRF Financing Agreement.

2.2.9. Qualitative assessment of the legality and regularity of payments and of compliance with art. 22(2)(a) and art. 22(5) of the Recovery and Resilience Facility Regulation indicates generally low/medium risk

The Commission's qualitative assessment as regards the legality and regularity of the payments is based on a combination of results from: (1) the Commission's *ex ante* assessment of the payment requests; (2) the Commission's *ex post* audits on milestones and targets taking into account the risk profile of the milestones and targets submitted; and (3) the European Court of Auditors' findings, if deemed acceptable.

As a result, the Commission determines a level of risk to the legality and regularity of each payment, and, for each Member State, a level of risk to compliance with art. 22(2)(a) and art. 22(5) of the RRF Regulation. The level of risk can be classified as low, medium or high.

The Commission's conclusions per payment request received are summarised in the following table:

⁽¹²²⁾ In accordance with Article 22(2)(a) of the Recovery and Resilience Facility Regulation, the Member State shall check that the financing provided has been properly used in accordance with all applicable rules and that any measure for the implementation of reforms and investment projects under the recovery and resilience plan has been properly implemented in accordance with all applicable rules in particular regarding the prevention, detection and correction of fraud, corruption and conflicts of interests.

⁽¹²³⁾ In accordance with Article 22(5) of the Recovery and Resilience Facility Regulation, the Commission may reduce proportionately the non-repayable support under the Recovery and Resilience Facility and, where applicable, recover any amount due to the EU budget in cases of fraud, corruption or conflicts of interest affecting the financial interests of the EU that have not been corrected by the Member State, or a serious breach of an obligation resulting from this agreement.

⁽¹²⁴⁾ The Court of Auditors does not select loans in their sample.

Qualitative assessment payments made in 2024

		Level of risk				
		Legality and regularity			Compliance with	
					Applicable rules (a)	Obligation to correct (b)
Member State	Payment request	Audit opinion	Management opinion	Overall	Audit opinion	Audit opinion
 Belgium	First	Low	Low	Low	Low	Medium
 Czechia	Second	Low	Low	Low	Medium	High
 Czechia	Third	Low	Low	Low	Medium	High
 Denmark	Second	Low	Low	Low	Medium	Medium
 Germany	Second	Low	Low	Low	Medium	Medium
 Estonia	Second	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low
 Ireland	First	Low	Low	Low	Low	Medium
 Greece	Fourth (Loans)	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low
 Greece	Fourth (Grants)	Low	Low	Low	Low	Medium
 Spain	Fourth	Low	Low	Low	Low	Medium
 France	Third	Low	Low	Low	Medium	Medium
 Croatia	Fourth	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low
 Croatia	Fifth	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low
 Italy	Fifth	Low	Low	Low	Medium	Medium
 Italy	Sixth	Low	Low	Low	Medium	Medium
 Cyprus	Second	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low
 Latvia	Second	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low
 Lithuania	First	Low	Low	Low	Medium	Medium
 Lithuania	Second	Low	Low	Low	Medium	Medium
 Lithuania	Third	Low	Low	Low	Medium	Medium
 Malta	Second	Low	Low	Low	Medium	Medium
 Netherlands	First	Low	Low	Low	Low	Medium
 Poland	First	Low	Low	Low	Medium	Medium
 Poland	Second	Low	Low	Low	Medium	Medium
 Portugal	Third/Fourth	Low	Low	Low	Medium	Medium
 Portugal	Fifth	Low	Low	Low	Medium	Medium
 Romania	First	Low	Low	Low	Medium	Medium
 Slovenia	Third	Low	Low	Low	Medium	Medium
 Slovakia	Fourth	Low	Low	Low	Medium	Medium
 Finland	First	Low	Low	Low	Medium	Medium

Notes to the table:

Applicable rules: Article 22(2)a of the Recovery and Resilience Facility regulation.

Obligation to correct: Article 22(5) of the Recovery and Resilience Facility regulation.

Source: European Commission.

Overall, the Commission concludes the following.

- Regarding legality and regularity: the level of risk is low for all the payments made. Based on the audits and controls carried out, none of the milestones and targets included in the payments made were assessed as not satisfactorily fulfilled. The Commission carefully analysed the results of the Court of Auditors audits for payments made in 2024 available as of the cut-off date of 27 May 2025 and maintained its position that the milestones and targets included in the corresponding payment requests were satisfactorily achieved.
- Regarding compliance with all applicable rules, namely public procurement and State aid ⁽¹²⁵⁾ the risk is medium level for 13 Member States ⁽¹²⁶⁾ and a low level for the other Member States ⁽¹²⁷⁾. Regarding the obligation to make corrections in cases of fraud, corruption or conflict of interest or a serious breach of obligations resulting from the financing and loan agreements ⁽¹²⁸⁾ the level of risk is medium for 17 Member States ⁽¹²⁹⁾ and a low level of risk for the other Member States ⁽¹³⁰⁾ except for Czechia for which the level of risk is high, on the basis of the audit results obtained which identified two individual cases of conflict of interests. A financial reservation was therefore introduced. The financial amount at risk for the two concerned projects amounts to EUR 17.5 million, representing 0.74% of the payments made to Czechia in 2024.

2.2.10. The authorising officer by delegation for the facility confirmed they had reasonable assurance

In their conclusions on the assurance for the Recovery and Resilience Facility, the officer ⁽¹³¹⁾ confirmed they had reasonable assurance on:

- the legality and regularity of the payments made in 2024 for the Recovery and Resilience Facility , based on the positive assessment of the evidence of the satisfactory fulfilment of the milestones and targets provided in the payment requests, on *ex post* audit work on the milestones and targets and also considering the outcomes of the audit work carried out by the Court of Auditors in the context of its statement of assurance 2024 (for clearing letters received and assessed by 27 May 2025);
- public procurement and State aid, the respect of the obligation of Member States laid down in Article 22(2)(a) of the RRF Regulation to regularly check that the financing provided in the context of the underlying transactions has been properly used in accordance with all applicable rules, including the effectiveness of these checks, and that any measure for the implementation of reforms and investment projects under the recovery and resilience plan has been properly implemented in accordance with all applicable rules in particular regarding the prevention, detection and correction of fraud, corruption and conflicts of interests; and
- the implementation of Article 22(5) of the RRF Regulation on the proportionate reduction of the support under the Recovery and Resilience Facility and recovery of any amount due to the Union budget or the request for early repayment of the loan, in cases of fraud, corruption, and conflicts of interests affecting the financial interests of the Union that have not been corrected by the Member State, or a serious breach of an obligation resulting from the agreements referred to in Articles 15(2) and 23(1) of the RRF Regulation with the exception of one Member State , as described in Section 2.2.9 for which a reservation was issued.

⁽¹²⁵⁾ Article 22(2)(a) of the Recovery and Resilience Facility Regulation.

⁽¹²⁶⁾ Czechia, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Italy, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia.

⁽¹²⁷⁾ Belgium, Croatia, Cyprus, Estonia, Greece, Ireland, Latvia, Netherlands and Spain.

⁽¹²⁸⁾ Article 22(5) of the Recovery and Resilience Facility Regulation.

⁽¹²⁹⁾ Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece (grants), Ireland, Italy, Lithuania, Malta, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, and Spain.

⁽¹³⁰⁾ Croatia, Cyprus, Estonia, Greece (loans), and Latvia.

⁽¹³¹⁾ The Director-General for Economic and Financial Affairs has been designated as the authorising officer by delegation for the Recovery and Resilience Facility.



Strasbourg, 17.6.2025
COM(2025) 824 final

ANNEX 4

ANNEX

to the

REPORT FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, THE COUNCIL AND THE COURT OF AUDITORS

Annual Management and Performance Report for the EU Budget – 2024 financial year

Annex 4 – Programme Performance Statements

Important: this annex will be published as a website

In line with the European Commission's digital strategy, and with the objective of improving the accessibility of performance information and the user experience, the 'Programme performance statements' annex will be published on the Europa website.

The present annex has been prepared in the current format with the objective of allowing its adoption by the College of Commissioners and its publication in the *Official Journal of the European Union*.

The PDF document to be published following the adoption of the Annual Management and Performance Report will feature the links to the web pages as illustrated below. Please note that the current links lead to the web pages from the previous year.

[Programme Performance Statements home page](#)

Heading 1: Single Market, Innovation and Digital

[Horizon Europe](#)

[Euratom Research and Training Programme](#)

[ITER](#)

[InvestEU](#)

[Connecting Europe Facility \(CEF\)](#)

[Digital Europe Programme](#)

[Single Market Programme](#)

[EU Anti-Fraud Programme](#)

[Cooperation in the field of taxation \(FISCALIS\)](#)

[Cooperation in the field of customs \(CUSTOMS\)](#)

[European Space Programme](#)

[Secure Connectivity Programme](#)

Heading 2: Cohesion and Values

[Regional Policy](#)

[Support to the Turkish Cypriot community](#)

[Recovery and Resilience Facility](#)

[Technical Support Instrument](#)

[Protection of the Euro Against Counterfeiting \(Pericles IV\)](#)

[Union Civil Protection Mechanism \(rescEU\)](#)

[EU4Health](#)

[European Social Fund+](#)

[Erasmus+](#)

[European Solidarity Corps](#)

[Justice Programme](#)

Citizens, Equality, Rights and Values programme
Creative Europe
Communication

Heading 3: Natural Resources & Environment

Common Agricultural Policy
European Maritime, Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund
Fisheries organisations and agreements
Programme for Environment and Climate Action (LIFE)
Just Transition Mechanism

Heading 4: Migration & Border Management

Asylum Migration and Integration Fund
Integrated Border Management Fund

Heading 5: Security & Defence

Internal Security Fund
Nuclear Decommissioning (Lithuania)
Nuclear Safety and Decommissioning
European Defence Fund
Act in Support of Ammunition Production (ASAP)
EU Defence Industry Reinforcement through Common Procurement Act (EDIRPA)

Heading 6: Neighbourhood & the World

Global Europe: Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument
European Instrument for International Nuclear Safety Cooperation
Humanitarian Aid
Common Foreign and Security Policy
Overseas Countries and Territories
Macro-Financial Assistance (MFA)
Pre-Accession Assistance
Ukraine Facility
Western Balkans Facility

Special instruments and outside the MFF

European Globalisation Adjustment Fund for Displaced Workers
European Union Solidarity Fund
Innovation Fund
Brexit Adjustment Reserve
Social Climate Fund

Table of content

HORIZON EUROPE	5
EURATOM RESEARCH AND TRAINING	30
ITER	38
INVESTEU	45
CONNECTING EUROPE FACILITY	60
DIGITAL EUROPE PROGRAMME	74
SINGLE MARKET PROGRAMME	87
ANTI-FRAUD	99
FISCALIS	106
CUSTOMS	113
EU SPACE PROGRAMME	122
EU SECURE CONNECTIVITY PROGRAMME	137
REGIONAL POLICY	147
TURKISH CYPRIOT COMMUNITY	166
RECOVERY AND RESILIENCE FACILITY	182
TECHNICAL SUPPORT INSTRUMENT	201
PERICLES IV	213
CIVIL PROTECTION	219
EU4HEALTH	228
EUROPEAN SOCIAL FUND+	237
ERASMUS+	255
EUROPEAN SOLIDARITY CORPS	269
JUSTICE PROGRAMME	280
CITIZENS, EQUALITY, RIGHTS AND VALUES PROGRAMME	291
CREATIVE EUROPE PROGRAMME	302
COMMUNICATION	313
COMMON AGRICULTURAL POLICY	323
EMFAF – EUROPEAN MARITIME, FISHERIES AND AQUACULTURE FUND	339
REGIONAL FISHERIES MANAGEMENT ORGANISATIONS AND SUSTAINABLE FISHERIES PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENTS	354
LIFE	361
JUST TRANSITION MECHANISM	380
ASYLUM, MIGRATION AND INTEGRATION FUND	394

INTEGRATED BORDER MANAGEMENT FUND.....	404
INTERNAL SECURITY FUND.....	415
NUCLEAR DECOMMISSIONING (LITHUANIA).....	424
NUCLEAR DECOMMISSIONING	428
EUROPEAN DEFENCE FUND	434
ACT IN SUPPORT OF AMMUNITION PRODUCTION (ASAP).....	442
EU DEFENCE INDUSTRY REINFORCEMENT THROUGH COMMON PROCUREMENT ACT (EDIRPA).....	448
NEIGHBOURHOOD, DEVELOPMENT AND INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION INSTRUMENT – GLOBAL EUROPE	453
EUROPEAN INSTRUMENT FOR INTERNATIONAL NUCLEAR SAFETY COOPERATION	492
HUMANITARIAN AID PROGRAMME.....	498
COMMON FOREIGN AND SECURITY POLICY	508
OVERSEAS COUNTRIES AND TERRITORIES – DECISION ON THE OVERSEAS ASSOCIATION, INCLUDING GREENLAND (OCT-DOAG).....	515
FINANCIAL STATEMENT FOR MACRO-FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE	529
INSTRUMENT FOR PRE-ACCESSION ASSISTANCE (IPA) III.....	534
EUROPEAN GLOBALISATION ADJUSTMENT FUND FOR DISPLACED WORKERS	555
EUROPEAN UNION SOLIDARITY FUND	563
INNOVATION FUND.....	570
BREXIT ADJUSTMENT RESERVE.....	579
SOCIAL CLIMATE FUND	583
UKRAINE FACILITY	585
REFORM AND GROWTH FACILITY FOR THE WESTERN BALKANS.....	594

HORIZON EUROPE

Concrete examples of achievements

106 525 eligible proposals have been put forward (since 2021).	17 813 proposals have been retained (since 2021).	26 972 distinct organisations have been involved in the projects.	17% of funds have been allocated to small and medium-sized enterprises.
7 753 peer reviewed scientific publications have resulted from the programme.	33 273 full-time-equivalent jobs have been created and maintained in Horizon Europe projects.	EUR 24.9 billion has been invested in partnerships, leveraging additional investment of nearly EUR 40 billion from partners, leading to a significant increase in the amount of investment in the EU's priorities.	627 legal entities (including regions and local authorities, private companies, non-governmental organisations and research institutions) have signed the Mission Soil Manifesto, committing themselves to the objectives of the EU mission 'A soil deal for Europe'.

Budget programming and implementation

Budget programming (million EUR):

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	Total
Financial programming	11 507.6	12 240.2	12 435.1	12 909.9	12 771.3	12 932.4	12 022.6	86 819.0
NextGenerationEU	1 772.0	1 776.9	1 832.3	13.3	10.0	7.3	4.9	5 416.7
Decommitments made available again (*)	20.0	117.3	148.8	95.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	381.4
Contributions from other countries and entities	843.2	796.7	934.0	3 375.6	0.0	0.0	0.0	5 949.6
Total	14 142.8	14 931.1	15 350.2	16 394.1	12 781.3	12 939.7	12 027.5	98 566.7

(*) Only Article 15(3) of the Financial Regulation.

Cumulative budget implementation at the end of 2024 (million EUR):

	Implementation	Budget	Implementation rate
Commitments	59 471.5	98 566.7	60.3%
Payments	33 907.1		34.4%

Implementation and performance

Key performance indicators

	Baseline	Progress	Target	Results	Assessment
Horizon Europe peer-reviewed scientific publications	0	4%	179 000 in 2030	7 753 in 2024 compared to a target of 179 000	On track
Researchers involved in upskilling (activities in framework programme projects)	0	33%	101 092 in 2030	Milestone in 2021 exceeded or equal (6 691 vs. 1 000), milestone in 2023 and 2027 not exceeded or equal, 2024: 19 738	Moderate progress
Research outputs shared through open knowledge infrastructure	0	0%	95% in 2027	0	Under revision

Innovative products, processes or methods from framework programme and intellectual property rights applications	0	60%	8 900 in 2030	5 330 compared to a target of 8 900	On track
Full-time equivalent jobs created, and jobs maintained in beneficiary entities for the framework programme project	0	12%	288 185 in 2027	33 273 compared to a target of 288 185	On track
Public and private investment mobilised with the initial framework programme investment	0	51%	20.0 in 2027	10.2 compared to a target of 20 .0	On track
Outputs aimed at addressing identified EU policy priorities and global challenges	0	0%	100% annually until 2027	Milestones not achieved for 2021 till 2024 (99.8%)	On track
Outputs in specific research and innovation missions	0	> 100%	6 outputs annually from 2022	9 in 2024 vs. a target of 6	On track

Framework programme projects where EU citizens and end users contribute to the co-creation of research and innovation content	0	97%	50% in 2030	49% in 2024	On track

In its fourth year, the Horizon Europe programme made substantial progress toward achieving its specific objectives. It focused on delivering scientific, technological, economic and societal impacts while strengthening the European research area (ERA). In 2024, the programme demonstrated significant advancements in both implementation and performance, guided by 27 indicators outlined in Annex V to Regulation (EU) 2021/695 ⁽¹⁾ (the “Horizon Europe Regulation”) which cover the entire life cycle of the programme. Currently, the focus is on the nine short-term indicators, which show the programme is on track to meet its objectives.

- **The scientific objectives** of Horizon Europe, evaluated through key dimensions of publications, researchers’ upskilling support and open-access outputs, underscores its commitment to fostering high-quality knowledge. There has been a noticeable increase in the number of peer-reviewed publications, which serves as a primary indicator of the quality of knowledge being generated. This growth demonstrates the effectiveness of funded projects in contributing meaningfully to the scientific community. The programme also prioritises strengthening human capital in research and innovation, with a strong focus on upskilling activities for researchers. Although data on the exact number of engaged researchers are still being compiled, these initiatives remain a priority for enhancing the capabilities of the research workforce. Additionally, regarding the diffusion of knowledge, open science is a critical area of focus. At the moment, the indicator is under revision.
- **Economically and technologically**, Horizon Europe aims to generate significant output. The programme has successfully produced a substantial number of innovative results, demonstrating its crucial role in translating research into practical applications and products that drive economic growth. Its impact on job creation is evident, with an increase in the number of jobs generated as a direct result of funded projects, thus contributing to economic stability and growth within the EU. Furthermore, Horizon Europe has effectively mobilised substantial public and private investment, which is crucial for sustaining research and innovation activities. The amount of co-investment secured highlights the programme’s ability to leverage additional funding, amplifying its impact on the research landscape.

⁽¹⁾ Regulation (EU) 2021/695 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 28 April 2021 establishing Horizon Europe – the Framework Programme for Research and Innovation, laying down its rules for participation and dissemination, and repealing Regulations (EU) No 1290/2013 and (EU) No 1291/2013 (OJ L 170, 12.5.2021, p. 1, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2021/695/oj>).

- **In terms of societal objectives**, Horizon Europe contributes significantly by aligning its research outputs with key EU policy priorities. This strategic alignment ensures the programme's relevance to pressing societal challenges and strategic objectives.
- The initiatives under the EU missions' framework have led to concrete results in areas such as climate change and health, demonstrating the programme's alignment with societal needs. The 2023 assessment confirmed that EU missions are on track to deliver in line with their implementation plans. It also identified three key areas needing more decisive action: strengthening governance, securing increased co-investment and enhancing citizen engagement. The European Commission is working to enhance the performance of the EU missions in these areas. Moreover, engaging citizens in the co-creation of research initiatives remains a priority, fostering collaboration between researchers and society, ensuring research is relevant to real-world challenges and enhancing public trust in scientific endeavours.
- **Strengthening the impact and attractiveness of the ERA** is another pivotal role of Horizon Europe. The programme aims to create a single, borderless market for research, innovation and technology across the EU, grounded in excellence, competitiveness, openness and talent-driven research.
 - o **Enhancing the impact and attractiveness of the ERA**
 - o Horizon Europe is pivotal in fortifying the ERA by establishing a cohesive market for research, innovation, and technology across the EU. This initiative prioritises excellence, competitiveness, openness and talent-driven research. Widening participation in and strengthening the ERA programme is central to this objective, aligning with the Council Recommendation on the Pact for Research and Innovation in Europe and the 2022-2024 ERA policy agenda. In 2024, the ERA programme implemented targeted measures to mitigate fragmentation and geographical disparities while enhancing research and innovation capacity through institutional reforms. Member States such as Czechia, Greece, Cyprus, Poland and Portugal have significantly increased their participation in EU research initiatives. The programme also extends to the outermost regions, enabling successful participation from Spain and France.
 - o To promote transparency and collaboration, the ERA Platform was launched. It will provide comprehensive insights into Horizon Europe-funded projects. In 2024, two calls were initiated: ERA Fellowships, open to researchers aiming to work within the EU or relocate to widening countries; and ERA Talents, designed to enhance career interoperability and employability in the research and innovation sector. The ERA Talents call received 117 proposals, with 13 selected, while the ERA Fellowships call listed 41 proposals.
 - o Additionally, the ERA component 'Reforming and enhancing the European research and innovation system' focuses on strengthening research and innovation capacities across priority areas. In 2024, two calls led to 184 proposals, with 30 selected for funding, addressing topics such as knowledge valorisation, inclusiveness, gender equality and open access.
 - o The Horizon Policy Support Facility, a decade-old instrument, supports the design and implementation of effective research and innovation policies and structural reforms. In 2024, it helped Member States including Bulgaria, Czechia, Greece, Finland and countries associated to Horizon Europe (Ukraine), enhance their national research infrastructures and foster public-private partnerships. The facility also promoted peer learning in areas such as researchers' careers and the integration of artificial intelligence into science.

In addition, Horizon Europe fostered and **strengthened synergies with other EU programmes**, notably those to do with cohesion policy. The seal of excellence contributed, in 2024, to facilitating

the provision of alternative funding to high-excellence and high-impact projects that it was not possible to finance due to insufficient funding. In addition, the transfer of funds from the European Regional Development Fund to Horizon Europe has been successfully tested and implemented for Lithuania and Malta, while other Member States have expressed interest in using this facility.

In conclusion, Horizon Europe's performance in 2024 shows substantial progress towards its specific objectives. The programme has effectively advanced scientific excellence, driven economic and technological innovation, addressed key societal challenges and strengthened the ERA. While challenges remain, particularly in data completeness and budget constraints, the strategic initiatives and collaborative efforts position Horizon Europe as a vital force driving research and innovation in Europe. Continuous evaluation and adaptation will be essential to maximising the programme's impact in the years to come.

Contribution to horizontal priorities

Contribution to green budgeting priorities (EUR million):

	Implementation				Estimates			Total	% of the total envelope
	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027		
Climate mainstreaming	4 502.0	4 753.0	5 007.8	5 009.1	4 514.0	4 284.0	4 208.0	32 278.0	34.9%
Biodiversity mainstreaming	603.6	1 167.7	1 146.1	627.5	1 122.0	1 224.0	1 202.0	7 092.8	7.7%

- Research and innovation are pivotal drivers in facilitating the green transition, offering pathways to accelerate and navigate the necessary changes while deploying, demonstrating and engaging citizens in innovative solutions.
- The Horizon Europe Regulation states that ‘actions under this Programme shall contribute at least 35 % of the expenditure to climate objectives where appropriate’. This underscores the programme’s commitment to addressing climate change and advancing sustainability goals. Based on the amounts relating to climate for the 2021 to 2024 implementation period, and considering the estimates for 2025 to 2027, the overall contribution of Horizon Europe to climate stands at 34,9%. This figure indicates that the programme is in a favourable position to meet the commitment of 35%, provided that the necessary measures are taken in the years 2025-2027 in order to ensure sufficient overall contribution to climate objectives. However, this percentage is contingent upon several factors. It relies on the confirmation of data for the years 2023 and 2024, which may fluctuate due to the nature of some funded activities. Consequently, the 34,9% contribution to climate is an estimate that reflects a positive trend towards realistically reaching the Horizon Europe’s commitment. This trend is contingent upon adhering to the planned programming and the confirmation of the amounts for prior years.
- As regards the contribution to biodiversity, the regulation states that Horizon Europe aims to align with the overarching target of the multiannual financial framework to dedicate 10% of its

spending to biodiversity by the years 2026-2027. To further step up action on biodiversity, Horizon Europe also commits to increasing investment in biodiversity to 10% of the Horizon Europe budget for 2025-2027. This commitment is part of a broader effort to mainstream biodiversity considerations across all areas and topics funded by Horizon Europe.

- Currently, preliminary estimates indicate that 7,7% of the programme's spending for 2021-2027 is allocated to biodiversity. However, to achieve the ambitious target of 10% by 2025-2027, additional efforts are necessary. Horizon Europe is committed to increasing its investment in biodiversity, aiming for 10% of its budget for 2025-2027 to support this crucial objective. Cluster 6 of pillar II is already making significant strides, focusing on biodiversity protection, nature restoration and transformative change. The Cluster contributes 42.71% of its resources to biodiversity support. To meet the 10% spending target, it is essential to increase the contribution of other clusters within pillar II, along with pillars I and III. This comprehensive approach will ensure Horizon Europe effectively contributes to biodiversity conservation and restoration, fostering a sustainable and resilient future for Europe and beyond.
- Horizon Europe strategically aligns with the EU's green spending objectives and the EU taxonomy by prioritising sustainable investment. A significant portion of its budget is dedicated to environmental initiatives, including allocation to climate and biodiversity. The programme ensures that funded activities contribute to key environmental goals, such as climate change mitigation and biodiversity conservation, while adhering to the 'do no significant harm' principle to prevent adverse impacts. At the programming stage, the Horizon Europe work programme is co-created to support research and innovation activities that respect the climate and environmental priorities of the EU and cause no significant harm to them, where applicable. Large parts of Horizon Europe are not directly relevant to the taxonomy, such as activities in the health, security or digital sectors, which are assessed as 'not covered'.

Contribution to gender equality (million EUR) (*)

Gender score	2021	2022	2023	2024	Total
2	77.1	87.8	142.6	103.8	411.3
1	1 176.1	1 985.8	2 040.0	1 391.2	6 593.0
0*	9 782.1	9 770.5	10 252.4	11 415.1	41 220.0
0	472.3	396.1	0.0	0.0	868.4
Total:	11 507.6	12 240.2	12 435.0	12 910.0	49 092.8

(*) Based on the applied gender contribution methodology, the following scores are attributed at the most granular level of intervention possible:

- 2: interventions the principal objective of which is to improve gender equality;
- 1: interventions that have gender equality as an important and deliberate objective but not as the main reason for the intervention;
- 0: non-targeted interventions (interventions that are expected to have no significant bearing on gender equality);
- 0*: score to be assigned to interventions with a likely but not yet clear positive impact on gender equality.

Gender equality is a cross-cutting priority in Horizon Europe, aiming to promote a culture of equality, diversity and inclusion and to provide equal opportunities for all researchers. Horizon Europe establishes as an eligibility criterion that public bodies, research organisations and higher education institutions from Member States and associated countries must have a gender equality plan in place. Additionally, the integration of the gender dimension into research and innovation content is a default requirement in all research and innovation actions, innovation actions and co-funds, and gender balance in research teams serves as a ranking criterion for *ex aequo* proposals.

From the next programme performance statement onwards, a decrease in the number of 0* scores is expected, as most research and innovation actions, innovation actions and co-funds funded under the 2021-2022 work programme will have concluded by then. This will allow for the extraction of information from project review templates regarding the effective integration of the gender dimension into research and innovation content, as this information is included in a dedicated section of the template.

For measures outside research and innovation actions, innovation actions and co-funds, i.e. measures where the integration of the gender dimension is not mandatory, the development of a harmonised methodology is planned. At this stage, there are some issues with categorising all projects that did not receive a score of 1 or 2 as 0. In the case of the European Research Council, for instance, the identification process involved searching for the term 'gender' in project abstracts, followed by a manual assessment based on the content. However, this method does not capture projects that apply gender-sensitive methodologies in their full proposals but do not explicitly mention gender in the abstract. For instance, a life sciences project on cancer may incorporate gender considerations in its methodology without referencing the term in the abstract. Therefore, a methodology will be co-developed with a bottom-up programme to establish a harmonised framework ensuring that their contribution to gender equality is accurately reflected.

For 2023, financial allocations have been updated compared to the programme performance statement attached to the 2025 draft budget, replacing indicative budget envelopes defined *ex ante* in the work programmes with the precise budgets allocated to measures. Additionally, the more rigorous screening process initiated for the programme performance statement attached to the 2025

draft budget to identify projects integrating a gender dimension under pillar 1 (European Research Council and Marie Skłodowska-Curie actions) and missions under pillar 2 has been continued. Joint Research Centre activities have also been subject to increased scrutiny. This approach, combined with budget updates, has led to the identification of a significantly larger number of projects scoring 2 or 1.

The 2024 budget figures are estimates and will be updated with the actual figures during next year's exercise.

Key data for 2023 (updated)

In 2023, the total budget allocated to programmes or initiatives where gender equality was the **main objective** (score 2) was **EUR 142.588 million**. Significant contributions under score 2 include:

- **cluster 1:** EUR 33.266 million;
- **cluster 6:** EUR 28.102 million;
- **Marie Skłodowska-Curie actions:** EUR 17.721 million;
- **cluster 2:** EUR 12.445 million.

Research infrastructures, clusters 3 and 4, and missions have **no score 2**, meaning no programmes or initiatives where gender equality was the main objective.

Programmes where gender equality was an **important objective** (score 1) received a total budget of **EUR 2 040.018 million**. Significant contributions under score 1 include:

- **widening:** EUR 433.10 million;
- **European Institute of Innovation and Technology:** EUR 358.639 million;
- **cluster 1:** EUR 336.117 million;
- **missions:** EUR 215.880 million;
- **cluster 4:** EUR 128.098 million.

Key data for 2024 (estimate)

In 2024, the total budget allocated to programmes or initiatives where gender equality was the main objective is **EUR 103.776 million**. Significant contributions under score 2 include:

- **cluster 1:** EUR 64.351 million;
- **cluster 2:** EUR 8.629 million;
- **cluster 3:** EUR 6.000 million;
- **European innovation ecosystems:** EUR 7.994 million;
- **European Institute of Innovation and Technology:** EUR 6.034 million.

Clusters 4, 5 and 6, along with missions, have **no score 2**, meaning no programmes or initiatives where gender equality was the main objective.

Programmes where gender equality was an **important objective** received a total budget of **EUR 1 391.152 million**. Significant contributions under score 1 include:

- **European Institute of Innovation and Technology:** EUR 333.425 million;
- **cluster 1:** EUR 227.376 million;
- **missions:** EUR 154.900 million;
- **cluster 6:** EUR 61.646 million.

In conclusion, the figures show that:

- score 2 (direct contribution to gender equality) increased from EUR 77.085 million in 2021 to EUR 142.588 million in 2023, demonstrating an 85% growth;
- score 1 (indirect contributions to gender equality) rose from EUR 1 176.090 million in 2021 to EUR 2 040.018 million in 2023, reflecting a 73.5% increase.

Gender-disaggregated information

- As of January 2024, 31% of Horizon Europe projects had women project coordinators. This reflects a notable increase in the share of consortia led by women, up from 23% in Horizon 2020.
- Women make up 51.4% of participants in Horizon Europe boards and expert groups, with 74 women (52.9%) in official expert groups and 38 women (48.7%) in special groups.
- Among Horizon Europe researchers, 37.8% are women (75 114), 62.1% are men (123 472) and 0.1% (189) identify as non-binary.
- European Research Council – women researchers made up 39.7% of all principal investigators funded in 2024, with 221 women principal investigators out of a total of 556 (excluding European Research Council advanced grants, as the call was still ongoing at the time of data collection).
- European Innovation Council (EIC) – for 2024, companies led by women comprised 12.2% of EIC accelerator-funded companies (17 out of 139), receiving a combined budget of EUR 146.2 million. Women led projects accounted for 30% (27) of the total EIC transition projects and for 23% (119) of the EIC pathfinder projects.
- European Institute of Innovation and Technology. Women chief executive officers or owners represented 26.9% of start-ups and scale-ups supported by the European Institute of Innovation and Technology, exceeding the 2024 target of 25%.

Contribution to the digital transition (EUR million)

	2021 implementation	2022 implementation	2023 implementation	2024 implementati on	Total	% of the 2021– 2024 envelope
Digital contribution	829.5	4 181.5	3 543.0	3 103.4	11 657.3	21.2%

- Horizon Europe plays a pivotal role in advancing Europe’s digital transformation. Between 2021 and 2024, investment in digital technologies is set at EUR 11 657.3 million (21.2%). In previous years, the reported figures for digital contribution were based on estimates. This year, the methodology has been improved. The new approach presents results based on the digital tracking within the funded projects. This methodological shift explains the difference in the reported amounts. It should be noted that the current figures do not yet represent a complete picture due to the nature of certain activities and the timing of periodic reporting cycles. As additional data become available, these figures will be updated accordingly.
- This financing supports the development of digital solutions across various economic sectors, with a particular emphasis on core digital technologies. An example of funded activities is provided by the European Innovation Council, which has supported strong portfolios with over EUR 1 billion of funding for digital technologies such as quantum, semiconductors and artificial intelligence. Beneficiaries include Axelera AI, a Dutch start-up that is one of the leading providers

of purpose-built artificial intelligence hardware acceleration technology for generative artificial intelligence and computer vision. It raised over EUR 60 million in a series B financing round, catalysed by the EIC.

- The Chips Joint Undertaking in 2024 committed around EUR 900 million under Horizon Europe to activities directly linked to the digital transition, including several pilot lines as a part of Pillar 1 of the Chips Act.
- The strategic plan for 2025-2027 continues this focus, directing research and innovation towards tackling global challenges such as the digital transition. By 2027, Horizon Europe aims to invest at least EUR 13 billion in core digital technologies, reinforcing the EU’s commitment to digital transformation and industrial competitiveness

Contribution to sustainable development goals

SDG	Does the programme contribute to the goal?	Example (only for the most relevant SDGs)
SDG1 End poverty in all its forms everywhere	Yes	Horizon Europe contributes to poverty reduction by analysing the impact of economic policies in European countries. This is achieved by utilising advanced data analytics and engaging stakeholders to inform policy decisions. Notably, Horizon Europe has, through direct activities, developed a methodology in collaboration with international organisations to stimulate endogenous sustainable development and promote international cooperation in science, technology and innovation in Africa. The project ‘prototypes for addressing the housing–energy nexus’ (Prefigure) tackles the intertwined issues of housing inequality and the energy crisis, which exacerbate poverty and challenge social cohesion. This initiative aims to identify, analyse and network innovative practices and policies that contribute to affordable housing renovation, thereby reducing housing inequalities and energy poverty. By focusing on sustainable housing and energy transition, Prefigure ensures access to affordable, energy-efficient housing, which is crucial for vulnerable groups. The project explores financial incentives for energy-efficient buildings and the perceptions of different user groups.

SDG2 End hunger, achieve food security and improve d nutrition and promote sustaina ble agricultu re	Yes	The project ‘an innovative “forest and trees toolkit” for reducing malnutrition in Africa’ (Treetool) is creating a toolkit for non-governmental organisations and extension workers to identify and plant tree species that enhance nutritional and environmental outcomes. In sub-Saharan Africa, where diets low in fruits and vegetables worsen malnutrition, Treetool provides a toolkit to support non-governmental organisations in increasing the planting of trees that offer nutritious fruits and vegetables. This targeted tree-planting toolkit offers a triple-win solution for nutrition, conservation and climate goals. The project ‘AfriFOODlinks’ aims to address the systemic underpinnings of food insecurity and environmental impact, to lead to real transformation. It views urban food environments as the key arena for improving nutrition and reducing environmental impact in African cities. AfriFOODlinks proposes to influence three key drivers of food environment form, function and dynamics: infrastructure investment, social and cultural preference & business innovation. AfriFOODlinks invests in direct food system change in 5 African Hub Cities and invites 10 African and 5 European Sharing Cities to join them on a mutual-learning journey, to share their innovative food systems work and to co-design pilot projects for implementation in each Sharing City, aiming for these cities to become beacons of inspiration for urban food systems transitions across the continent. Direct activities have developed a methodology to assess the impacts of the African Continental Free Trade Area on individual African countries. Collaborations with local research institutes in Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria and Tanzania have been established to evaluate the free trade area’s impact on their economies, with a focus on agri-food sectors and food security. ‘Mission soil’ contributes to zero hunger, including by harnessing the multifunctional potential of soil biodiversity for healthy cropping systems and assessing soil health in Africa. It now counts 627 signatories including regions and local authorities, private companies, non-governmental organisations and research institutions.

SDG3 Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages	Yes	The ‘establishing of cancer mission hubs: network and synergies’ (ECHOS) project seeks to extend cancer-policy dialogues beyond research, innovation and health systems to include other relevant areas in cancer control and support, such as employment, education and socioeconomic aspects. This involves creating cross-border communication and collaboration networks in alignment with the ‘Cancer’ mission’s objectives. National cancer mission hubs are being established across Member States and associated countries to facilitate cooperation among stakeholders and citizens in policy dialogues, ultimately promoting resilient and patient-centred healthcare and research systems. The ‘programming the epicardium to cure broken hearts’ (Epicure) project builds on previous successes in recreating the structure and cells of an embryonic heart <i>in vitro</i>. By utilising advanced 3D imaging and observational equipment, the research team aims to explore the potential of the epicardium in heart regeneration, offering a transformative approach to human heart health.

SDG4 Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all	Yes	The ‘longitudinal educational achievements: reducing inequalities’ (LEARN) project aims to enhance access to quality education by highlighting short-, medium- and long-term patterns of inequality, aiming to support educational policymaking in being able to robustly address these inequalities with evidence-based interventions. By collecting data and performing a detailed mapping of case studies in nine European countries, LEARN seeks to develop tools for policymakers and identify interventions to compensate for educational inequalities. This project contributes to creating inclusive and equitable learning environments. The ‘machine-assisted teaching for open-ended problem solving: foundations and applications’ (TOPS) project is dedicated to promoting quality education. By implementing innovative educational resources and teacher-training programmes, TOPS aims to ensure equitable access to education for all students. Through partnerships with educational institutions and community organisations, the TOPS project strives to overcome learning barriers and foster inclusion. Ultimately, TOPS aspires to create an educational framework that empowers every learner to reach their full potential.

SDG5 Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls	Yes	The ‘realising girls’ and women’s inclusion, representation and empowerment’ (Re-wiring) project aims to prevent and reverse gender inequalities across the political, social, economic and cultural spheres by identifying and dismantling the root causes of gender discrimination through a multidisciplinary approach. It involves collaboration across several European countries and South Africa, focusing on institutional, experiential and symbolic dimensions to promote transformative equality. The project produced, among other things, country-level reports on the gendered nature of law and policymaking and a working paper on effective transformative strategy in decision-making and leadership. Incorporating demographic factors in language technology is difficult. However, through innovative research, ‘incorporating demographic factors into natural language processing models’ (Integrator) seeks to develop artificial intelligence systems that recognise and respect diverse communication styles. It has produced several findings on gendered stereotypes in large language models, gender bias mitigation and sexism detection online.

SDG6 Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all	Yes	The ‘water security for the planet’ (Water4all) partnership aims at enabling water security for everyone by facilitating systemic transformations and connecting problem owners with solution providers. It brings together a wide and cohesive group of 90 partners from 33 countries, encompassing academia, research funders, water authorities and associations. The partnership focuses on strengthening water research collaboration, promoting innovative solutions to market and enhancing water management through participatory development and strategic coordination. The Electron4water project targeted the elimination of pollutants such as per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances, antibiotic-resistant bacteria, hydrogen sulphide and organic pollutants from water systems. It successfully developed a chemical-free water purification technology using (nano)electrochemical systems. Building on this success, the project expanded with a follow-up proof-of-concept grant, ‘scalable graphene-enabled electrochemical treatment for complete destruction of “forever chemicals” in contaminated water’ (Graphec). Graphec aims to answer key scientific and technical questions required for further technology adoption by the water industry, further upscaling and enhancing its innovative solution for sustainable and energy-efficient water treatment for the complete destruction of forever chemicals (per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances).

SDG7 Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all	Yes	The Nextenergeia project is developing an advanced analytical tool to simulate the impact of renewable energy investment, energy storage, electric vehicles and hydrogen production on electricity markets. This tool will assess the effects on market prices, emissions and the profitability of other generation assets, guiding regulators, policymakers and energy firms. The project will begin testing its analytical tools with data from the Spanish market, extending to other European power markets. The ‘accelerate positive clean energy districts’ (Ascend) project aims to accelerate the implementation of positive clean energy districts in European cities, contributing to the EU’s ‘Climate-neutral and smart cities’ mission. By delivering inclusive and affordable positive clean energy districts in Lyon and Munich, Ascend will provide scalable solutions for urban energy transitions. The project seeks to disseminate its outcomes to foster a replication wave across eight partnering cities, enhancing urban sustainability and inclusivity.
SDG8 Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all	Yes	The ‘well-being in a sustainable economy revisited’ (WISER) project addresses the challenge of relying solely on gross domestic product growth to achieve sustainable well-being by developing an evidence-based economic framework that prioritises well-being for all generations. It aims to reconcile economic growth with sustainable, high well-being, focusing on gender perspectives and disadvantaged groups. By integrating multidisciplinary approaches and case studies, WISER seeks to provide policymakers with insights into how to achieve sustainable growth and maximise well-being. The ‘illicit labour: unveiling the dark sides of the global photovoltaic industry’ (IllicitLabour) project explores the intersection of climate change mitigation and illicit labour within the global photovoltaic sector, with a focus on China, Ghana and India. It aims to study the links between climate change mitigation and illicit economies, and their implications for ecological governance. By adopting an interdisciplinary approach, the project seeks to advance understanding of the risks, vulnerabilities and mitigation efforts associated with illicit economies in the renewable energy industry.

SDG9 Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation	Yes	The ‘European partnership on innovative SMEs’ helps innovative small and medium-sized enterprises to increase their research and innovation capacity and productivity and successfully embed themselves in global value chains and new markets. The ‘bioinspired living skin for architecture’ (ARCHI-SKIN) project develops a sustainable, self-healing, eco-friendly bioactive protective coating system for engineered materials, inspired by fungal biofilms, to protect surfaces while conserving energy and water. The project has already published several articles on bioactive protective coating system for engineered materials based on fungal biofilms for sustainable and resilient architecture, wood protection and ultraviolet resistance.
SDG10 Reduce inequalities within and among countries	Yes	The ‘facing inequalities and democratic challenges through co-production in cities’ (Fairville) project investigates the link between societal inequalities and declining trust in democratic institutions in Europe, focusing on urban policy co-production. It aims to develop pilot models of urban intervention that involve local academics, authorities, community organisations and residents in improving disadvantaged neighbourhoods through active participation in democratic processes. By addressing environmental, housing and climate-related inequalities, Fairville seeks to empower communities and reduce epistemic inequalities and power imbalances. The ‘green tax reform for a just climate transition’ (GRETA) project seeks to enhance climate policies by integrating a methodology that balances environmental goals with the equitable distribution of benefits and burdens across society. It proposes a green tax reform to incentivise emission reductions, generate public revenue and ensure fair cost distribution. Focusing on Finland, the project will empirically examine how rising electricity prices contribute to societal inequalities, particularly on how they affect business owners and workers differently.

SDG11 Make cities and human settleme nts inclusive, safe, resilient and sustaina ble	Yes	The ‘green locally unwanted land uses’ (Greenlulus) project has helped to highlight the threat of social exclusion posed by green gentrification. Researchers have also put forward best practices to ensure that every citizen is part of their city’s green transformation. Building on this study, the project was extended with a proof-of-concept grant. The ensuing ‘ClimateJusticeReady’ project aims to create a predictor index and to test the early development of an actionable municipal policy and planning in partnership with residents and planners. It is implemented in collaboration with the cities of Barcelona and Boston, supporting their efforts for just and equitable green cities. The EU mission ‘Smart cities and climate neutral’ aims to make cities inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable. It supports 112 cities in achieving climate neutrality and becoming smart by 2030, with a particular focus on energy transition and the development of renewable energy projects.

SDG12 Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns	Yes	The ‘sustainable and healthy food solutions: system dynamics and trade-offs’ (FLORA) project is making a diagnosis of the integrated health and environmental outcomes of food systems globally and seeking solutions to enhance sustainability and health. Its initial findings indicate that our food systems are misaligned with the goals of improving environmental and human well-being, highlighting the need for profound transformation. The ‘European partnership for a sustainable future of food systems’ (FutureFoods) is an innovative European partnership focused on transforming food production and consumption towards more sustainable and resilient systems. By integrating cutting-edge technologies and circular economy principles, it aims to reduce the environmental footprint, enhance consumer health and ensure the economic viability of the food chain. Supported by the EU and bringing together 86 partners from 29 countries, this project aspires to build a sustainable and interconnected European food system by 2050. The ‘textile recycling excellence’ (T-REX) project aims to transform household textile waste into a valuable feedstock, creating a new business model for the textile industry. T-REX engages key players across the entire value chain to improve recycling rates and reduce carbon dioxide emissions by 30% by 2030 across the whole value chain.

SDG13 Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts	Yes	The ‘from niches to norms: drivers and diffusion of green social tipping’ (Green Tipping) project explores how social norms and collective responsibility can encourage sustainable behaviours, such as shifting to renewable energy. It offers innovative strategies to catalyse societal transformations towards net-zero emissions. The ‘Adaptation to climate change’ mission supports regions and communities in accelerating their transformation towards climate resilience by 2030. It funds research and innovation projects to better understand and manage climate risks while developing innovative solutions to enhance resilience. A total of 308 signatories are now part of the community of practice on adaptation to climate change, launched on 26 January 2023 in Brussels.
SDG14 Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development	Yes	Through direct activities, Horizon Europe provides scientific advice under the common fisheries policy to ensure sustainable fishing levels in the EU. Through data analysis and modelling, it supports the implementation of measures that maintain fish stock sustainability. This work is vital for preserving marine biodiversity and ecosystems. The ‘digital twin politics: unlocking the full potential of digital twins for sustainable ocean futures’ (TwinPolitics) project explores the socio-technical challenges of creating a digital twin of the ocean to aid in climate change mitigation and ocean data management. By addressing development, access and legal challenges, the project aims to enhance the use of digital twins of the ocean in national and international contexts. This initiative supports informed decision-making to protect marine environments. The ‘Ocean and waters’ mission focuses on restoring ocean and water health through innovative solutions to protect ecosystems, prevent pollution and promote a circular, carbon-neutral blue economy. With a budget of EUR 492 million (for 2021-2024), it aims to enhance marine biodiversity and ecosystem resilience.

SDG15 Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss	Yes	The ‘shaping functional ecosystems of the future’ (FutureNature) project investigates how to maximise assisted migration – the active translocation of species to novel ecosystems – to enhance ecosystem resilience against future climate conditions. By proposing a forward-looking approach to conservation, it seeks to ensure ecosystems remain functional and adaptable. This project contributes to sustainable land management and biodiversity conservation. The European biodiversity partnership Biodiversa+ supports biodiversity research and its application in policy and society, aiming to conserve Europe's biodiversity by 2030. The partnership coordinates research programmes across Europe, improves biodiversity monitoring, and supports science-based policymaking. It is vital for achieving the goals of the EU biodiversity strategy for 2030. The ‘European FOREST Research and Innovation Ecosystem’ EUFORE project is considering the preparation for a possible European research and innovation partnership on forests. It aims to develop a sustainable, transnational, co-creative environment to define, implement, and evaluate research and innovation (R&I) agendas and roadmaps for the entire forest-based value chains in Europe. The project’s activities include launching and analysing a study on societal demands towards forests, as well as developing a research protocol for examining European policies and analysing future trends for forests & wood supply and wood demand.

SDG16 Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels	Yes	The project 'The agency of transnational strategic litigators in global governance' (TransLitigate) examines how litigation can advance justice in environmental and climate-related conflicts. It studies how lawyers and civil-society organisations handle disputes relating to climate governance and marginalised communities. The project aims to support a just energy transition and address biodiversity protection challenges. Since the onset of the Israel–Hamas war in October 2023, the Joint Research Centre has provided daily monitoring, analysis and mapping of the conflict, including assessing damage and evaluating the humanitarian impact. The Joint Research Centre's work aids in understanding and addressing the conflict's implications for peace and justice.
SDG17 Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development	Yes	The 'building EU–Africa partnerships on sustainable raw materials value chain' (Africamaval) project, bringing together 18 partners from 11 countries, will develop a responsible and sustainable EU–Africa partnership for sourcing mineral resources. It is building an EU–Africa business network on the whole critical raw materials value chain, creating a mutually beneficial environment that prioritises environmental, social and governance standards and results in long-term business opportunities for European and African companies.

Support for reforms

- NOT APPLICABLE

Contribution to strategic technologies (STEP)

In line with Regulation (EU) 2024/795 ⁽²⁾ (the “STEP Regulation”), Horizon Europe is one of the EU programmes under direct management mobilised under the Strategic Technologies for Europe Platform (STEP) to strengthen the competitiveness and resilience of the European Union in critical technology areas, fostering innovation, industrial leadership and strategic autonomy. As stipulated in Article 4 of the STEP Regulation, Horizon Europe is one of the programmes that can award the STEP (Sovereignty) Seal under its calls for proposals.

The EIC is the main programme through which STEP is implemented in Horizon Europe, focusing on supporting innovation in critical STEP sectors, boosting investment and reducing strategic dependencies.

The EIC’s work programme for 2025, launched in November 2024, includes the first-ever EIC STEP scale-up call, a new scheme for later-stage investments with a budget of EUR 300 million in 2025 and a projected growth to EUR 900 million over the 2025-2027 period. This initiative aims to provide larger investments in companies developing strategic technologies to bring them to the market and reduce strategic dependencies. The EIC STEP scale-up will help address the market gap in scale-up funding for deep tech in the STEP sectors in Europe, targeting digital technologies, clean and resource-efficient technologies, including net-zero, and biotechnologies.

The new EIC STEP scale-up call provides equity funding of between EUR 10 million and EUR 30 million, with a clear emphasis on companies that aim at larger investment rounds in the range of EUR 50-150 million. The initiative builds on the EIC’s experience with the EIC accelerator, leveraging its robust evaluation processes and extensive network of co-investors. By encouraging companies to structure and demonstrate the need for these larger rounds, the EIC STEP scale-up call ensures that European innovators can compete on a global scale, attract significant private investment and secure their leadership in critical technologies.

Additionally, companies that pass the quality thresholds under the EIC STEP scale-up will be awarded the prestigious STEP Seal, which is granted to projects that satisfy all quality thresholds in line with the STEP objectives. The STEP Seal not only enhances their visibility and credibility but also serves as a catalyst for attracting funding from other public sources (including EU programmes managed by national authorities) and private investors, strengthening the broader European innovation ecosystem.

On top of this, in the EIC’s work programme for 2025, five other challenges of the EIC accelerator contribute directly to STEP objectives and earmark an indicative total budget of EUR 250 million to

⁽²⁾ Regulation (EU) 2024/795 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 29 February 2024 establishing the Strategic Technologies for Europe Platform (STEP), and amending Directive 2003/87/EC and Regulations (EU) 2021/1058, (EU) 2021/1056, (EU) 2021/1057, (EU) No 1303/2013, (EU) No 223/2014, (EU) 2021/1060, (EU) 2021/523, (EU) 2021/695, (EU) 2021/697 and (EU) 2021/241 (OJ L, 2024/795, 29.02.2024, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2024/795/oj>).

support STEP-relevant objectives in clean technologies, digital technologies and biotechnologies. All ‘challenges’ projects under the EIC accelerator are eligible to receive the STEP Seal to leverage additional financing.

EURATOM RESEARCH AND TRAINING

RESEARCH AND TRAINING PROGRAMME OF THE EUROPEAN ATOMIC ENERGY COMMUNITY

Concrete examples of achievements

10 774 people have benefited from upskilling activities (training, mobility and access to infrastructure) since 2021.	1 966 scientific publications in nuclear research in peer-reviewed journals have been funded by Euratom since 2021	564 PhD degrees in fusion sciences completed by students have been supported by EUROfusion since 2021.	470 master’s degrees in fusion sciences completed by students have been supported by EUROfusion since 2021.
7 182 researchers have had access to research infrastructure due to support from the Euratom programme since 2021.	76 training sessions have been delivered to nuclear inspectors and frontline officers since 2021.	EUR 319 million of public and private investment has been mobilised since 2021.	36 reference materials on nuclear technologies and nuclear data have been delivered by the Joint Research Centre since 2021.

Budget programming and implementation

Budget programming (million EUR):

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	Total
Financial programming	264.7	269.7	286.0	279.9	287.8	293.8	304.5	1 986.5
NextGenerationEU	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Decommitments made available again	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Contributions from other countries and entities	15.1	8.9	0.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	24.5
Total	279.8	278.6	286.5	279.9	287.8	293.8	304.5	2 011.0

Cumulative budget implementation at the end of 2024 (million EUR):

	Implementation	Budget	Implementation rate
Commitments	1 121.6	2 011.0	55.8%
Payments	944.1	0.0	46.9%

Implementation and performance

Key performance indicators

	Baseline	Progress	Target	Results	Assessment
Number of Euratom-funded peer-reviewed scientific publications	0	49%	4 000 in 2025	1 966 compared to a target of 4 000	On track

Reference materials delivered and reference data incorporated to a library	0	86%	42 in 2025	36 compared to a target of 42	On track
Number of outputs contributing to modifying international standards	0	45%	20 in 2025	9 compared to a target of 20	Moderate progress
Number of technical systems provided and in use	0	59%	65 in 2025	38 compared to a target of 65	Moderate progress
Number of people having benefited from upskilling activities under the Euratom programme	0	> 100%	6 000 in 2025	10 774 compared to a target of 6 000	Achieved
Number and share of Euratom projects producing policy-relevant findings	0	60%	50% from 2023 to 2025	Milestones achieved for 2022, 2023 and 2024. Milestone not achieved for 2021	On track
Amount of public and private investment mobilised with the initial Euratom investment	0	64%	EUR 500 million in 2025	EUR 319 million compared to a target of EUR 500 million	On track

Number of full-time-equivalent jobs created, and jobs maintained in beneficiary entities for the Euratom project	0	n/a	11 000 in 2025	n/a	No data
Progress in the implementation of the fusion roadmap – percentage of the fusion roadmap's milestones established for the 2021-2025 period reached by the Euratom programme	0	57%	95% in 2025	54% compared to a target of 95%	On track

Euratom is on track towards achieving its objectives for 2024. Out of the nine indicators reported in the table, five are on track, one has been achieved, two show moderate progress and one has no data available. Notably, the Euratom programme delivered 1 966 peer reviewed publications, 76% of which were open access. Among those, 70% were actively cited and used. 10 774 people benefited from training and access to research infrastructure.

The following section highlights the major achievements of the various initiatives in 2024.

In the area of **indirect actions in fusion research and development**, Euratom continued playing a pivotal role. EUROfusion roadmap implementation was on track in 2024, with advancements in the preparations for the pilot fusion power plant: Euratom made an indicative budget of EUR 1.25 million available to support the consolidation phase of the International Fusion Materials Irradiation Facility – DEMO Oriented Early Neutron Source. Moving forward with the partnerships, Euratom also launched the ‘European fusion industry platform and preparation for a public–private partnership on fusion energy’ call for proposals with a budget of EUR 1.50 million. The selected project, the strategic alliance for building European fusion energy partnership Go4fusion, launched in January 2025.

In the area of **indirect actions in nuclear fission**, Euratom funded 21 nuclear research projects in 2024, with a total allocation of EUR 121 million. Nearly EUR 48 million was provided for nine projects addressing the safety of existing and future nuclear power plants, including small modular reactors. The projects deal with design improvements, structural integrity and validation of computer models. Four projects, which together received EUR 11 million, support research in the

application of and protection from ionising radiation, including on solutions for recovering rare-earth metals and the study of side effects associated with breast radiotherapy. Other projects concern decommissioning (with a contribution of EUR 4 million), the fuel cycle, in particular in the supply of low-enriched uranium fuels to European research reactors to secure production of medical radioisotopes (EUR 14 million) and the development of nuclear data for modelling and simulation tools used by European stakeholders (EUR 4 million).

Euratom mobilised EUR 319 million in private and public investment during the year, notably through partnerships. Two new co-funded partnerships were launched: the European Partnership on Radioactive Waste Management (EURAD 2 with a contribution of EUR 20 million); and Coordination of the European Research Community on Nuclear Materials for Energy Innovation (CONNECT-NM, EUR 20 million). These partnerships are the result of long-term efforts by the research community, stakeholders and Member States to advance a common research agenda and to address key challenges in safe radioactive waste management and for the development of innovative materials for nuclear power plants.

In 2024, the Commission also established the European Industrial Alliance on Small Modular Reactors, a strategic initiative to facilitate the demonstration and deployment of Europe's first small modular reactor projects by the early 2030s. This initiative is supported by the Euratom programme, which provided EUR 15 million in funding for the research project to ensure safe reactor design, construction, and operation.

Using EUR 10 million in unspent ITER funds, in 2024 the Euratom programme launched the SAVE (safe and alternative VVER European fuel) project to improve the security of nuclear fuel supply in Europe and Ukraine for Russian-designed nuclear power plants (water–water energy reactors, or VVERs).

Regarding **direct actions**, the unique expertise and critical capacity in nuclear science research maintained at the Joint Research Centre saw constrained resources and reduced staffing under the current programme, along with high operational costs due to persistent inflation and associated cumulative effects. These factors are putting pressure on the Joint Research Centre's ability to maintain and develop its research capacities and to continue providing the same range of services to the European Commission and the Member States, especially when faced with increased demand. In the face of such constraints, the Joint Research Centre prioritised key activities, leading to a decreased volume of scientific publications, while some technical outputs did not reach the anticipated targets due to less engagement in research and development with a low technology readiness level, especially on emerging topics.

Nevertheless, direct activities by the Joint Research Centre resulted in 105 new peer-reviewed scientific publications and various technical outputs, including 10 additional reference materials and reference measurements incorporated into nuclear libraries. Such data, used as reference material for nuclear standards, contributes to improving nuclear safety, security and safeguards and sustaining efforts in harmonisation and standardisation. The outputs also included three contributions to international standards, along with 10 technical systems that were developed and provided to the Commission's inspectors to reinforce Euratom's safeguards.

In the area of **training**, the Joint Research Centre delivered 37 specialised training courses to over 900 beneficiaries from EU Member States and Ukraine, as an associated country, on aspects of nuclear safety, radiation protection, radioactive waste management, decommissioning, nuclear data measurements, monitoring of environmental radiation, nuclear security and safeguards. In the areas of nuclear security and safeguards, training delivered through the European Nuclear Security

Training Centre strengthened the capacities of more than 350 nuclear inspectors and frontline officers.

Open access to 11 Joint Research Centre nuclear research infrastructures located in Geel (Belgium), Karlsruhe (Germany) and Petten (Netherlands) has continued to play a key role in stimulating research, sharing expertise and enhancing skills. In 2024, it enabled an additional 59 researchers, from master’s and PhD students to post-doctoral researchers and well-established scientists, to conduct experimental research in world-class laboratories. The demand for both training and access to the Joint Research Centre’s facilities has remained high, and concentrates the mobilisation of significant resources.

In 2024, the Joint Research Centre contributed to analyses and offered its expertise in support of 13 different policy items relating to nuclear fission, from directives on nuclear safety, radioactive waste management and basic safety standards to articles under the Euratom Treaty and other specific EU instruments such as the European Instrument for International Nuclear Safety Cooperation. The Joint Research Centre supported partner directorates-general of the Commission in analysing several investment projects communicated by Member States under Article 41 of the Euratom Treaty; monitoring the implementation of the Radioactive Waste and Spent Fuel Management Directive; contributing to the third Commission report on the progress of implementation; contributing to the annual safeguards report; and supporting DG Energy in the efficient implementation of the Euratom safeguards regime. Under five specific service agreements with DG Energy directly supporting policy implementation in the areas of nuclear security and safeguards, the Joint Research Centre provided technical expertise such as in-field measurements, operational support at the on-site laboratory in La Hague, France, and timely analysis of highly radioactive samples. Lastly, the Joint Research Centre provided analyses of Member States’ notified plans for the disposal of radioactive waste under Article 37 of the Euratom Treaty and supported with scientific and technical expertise the implementation of the European Instrument for International Nuclear Safety Cooperation’s annual action plan.

Contribution to horizontal priorities

Contribution to green budgeting priorities (EUR million):

	Implementation				Estimates			Total	% of the total envelope
	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027		
Climate mainstreaming	121.3	125.1	140.1	149.0	143.1	0.0	0.0	678.6	34.2%

The Euratom research and training programme for 2021-2025 contributes to climate mainstreaming, as the programme’s general objective provides for complementing the achievement of Horizon

Europe's objectives, inter alia in the context of the energy transition (Article 3 of Council Regulation (Euratom) 2021/765⁽³⁾).

- 100% of the expenditure for fusion energy research contributes to the climate efforts of the EU budget.

Research and innovation in fusion technology are pivotal to advancing the climate transition. Research activities carried out by the EUROfusion consortium, such as supporting the ITER project and its successor, demonstrate that fusion power plants can significantly reduce greenhouse gas emissions and mitigate climate change. Investment in fusion technology supports the development of reliable, carbon-free energy solutions that can help meet the world's growing energy demands while minimising environmental impacts. By driving advancements in fusion research, the EU is paving the way for a cleaner and more sustainable future.

- 40% of fission-research-related expenditure contributes to the climate efforts of the EU budget.

For instance, the 'ensuring assessment of safety innovation for small modular reactors' project addresses safety issues relating to the light water small modular reactors technology to support its implementation. The project aims to ensure safe reactor design, construction and operation, with a focus on innovations such as passive systems, soluble boron-free cores, cogeneration, additive manufacturing and multi-unit operation. By leveraging innovative designs and advanced safety features, the Euratom programme increases the potential of small modular reactor technologies to support the EU's energy security and competitiveness, and alignment with its climate ambitions.

Contribution to gender equality (million EUR) (*)

Gender score	2021	2022	2023	2024	Total
2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
0*	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
0	264.7	269.7	286.0	279.9	1 100.3
Total:	264.7	269.7	286.0	279.9	1 100.3

(*) Based on the applied gender contribution methodology, the following scores are attributed at the most granular level of intervention possible:

- 2: interventions the principal objective of which is to improve gender equality;
- 1: interventions that have gender equality as an important and deliberate objective but not as the main reason for the intervention;
- 0: non-targeted interventions (interventions that are expected to have no significant bearing on gender equality);
- 0*: score to be assigned to interventions with a likely but not yet clear positive impact on gender equality.

⁽³⁾ Council Regulation (Euratom) 2021/765 of 10 May 2021 establishing the Research and Training Programme of the European Atomic Energy Community for the period 2021-2025 complementing Horizon Europe – the Framework Programme for Research and Innovation and repealing Regulation (Euratom) 2018/1563 (OJ L 167I, 12.5.2021, p. 81, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2021/765/oj>).

- The gender dimension is integrated into research and innovation and followed through at all stages of the research cycle. However, measures under the Euratom research and training programme for 2021-2025 are classified as non-targeted interventions, i.e. interventions that are expected to have no significant bearing on gender equality or with a likely but not yet clear positive impact on gender equality. The Euratom programme is promoting gender equality through sustainable institutional change by requesting that applicants (public bodies, research organisations and higher education establishments) have in place a gender equality plan as an eligibility criterion for research proposals (a requirement shared with Horizon Europe).

Contribution to the digital transition

- The Commission puts a strong emphasis on the digital transition in Euratom calls for research proposals. Specific call topics for initiatives (7 out of 11 topics under the 2023-2025 call, i.e. 64%) in nuclear safety, radiation protection and waste management include requirements, as appropriate, for digitalisation, the deployment of artificial intelligence, robotics, the internet of things and big data.

Contribution to sustainable development goals

- The Euratom programme pursues nuclear research and training activities and complements the achievement of Horizon Europe's objectives, inter alia in the context of the energy transition. In accordance with Council Regulation (Euratom) 2021/765, no direct contribution by the Euratom programme to the sustainable development goals has been identified.

Support for reforms

- n/a

Contribution to strategic technologies (STEP)

- The Euratom programme supports research on the nuclear energy technologies (fission and fusion) that are included in the STEP initiative. Pursuant to Article 2(1) of the STEP Regulation, it concerns net-zero technologies, including nuclear, as defined by Article 4 of Regulation (EU) 2024/1735⁽⁴⁾ (the "Net Zero Industry Act")
- Research projects initiated by the Euratom programme in 2024 concern a broad range of nuclear technologies (small and medium-sized reactors, nuclear fuel, long-term operation of existing nuclear power plants, etc.). However, no specific initiatives can be classified as contributing to STEP, as the call for proposals was launched and concluded in 2023, before the entry into force of the STEP Regulation.

⁽⁴⁾ Regulation (EU) 2024/1735 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 June 2024 on establishing a framework of measures for strengthening Europe's net-zero technology manufacturing ecosystem and amending Regulation (EU) 2018/1724, (OJ L, 2024/1735, 28.6.2024, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2024/1735/o>).

ITER

EUROPEAN JOINT UNDERTAKING FOR ITER AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF FUSION ENERGY

Concrete examples of achievements

29 500 annual jobs were directly or indirectly created by the International Thermonuclear Experimental Reactor (ITER) project between 2007 and 2019.	EUR 7 699 million is the total current value of procurement procedures signed up by Fusion for Energy (F4E), the European domestic agency of ITER, at the end of March 2024.	584 operational contracts were signed by the Fusion for Energy Joint Undertaking between 2014 and 2024.	EUR 389 million was paid to European companies by the Fusion for Energy Joint Undertaking in 2024.
1st joint EU–Japan Tokamak was inaugurated in late 2023. The JT-60SA is the biggest and most advanced tokamak fusion reactor in the world. It has been built and will be operated jointly by the EU and Japan under the Broader Approach cooperation agreement.	EUR 3 000 million is the value of the ITER buildings constructed by F4E.	100% is the delivery rate of magnets that Europe had committed to deliver for ITER. These powerful magnets can confine the super-hot plasma that will reach 150 million °C.	1st European sector of the vacuum vessel was delivered in October 2024. The four other sectors to be provided by Europe will be delivered between May 2025 (Sector 4) and August 2026 (Sector 2).

Budget programming and implementation

Budget programming (million EUR)

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	Total
Financial programming	864.0	710.1	549.8	436.3	486.5	852.4	663.0	4 562.1
NextGenerationEU	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Decommitments made available again (*)	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Contributions from other countries and entities	0.6	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.6
Total	864.6	710.1	549.8	436.3	486.5	852.4	663.0	4 562.7

(*) Only Article 15(3) of the Financial Regulation.

Cumulative budget implementation at the end of 2024 (million EUR)

	Implementation	Budget	Implementation rate
Commitments	2 560.1	4 562.7	56.1%
Payments	1 107.6	0.0	24.3%

Implementation and performance

Key performance indicators

	Baseline	Progress	Target	Results	Assessment
The ITER Organisation (IO) schedule performance index is a measure of the conformance of actual progress to the planned progress	0	N/A	N/A	0.99	N/A
The IO cost performance index is a measure of the conformance of the actual work completed to the actual cost incurred	0	N/A	N/A	1.05	N/A

A third revision of ITER is ongoing, and the dates for the completion of construction and for the start of operations have been pushed back. The figures provided last year are no longer relevant. Furthermore, the indicators related to the new baseline, which will be approved in a stage approach, do not allow to report in the same manner.

Given these significant changes, it was recommended to change the indicators to report:

- the cost performance indicator (CPI = 1.05); and
 - - the schedule performance indicator (SPI = 0.99) of the IO.
-
- **A challenging construction.** The construction of ITER is extremely challenging, because of the size of the machine (twice as big as the biggest machine currently in operation) and the unprecedented nature of the components to be built. The construction of ITER began in 2009 in the south of France and, due to difficulties encountered, the ITER baseline – which defines the schedule, costs and scope of ITER – was revised three times. Its last version was presented by the IO in June 2024 during an ITER Council. In November, the council endorsed the overall approach and agreed to aim at the approval of the 2024 baseline by phases. This approach provides ITER members with a protection mechanism by providing new funds to IO only upon the successful completion of a previous phase, confirmed to the governance via reinforced control. It also allows Euratom to approve the first phase of the 2024 baseline, as it coincides with the remainder of the current multiannual financial framework, for which Euratom has all the necessary funding.
 - **Reasons for delays and cost overruns.** Since 2021, the ITER project has experienced major delays and cost overruns mainly caused by: i) the fact that the previous baseline (set by the IO in 2016) was overly ambitious, ii) the supply chain disruptions following the COVID-19 pandemic and Russia's war of aggression in Ukraine, which delayed the delivery of key components, iii) the need for some key components delivered by domestic agencies to be repaired, and iv) licensing issues with the French Nuclear Safety Authority.
 - All these elements forced the IO to propose a new schedule, where the start of the deuterium–tritium experiments is postponed from 2035 to 2039. Euratom and other ITER members currently assess the proposed new baseline and the reliability of its cost estimates (+ EUR 5 billion for the total cost of the project) before its potential approval. **New project key performance indicators are under definition to adequately monitor the progress of the ITER project.**
 - **A slower execution than expected, leading to a revision of the European contribution to the project needs.** F4E's performance compared to the 2016 baseline has been below expectations and achievement of key milestones defined by the ITER Council and its own Governing Board. F4E and the other domestic agencies still have to manufacture some challenging components (diagnostics, cryoplant, remote handling, hot cells, etc). The slower execution of the ITER assembly forced the European Commission to realign the commitment profile of its contribution over 2021-2027 with the real needs of the project. At the end of 2024, EUR 1 052 million (out of EUR 5 614 million) was returned to the general budget of the EU.
 - In 2024, F4E confirmed that, based on some assumptions (including no significant modifications of the ITER schedule/cost baseline presented in June 2024), the impact of the new baseline can be managed in the remaining years of the current multiannual financial framework (2025-2027), within the approved budgetary envelope and without jeopardising the project implementation schedule. Therefore, it is not planned to return any additional budget until the end of the current multiannual financial framework.
 - **Major achievements at the end of 2024.** In 2024, the IO, assisted by the domestic agencies of all ITER parties, implemented an efficient strategy to repair the damaged components and

renewed a constructive dialogue with the French Nuclear Safety Authority. The IO managed to achieve an unprecedented execution rate in 2024, delivering fully according to its new baseline, and achieving a budget implementation increase of 30% compared to 2023.

- At the end of 2024, F4E had already delivered a significant part of its expected contributions. This includes almost all the buildings necessary for ITER (total committed value of EUR 3 billion), the largest and most integrated superconducting magnet system ever built and the first European sector of the vacuum vessel, which will be soon followed by the other four sectors (until mid-2026).
- **Measures to put the project on track.** In 2024, F4E underwent a thorough reorganisation and implemented a series of reforms to accelerate the delivery of the European contribution to ITER. It improved its financial management and planning, and delivered more than 80% of its work programme in 2024 (compared with 57% in 2022 and 67% in 2023). F4E and IO are also exploring how to work in a more collaborative manner and better integrate their activities, in view of identifying savings and optimisations of the ITER design.

Contribution to horizontal priorities

Contribution to green budgeting priorities (EUR million)

	Implementation				Estimates			Total	% of the total envelope
	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027		
Climate mainstreaming	857.1	703.0	548.5	429.2	478.3	844.0	654.7	4 514.9	99.0%

- The Commission considers that 100% of the ITER-related expenditure for the 2021-2027 period contributes to the climate effort of the EU budget. The project does not, however, contribute to biodiversity mainstreaming or the clean air budgeting priorities.
- The climate-related expenditures are mainly mitigation measures. Indeed, the objective of the ITER project is to construct and operate an experimental fusion reactor, to explore and demonstrate the scientific and technological feasibility of sustainable fusion power generation. The successful realisation of ITER would determine whether fusion can become a major sustainable energy source, contributing to the EU's strategy for long-term security in energy supply. Fusion is likely to play a major role in the decarbonisation of our economies, as it can be a source of low-carbon, safe, reliable and predictable energy.

Contribution to gender equality (million EUR) (*)

Gender score	2021	2022	2023	2024	Total
2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
0*	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
0	864.0	710.0	549.8	436.3	2 560.1
Total:	864.0	710.0	549.8	436.3	2 560.1

(*) Based on the applied gender contribution methodology, the following scores are attributed at the most granular level of intervention possible:

- 2: interventions the principal objective of which is to improve gender equality;
 - 1: interventions that have gender equality as an important and deliberate objective but not as the main reason for the intervention;
 - 0: non-targeted interventions (interventions that are expected to have no significant bearing on gender equality);
 - 0*: score to be assigned to interventions with a likely but not yet clear positive impact on gender equality.
- The ITER agreement⁵ does not include any objectives or reporting in terms of gender equality.
 - However, the IO and the Fusion for Energy Joint Undertaking have set targets to improve the representation of women in management positions. Between 2018 and 2025, the proportion of female managers in F4E has progressively increased from 10% to 25%. In IO, this proportion has recently dropped to 9%.
 - Specific programmes have also been put in place to encourage female engineers to pursue a career in the nuclear field (e.g. a partnership agreement between F4E and the International Atomic Energy Agency for the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Fellowship Programme).

Gender-disaggregated information:

- No information on gender-disaggregated information is collected under this programme.

Contribution to the digital transition (EUR million):

- The ITER agreement does not include any objectives or reporting in terms of the digital transition.

⁵ [OJ L 358, 16.12.2006, p. 62.](#)

Contribution to sustainable development goals

SDG	Does the programme contribute to the goal?	Example (only for the most relevant SDGs)
SDG7: Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all	Yes	ITER is a key project for developing fusion energy, which has the potential to provide a virtually limitless source of clean energy.
SDG8: Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all	Yes	A big number of direct and indirect jobs are created through ITER. The project supports the development of a skilled workforce.

SDG9: Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation	Yes	ITER falls under the category of Research and Innovation, both of which underpin the implementation of SDG9. Furthermore, ITER involves a significant investment in innovation and infrastructure development.
SDG13: Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts	Yes	ITER contributes to a clean energy transition while boosting jobs and growth in the area of energy and climate.

Support for reforms

- ITER is an international research programme and does not support any reforms in Member States and other countries.

Contribution to strategic technologies (STEP)

- ITER is an international research programme that aims to demonstrate the scientific and technological feasibility of fusion as a future source of sustainable energy. A global framework has been established among seven international partners (Euratom, China, India, Japan, South Korea, Russia, and the United States) to construction and the future operation of ITER; The European contribution to ITER is delivered through the Fusion for Energy (F4E) Joint Undertaking.
- While the nuclear fusion is a technology that could qualify as critical in the sense of the STEP Regulation, the ITER programme is not eligible for financing under this initiative.

InvestEU

Concrete examples of achievements

EUR 299.73 billion was mobilised for investment between 2022 and 2024, of which 67.4% from the private sector.	4.2 million jobs were created and supported between 2022 and 2024.	2.9 million additional households and public or commercial premises have improved their energy consumption through investments in energy generation between 2022 and 2024.	53 058 Small and medium-sized enterprises and mid-caps were supported under InvestEU's SME window between 2022 and 2024.
2.1 million additional households, enterprises or public facilities obtained access to high-speed internet between 2022 and 2024.	3.7 million people were covered by improved healthcare infrastructure between 2022 and 2024.	2 074 new engagements for advisory support to public and private counterparts were carried out via the InvestEU Advisory Hub between 2022 and 2024.	1 402 new investment project proposals were published on the InvestEU Portal between 2021 and 2024.

Budget programming and implementation

Budget programming (million EUR)

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	Total
Financial programming (*)	692.8	1 430.2	504.5	1 201.0	394.5	312.5	291.5	4 826.9
NextGenerationEU	1 745.5	1 852.4	2 474.1	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	6 074.0
Decommitments made available again (**)	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Contributions from other countries and entities (***)	0.8	35.9	257.7	286.6	402.8	642.4	193.4	1 819.6
Total	2 439.1	3 318.5	3 236.3	1 488.1	797.8	955.4	485.4	12 720.5

(*) including shared management funds

(**) Only Article 15(3) of the Financial Regulation

(***) Member State compartments and European Free Trade Association (EFTA) contributions are included in the budget envelope for the whole period

Total 2021-2027	
Complementary budget (*)	1 757.2
Common provisioning fund – blending operations	1 626.0
Advisory Hub – top-up from other programmes	131.2

(*) The following amounts are not included in the total budget of InvestEU above. They represent amounts delegated from other programmes for the InvestEU Fund blending operations and Advisory Hub top-ups for 2021-2027.

Cumulative budget implementation at the end of 2024 (million EUR)

	Implementation	Budget	Implementation rate
Commitments	10 160.0	12 720.5	79.9%
Payments	5 915.3		46.5%

Implementation and performance

Key performance indicators

	Baseline	Progress	Target	Results	Assessment
Investment mobilised (EU compartment) (*)	0	76%	EUR 372 billion in 2027	EUR 283.4 billion in 2024 compared to a target of EUR 372 billion	On track
Multiplier effect achieved (EU compartment) (*)	0	> 100%	14.2 in 2027	15.1 in 2024 compared to a target of 14.2	On track
Investment supporting climate objectives	0	> 100%	30% in 2027	38.4% in 2024 compared to a target of 30%	On track
Number of households and public and commercial premises with an improved energy consumption classification	N/A	N/A	N/A	2.9 million in 2024	N/A
Additional households, enterprises or public buildings with broadband access of at least 100 megabits per second upgradeable to gigabit speed, or the number of Wi-Fi hotspots created	0	N/A	N/A	2.1 million in 2024	N/A
Number of enterprises supported under the small and medium-sized	0	N/A	N/A	53 058 in 2024	N/A

enterprises policy window					
Number of engagements of the InvestEU Advisory Hub	0	N/A	N/A	2 074 in 2024	N/A
Number of projects published on the InvestEU Portal	0	> 100%	1 000 in 2027	1 402 in 2024 compared to a target of 1 000	On track

(*) The reported figures exclude performance guarantee operations.

- The InvestEU programme uses an EU budget guarantee to increase investment by lowering risk for financial institutions and attracting private capital. At the end of 2024, the volume of InvestEU operations approved by implementing partners reached EUR 62.3 billion and is expected to mobilise investments of EUR 299.73 billion, with 67.4% of this coming from the private sector. At the same time, the investments supporting climate goals account for 38.4% of the signed operations. The overall multiplier effect of the programme is 14.80, which means that, on average, every EUR 1 of EU budget funds mobilises EUR 14.80 of investment. The programme's overall multiplier effect demonstrates its success in mobilising investment across key strategic sectors.
- Under the InvestEU Fund, the EU provides funding support through an EU budgetary guarantee of an initial amount of EUR 26.2 billion covering potential losses of the international financial institutions and national promotional banks and institutions implementing the fund's support in the marketplace ('implementing partners').
- At the end of 2024, the total amount of guarantee under the programme stands at EUR 30.5 billion, with EUR 4.3 billion added to the initial allocation and coming from three sources.
 - o **Member State compartments (EUR 2.3 billion).** Member States can use it to increase the offer of financial products in their geography by means of financial contributions using the Recovery and Resilience Facility, cohesion funds or contributions from national funds. So far, seven Member State compartments have been signed: Bulgaria, Czechia, Greece, Malta, Romania, Finland and Spain, whose contribution agreement was signed at the end of 2024.
 - o **Contribution from other EU programmes, i.e. for blending operations (EUR 1.6 billion).** Eight EU programmes are expected to provide extra resources to the InvestEU programme: EU4Health, Innovation Fund, Horizon Europe, European Defence Fund, European Space programme, Creative Europe, Digital Europe, European Maritime, Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund.

- o **Third country contributions (EUR 0.489 billion).** Iceland and Norway made contributions to the InvestEU Fund on the basis of Article 81 of the European Economic Area Agreement.
- In total, as of the end of 2024, around 90% of the original EUR 26.2 billion EU guarantee was already signed with 16 implementing partners through guarantee agreements. The agreement with the European Investment Bank (EIB) and the European Investment Fund (EIF) (representing a 75% share of the EU budget guarantee, i.e. EUR 19.6 billion) was signed in March 2022. In total, 14 guarantee agreements with other implementing partners under the EU compartment were signed as of the end of 2024. In 2024, one guarantee agreement was signed with Banco Português de Fomento, along with several amendments to the existing guarantee agreements.
- The InvestEU implementing partners are a very diverse group of financial institutions in terms of the scope of their activities, target areas and recipients, and geographic scope.
- Currently, under the programme, implementing partners provide over 50 different financial products in the form of debt, equity and guarantees. Some of these products are implemented directly, and others indirectly through financial intermediaries.
- For the EU compartment (including the European Free Trade Association countries contributions and blending operations), the expected investment mobilised is EUR 283.40 billion, of which 66.8% comes from the private sector. The volume of operations signed (hence the amount of the InvestEU operation signed between the implementing partner and the final recipient or financial intermediary) amounts to EUR 40.22 billion, of which EUR 13.33 billion corresponds to the EU guarantee. For the EU compartment, the multiplier reaches 15.11.
- In 2024, the EUR 1.05 billion commitments included the provisioning of the Common Provisioning Fund under the EU compartment, from which future calls on the EU guarantee are to be paid. This amount includes EUR 248.3 million from the EU general budget and EUR 778.9 million of internal assigned revenue from predecessor financial instruments and the InvestEU Fund. Furthermore, EUR 25.2 million was committed as external assigned revenue from the European Free Trade Association countries contributions to the InvestEU Fund.
- In 2024, EUR 401.57 million commitments were carried out under the blending operations that combine InvestEU support with support provided under other EU programmes, allocated to the EIB, the EIF and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development for top-up operations. In addition, EUR 100 million was allocated from Horizon Europe to the EIB for non-repayable transactions under the ‘Green premium agreement’ in 2022 and 2023.
- Seven contribution agreements were signed with Bulgaria, Czechia, Greece, Spain, Malta, Romania and Finland. Up to the end of 2024, Common Provisioning Fund compartments were also set up for these Member States for the receipt of the relevant amounts needed for the provisioning of the EU guarantee implemented under the InvestEU Member State compartment. The compartment was included in the guarantee agreements signed with the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development and EIF. Moreover, separate guarantee agreements were signed in 2023 with BDB (Bulgaria) and NRB (Czechia) to implement financial products under the Member State compartment.
- Under the InvestEU Guarantee (Member State compartments of the Common Provisioning Fund), EUR 254.29 million was transferred as external assigned revenue from four Member States (Bulgaria, Greece, Romania and Finland), according to the schedules laid down in the contribution agreements. Also, as set out in the adopted partnership agreements and signed contribution agreements, the following appropriations were committed in 2024 as contributions

to the InvestEU Fund: EUR 16 million from the European Regional Development Fund for two Member States (Czechia and Malta).

- Regarding the InvestEU Advisory Hub, the advisory agreement with the EIB was signed in March 2022, followed by five additional agreements with three national promotional banks and institutions and two international financial institutions after the first call for expressions of interest. These agreements were concluded by early 2023. Additionally, a memorandum of understanding was signed with the European Climate, Infrastructure and Environment Executive Agency, which acts as an advisory partner, supporting assignments with green, sustainable and climate-related objectives.
- At the end of 2024, the InvestEU Advisory Hub provided advisory support under 28 advisory initiatives, covering all InvestEU policy windows and a diverse range of sectors, and had 2 074 ongoing or completed assignments.
- In 2024, the following commitments (including resources from NextGenerationEU) were made: EUR 95.3 million for the InvestEU Advisory Hub (including the EUR 15 million mentioned below), EUR 2.9 million for the InvestEU Portal and accompanying measures, and EUR 1.38 million for support expenditure. In addition, under the advisory agreement with the EIB, funds from several EU programmes were committed as top-ups, for a total envelope of EUR 45 million.
- Following the second call for expression of interest, an additional amount of EUR 15 million was committed in 2024 through amendments in advisory agreements with three partner institutions. Furthermore, negotiations were initiated with one existing and one new advisory partner institution for an additional EUR 10 million of funding.
- In 2024, the InvestEU Portal continued the strategic partnerships with Bpifrance/Euroquity and the European Business Angels Network, which involved participation in two physical events, virtual pitching sessions, workshops and online coaching sessions. Throughout the year, the InvestEU Portal also maintained a strong presence at major start-up events to increase visibility and commitment to supporting the start-up community, including at ‘Bits and Pretzels’, ‘WebSummit’ and ‘Slush’.
- In 2024, the interim evaluation of InvestEU ⁽⁶⁾ concluded that the programme is proving crucial in effectively and flexibly addressing significant investment needs across Europe through the provision of the EU budget guarantee. This allows the implementing partners to efficiently finance higher-risk activities, enabling investments in sectors such as space, semi-conductors, the blue economy and quantum computing, laying the groundwork for the EU’s long-term competitiveness. The evaluation also found that the InvestEU Advisory Hub plays a key role by supporting project developers in preparing, developing and implementing investment projects, whereas the InvestEU Portal has the potential to add value to the wider investment ecosystem through matchmaking and pitching events funded by the EU.

Contribution to horizontal priorities

Contribution to green budgeting priorities (EUR million):

Implementation	Estimates	

⁽⁶⁾ https://commission.europa.eu/about/departments-and-executive-agencies/economic-and-financial-affairs/evaluation-reports-economic-and-financial-affairs-policies-and-spending-activities/interim-evaluation-investeu-programme_en.

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	Total	% of the total envelope
Climate mainstreaming	926.5	1 238.0	1 132.3	431.1	239.3	286.6	145.6	4 399.4	34.6%
Biodiversity mainstreaming	8.1	11.0	10.7	4.9	0.0	0.0	0.0	34.7	0.3%

Green budgeting

- To be noted that the climate contribution reported as of end-2024 amounts to 38.42%. The estimates for the period from 2025 to 2027 are calculated based on the 30% InvestEU climate target.
- InvestEU places strong emphasis on investments that have a positive impact on the climate and the environment. The programme aims to allocate 30% of its overall financial envelope to climate objectives, while 60% of investments from the sustainable infrastructure window are expected to support the EU objectives on climate and the environment. These targets provide strong incentives for financial institutions to develop financial products, in line with the climate ambition of the programme.
- As of the end of 2024, the investment supporting climate objectives represented 38.4% of the volume of operations signed both at the programme level and the EU compartment level. Under the sustainable infrastructure window, the investment supporting climate and environmental objectives amounted to 69.79% of the volume of operations signed under this policy window. Overall, InvestEU is expected to help mobilise more than EUR 110 billion to meet EU climate goals. At present, the EIB Group and several international financial institutions and national promotional banks are already deploying dedicated green products.
- To guide the implementation of the InvestEU financial products, the Commission has published sustainability proofing guidance⁽⁷⁾ and climate- and environment-tracking guidance⁽⁸⁾. Investments above EUR 10 million are subject to sustainability proofing to identify, assess and mitigate climate, environmental or social risks. All InvestEU-supported investment will be tracked in terms of environmental and climate impact against the methodology issued by the Commission. Both guidance documents integrate, where possible, the EU taxonomy framework.
- InvestEU implementing partners have a choice to track the achievement of the climate and environmental targets under the sustainable infrastructure window using the EU-taxonomy-aligned criteria or the InvestEU climate and environmental markers. As of 31 December 2024, 35.45% of the aggregate InvestEU signed financing was tracked using EU-taxonomy-aligned criteria for the purpose of determining the climate and environmental objectives. The EU-taxonomy-compliant financing for the implementing partners who use the EU-taxonomy-aligned criteria amounts to 75% of their volume of signed InvestEU operations.
- The reported investment on biodiversity (amounting to EUR 133.2 million) results in an estimated EU contribution of EUR 34.7 million as of end 2024.

⁽⁷⁾ [https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:52021XC0713\(02\)](https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:52021XC0713(02)).

⁽⁸⁾ https://investeu.europa.eu/system/files/2022-06/InvestEU%20C%26E%20T%20C_2021_3316_Main%20%26%20Annexes_EN.pdf.

- In addition to these ambitious climate targets, the InvestEU Fund set up a dedicated scheme to generate additional investment for the benefit of just transition territories – those territories that will be the most affected by the socioeconomic consequences of the green transition – as a complement to the Just Transition Fund and the Public Sector Loan Facility. The investments supporting just transition backed by InvestEU amount to EUR 6 billion as of the end of 2024. By mid-2024, the InvestEU Advisory Hub had provided advisory support for 14 assignments, assisting investment projects in territories identified in the territorial just transition plans with a total funding allocation of EUR 2.0 million.

Contribution to gender equality (EUR million) (*)

Gender score	2021	2022	2023	2024	Total
2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
1	69.1	142.6	50.3	119.8	381.8
0*	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
0	623.7	1 287.6	454.2	1 081.2	3 446.7
Total:	692.8	1 430.2	504.5	1 201.0	3 828.5

(*) Based on the applied gender contribution methodology, the following scores are attributed at the most granular level of intervention possible:

- 2: interventions the principal objective of which is to improve gender equality;
- 1: interventions that have gender equality as an important and deliberate objective but not as the main reason for the intervention;
- 0: non-targeted interventions (interventions that are expected to have no significant bearing on gender equality);
- 0*: score to be assigned to interventions with a likely but not yet clear positive impact on gender equality.

As of end 2024, the total InvestEU programme contribution to gender equality assigned with score 1 amounts to EUR 318.8 million. The remaining amount of EUR 3.45 billion is marked with score 0, since InvestEU is a demand-driven instrument and there was no specific budget allocation to gender equality.

InvestEU contributes to the achievement of priorities set out in the EU gender equality strategy 2020-2025. Gender mainstreaming is ensured through the design and implementation of targeted financial products and advisory initiatives. These initiatives include the following items.

- The gender smart advisory initiative provides tailored advice and capacity-building to improve access to financing for female-founded and female-led companies. Its key objectives include increasing female representation in the investment community (notably by identifying barriers, strengthening women's capacity, challenging unconscious biases, etc.), and increasing awareness of the funding gap and of missed opportunities. This is being done through activities such as an annual 'Empowering Equity Conference' for women investors, a mentorship programme for fund managers, a study of financial products by banks and other lenders focusing on women and women-led businesses, and a training programme for banks on gender issues to be launched in 2025.
- EIF equity financing, where gender smart financing is one of the horizontal topics implemented across the different thematic policy areas supported by the fund's equity products across all policy windows. At least 25% of equity financial intermediaries supported by InvestEU through the EIF have to comply with the gender criteria. The EIF has already exceeded this target, reporting 62% in June 2024.

In 2024, the methodology for additional key performance indicator on investment supporting gender equality was adopted by the InvestEU Steering Board. InvestEU implementing partners can now report on a best effort basis, on the impact of InvestEU operations across all policy windows on gender equality. As of the end of 2024, implementing partners had reported EUR 4 billion of investment supporting gender equality.

Gender disaggregated information:

- N/A

Contribution to the digital transition (EUR million):

	2021 implementation	2022 implementation	2023 implementation	2024 implementation	Total	% of the 2021- 2024 envelope
Digital contribution	210.5	286.5	279.4	128.5	904.8	8.6%

- As of the end of 2024, InvestEU had mobilised EUR 15.88 billion worth of operations supporting digitalisation.
- Several implementing partners are implementing financial products to support digitalisation. Amongst others, the EUR 3.64 billion allocated to the EIF ‘Innovation and digitalisation guarantee’ financial product of the small and medium-sized enterprises window support innovation- and digitalisation-driven small and medium-sized enterprises and small mid-caps. The EU guarantee supports, among other things, innovative business models, supply chain management, the acquisition of digital skills and support to service providers that enable and support companies in the digitalisation of value chains, as long as the service providers focus predominantly on the provision and adoption of digital products and services.
- Moreover, the joint small and medium-sized enterprises / research, innovation and digitalisation window equity product implemented by the EIF includes a sub-product that supports investments fostering the development of digital, cultural and creative industry solutions.

Contribution to sustainable development goals

SDG	Does the programme contribute to the goal?	Example (only for the most relevant SDGs)
SDG1: End poverty in all its forms everywhere	Y	The InvestEU programme supports sustainable and inclusive/social investments, economic progress and job creation through micro-entrepreneurship, social economy, education, training and skills and investments in social infrastructure that contribute to alleviating poverty. A total of 8 517 social or affordable housing units were built or renovated through InvestEU support since the start of the implementation of the programme in 2022.
SDG3: Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages	Y	InvestEU aims to contribute to better healthcare through investments in rehabilitation and expansion of health infrastructure, and financial support dedicated to medical research. For example, InvestEU finances a project that covers the construction of 12 new long-term care centres, three rehabilitation hospitals and four assisted-living facilities in Spain.
SDG4: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all	Y	InvestEU support for inclusive and equitable education and lifelong learning opportunities is channelled via social investments for educational purposes, including infrastructure in support of education. As of the end of 2024, 14 422 individuals have benefited from educational programmes financed under InvestEU.
SDG5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls	Y	InvestEU has backed total investments of EUR 4 billion supporting gender equality as of December 2024. Also, the InvestEU Advisory Hub aims to provide tailored advisory support and capacity-building to improve access to finance for female-founded and female-led companies.

SDG6: Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all	Y	InvestEU operations contribute to the sustainable management of water resources by helping projects in the fields of water supply and wastewater treatment. As of December 2024, implementing partners signed around EUR 156.33 million worth of operations supporting water resources.
SDG7: Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all	Y	Through the energy efficiency measures of the InvestEU supported projects, the programme has contributed to the production of over 32 054 megawatts of electricity from renewable energy sources.
SDG8: Promote sustained , inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all	Y	InvestEU projects can support meaningful advancements towards promoting sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, and full and productive employment and decent work for all.

SDG9: Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation	Y	Under the InvestEU Fund, several implementing partners (for instance the EIB Group, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development and the Nordic Investment Bank) finance innovative projects and companies and sustainable infrastructure investments, thus building resilient infrastructure, promoting sustainable industrialisation and fostering innovation.
SDG10: Reduce inequalities within and among countries	Y	The InvestEU programme provides financing and advisory support for projects that might otherwise struggle to secure private investment, enabling development in countries with less-developed capital markets, where financial barriers exist.
SDG11: Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable	Y	The dedicated investments in economic and social infrastructure projects under InvestEU support advancement towards promoting resilient and inclusive infrastructure, and further efforts to support service-rich integrated infrastructure projects contribute to making cities more inclusive and sustainable.
SDG12: Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns	Y	InvestEU support to inclusive business practices and small and medium-sized enterprise growth and development contributes to promoting sustainable production and consumption practices.

SDG13: Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts	Y	Several implementing partners (e.g. the EIB Group, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, the Nordic Investment Bank and the Caisse des Dépôts et Consignations) finance clean energy investments with low or zero emissions, thus combating climate change and its impacts.
SDG14: Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development	Y	InvestEU is providing support to activities related to the sustainable use of marine resources, aquaculture and other elements of the wider bioeconomy. As of 31 December 2024, implementing partners signed around EUR 10.5 million for operations in the area of the blue economy and the sustainable blue economy finance principles.
SDG15: Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss	Y	InvestEU contributes to sustainable forest management, in line with the biodiversity-related priority areas which are to be supported under various financial products deployed under the InvestEU programme. As of December 2024, implementing partners signed around EUR 133.2 million for operations supporting biodiversity and ecosystems.

Support for reforms

N/A

Contribution to strategic technologies (STEP)

No new dedicated product to STEP was launched as of December 2024. However, by design, on the basis of its existing portfolio of financial products, InvestEU can support projects consistent with the STEP objectives, in particular within its Research and Innovation Window and using relevant financial products such as the thematic financial products implemented by the EIB and certain venture capital financial products implemented by the EIF. In addition, top-ups to InvestEU from other EU programmes (such as the Innovation Fund, Horizon Europe, EU4Health, the European Defence programme and the Digital Europe programme) also support STEP-relevant investments. Thus, InvestEU is already making a substantial contribution to support STEP-relevant sectors of (a) digital technologies and services and deep-tech innovation, including within the digital connectivity infrastructure; and (b) clean and resource-efficient technologies within the energy eligible area / environment eligible area.

The STEP Regulation allows Member States to allocate up to 6% of their Recovery and Resilience (RRF) envelope to the InvestEU Member State Compartment to support projects that contribute to STEP objectives (this is in addition to the 4% of the RRF envelope that Member States can deploy via InvestEU towards more general objectives). This option would allow the use of these RRF resources to stipulate financing contracts beyond the RRF deadline (31 December 2026). As of December 2024, no Member State has made use of this increased opportunity for STEP.

Connecting Europe Facility

Concrete examples of achievements

2 600 alternative fuel supply points were supported by the CEF during 2021-2027. Under CEF I (2014-2020) and CEF II (2021-2027), the deployment of 17 000 alternative fuel supply points has been supported.	200 electric locomotives were equipped with the European Railway Traffic Management System under CEF II. Under CEF I and CEF II, 685 locomotives in total were supported. Additionally, 2 150 kilometres of European Railway Traffic Management System track-side infrastructure were deployed under CEF I and CEF II.	200 kilometres of railway lines were addressed through closed studies and works under CEF II, and 3 500 kilometres in total under CEF I.	5 360 megawatts of electricity transmission capacity were added in 2024 to interconnect electricity networks and to facilitate the integration of renewable energy.	3 959 kilometres of electricity lines were added to the EU's energy system for the interconnection between Member States supported under the 2014-2020 programme.
19 billion cubic metres per year of additional transmission capacity through gas pipelines was installed across the EU in 2024.	114 new networks were added for socioeconomic drivers enabling very high-quality connections for local communities.	8 035 kilometres of CEF-funded transport corridors covered by 5G connectivity infrastructure (passive and/or active network elements) were added at the EU level, for roads, rail and inland waterways.	5 000 terabits per second of additional capacity was created by deployed backbone networks, including submarine cables.	

Budget programming and implementation

Budget programming (million EUR):

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	Total
Financial programming	4 517.5	4 570.8	4 839.1	4 586.8	4 747.4	5 001.3	5 173.7	33 436.6
NextGenerationEU	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Decommitments made available again (*)	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Contributions from other countries and entities	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Total	4 517.5	4 570.8	4 839.1	4 586.8	4 747.4	5 001.3	5 173.7	33 436.6

(*) Only Article 15(3) of the Financial Regulation.

Cumulative budget implementation at the end of 2024 (million EUR):

	Implementation	Budget	Implementation rate
Commitments	18 512.4	33 436.6	55.4%
Payments	9 033.5		27.0%

Implementation and performance

Key performance indicators

	Baseline	Progress	Target	Results	Assessment

Number of cross-border and missing links addressed with the support of the programme	0	82%	77 in 2029	63 cross-border and missing links out of 77 in 2024	On track
Number of programme-supported actions contributing to the digitalisation of transport, in particular through the deployment of the European Rail Traffic Management System, the river information services, the intelligent transport systems, the vessel traffic management information system / e-maritime services and the single European sky air traffic management research programme	0	72%	130 in 2027	93 actions out of 130 in 2024	On track
Number of alternative fuel supply points built or upgraded with the support of the programme	0	7%	38 000 in 2029	2 563 alternative fuel supply points out of 38 000 in 2024	On track
Number of transport infrastructure components adapted to civilian—military dual-use requirements	0	10%	140 in 2029	14 components in 2024 out of 140	On track
Number of programme actions contributing to projects interconnecting Member State networks and removing internal constraints	0	15%	95 in 2030	14 actions out of 95 in 2024	On track

Number of programme actions contributing to the improvement and digitalisation of grids and increasing energy storage capacity	0	24%	25 in 2030	6 actions out of 25 in 2024	On track
Number of programme actions contributing to the cost-efficient reaching of the target for EU-shared renewable energy sources on the basis of cross-border cooperation in the area of renewables	0	29%	48 in 2030	14 actions out of 48 in 2024	On track
Number of programme actions enabling 5G connectivity along transport paths	0	54%	46 in 2028	25 actions out of 46 in 2024	On track

- Between 2021 and the end of 2024, **EUR 21.6 billion of the total EUR 25.8 billion** Connecting Europe Facility (CEF) transport sector budget has been allocated to projects.
- The **CEF Transport** amended work programme was adopted in 2023 and it covers the remaining calls for proposals under this multiannual financial framework for 2023 and 2024. Following the **CEF 2023 call for proposals**, **EUR 7 billion** was allocated to projects contributing to a sustainable, smart, environmentally friendly and resilient transport infrastructure network. This was the largest CEF call under this multiannual financial framework, with EU support requests reaching EUR 22 billion.
- **80% of the available budget** was allocated to the **development of railways**, including **cross-border connections**. Among others, projects under the **solidarity lanes initiative** were supported to improve transport connectivity with **Ukraine and Moldova**.
- The **CEF 2024 call for proposals** closed in **January 2025**, receiving requests 3.8 times higher than the available budget. This call will allocate the remaining budget under the current multiannual financial framework to selected projects.
- In **2024**, the selection decision for the final **CEF Military Mobility 2023 call** was adopted. Under this call, **EUR 807 million** was allocated to upgrade key **EU transport infrastructure** for **dual use – i.e. for both civilian and defence purposes**. Demand was high, with grant requests exceeding the available budget by more than four times. With this call, the total **EUR 1.7 billion budget for military mobility** under this multiannual financial framework has now been fully allocated.
- The **CEF Alternative Fuels Infrastructure Facility** blends grants with financial instruments from international financial institutions and national promotional banks. In **2024**, the second **CEF Alternative Fuels Infrastructure Facility rolling call** was launched, involving three cut-off dates and a **total budget of EUR 1 billion**. The selection decision for the first cut-off date was adopted in February 2025.

- The first grant agreements under CEF II were signed in the third quarter of 2022. Therefore, the first projects have been in full implementation for less than three years. Some smaller projects, such as the deployment of alternative fuels infrastructure or preparatory studies, have been completed. However, large-scale construction projects take longer and are currently in full implementation.
- As regards the **Energy strand**, in the first window, CEF eligibility is limited to **projects of common interest** that belong to a given infrastructure category (essentially electricity, natural gas, hydrogen or carbon dioxide networks). In the **first three annual calls** for proposals under this window for projects of common interest (PCIs, cross-border projects between Member States), the Commission awarded approximately EUR 1 billion (2021), EUR 600 million (2022) and EUR 570 million (2023). CEF Energy grants were awarded for 21 actions (14 for construction works, with a total of more than **EUR 2.2 billion**, and 7 for studies, with a total of less than EUR 50 million). Out of these 21 grants, 8 concerned electricity projects and smart electricity grids (EUR 1.4 billion), 4 natural gas (EUR 150 million) and 9 carbon dioxide networks (EUR 610 million). Among the projects selected for funding, there are electricity interconnectors (EuroAsia, Aurora Line, ELMED), natural gas storage sites that will contribute to security of supply in Central and Eastern Europe, as well as the first building blocks of a future EU-wide carbon dioxide transport value chain. Following the revision of the TEN-E Regulation in 2022, the 2023 call was the last one where natural gas projects were fully eligible to apply.
- **In 2024**, based on Regulation (EU) 2022/869⁽⁹⁾ (the “TEN-E Regulation”), the Commission adopted the first list of PCIs and projects of mutual interest (a new category of cross-border projects linking Member States with non-EU countries). The list covers new infrastructure categories, such as offshore electricity grids and hydrogen networks. The 2024 call for proposal was the first one under which projects from the new list could apply for CEF Energy funding. In that call, the Commission awarded **EUR 1.25 billion** for 41 actions: EUR 750 million for electricity projects (8 actions, including the Bornholm Energy Island), EUR 250 million for hydrogen projects (21 studies actions), and EUR 250 million for carbon dioxide projects (12 actions). This is the largest call for proposals under the current CEF Energy programme, both in terms of applications received (over 70) and funding awarded. Thanks to the flexibility of the programme, the lower grant totals awarded in the 2022 and 2023 calls, which received fewer applications, were counterbalanced by the grant awards of the highly subscribed 2024 call.
- Regarding the second window for **cross-border renewable energy projects**, five calls for funding proposals were launched between 2021 and 2023 and another in 2024 (ongoing evaluation), with 14 actions awarded in total (**EUR 91.2 million**) providing funding for preparatory studies and for technical studies and works. The programme window is still in the process of constituting a pipeline of viable projects (8 in 2024) with the organisation of an annual call for status proposals. There is a growing interest from promoters (6 status applications received in 2024), which already translates into higher subscription rates for the funding calls (1.4 average for the past three calls).

⁽⁹⁾ Regulation (EU) 2022/869 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 May 2022 on guidelines for trans-European energy infrastructure, amending Regulations (EC) No 715/2009, (EU) 2019/942 and (EU) 2019/943 and Directives 2009/73/EC and (EU) 2019/944, and repealing Regulation (EU) No 347/2013 (OJ L 152, 3.6.2022, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2022/869/oj>).

- The first **CEF Digital** multiannual work programme, covering the calls for 2021-2023, was adopted in December 2021 and amended in April 2023, to take into account the evolution of stakeholder preparedness and demand, as well as the latest developments in policy priorities. Notwithstanding the initial late start, the three calls under the 2021-23 work programme followed the yearly planning schedule, with good budget absorption, in particular for certain topics (such as submarine cables). The grant agreements for the projects following the third call (2023 budget allocation, closed on 20 February 2024) had a 2.4 budget oversubscription rate. The grant agreements, for projects concerning the deployment of global gateways (mainly submarine cables) and deployment of 5G in smart communities and along major transport paths, were concluded in autumn 2024.
- The first three CEF Digital calls sum up (in commitments) to over 40% of the total EUR 1.6 billion budget for CEF Digital.
- The second CEF Digital multiannual work programme (covering 2024-2027) was adopted in October 2024 ⁽¹⁰⁾ and, based on that, the [fourth call](#) for proposals (2024 budget) was opened on 22 October 2024 with a closing date of 13 February 2025. In addition to support for the previous topics (global gateways and 5G connectivity), the fourth call will also co-fund projects deploying quantum communication infrastructure.

Contribution to horizontal priorities

Contribution to green budgeting priorities (EUR million):

	Implementation				Estimates			Total	% of the total envelope
	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027		
Climate mainstreaming	3 196.8	3 607.8	3 737.4	3 654.0	3 750.5	3 951.0	4 087.2	25 984.7	77.7%

- Under the **CEF Transport strand**, the projects mainly aim at completing and upgrading the railway and inland waterway infrastructure along the trans-European transport network and support the take-up of alternative fuels through the co-funding of charging infrastructure, hence contributing to the Green Deal agenda for the decarbonisation of the transport sector. As a result, appropriations committed to the co-funding of these projects correspond to around 78% of the overall Transport strand allocation. Notably, under the CEF 2023 call for proposals, more than 80% of the budget was allocated to railway projects.
- These investments in the development of electrified railway infrastructure (including associated signalling subsystems), along with the deployment of infrastructure for zero-emission vehicles,

⁽¹⁰⁾ [Commission Implementing Decision C\(2024\) 6891 of 9.10.2024](#).

like electric charging points, and the installation of shore-side electricity for ships at berth are all taxonomy-aligned activities.

- The programme’s **Energy strand** contributes to climate performance by supporting electricity, smart grid and carbon dioxide transport infrastructure and cross-border projects in the field of renewable energy. While CEF Energy contributed to climate objectives to 84% under the previous multiannual financial framework, the climate contribution of the CEF II Energy strand is estimated at over 90%. In addition, the Energy strand complies with the legislation on biodiversity objectives, as stated in recital 5 of the CEF Regulation.
- Moreover, most of the investments funded under CEF Energy have a substantial contribution to climate mitigation and adaptation, according to the criteria set in the [relevant EU taxonomy delegated acts](#). This includes all the projects related to electricity transmission, storage and smart grids and carbon dioxide networks. Under the first three calls of the current multiannual financial framework, EUR 2.1 billion, corresponding to the 93% of the commitment appropriations under CEF II Energy, is considered taxonomy-compliant.
- Because of their nature, the programme’s **Digital strand** projects will contribute to the digitalisation of other infrastructures and services, reducing their carbon footprint and making them energy-efficient.

Contribution to gender equality (million EUR) (*)

Gender score	2021	2022	2023	2024	Total
2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
0*	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
0	4 517.5	4 570.8	4 839.1	4 586.8	18 514.2
Total:	4 517.5	4 570.8	4 839.1	4 586.8	18 514.2

(*) Based on the applied gender contribution methodology, the following scores are attributed at the most granular level of intervention possible:

- 2: interventions the principal objective of which is to improve gender equality;
- 1: interventions that have gender equality as an important and deliberate objective but not as the main reason for the intervention;
- 0: non-targeted interventions (interventions that are expected to have no significant bearing on gender equality);
- 0*: score to be assigned to interventions with a likely but not yet clear positive impact on gender equality.

- The programme has a 0 score for its contribution to gender equality. Based on the nature of the infrastructure projects, it is not possible to disaggregate gender-specific data. Therefore, the score will be adjusted from 0* to 0.
- The programme, which supports basic infrastructural investments, does not have gender equality as a deliberate objective. Also, at the present time and based on CEF I- and CEF II-related regulations, the collection of gender-balance disaggregated data is not feasible for any of the three strands.

- In the CEF Transport sector, the investments mainly concern major infrastructure projects on the trans-European transport corridors, such as the development of railway infrastructure, port infrastructure, digitalisation of transport, deployment of alternative fuels infrastructure, etc. Transport of goods plays an important role for many of the projects, so users will not necessarily be individuals. Compared to transport infrastructure at the local or regional levels, which can have gender relevance depending on which concrete communities and locations the infrastructure is connecting, CEF-financed infrastructure is not gender-specific and it is not possible to disaggregate the data concerning gender.
- Similarly, the CEF Energy strand has supported investments for large infrastructure such as electricity interconnectors, electricity storage sites, smart electricity grids, gas pipelines, liquid natural gas terminals, underground gas storage and cross-border carbon dioxide networks, for which it is not possible to have a disaggregation of gender-specific data.
- As for the Digital strand, it supports only the deployment of physical connectivity infrastructures. It is however not possible to have disaggregated gender-specific data on the later use of these connectivity infrastructures.

Gender disaggregated information:

The collection of gender-balance disaggregated data is not feasible for any of the three strands of the Connecting Europe Facility. The programme supports the development of basic infrastructure, which does not have specific gender-related objectives.

Contribution to the digital transition (EUR million):

	2021 implementatio n	2022 implementatio n	2023 implementatio n	2024 impleme ntation	Total	% of the 2021- 2024 envelope
Digital contribution	366.4	213.1	270.8	101.9	952.2	5.1%

- In 2024, the digital contribution of **CEF Transport** was calculated based on the grants signed following the calls for proposals launched in 2023. It is foreseen that this contribution will remain stable in 2025. The 2024 CEF transport calls closed in January 2025 and the grant agreements will be signed by the end of the year.
- As a result of the 2023 Transport calls for proposals for ‘Actions related to smart and interoperable mobility’ launched in September 2023, 43 actions with programme co-funding of more than EUR 500 million have been awarded. In particular, support has been provided to the digitalisation of the trans-European transport network railway network, through the support to the European Railway Traffic Management System technology.
- The **Energy strand** contributes to digitalisation of the energy system and further integration of renewable electricity, notably by reducing bottlenecks in connection requests, improving grid controllability and enabling innovative market solutions, as one of the main objectives of the trans-European networks for energy priority thematic area of smart electricity grids. These

projects aim to modernise the grids so that consumers are empowered to become more active players in the market, producing much of their own energy needs while offering a cost-effective solution to balancing energy supply and demand. In the 2022, 2023 and 2024 calls for PCIs and projects of mutual interest under the first window of CEF Energy, four cross-border smart grid projects have been awarded grants for works and studies worth more than EUR 200 million in total.

- Through its specific support to the deployment of digital connectivity infrastructure, the **Digital strand** will contribute in its entirety to the digital transition policy goals, specifically to achieve the targets set in the Digital Decade policy programme in terms of digitalisation of businesses, public services and citizens. By supporting projects of common interest relating to the deployment of safe, secure, sustainable and very high-capacity digital networks, including 5G systems, the programme’s digital actions contribute to the transformation and modernisation of vertical sectors such as health, education and training, tourism, manufacturing, transport or logistics.
- Enhanced digital connectivity will contribute to the digital readiness and competitiveness of the EU’s businesses and the industrial and public services ecosystem. It will give all citizens and businesses new opportunities to benefit fully from the digital single market and accelerate economic recovery and growth. The Digital strand will contribute to the inclusiveness of outermost regions and overseas countries and territories by connecting them with up-to-date submarine backbones and ensuring that they can also benefit from advanced fixed and mobile connectivity. It is financing coordination and support actions to promote the best practice projects addressing the deployment and take-up of 5G systems to support services of general interest in local, rural communities, contributing to the digital and green transitions of public services and businesses.

Contribution to sustainable development goals

SDG	Does the programme contribute to the goal?	Example (only for the most relevant SDGs)
SDG7 Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all	YES	CEF Energy supports SDG7 by promoting investments contributing to the further integration of the internal energy market and to sustainable development, by the integration of energy from renewable sources and the development of smart energy grids. An example is the completion, in 2024, of one of the internal lines that are part of the third Finland–Sweden interconnection, which aims at increasing the transmission capacity between the countries, thus strengthening the internal electricity market, increasing security of supply in the region and improving integration of renewable energy sources in the region.

SDG9 Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation	YES	CEF Transport supports SDG9 through investments in sustainable, resilient and inclusive transportation systems, in particular infrastructure. For example, 2024 saw the finalisation of a CEF I project improving the rail access infrastructure of the Port of Gdańsk (Poland) by the reconstruction of over 70 kilometres of tracks, 13 railroad and pedestrian crossings, the replacement of 221 switches and the modernisation of 3 bridges, 2 viaducts and 18 culverts. Another action implemented European Rail Traffic Management System level 2, baseline 3 upgrades on one international prototype trainset (type Stadler Flirt 3C) operating on the Rhine Alpine corridor and partially on the North Sea Baltic Core Network corridors, between Belgium, Germany and the Netherlands. CEF Energy supports SDG9 through the investments aiming to increase the interoperability of electricity and gas networks across the borders. An example is the enhancement of the Latvia—Lithuania interconnection, commissioned in 2024, which aims to increase the overall cross-border interconnection capacity between the gas systems of these Member States. It integrates the gas and energy markets in the Baltic Sea region with the internal EU energy market, which contributes to the improvement of market competition and security of gas supply. The CEF Digital strand supports SDG9 by funding actions enabling uninterrupted connectivity along transport corridors and high-capacity networks for digital global gateways. Funded actions are already deploying 5G (passive/active) infrastructure along the major trans-European transport network corridors that would potentially enable seamless 5G connectivity on highways and/or railways fostering the adoption of connected and automated mobility. Another example is the deployment of submarine cables connecting remote areas with the EU and increasing networks' capacity, resilience and security.
SDG11 Make cities and human settlements inclusive , safe, resilient and sustainable	YES	CEF Transport supports sustainable cities and communities. In 2024, a CEF I project resulted in the preliminary designs for the new Milan Segrade East Gate high-speed rail station, and the metro line connection to Milan Linate Airport metro station.

SDG13 Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts	YES	The CEF programme contributes to the EU's climate-related goals, as indicated in the European Green Deal communication and the European Climate Law adopted in 2021. The Transport strand strongly supports climate-related investments, with 78% of the budget being dedicated to those projects. For example, since 2014, 17 000 supply points for alternative fuels have been put into operation along the trans-European transport network. CEF is financing electric charging points for cars and trucks as well as electricity supply for vessels at berth in ports. CEF Energy supports SDG13 by financing actions that contribute to the decarbonisation of the energy system, inter alia through the integration of renewable energy into the grid and the transmission of renewable generation to major consumption centres and storage. For example, the interconnection between Tsirguliina (Estonia) and Valmiera (Latvia), which was commissioned in 2024, is part of the cluster that will integrate and synchronise the Baltic States' electricity system with the European network, thus guaranteeing security of supply and also allowing for better integration of renewable energy in the overall region.

Support to reforms

- N/A

Contribution to strategic technologies

- N/A

2014-2020 – Connecting Europe Facility

Cumulative budget implementation at the end of 2024 (million EUR):

	Implementation	2014-2020 budget	Implementation rate
Commitments	29 860.5	29 875.9	99.9%
Payments	21 985.8	0.0	73.6%

Key performance indicators

	Baseline	Progress	Target	Results	Assessment
CEF Transport – lines in service equipped with the European Railway Traffic Management System	0	Actual results: 6%	5 491 in 2024	326 kilometres out of 5 491 kilometres	Moderate progress
CEF Transport – number of supply points for alternative fuels	0	Actual results: 9%	21 272 in 2024	1 904 out of 21 272	Moderate progress
CEF Energy – system resilience – number of	3	91%	22 in 2020	20 out of 22	On track

Member States					
Number of Wi-Fi hotspots supported by CEF	0	> 100%	90 700 in 2023	92 570 in 2022 out of 90 700	Achieved

- Under the predecessor programme for the 2014-2020 multiannual financial framework, more than 1 000 actions signed under the **Transport strand** have been supported with an EU contribution of EUR 23 billion, triggering around EUR 50 billion of private and public investments. These have strongly contributed to paving the way for the achievement of the key trans-European transport network and wider EU policy objectives addressing the removal of bottlenecks and enhancing interoperability, ensuring sustainable and efficient transport systems and optimising the integration and interconnection of transport modes.
- So far, more than half of the projects have been closed. These closed projects have an absorption rate of 91.3% of the allocated budget, compared to the amount of the latest grant agreement in force. Given this high absorption rate, a very large part of the closed projects achieved their objectives as laid out in the grant agreement.
- In 2024, more than 430 projects were still ongoing corresponding to most of the budget. Due to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and the geopolitical crisis in Ukraine leading to increased prices for construction materials and a lack of workforce, the maximum duration of the programme's Transport actions was extended to the end of 2024. As of that date, all grant agreements have ended and are in the process of closing.
- Since it was the last year of the grant agreement, those ongoing actions were in full implementation phase in 2024.
- Ongoing actions will submit their final reports in the course of 2025, which are needed to assess their performance in 2024, the overall performance of the programme and to what extent the extension of the grant agreements to the end of 2024 has helped projects to overcome cumulated past delays.
- In parallel, the *ex post* evaluation of the programme is also expected to be finalised in 2025.
- In terms of performance, during the 2014-2020 period, **CEF Energy** provided a total of EUR 4 672 billion in funding to 149 actions contributing to 107 PCIs. By the end of 2024, 127 of these actions were completed: 60 on electricity and storage, 59 on gas, 3 on smart grids and 5 on carbon dioxide networks.
- The Commission closely monitors the progress of the PCIs, through action status reports submitted by beneficiaries to the European Climate, Infrastructure and Environment Executive Agency, but also through the yearly monitoring by national competent authorities and the Agency for the Cooperation of Energy Regulators under the TEN-E Regulation. It should be noted that a number of these large cross-border infrastructure projects have faced technical challenges (e.g. for submarine electricity interconnectors), delays in permitting procedures (sometimes caused by

appeals) or supply chain issues (e.g. a limited number of suppliers for equipment such as high-voltage cables).

- Under CEF I, 77% of the actions were studies, accounting for 10% of the total commitments under the 2014-2020 multiannual financial framework, as preparatory studies are normally much less budget-intensive than construction works. The largest share of CEF I funding goes to works (90%), representing 23% of the total number of actions. Compared to CEF I, under the calls organised so far under CEF II (2021-2024), 72% of the actions have been studies and 28% have been works, with the latter absorbing 86% of the available commitments.
- In general, the Energy core performance indicators for 2014-2020 reflect different angles of the achievements of the EU's energy policy, such as the end of Member States' isolation, the interconnection target levels (reflecting a Member State's interconnection capacity as a ratio of its internal electricity system), the increase of energy system resilience and the diversification of gas supply sources, which are of the utmost relevance in minimising the effect of the Russian full-scale invasion of Ukraine on energy markets.
- CEF Energy's impact is measured in the long term, considering the time it takes to implement large-scale energy infrastructure projects (between 5 and 10 years). In 2024, no further progress was registered in terms of commissioned projects reducing Member States' energy isolation (six PCIs failing to reach the target), system resilience (two Member States failing to reach the target), and level of interconnectivity (16 Member States complying with the 15% interconnection target). On the interconnectivity level, this means a reduction compared to the previous year, where more Member States complied with the target, but this is caused by the increase in installed generation capacity (notably from renewable energy sources) across all Member States (renewable energy generation projects generally take less time to develop than electricity infrastructure projects). In terms of projects allowing the diversification of supply sources, one additional PCI supporting the EU's security of supply was completed in 2024, setting the level of pending PCIs to be commissioned under this particular indicator to 5.
- The success of the numerous actions for the implementation of energy infrastructure PCIs and their contribution to the policy objectives of the Trans-European Networks for Energy strategy is not yet fully reflected in the indicators, due to the long implementation time for large and technically complex energy infrastructure projects. In addition, delays have occurred because of external factors such as the COVID-19 sanitary crisis, the need to secure sufficient co-funding (from national or other sources), public procurement issues (e.g. complaints/appeals during tender procedures) and legal and environmental issues (e.g. permitting, spatial planning, other authorisations and land acquisition).
- For **CEF Telecom**, the WiFi4EU programme implementation ended in 2023 and resulted in 7 237 municipalities rolling out 9 152 networks with 93 181 access points. Municipalities committed to keeping these networks active for at least three years.
- By the end of 2024, although 77% of municipalities had already passed the 3-year monitoring period, 90% of them kept their networks active.

DIGITAL EUROPE PROGRAMME

Concrete examples of achievements

1st exascale supercomputer (one quintillion calculations per second) was launched in Europe to support researchers, industry and AI development. Jedi – the first module of the Jupiter exascale supercomputer – ranked first in the list of the world's top 500 greenest supercomputers in June 2024.	2 digital twins of the Earth of groundbreaking accuracy were launched in June 2024, simulating the impact of long-term climate change and predicating weather-induced extremes shortly before they occur, to improve the EU's response to major natural disasters and adapt to climate change.	5 semiconductor pilot lines launched in early 2024 to serve as pioneering, state-of-the-art facilities to test, experiment and validate leading-edge chip technologies and designs. They will form the basis of Europe's next generation of semiconductor production.	169 European digital innovation hubs were available by the end of 2024 in all EU Member States and Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway (and in late 2024 also in seven associated non-EU countries), offering services to public and private organisations in nearly 90% of European regions to boost their digitalisation.
20 713 students/participants were involved in 835 new training programmes (bachelor's and master's programmes and short training courses) in highly specialised fields, such as AI, cybersecurity and robotics, by the end of 2024.	> 58 million digital objects from 4 000 institutions all around Europe, with a particular focus on 3D data, were available on the data space for cultural heritage by the end of 2024 .	26 Security Operation Centres / Cyber Hubs and cross-border security operation centres were set up during 2024 across Europe, ensuring cross-border cooperation, strengthening coordinated detection capacities and situational awareness of cyber threats and incidents in the EU.	> 300 AI innovators tested and validated their AI solutions in the four highly specialised testing and experimentation facilities in agrifood, health, manufacturing and smart cities and communities by the end of 2024.

Budget programming and implementation

Budget programming (million EUR):

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	Total
Financial programming	1 130.5	1 232.8	1 340.8	1 265.4	1 097.3	999.7	1 063.7	8 130.2
NextGenerationEU	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Decommitments made available again (*)	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Contributions from other countries and entities	30.5	31.3	40.1	73.5	58.0	0.0	0.0	233.4
Total	1 161.0	1 264.1	1 380.9	1 338.8	1 155.3	999.7	1 063.7	8 363.6

(*) Only Article 15(3) of the Financial Regulation.

Cumulative budget implementation at the end of 2024 (million EUR):

	Implementation	Budget	Implementation rate
Commitments	5 115.2	8 363.6	61.2%
Payments	2 759.1		33.0%

Implementation and performance

Key performance indicators

	Baseline	Progress	Target	Results	Assessment
High-performance computing infrastructures jointly procured	7	63%	30 in 2029	19 in 2024 compared to a target of 30	On track

Co-investment in sites for experimentation and testing	0	156%	EUR 180 million in 2027	EUR 280 million in 2024 compared to a target of EUR 180 million	On track
Usage of common European libraries or interfaces to libraries of algorithms, usage of common European data spaces and usage of sites for experimentation and testing related to activities under this regulation	0	26%	1 600 in 2030	414 in 2024 compared to a target of 1 600	On track
Users and communities getting access to European cybersecurity facilities	0	26%	400 in 2028	103 in 2024 compared to a target of 400	On track
People who have received training to acquire advanced digital skills	0	32%	65 000 in 2027	20 713 in 2024 compared to a target of 65 000	On track
People reporting an improved employment situation after the end of the training supported by the programme	0	0%	26 200 in 2027	0 compared to a target of 26 200	On track

Extent of alignment of the national interoperability framework with the European interoperability framework	3 750	101%	3 775 in 2025	3 798 in 2023 compared to a target of 3 775	On track
Businesses and public sector entities that have used the European digital innovation hub services	0	19%	287 400 in 2029	54 610 in 2024 compared to a target of 287 400	On track

- By the end of 2024, the Digital Europe (DEP) programme launched a wide range of activities to boost the digital transformation in Europe. In the context of the **Destination Earth** initiative, two digital models of the Earth of groundbreaking accuracy were launched in June 2024: the digital twins of climate change adaptation and weather-induced extremes will improve the EU's response to major natural disasters and climate change. Destination Earth would not be possible without the world-leading **supercomputing network** established by the European High-Performance Computing Joint Undertaking, which includes two supercomputers currently ranked among the top 10 fastest in the world. In 2024, Jupiter, the **first exascale computer**, was launched with an unprecedented amount of computing power. Jedi, the first module of Jupiter, has been ranked as the greenest high-performance computing system in the world. Six quantum computers are in the pipeline and **seven AI factories** were launched, offering access to AI-optimised high-performance computers, AI training and technical expertise.
- To support the development of AI and boost innovation, **common European data spaces** have been deployed in seven sectors. For instance, a public catalogue of 46 medical imaging datasets (of around 35 000 subjects) for nine cancer types is available for the development of AI-based cancer solutions shaping the future of cancer diagnosis and treatment. **Four highly specialised and large-scale testing and experimentation facilities** for AI in agrifood, health, manufacturing and smart cities and communities have been set up, which have allowed more than 300 innovators to test and/or validate AI-based products in real world conditions.
- To reduce dependencies in semiconductor product development and boost innovation in the EU, **five pilot lines for chips** have been launched, which allow organisations to test, experiment and validate leading-edge chip technologies and designs.
- **27 National Cybersecurity Competence Centres and 26 national and cross-border Security Operation Centres / Cyber Hubs** have been set up, ensuring cross-border cooperation and strengthening coordinated detection capacities and situational awareness of cyber threats and incidents.
- **20 713 students and participants** have taken part in the **835 educational and training programmes designed and offered** (bachelor's and master's programmes as well as short

courses) in highly specialised information and communications technology fields. To help organisations, especially small and medium-sized enterprises, across the EU and beyond to boost digitalisation, **169 digital innovation hubs** offer their services in more than 90% of European regions and seven DEP-associated countries.

- DEP supports many other activities, such as the development of a **European Digital Identity Wallet**, interoperability in the public sector across the EU or measures to ensure that minors are protected when surfing online (reaching 30 million EU citizens and residents per year).
- The year 2024 saw the signature of the 500th grant of the programme. This milestone represents an overall investment of EUR 3.3 billion, with EUR 1.9 billion contributed from the DEP budget. Over EUR 1 billion has been invested in over 140 procurements and in contribution agreements. Through equity financial instruments, EUR 83.63 million has been committed to support strategic digital technologies and EUR 67 million for investments in semiconductor technologies. These equity investments are expected to mobilise EUR 2.1 billion, facilitating access to finance for key companies across Europe.
- DEP has also contributed to the InvestEU Programme through blending with the EU guarantee, which contributed to the mobilisation of additional investments. In particular, DEP contributed via an InvestEU EIF equity product in the target area of strategic digital technologies. As of end-2024, EUR 83.63 million has been committed to support strategic digital technologies and EUR 67 million for investments in semiconductor technologies. These equity investments are expected to mobilise EUR 2.1 billion, facilitating access to finance for key companies across Europe.
- The ongoing interim evaluation has shown that stakeholders perceive the implementation of national co-funding schemes as a challenge due to state aid rules. Participation restrictions under Article 12 (5) and Article 12 (6) of Regulation (EU) 2021/694¹¹, while being key to protecting the EU in key security areas, have also been a hurdle for implementation, leading to delays and changes in grant agreements. The widely used ‘simple grant’, with a 50% co-financing rate, is an important tool to leverage digital solutions across the EU, but has represented a challenge for some types of stakeholders. To facilitate national co-funding, the Commission has introduced the most favourable funding rates in the 2025-2027 work programme to bring more clarity into the possible aid intensity on top of DEP support. In addition, in order to further help applicants and national authorities understand the particularities of security restrictions, several outreach activities, training sessions and workshops have been organised, including workshops for the programme committee, National Contact Points and appointed national security experts.

(¹¹) Regulation (EU) 2021/694 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 29 April 2021 establishing the Digital Europe Programme and repealing Decision (EU) 2015/2240 (OJ L 166, 11.5.2021, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2021/694/oj>).

Contribution to horizontal priorities

Contribution to green budgeting priorities (EUR million):

	Implementation				Estimates			Total	% of the total envelope
	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027		
Climate mainstreaming	100.8	154.5	82.9	22.7	6.0	43.8	46.6	457.3	5.6%

- Several actions in the DEP are contributing to climate change mitigation or adaptation. This is mainly the case of the Destination Earth initiative, which enables the visualisation, monitoring and forecasting of natural and human activity on the planet. The **Destination Earth initiative** made substantial progress in 2024. Following the launch event in June 2024, all three components of Destination Earth are operational and open to users:
 - the first two digital twins simulating the impact of long-term climate change and predicating weather-induced extremes shortly before they occur;
 - the Destination Earth Platform, offering 20 services (such as advanced 3D rendering technologies or content creation services for storytelling); and
 - the Destination Earth Data Lake.
- The digital twins are models of the earth system of groundbreaking accuracy, developed to improve the EU's response to major natural disasters, adapt to climate change and assess potential socioeconomic and policy impacts. 'Destination Earth' (Destine) was recently awarded the [HPCwire reader's choice award](#) for best use of high-performance computing in physical sciences and top high-performance-computing-enabled scientific achievement.
- A small number of other actions – such as the **Digital Product Passport** – are expected to have a non-marginal positive contribution to climate change mitigation or adaptation objectives. The Digital Product Passport is an information system that provides data on a product's sustainability and environmental impact throughout its life cycle, from design to disposal. The project to develop the framework has already established a stakeholder community of over 4 000 individuals and organisations interested in the digitally enabled transition to the circular economy, and is currently running 13 pilots to test the passport in four value chains: textile, electrical and electronic equipment, tyres and construction material.
- In addition, the **EU energy-saving reference framework** will help conserve electricity when there is a shortage of energy supply. This framework for energy-saving applications will support consumers and businesses in enhancing energy efficiency by providing, for example, recommendations on when to increase or decrease energy usage based on regional demand and usage patterns, and personalised guidance for eco-friendly consumption integrating data from smart meters. The project has recently started to be implemented and has worked on use cases, architecture and data sets.
- The **Green Deal data space** will offer access to a variety of data related to the environment and the EU's climate objectives, for instance by providing detailed data on geospatial systems, localised water, soil and air pollution, energy supply and consumption. The **agricultural data space** will enable the agriculture sector to transparently share and access data, thereby

promoting its economic and environmental performance. Similarly, the **energy data space** will provide access to data to foster the development of innovative energy services to optimise the electricity grids and improve energy efficiency. It will play a key role in increasing the integration of intermittent renewable energy sources.

- The climate contributions of the programme after 2024 will depend on the actions to be funded in the subsequent work programmes. The main contribution is expected to stem from the completion of Destination Earth’s main components, a full digital twin of the Earth powered by Europe’s supercomputers and AI capacity in 2030.
- The programme will deliver digital solutions and contribute to closing the digital skills gap, and is not expected to make a direct contribution to biodiversity or clean air. During the implementation of the programme, this *ex ante* assessment will be revised should specific projects make a tangible contribution to these horizontal priorities that could not be anticipated at the start of the implementation.

Contribution to gender equality (million EUR) (*)

Gender Score	2021	2022	2023	2024	Total
2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
0*	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
0	1 130.5	1 232.8	1 340.8	1 265.4	4 969.5
Total:	1 130.5	1 232.8	1 340.8	1 265.4	4 969.5

(*) Based on the applied gender contribution methodology, the following scores are attributed at the most granular level of intervention possible:

- 2: interventions the principal objective of which is to improve gender equality;
 - 1: interventions that have gender equality as an important and deliberate objective but not as the main reason for the intervention;
 - 0: non-targeted interventions (interventions that are expected to have no significant bearing on gender equality);
 - 0*: score to be assigned to interventions with a likely but not yet clear positive impact on gender equality.
- In line with the Commission’s methodology to track gender-equality-related expenditure, the programme has been attributed a gender score of 0. However, the programme’s impact on gender will be determined *ex post*, once sufficient information from the programming and implementation phases is available. The contribution from DEP to gender equality may be relevant for the training initiatives to promote advanced digital skills organised under the ‘advanced digital skills’ specific objective, in line with Article 7 of the Digital Europe Regulation, under which gender balance should be taken into account. For this purpose, the 2023-2024 DEP work programme introduces two new actions (EUR 8 million in total) to boost the development of digital skills from an early age, particularly for girls, and to promote gender convergence in information and communications technologies. Should the implementation of the abovementioned actions in specific objective 4 entail a contribution, this will be reflected in the respective programme performance statement.

Gender disaggregated information:

- Gender disaggregated information is available for the education and training opportunities funded under the ‘advanced digital skills’ specific objective. From the start of the DEP, for activities from the end of 2022 to the end of 2024, a total of 20 713 participants have taken part in the various education and training opportunities designed and offered by the funded projects. Of these participants, 5 408 were female, accounting for over 26% of the total enrolment. This percentage is higher than the percentage of women currently employed in Europe’s information and communications technology sector, which stands at 20%. The different educational programmes and training initiatives cover diverse key digital areas, including AI, data science, cybersecurity, cloud computing, high-performance computing, quantum technologies, blockchain, semiconductors and robotics, as well as interdisciplinary programmes for the acquisition of advanced digital skills in strategic sectors such as agriculture, healthcare and wind and energy systems.
- The highest percentage of female enrolments is in higher-education programmes: 33% of participants in master’s programmes are women, compared to 26% of female enrolments in specialised short-term training courses.
- Funding also covers financial support to participants, for instance in the form of scholarships, fee waivers or internships. Financial support has been offered by higher-education institutions to 455 students, out of which 177 were female, representing 39% of the supported students.
- In the context of the EU Code Week in 2024, activities related to coding and algorithmic thinking attracted 2 million young participants from all over Europe, with 48% of them being girls.

Contribution to the digital transition (EUR million):

	2021 implementatio n	2022 implementatio n	2023 implementatio n	2024 implementati on	Total	% of 2021- 2024
Digital contribution	1 161.0	1 264.1	1 380.9	1 338.8	5 144. 8	100.0 %

The full envelope of the DEP contributes to the digital transition. The contribution is thus 100% of the budget committed in a given year.

Contribution to sustainable development goals

SDG	Does the programme contribute to the goal?	Example (only for the most relevant SDGs)
SDG3 Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages	X	The DEP is expected to contribute to this SDG through the support provided for the digitalisation of the health sector, in particular through the uptake of digital health solutions and services. Several actions in the first work programme contribute directly to this goal. One example is the data spaces for health (with over 240 beneficiaries and an investment of over EUR 71 million by the end of 2024) enabling the secure sharing of health data to promote research, innovation, public health policy and healthcare delivery across the EU. Additionally, the Testing and Experimentation Facility for Health AI and Robotics (with over 100 beneficiaries and an investment of over EUR 59.9 million) contributes to this goal by offering public and private organisations the opportunity to test and validate AI innovations for the health sector in real-life settings. Other topics might also marginally contribute with positive externalities, although healthcare is not their main objective. Such is the case for support to specialised education programmes in key digital technologies for professionals in various areas, including the health sector.
SDG4 Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all	X	DEP promotes learning opportunities in advanced digital skills in key capacity areas like data and artificial intelligence, cybersecurity, quantum and high-performance computing. The support targets training opportunities for future experts and upskilling of the existing workforce through short training sessions reflecting the latest developments in the abovementioned key capacity areas. An example of such investment would be the 'Specialised educational programmes in key capacity areas', with a total support of over EUR 179 million by the end of 2024 and involving over 520 organisations.

SDG8 Promote sustainable, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all	X	The DEP is expected to contribute to bridging the investment gap in Europe and to generate jobs and economic growth. The programme will support the promotion of the advanced digital skills needed for the deployment of the technologies funded by the programme. An example of such investment would be the highly specialised Cybersecurity Skills Academy and the advanced training sessions to reinforce skills in semiconductors, with over 90 beneficiaries and an investment of over EUR 23.5 million by the end of 2024.
SDG9 Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation	X	DEP is contributing to the broader digital transformation of areas of public interest and of industry. The acquisition and deployment of advanced supercomputing capabilities aim to enhance Europe's industrial competitiveness. Moreover, the established network of European digital innovation hubs contributes to the digitisation of industry and addresses issues of technological accessibility, ensuring that businesses, including small and medium-sized enterprises, have access to cutting-edge technologies and finance for adapting to digital change. The interoperable Europe action supports the development of reusable interoperability infrastructure/solutions, with the view to support the digital transformation of the public sector and create capacity for public authorities to collaborate effectively to set up seamless cross-border services. In particular, the govtech ⁽¹²⁾ action under the interoperability track brings together 29 digital agencies from 20 European countries to innovate the way governments deliver citizen services digitally. Another example of investment into this goal is the setup of the network of digital innovation hubs, with a total support of over EUR 342 million and over 1 900 participating organisations. By the end of 2024, 169 hubs in the EU and in seven associated countries have received funding from the programme to establish a network of digital innovation hubs.

(12)

<https://interoperable-europe.ec.europa.eu/collection/govtechconnect/govtech4all>.

SDG11 Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable	x	A number of activities funded by DEP are expected to contribute to more inclusive and sustainable cities and communities. One example is the data space for tourism (over EUR 8 million and over 40 participants), which aims to enable more efficient crowd management at tourist destinations, among other outcomes. This goal is also supported by the data space for smart communities (with over EUR 17.9 million in funding), allowing cities to have the right data to model aspects such as energy use in buildings or infrastructures. In addition, DEP is supporting the large-scale roll-out of local digital twins across the EU (EUR 20 million in funding). As a further step, virtual reality / augmented reality and metaverse technology (over EUR 6.4 million involving 29 beneficiaries) will be introduced, creating an immersive environment for citizens and businesses: the ‘Citiverse’ can be used for virtual/real spatial planning, management or navigation while also enhancing the social, architectural, green and cultural heritage dimensions of living spaces.
SDG13 Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts	x	A small number of actions under the DEP will contribute to climate mitigation or adaptation. Destination Earth will contribute through the development of a very high-precision digital model of the Earth to enable visualising, monitoring and forecasting natural and human activity on the planet in support of sustainable development. DEP investment (work programmes 2021/2022 and 2023/2024) for the first two phases exceeds EUR 300 million. The Destination Earth initiative is being implemented via contribution agreements by the European Space Agency, the European Centre for Medium-Range Weather Forecasts and the European Operational Satellite Agency for Monitoring Weather, Climate and the Environment from Space.

SDG16 Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels	X	Selected DEP actions, along with the legacy solutions deployed in the telecommunications programmes of the Connecting Europe Facility, aim to enlarge and maximise the benefits of the digital transformation for citizens and businesses. Contributions to this goal are expected from selected topics that aim to support the digitalisation and interoperability of public administrations, piloting of AI applications in law enforcement domain, and the digital transformation of justice and consumer protection. The digital transformation of public administrations shall foster trust in online services, improve service delivery and the convenience of services for European businesses and citizens, and reduce digital administrative barriers. An example of such investment would be in the work strands supporting the digitalisation of justice and consumer protection implemented via procurement under the first work programme, with EU budget support of EUR 17 million from 2021 to 2022, and EUR 17.4 million from 2023 to 2024.

Support to reforms

n/a

Contribution to strategic technologies

In line with the STEP Regulation, DEP is one of the EU programmes in direct management mobilised under the Strategic Technologies for Europe Platform (STEP) to strengthen the competitiveness and resilience of the European economy. As stipulated in Article 4 of the STEP Regulation, DEP is also among the programmes authorised to award the STEP (Sovereignty) Seal under its calls for proposals.

As of 31 December 2024, DEP launched and closed two calls for proposals addressed to digital technologies, each with one STEP-relevant topic, respectively targeting models for artificial intelligence and cloud-computing technologies.

As such, in 2024 DEP earmarked a total budget of EUR 55 million for STEP objectives. These calls align with STEP objectives, as the supported projects qualify as ‘associated services’ under the STEP Regulation. They are expected to introduce cutting-edge innovations with strong economic potential while reducing or preventing strategic dependencies within the EU.

In early 2025, the AI project ‘openeuroLLM’ – a cross-border collaboration involving eight Member States – was awarded a STEP Seal under the 2024 topic ‘DIGITAL-2024-AI-06-FINETUNE’. The project has a total budget of around EUR 37 million and is supported with a DEP grant of some EUR 21 million.

SINGLE MARKET PROGRAMME

PROGRAMME FOR SINGLE MARKET, COMPETITIVENESS OF ENTERPRISES, INCLUDING SMALL AND MEDIUM-SIZED ENTERPRISES, AND EUROPEAN STATISTICS

Concrete examples of achievements

325 000	34 million	21 353	95.2%	24 197
small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) have been supported directly or used advisory services from the main projects.	visitors came to the Your Europe portal, the most visited Commission website in 2024, with a satisfaction rate of over 93%.	non-compliant products circulating on the single market were detected by EU market surveillance authorities in 2024.	of the international financial reporting standards were endorsed in the EU in 2024.	European standards were successfully implemented across the EU.
141	134 000	650 900	47	276
training sessions were organised under the better training for safer food programme, with 4 068 total participants. In addition, 4 452 people participated in e-learning courses.	cases were handled by the European Consumer Centre Network in 2024, and over EUR 7.6 million was recovered for consumers following interventions with traders.	people in total are following Eurostat's social media channels, notably Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn and X.	position papers and responses to public consultations in the field of financial services were produced in 2024.	judges were trained in 2024 under the grant programme for training of judges in EU competition law.
				640 744
				is the total number of external users of DG Competition digital solutions.

Budget programming and implementation

Budget programming (million EUR):

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	Total
Financial programming	583.1	687.6	633.8	603.6	613.3	663.5	620.2	4 405.2
NextGenerationEU	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

Decommitments made available again (*)	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Contributions from other countries and entities	35.1	14.4	24.9	22.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	96.7
Total	618.2	702.0	658.8	626.0	613.3	663.5	620.2	4 501.9

(*) Only Article 15(3) of the Financial Regulation.

Cumulative budget implementation at the end of 2024 (million EUR)

	Implementation	Budget	Implementation rate
Commitments	2 584.7	4 501.9	57.4%
Payments	1 712.7	0.0	38.0%

Implementation and performance

Key performance indicators

	Baseline	Progress	Target	Results	Assessment
Number of cases of non-compliance in the area of goods, including online sales	9 606	NA	NA	21 353	NA

Number of entrepreneurs benefiting from mentoring and mobility schemes, including young, new and female entrepreneurs, and other specific target groups	0	14%	22 000 in 2027	3 032 compared to a target of 22 000	Moderate progress
Percentage of international financial reporting and auditing standards endorsed by the EU	1	95%	100% in 2027	95.2% compared to a target of 100%	On track
Number of position papers and responses to public consultations in the field of financial services from beneficiaries	0	53%	371 in 2027	197 compared to a target of 371	On track
Number of successfully implemented national veterinary programmes	0.9	> 100%	> 90% in 2027	99% compared to a target of > 90%	On track
Number of successfully implemented national phytosanitary programmes	0	> 100%	95% in 2027	100% compared to a target of 95%	On track

Number of web mentions and positive/negative opinions	480 000	> 100%	499 539 in 2028	794 500 compared to a target of 499 539	On track

- SMP has been established as the EU funding programme with a strategic focus to help **our single market** reach its full potential and remain the ultimate engine of Europe's recovery. By grouping instruments into an integrated and coherent package of funding opportunities, the SMP aims to allow for a more streamlined functioning (procedures) and enhanced effectiveness from joint or coordinated implementation of activities via savings or increased impact.
- Overall, for the first four years of implementation (2021-2024), the key actions have contributed to the **achievement** of the general and specific objectives of the SMP. The implementation of the programme has been effectively done and with efficient resource allocation.
- The programme generates an **EU added value** that funding at the national level could not have achieved. The financed activities allow the Commission to fulfil its legal obligations to address issues falling in its competence remit or due to the nature of the challenges and needs pertaining to the well-functioning of the single market. The potential of the SMP for **flexibility** has brought some positive results, yet it has not been fully exploited. In 2024, transfers of appropriations within the programme allowed to achieve 100% implementation in commitments and 98.71% in payments (voted appropriations).
- However, considering the **limited budget** of the programme and a fixed programming schedule, accommodating new policy priorities remains a **challenge** without a substantially increased budget. Notably, higher-than-expected inflation eroded the number and extent of actions that could be undertaken.
- A more systematic **gathering of data** across all pillars would better inform the assessment of the programme's implementation and potentially improve its overall performance. It would allow to adopt adjustments and corrective measures to ensure that the activities effectively and efficiently serve the achievement of the objectives, and remain relevant and coherent within the SMP and with the broader EU priorities.

Contribution to horizontal priorities

Contribution to green budgeting priorities (EUR million)

	Implementation				Estimates			Total	% of the total envelope
	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027		
Climate mainstreaming	47.2	62.0	74.6	50.9	49.0	49.5	49.6	382.8	8.7%

There is no relevant expenditure tracking for climate mainstreaming at the programme level. However, the objectives of the SMP are inherently linked to the success of the twin transitions for their achievement, and activities are aligned with the EU policy priorities, including the European

Green Deal, mainly with indirect impact. Funding the fostering of sustainable competitiveness while ensuring the protection of consumers and citizens in the EU contributes to the transition towards a greener and more digital internal market.

- **Internal market.** Grants to EFRAG (previous name: the European Financial Reporting Advisory Group) support the development of European sustainability reporting standards, as provided for by the Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive adopted on 14 December 2022. The directive is a key instrument to support the EU sustainable finance agenda and important for meeting the objectives of the European Green Deal. For 2024, EFRAG was mandated by the Commission to produce additional guidance aiming at providing support to companies for the implementation of the European sustainability reporting standards. During 2023, the Commission had requested EFRAG to focus on implementation guidance for the first set of standards and in turn deprioritise work on standards for ‘listed small and medium-sized enterprises’ (LSME) and on the ‘voluntary reporting standard for small and medium-sized enterprises’ (VSME). Consequently, EFRAG reprioritised its work and, in 2024, continued working on the workstreams that were delayed in 2023. These activities included the ongoing development and finalisation of the LSME and VSME draft standards to be submitted to the Commission by the end of 2024 (VSME was submitted and LSME was finalised but put on hold due to the ‘Omnibus’ discussion). Furthermore, three implementation guidance documents pertaining to the first set of standards were published in 2024. The EFRAG activities for 2024 on sustainability reporting further dealt with standards for high-impact sectors and for non-EU companies. EFRAG submitted two draft ‘XBRL’ taxonomies providing digital solutions for sustainability reporting. Furthermore, EFRAG engaged with other international standard setters to ensure interoperability with the European sustainability reporting standards. In this regard, a joint interoperability-document was published by EFRAG and the International Sustainability Standards Board.
- **SMEs.** Supporting the green transition is a key objective of the ‘Eurocluster’ initiatives. At least 20% of the budget of this action supports climate goals. This is achieved mainly by providing direct financial support to SMEs (via cascading calls) to assist their adoption of new technologies leading to higher sustainability. By May 2024, the 30 Euroclusters provided financial support to third parties for a total of 1 281 different companies (1 396 funding cases) and an estimated budget allocation of EUR 22 million. The European Raw Materials Academy and the European Solar Academy were set up under the SME pillar following the Net-Zero Industry Act and the Critical Raw Materials Act. The academies enable further training modules to be provided for educating and training workforce. This provides opportunities for SMEs across the solar value chain and in critical raw materials.
The social economy and tourism sectors were supported by a variety of ongoing actions, such as sustainable growth and building resilience in tourism and the greening of social economy SMEs.
While the SME pillar pursues environmental goals, in 2024 it did not directly contribute to biodiversity mainstreaming. However, in the ‘[SME fund](#)’, a community plant variety voucher (up to EUR 1 500) is available and can be used for registering plant varieties, to protect them in the EU.
- **European standardisation** continues to support the green transition through key initiatives that enhance sustainability and environmental responsibility. This includes the recycling of permanent magnets and the exploration, extraction, refining and recycling of critical raw materials, ensuring a more efficient and circular use of essential resources. Efforts also focus on hydrogen quality in dedicated gaseous hydrogen networks, contributing to the deployment of clean energy solutions. Additionally, standardisation activities address methane emissions

quantification in oil, coal and upstream gas operations, improving emissions monitoring and reduction. Further support is provided for offshore wind energy standardisation and through the CEN and CENELEC Coordination Group on Hydrogen, reinforcing the role of standardisation in advancing Europe's green transition.

- The **consumer** pillar continues to support consumers in the green transition, which is one of the key consumer policy priorities. This includes initiatives that empower and assist consumers to make sustainable and informed choices, by raising their awareness of the environmental performance of products, such as their durability, reparability and eco-design features, and by ensuring consumers' rights are represented in the area of sustainable finance. Consumer pillar initiatives also focus on protecting consumers against misleading commercial practices, such as greenwashing and early obsolescence of goods, and better information at the point of sale. Additionally, the consumer pillar calls upon businesses in various sectors of the economy to undertake voluntary commitments to promote sustainable consumption and production, beyond what is required by law, for example by reducing their environmental footprint, by producing and marketing more sustainable products and by changing their business practices towards a more circular model. The consumer pillar also supports policy makers in policy discussions around climate change and climate related risks as well as climate related investing.
- **European statistics.** Eurostat offers grants for national authorities to develop statistics about the environment and climate change. Also included are developments of environmental accounts, which is a statistical framework that integrates economic and environmental data to assess how the environment contributes to the economy and how economic activities affect the environment. Policy topics include climate change mitigation, circular economy, natural capital, forestry and water.

Eurostat	Implementation				Estimates			Total	% of the envelope
	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027		
Climate mainstreaming	4 960 020	3 030 677	2 734 375	5 563 011	3 054 250	-	-		
Biodiversity mainstreaming					5 082 350	-	-		

Contribution to gender equality (million EUR) (*)

Gender Score	2021	2022	2023	2024	Total
2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
0*	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
0	583.1	687.6	633.8	603.6	2 508.2
Total:	583.1	687.6	633.8	603.6	2 508.2

(*) Based on the applied gender contribution methodology, the following scores are attributed at the most granular level of intervention possible:

- 2: interventions the principal objective of which is to improve gender equality;

- 1: interventions that have gender equality as an important and deliberate objective but not as the main reason for the intervention;
- 0: non-targeted interventions (interventions that are expected to have no significant bearing on gender equality);
- 0*: score to be assigned to interventions with a likely but not yet clear positive impact on gender equality.

Measures supported under the SMP respect gender equality principles and take the gender dimension into account. Although some actions may be identifiable for possible gender impact, gender equality is not a deliberate objective of the programme (as a whole or for its pillars). Therefore only partial tracking is possible to quantify the impact of actions on gender.

Although some specific activities in the SMP work programmes integrate gender-related aspects, and specific strands (SME, Consumer, Statistics) even produce gender-related data or reporting, in most cases the funded interventions will not be marked as 1 or 2. Gender perspective is usually a sub-task and tool.

With this and the request to reassess the score in mind, it can be argued to assign a score of 0.

- **SMEs.** Women entrepreneurs are supported through the ‘Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs’ and other smaller specific actions dedicated to female entrepreneurship. Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs has equal participation rates among men and women for new entrepreneurs and 70% male versus 30% female participation rates for host entrepreneurs.
- **European standardisation** continues to integrate inclusivity as a key priority alongside the green and digital transitions. Recognising the importance of diverse perspectives in shaping technical standards, a pilot project on making harmonised standards inclusive and gender-responsive has been financed. This initiative aims to ensure that European standards reflect the needs of all users, fostering equality in product design, workplace safety and accessibility.
- **European statistics.** In 2024, Eurostat disseminated gender pay gap data for 2022, along with many detailed sex-disaggregated socioeconomic indicators. Indicators providing information on the prevalence and dynamics of violence, stemming from an EU gender-based violence survey (wave 2021), were disseminated for the entire EU on 25 November 2024. Eurostat coordinated data collection in 18 Member States and Italy shared comparable data for the main indicators based on its national survey. For eight Member States, the European Institute for Gender Equality and the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights coordinated the data collection, which was carried out by private companies in accordance with the guidelines of the EU survey on gender-based violence against women.

Gender disaggregated information: n/a

- European statistics: Eurostat, in addition to domain-specific databases, is disseminating gender equality statistics via the following dedicated section on equality:
<https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/equality-non-discrimination/overview>.

Contribution to the digital transition (EUR million)

2021 implementatio n	2022 implementatio n	2023 implementatio n	2024 implementatio n	Total	% of 2021

						- 2024
Digital contribution	5.4	5.5	5.2	14.0	30.1	1.2%

The SMP does not directly finance activities with explicit contribution to the goals of the digital transition and, more importantly, most parts of the programme do not fit the criteria for digital tracking in this exercise.

However, some of the programme funding indirectly contributes to the digital transformation in supporting the resilience of the single market and helping to fulfil the green and digital transitions of Europe's industrial ecosystems. The digital tools linked with SMP strands are in line with the Commission's digital strategy.

- **Competition.** DG Competition concentrates efforts to establish innovative and optimised digital solutions to make competition enforcement more effective. In 2024, the modernisation of DG Competition's case management progressed further. The replacement of the ageing case management systems with a new system (CASE@EC) is expected to be completed in 2025. Two new digital solutions were developed in 2024, including a new e-notification solution to digitise the notification process in the fields of merger and state aid control, and a new solution to help Member States comply with state aid *de minimis* regulations.
- **Internal market governance tools.** By integrating more single market topics into the scope of the single digital gateway, such as traffic rules and biotech and biomanufacturing support, the Your Europe portal continues to streamline and simplify information provision and to curb the proliferation of overlapping portals and websites. The Internal Market Information System supports digital information exchanges between 12 000 national authorities for 103 administrative cooperation procedures in 21 policy areas of the single market. It therefore replaces the need for at least 21 different information technology systems and also ensures that digital tools are available to national authorities to enforce single market rules for the benefit of citizens and businesses.
- **Market surveillance.** Thanks to the SMP, the Information and Communication System on Market Surveillance Platform, which ensures the reporting of the results of national product inspections, can be hosted, maintained and further developed to meet the needs of market surveillance authorities. The SMP has also financed the development of AI-based information technology tools meant to automate and facilitate the daily operations of product market surveillance inspectors. A proactive 'web crawler', meant to detect non-compliant products sold online, was developed to support ecommerce surveillance.
- **SMEs.** The Enterprise Europe Network's service package includes advice to help SMEs prepare for and implement the digital transition by adapting their processes, using digital technologies and developing new products and services using new digital means. As of 2023 for instance, the Enterprise Europe Network, the European digital innovation hubs and cluster organisations have worked together to create guidelines on how to provide joint services to SMEs on digitalisation. The Enterprise Europe Network provides basic services, and the hubs provide more advanced services with the support of digital clusters. The scope of such collaboration is to create a single entry point for digitalisation-related services and thus accelerate the uptake of digital solutions by SMEs.

In addition, sector-specific Euroclusters have tackled the digital dimension through financial support to third-party calls and by creating linkages with the European digital innovation hubs. Some projects have also integrated the digital dimension into their value chain concept and often include partners from both industry domains and digital clusters. As of December 2024, 529 SMEs undertook business process innovation tied to technological adoption, leading to higher sustainability or digitalisation as a result of Eurocluster support only.

- **European standardisation** continues to advance the digital transition by developing frameworks that ensure security, interoperability, and innovation across key sectors. The annual Union work programme for European standardisation, shaped by inputs from Member States, industry, SMEs and societal stakeholders, defines strategic actions that support digital transformation and ensure alignment with emerging technological developments. Key actions include standards for quantum-safe connectivity, reinforcing cybersecurity in a post-quantum era, and supporting the Cyber Resilience Act, which strengthens cybersecurity measures for digital products and services. Efforts also focus on standards for customer data access and portability in the insurance sector, improving data governance and consumer rights.

Further initiatives, such as interoperability reports and work on standardised interoperability and access to data in internet of things ‘edge’ and ‘swarm’ computing environments, ensure seamless digital integration across connected devices. Additionally, a study on standards for virtual worlds explores frameworks that facilitate the development of immersive and interoperable digital spaces, enhancing Europe’s leadership in emerging technologies.

- The **consumer** pillar remains committed to supporting consumers and ensuring they fully benefit from the digital transformation that is radically changing their lives, offering opportunities while addressing emerging challenges, particularly for vulnerable consumers. This includes initiatives focused on strengthening consumer protection in the digital realm, addressing the safety of products driven by new technologies and tackling unfair online practices, such as dark patterns, phishing, scams, personalised advertising, influencer marketing, and addictive design of digital products – particularly when consumer vulnerabilities, especially those of children, are exploited for commercial purposes. Additionally, the Consumer pillar supports sweeps, i.e. coordinated, simultaneous investigations across Member States, where national enforcement authorities check compliance with consumer protection laws on websites and online marketplaces, focusing on social media influencers, misleading practices, unsafe products and non-transparent or fraudulent online practices. The consumer Pillar also focused on ensuring the interests of consumers in the area of digital finance are protected including. Related initiatives included the representation of consumers in policy discussions as well as the assessment of risks and opportunities of digitalisation in financial services such as artificial intelligence and online platforms.
- **European statistics.** Eurostat is contributing to this pillar through several major digital transformation initiatives, including a project for the modernisation of its information technology systems for the production of statistics, an innovative project on traffic and mobility data, and through a project for the creation of a privacy-preserving computation platform for processing confidential data across organisations. Eurostat’s digital contribution in 2024 amounts to a total of EUR 1 030 000.

Contribution to sustainable development goals

SDG	Does the programme contribute to the goal?	Example (only for the most relevant SDGs)
SDG2 End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture	yes	Emergency measures for animal and plant disease control reduce risks to food security by ensuring sustainable agricultural production and resilience against outbreaks of diseases like African swine fever or avian influenza. SMP supports the European Food Banks Federation, which facilitates food donation and increases the share of surplus food, addressing food security and preventing food waste. It also organises training sessions for veterinarians and farmers on the prudent use of antimicrobials, helping to reduce their overall use in animals and curb the development of antimicrobial resistance.
SDG3 Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages	yes	Setting up national systems to collect data on the sales and use of antimicrobials in animals helps in the global fight against antimicrobial resistance, enabling an integrated analysis in the 'one health' approach.
SDG7 Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all	yes	The solar skills academy provides training for SMEs and contributes to affordable and clean energy and the availability of domestically produced solar photovoltaic components. The 'Intelligent Cities Challenge' action (SDG11) supports cities in decarbonising their energy sectors, accelerating the integration of renewable energy sources. Euroclusters contribute through projects like 'ELBE Eurocluster of Blue Energy' and 'building resilience and accelerating transition to green and digital transition in energy-intensive industries' (Ingenious).
SDG8 Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all	yes	The Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs scheme supports business exchanges and allows mutual learning between new and experienced entrepreneurs in its SME pillar.

SDG11 Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable	yes	The Intelligent Cities Challenge initiative supports 89 European cities through local Green Deals in the green and digital transition of local economies. The initiative drives cities determined to drive prosperity, sustainable growth and competitiveness, and healthier, greener, sustainable and more inclusive living conditions for EU citizens.
SDG12 Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns	yes	Grants for Member States and stakeholders improve measurement of food waste and help implement food waste prevention actions (SDG 12.3 Target). Action grants support consumer education and awareness-raising in sustainable consumption. Research and data-gathering support the development of the legislative proposal on empowering consumers in green transition. Sustainable consumption pledges encourage businesses to commit to sustainability efforts beyond legal requirements (reducing their carbon footprint, offering sustainable products and educating consumers about environmentally friendly choices).
SDG13 Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts	yes	Up to 40% of Eurocluster call actions support SMEs adopting new technologies leading to increased sustainability. The tourism call for sustainable growth and to build resilience, support SMEs to find innovative solutions and projects to facilitate the exchange of best practices.
SDG16 Promote just, peaceful and inclusive societies'	yes	Eurostat regularly monitors progress towards the SDGs in the EU context and coordinates the development of the EU SDG indicator set (around 100 indicators). Its annual review ensures the highest quality to include the most policy-relevant indicators. Two thirds of the indicators are produced by the European Statistical System. An annual report monitors the progress of the EU towards the UN SDGs, complemented by other communication products to target different user groups. Eurostat analyses spillover effects on non-EU countries. A graphical overview of status and progress of each Member State towards the SDGs is included in the country reports of the European semester. Trainings are provided for the National Statistical Institutes on producing harmonised and comparable social and environmental statistics, national accounts, etc.

Support to reforms

n/a

Contribution to strategic technologies (STEP)

- n/a

ANTI-FRAUD

THE UNION ANTI-FRAUD PROGRAMME

Concrete examples of achievements

5 699 000	120	8	1
illegal cigarettes were detected and seized in a single day inspection in 2024 by a mobile X-ray scanner acquired by a Member State law enforcement service, with financial support (EUR 1 352 093.40) from the programme's anti-fraud component.	law enforcement officials from the 27 EU Member States and candidate countries participated in 2024 in the specialised digital forensic analysis and analysts training, funded by the programme's support for training events in the amount of EUR 771 008.81.	high-level events focusing on the protection of the EU's financial interests were organised by the European Anti-Fraud Office in 2024 for our stakeholders, through financial support by the programme dedicated to conferences and seminars, in the amount of EUR 915 268.30.	successful, significant refactoring operation of the Irregularity Management System occurred in 2024 (EUR 790 098.83). The system has been technically refactored to bring its underlying technology up to date, to prepare it for future developments and improve its user-friendliness.
11 843 834	352	3	15
illegal cigarettes were seized between 2023 and 2024 during the implementation of a single project (using an international mobile subscriber identity-catcher, a telephone eavesdropping device used for intercepting mobile phone traffic, built into a car). The programme contributed EUR 663 139.	attempts of data extraction from mobile devices have been made possible in 2024, thanks to the purchase of forensic equipment. The data relate to cases involving excise tax and value added tax fraud crimes. The programme provided EUR 113 325 as financial support.	multiple digital accesses to three commercial databases were provided in 2024 to several authorities of the 27 Member States, financed by the programme (EUR 1 068 495), such as access keys to company data, trade statistics and vessel movement databases.	joint customs operations were financially supported in 2024 through the programme (EUR 101 447.27), targeting the protection of EU financial interests, combating counterfeit medicines, illegal pesticides, waste and wildlife trafficking.

Budget programming and implementation

Budget programming (million EUR):

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	Total
Financial programming	24.1	24.4	24.9	25.5	27.4	26.9	28.7	181.7
NextGenerationEU	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

Decommitments made available again (*)	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Contributions from other countries and entities	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Total	24.1	24.4	24.9	25.5	27.4	26.9	28.7	181.7

(*) Only Article 15(3) of the Financial Regulation.

Cumulative budget implementation at the end of 2024 (million EUR):

	Implementation	Budget	Implementation rate
Commitments	97.3	181.7	53.6%
Payments	64.2	0.0	35.3%

Implementation and performance

Key performance indicators

	Baseline	Progress	Target	Results	Assessment
Satisfaction rate of activities organised and financed through the programme	0	57%	95% in 2027	Milestones achieved in all years until 2024 (2024: 97%)	On track

Percentage of Member States receiving support each year of the programme	0.81	57%	87% in 2027	Milestones achieved in all years until 2024 (2024: 100%)	On track
User satisfaction rate for the use of the Irregularity Management System	0.72	100%	72% annually until 2024	Results higher or equal to the target in all years until 2024 (2024: 91%)	On track
Number of mutual assistance information items made available and number of supported mutual assistance-related activities	18 639	more than 100%	24 000 in 2024	43 978 in 2024	On track

- In line with Article 325 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, the European Commission publishes an annual report on the protection of the EU's financial interests. In relation to the implementation of the technical assistance activities financed by the programme, the Customs Control Equipment Instrument allowed the programme to continue its focus on advanced tools and technologies (including data analysis) and generated valuable synergies and complementarity across the two programmes, while avoiding any overlap.
- The programme's 'Hercule' component provides grants to national competent authorities to enhance their capabilities in investigating threats to the EU budget, including acquiring technical equipment and facilitating training. Through funding diverse activities such as staff exchanges and specialised training, the Hercule component promotes stakeholder collaboration and ensures that law enforcement organisations maintain up-to-date digital forensic skills. The financial assistance offered through the Anti-Fraud Information System (AFIS) supports a technical information technology infrastructure that covers several applications. It aims to facilitate proper enforcement of EU law in customs and agriculture by fostering information exchange and mutual administrative cooperation.
- From 2021 to 2024, the Hercule component granted awards to a total of 98 projects, with a total value of EUR 34 439 051, of which 96 projects were related to technical assistance (equipment and tools, also digital, for a value of EUR 10 502 410 in 2024), while the remaining 32 projects were related to training activities, conferences and anti-fraud-related studies (of which 8 projects ran in 2024 for a value of EUR 915 268.30).
- The Irregularities Management System (IMS) is an electronic platform created by the Commission for national authorities to report any irregularities, including suspected or confirmed fraud, detected in areas where the EU offers financial aid. In 2024, IMS underwent, among other things, a major upgrade of its underlying technology. This upgrade will allow the development and deployment, in the future, of additional features and improvements. This refactoring

(EUR 790 098.83) already allowed for increasing its user-friendliness through a new look and feel and an enhanced search page.

- With regard to the programme's third strand, **AFIS**, 29 releases for the new import, export and transit directory and several other releases and hotfixes were developed for the various other AFIS applications in 2024, totalling nearly 120 releases.
- Additional data sources and analytical tools were implemented for the fraud analytical platform and its computing resources were extended. In 2024, AFIS also supported 15 joint customs operations (EUR 101 447.27).
- In mid-December 2024, the interim evaluation of the programme, supported by an external study, was concluded with a report from the Commission to the other EU institutions, accompanied by a detailed staff working document, which can be accessed here:
 - Report: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:52024DC0572>.
 - Staff working document: https://anti-fraud.ec.europa.eu/document/download/d651f033-39d2-486a-b8b6-6539e6248d07_en?filename=uafp-interim-evaluation-swd_en.pdf.
- The results of this evaluation will feed the preparations for the future programme for a more efficient implementation. The interim evaluation of the programme shows that stakeholders still consider it as effective in reducing the exposure of EU financial interests to fraud, corruption and other illegal activities. The Hercule component in particular has supported EU efforts to combat fraud and other illegal activities through the allocation of grants for technical equipment and training activities. Beneficiaries reported high satisfaction rates for both the equipment and the training, surpassing initial targets in terms of its effectiveness. Programme-funded projects have helped to reduce EU vulnerability to fraud and illegal activities and increase beneficiaries' investigative, operational and technical capacities.
- The AFIS component has effectively facilitated the exchange of fraud-related information between the EU and national (law enforcement) bodies, exceeding its performance targets from 2021 to 2024. It has also supported numerous customs operations and training sessions. The 2023 AFIS satisfaction survey identified a high level of user satisfaction, as well as receiving significantly more responses than the previous survey held in 2019, suggesting increased user engagement.
- The IMS component remains a crucial tool for reporting and tracking irregularities related to the implementation of EU funds in certain budgetary areas and management modes (shared management – agriculture, cohesion, fisheries and some internal policies – and the pre-accession funds under indirect management), offering a unique repository of data on past and ongoing cases. Data collected through the IMS provide a unique resource for tracking and understanding the scale and impact of fraud. As such, the system is central to maintaining an understanding of fraud in the EU and informing programme decisions. The 2023 AFIS survey showed that satisfaction with IMS was rated high by the users/stakeholders, at 91%.
- Overall, the interim programme evaluation shows EU added value in several key areas. Recipients of Hercule funding expressed high satisfaction levels and reported that similar interventions would not have been possible at the national level alone. The number of instances of mutual assistance information made available under AFIS has steadily increased each year, consistently meeting or exceeding yearly targets. These findings suggest that the UAFP has created and enhanced EU added value by supporting interventions that would not have been feasible at the national level and by facilitating information-sharing through AFIS and IMS. Unexpected EU added value elements are also identified, such as increased credibility and interest in training participation due to support from the European Anti-Fraud Office.

Contribution to horizontal priorities

Contribution to green budgeting priorities:

- Programme-funded projects have no direct relevance for climate or biodiversity policy.

Contribution to gender equality (million EUR) (*)

Gender score	2021	2022	2023	2024	Total
2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.3	0.3
0*	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
0	24.1	24.4	24.9	25.2	98.5
Total:	24.1	24.4	24.9	25.5	98.7

(*) Based on the applied gender contribution methodology, the following scores are attributed at the most granular level of intervention possible:

- 2: interventions the principal objective of which is to improve gender equality;
 - 1: interventions that have gender equality as an important and deliberate objective but not as the main reason for the intervention;
 - 0: non-targeted interventions (interventions that are expected to have no significant bearing on gender equality);
 - 0*: score to be assigned to interventions with a likely but not yet clear positive impact on gender equality.
- The programme falls under the gender score of 0. This is because around 80% of the programme's yearly budget is used to finance the purchase of specialised technical equipment, including information technology tools. Overall, the programme has no significant bearing on the promotion of gender equality. However, with regard to the procured training events, and more specifically the ones directly organised by the Commission's European Anti-Fraud Office, with financial support from the programme, Member State authorities are encouraged to aspire to a better gender balance in their selection of training participants to these events.

Gender disaggregated information:

- The European Anti-Fraud Office does not systematically have/keep any gender disaggregated data collected during the implementation of the programme. For training-related activities, applicants or beneficiaries for funding mainly present a list of participants, without gender specification. Moreover, in certain Member States, a name could be considered both as a name for a man or a woman, for example Nicola, Andrea.
- On the other hand, the office does encourage the participation of a significant percentage of female law enforcement officers to the digital forensic analysis and analyst training events. In 2023, 30.8% of training participants were women, with 32.5% in 2024. Women represent less than 20% of the total number of applicants. Looking at the final cost of the digital forensic analysis and analyst

training event in 2024 (EUR 771 008.81), the budget contribution for the female participants would represent 32.5% or EUR 250 577.86.

Contribution to the digital transition (EUR million):

	2021 implementation	2022 implementation	2023 implementation	2024 implementation	Total	% of the 2021- 2024 envelope
Digital contribution	11.6	12.6	11.6	12.1	47.9	48.5%

- The programme is considered to contribute to the Commission's priority of digital transition through its three components, as described below. The 'technical assistance activities' part of the first component is considered to contribute by funding those 'digitalisation' projects that are related (only) to the purchase and implementation of hardware and software, including updates and maintenance of the related information technology material to run such hardware or software.
- The second and third components (IMS and AFIS) are considered to contribute in full to the digital transition (of authorities in beneficiary countries), since they are information technology platforms that allow the partners and the Commission to receive and share data and information. In that sense, these two systems contribute to a more efficient and more user-friendly management of data and information in all 27 participating Member States, by improving the digital transition of their administrations.
- The amounts effectively paid in 2024 for AFIS and IMS have been considered for the calculation of the contribution in 2024.

Contribution to sustainable development goals

SDG	Does the programme contribute to the goal?	Example (only for the most relevant SDGs)
SDG10 Reduce inequaliti es within and among countries	Yes	The financial support provided by 21 technical assistance (TA) projects, granted in 2024, indirectly assists in harmonising differentiated levels of (financial) resources and (budgetary) capacities, helping to reduce as such inequality within and among Member States' administrations. To be noted that Ukraine is now an associated country to the UAFP. EUR 9.91 million is the total proposed amount to grant 21 selected projects in 2024, which usually start effective implementation in Y+1 (= 2025 and beyond).

SDG16: Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels	Yes	The programme indirectly helps building effective, accountable and inclusive institutions in the Member States at various levels of national and/or local administrations (law enforcement agencies), in particular through support given leading to an enhanced digital transition. EUR 8.99 million has been allocated in 2024 to run, develop and manage IMS and AFIS. To this amount, the 8 grants for technical assistance projects in the field of IT and digitalisation of law enforcement agencies should be added, or a value of EUR 3.1 million, resulting in a total amount of: EUR 12.09 million. The mentioned projects will run in 2025 and continue beyond, in 2026.

Support for reforms

- N/A

Contribution to strategic technologies (STEP)

- N/A

FISCALIS

ACTION PROGRAMME FOR COOPERATION IN THE FIELD OF TAXATION IN THE EUROPEAN UNION

Concrete examples of achievements

2 328 million	306	30	4
messages were exchanged on the key European electronic systems in 2024.	e-learning tax modules (including different linguistic versions) were in use in 2024.	European electronic systems were in operation in 2024.	expert teams in the taxation area were operational at the end of 2024.
99.62%	5 652	203	
was the availability of the European electronic systems (in time percentage terms) in 2024.	participants took part in 425 virtual and physical meetings organised in 2024 under the general collaboration actions grant.	online collaboration groups were supported by the programme in 2024.	

Budget programming and implementation

Budget programming (million EUR)

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	Total
Financial programming	34.8	36.9	37.7	38.4	39.2	40.0	40.7	267.7
NextGenerationEU	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Decommitments made available again (*)	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Contributions from other countries and entities	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.5
Total	34.8	37.0	37.8	38.8	39.2	40.0	40.7	268.3

(*) Only Article 15(3) of the Financial Regulation.

Cumulative budget implementation at the end of 2024 (million EUR)

	Implementation	Budget	Implementation rate
Commitments	146.3	268.3	54.5%
Payments	100.5		37.5%

Implementation and performance

Key performance indicators

	Baseline	Progress	Target	Results	Assessment
EU law and policy application and implementation index – number of actions under the programme organised in this area	0	57%	23 annually in 2027	29 in 2024 compared to a target of 23, since 2021 all results higher or equal to the milestones	On track
Learning index – number of tax officials trained by using common training material	0	188%	96 400 in 2027	181 428 in 2024 compared to a target of 96 400	Achieved
Availability of European electronic systems	0	57%	99.50% annually from 2021 to 2027	99.6% in 2024, milestones achieved for all years until 2024	On track
Availability of the common communication networks	0	29%	99.80% annually from 2021 to 2027	Milestones achieved for 2021 and 2023, not achieved for 2022 and 2024	On track
Information technology simplified procedures for the national administrations and economic operators – number of economic operators registered	0	50 %	41.4 million in 2027	20.3 million in 2024 compared to a target of 41.4 million	On track

Information technology simplified procedures for the national administrations and economic operators – number of applications	0	53%	5.6 million in 2027	3.0 million in 2024 compared to a target of 5.6 million	On track
Collaboration robustness index – number of online collaboration groups	0	43%	206 annually from 2021 to 2027	Milestones achieved for 2021, 2022 and 2023, not achieved for 2024	On track

- The programme continued to contribute in 2024 to the overall EU priorities, including the digital transition. Throughout the year, the programme sustained its support to tax authorities and taxation in order to enhance the functioning of the internal market.
- The programme's collaborative activities provided a forum to exchange expertise and best practices among participating countries on one hand, and between them and the Commission on the other. These exchanges touched mostly upon taxation and policy measures, including their implementation.
- The overall progress of the performance indicators is on track.
- In 2024, the support to the development and maintenance of the European electronic systems for taxation remained a key point of the programme. 87% of the Fiscalis programme budget was devoted to the common components of the European electronic systems in 2024, demonstrating the importance of this programme in the context of the digital transition and simplification of public services in the area of taxation.
- 30 European electronic systems funded by the programme were operational in 2024. The programme was instrumental in guaranteeing business continuity via these European electronic systems for taxation as well as via the common communication networks (CCN and CCN2). With the exception of the global power outage in March 2024, which affected only the central common communication network sites but not the local ones in the Member States, the availability of the networks and the European electronic systems remained high without service disruptions, at 99.63% and 99.62% respectively. Furthermore, in 2024, the network availability was challenged by, but successfully coped with, the significantly increased data volumes due to deployment of customs-related systems (e.g. Import Control System 2, Central Electronic System of Payment Information and e-commerce data volumes. DG Taxation and Customs Union has upgraded the network's wide-area capacity in 2024, which ensures very good data transport performance and will continue to extend further in 2025 for the new e-commerce increasing flows.
- 2024 saw an increase of physical meetings, even though online collaboration remained strong and in overall balance with in-person interactions, hence respecting the Commission's greening efforts. The increasing proportion of physical meetings allowed for closer human interaction and networking. Physical meetings are considered essential by many participants to guarantee the networking opportunities created by the programme: nearly 81% of the participants reported strong satisfaction with the networking possibilities offered through the programme. With the

programme in full swing, the collaboration activities bore a high number of outputs/recommendations that were reported as useful and well used in the administrations.

- In terms of training, a substantial increase has been observed with regard to the number of tax officials trained, which was 34 981 in 2023 and increased to 121 304 in 2024 thanks to the development of two popular courses. This includes the number of professionals who followed the courses with support of the EU portal (120 139), together with the number of tax officials who participated in common learning event programme events (681) and information technology training sessions supported by the Fiscalis programme (484). Overall, 129 444 professionals (including tax officials and other tax professionals) benefited from the training opportunities offered by the programme. Thanks to newly developed and updated tax courses, the quality score of e-learning modules improved in 2024 and was above the target.
- Concerning the participation of third countries in the Fiscalis programme, there are currently nine candidate and potential candidate countries that take part in the Fiscalis programme. The programme offers enlargement countries the possibility to cooperate with the tax authorities of Member States and their peers, and to learn the sector-specific EU legislation and operational good practices, which should help not only the *acquis* harmonisation but also its implementation.

Contribution to horizontal priorities

Contribution to green budgeting priorities (EUR million):

	Implementation				Estimates			Total	% of the total envelope
	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027		
Climate mainstreaming	0.0	4.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	8.2	3.1%

- As shown in the above table, during 2024 there were no actions that specifically contributed to green budgeting priorities. However, the programme continued indirectly supporting the green deal by means of reinforced digitalisation of information technology taxation systems and related cooperation actions.
- In addition, the collaborative actions promoted greening priorities through the emphasis given to online collaboration and networking, which accounted for almost half of all meetings in 2024.

Contribution to gender equality (million EUR) (*)

Gender score	2021	2022	2023	2024	Total
2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
0*	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
0	34.8	36.9	37.7	38.4	147.8

Total:	34.8	36.9	37.7	38.4	147.8

(*) Based on the applied gender contribution methodology, the following scores are attributed at the most granular level of intervention possible:

- 2: interventions the principal objective of which is to improve gender equality;
- 1: interventions that have gender equality as an important and deliberate objective but not as the main reason for the intervention;
- 0: non-targeted interventions (interventions that are expected to have no significant bearing on gender equality);
- 0*: score to be assigned to interventions with a likely but not yet clear positive impact on gender equality.

Most of the Fiscalis programme funding (approximately 82% of the programme's budget) relates to digital expenditure, in particular to the development and operation of European electronic systems, which are non-targeted interventions regarding gender equality.

The remaining types of expenditure (approximately 18% of the programme's budget) relates to collaboration activities, training sessions, studies and communication. None of these activities have had any bearing on gender equality.

DG Taxation and Customs Union recognises the potential relevance of gender equality in the taxation policy domain, in light of, inter alia, taxation redistribution and multiplier effects. This potential relevance at the policy level is however not related to expenditures under the Fiscalis programme.

Gender-disaggregated information:

The gender-disaggregated information is not applicable for the Fiscalis programme, considering that the programme consists of interventions that are expected to have no bearing on gender equality (score 0). However, figures on female and male participants in a specific type of programme action (meetings of the general collaborative action grant) are available for 2024 ⁽¹³⁾. It should be noted that these activities represent only 5.4% of the programme's total implemented budget:

- 2 696 participants are indicated in the activity reporting tool as female; and
- 3 030 as male.

Contribution to the digital transition (EUR million):

2021 implementation	2022 implementation	2023 implementation	2024 implementation	Total	% of the 2021-

⁽¹³⁾ The main beneficiaries of the programme are the customs/tax authorities in the participating countries. In particular for the collaborative activities grant, customs/tax authorities decide at their own discretion whom they delegate to the specific programme events according to the activity's customs/tax-specific agenda and objectives. The data reflects the information available in the activity reporting tool on 7 March 2025.

						2024 envelope
Digital contribution	22.2	34.7	31.6	33.7	122.2	82.7%

- Thanks to its financial support, the programme contributes – directly and indirectly – to the EU agenda for economic recovery and long-term growth and fair taxation while advancing the digital transition.
- The programme allocates most of the budget to information technology capacity-building actions, defined as a top priority in the programme’s regulation (recital 12). Among the information technology capacity-building actions supported by the programme, priority is given to the European electronic systems that are necessary for the implementation of the general and specific objectives of the programme.
- In 2024, the committed expenses for the development and maintenance of European electronic systems were EUR 33.6 million. This volume is in line with the committed budget to information technology procurement under the programme. The cumulative commitment appropriations devoted to the European electronic system represents approximately 87% of the total envelope of the Fiscalis programme.

Contribution to sustainable development goals

SDG	Does the programme contribute to the goal?	Example (only for the most relevant SDGs)
SDG8: Promote sustained , inclusive and sustainab le economic growth, full and productiv e employm ent and decent work for all	Yes	The Fiscalis programme supports tax authorities to enhance the functioning of the internal market, foster competitiveness, fight tax fraud, tax evasion and tax avoidance and improve tax collection. These are important elements for compliant businesses to reap the benefits of the internal market and sustain the Union economic growth. The Programme secures this contribution through the support to digitalisation, efficiency of the EU tax administrations, as well as to the development of human competency and training for tax officials. As an example, in 2024, 129 305 professionals (including tax officials and other tax professionals) benefitted from the training opportunities offered in the customs & tax EU learning portal developed with the support of the programme.

SDG9: Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industriali- zation and foster innovation	Yes	87% of the Fiscalis programme budget in 2024 was devoted to the development and operation of the common components of the European electronic systems, a key element in the digitalisation and in the simplification process of public services in the area of taxation. The programme funded in 2024 the launch of Central Electronic System of Payment (CESOP). Thanks to the system, new transparency rules are in place to help EU Member States to fight VAT fraud. Moreover, in 2024, the Fiscalis programme funded projects in the area of digital security and the use of artificial intelligence for tax purposes.

Support to reforms

The Fiscalis programme is not per se a technical assistance programme, although the collaborative actions under the programme could contribute to technical assistance. The Fiscalis programme's collaborative or cooperation activities allow for bringing together national tax administration officials of participating countries, by means of:

1. meetings and similar ad-hoc events such as seminars workshops, working/study visits and
2. project-based structured collaboration such as networks, project groups, expert teams, task forces, and monitoring activities.

Collaborative activities are a useful tool to implement the policy objectives and exchange best practices. Both the participating countries and the Commission services can initiate such collaborative activities.

Contribution to strategic technologies (STEP)

- Not applicable

CUSTOMS

ACTION PROGRAMME FOR COOPERATION IN THE FIELD OF CUSTOMS IN THE EUROPEAN UNION

Concrete examples of achievements

7.816 billion messages were exchanged on the key European electronic systems in 2024.	776 eLearning modules (including linguistic versions) were used by customs professionals in 2024.	69 European electronic systems in the field of customs were in operation in 2024.	84.4% of collaboration action participants reported that they made use of a working practice/guideline developed with the support of the programme.
99.49% was the availability of the European electronic systems (in terms of percentage of time) in 2024.	5 868 participants took part in 307 virtual and physical meetings organised in 2024 under the general collaboration actions grant.	220 online collaboration groups were active within the programme in 2024.	

Budget programming and implementation

Budget programming (million EUR)

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	Total
Financial programming	125.5	130.4	121.6	135.7	138.4	141.2	144.3	937.1
NextGenerationEU	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Decommitments made available again (*)	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Contributions from other countries and entities	0.0	0.1	3.5	1.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	5.4
Total	125.5	130.5	125.1	137.5	138.4	141.2	144.3	942.5

Cumulative budget implementation at the end of 2024 (million EUR)

	Implementation	Budget	Implementation rate
Commitments	512.7	942.5	54.4%
Payments	361.1		38.3%

Implementation and performance

Key performance indicators

	Baseline	Progress	Target	Results	Assessment
EU law and policy application and implementation index – number of actions under the programme in this area	0	14%	20 annually from 2022 to 2027	Milestone achieved in 2021, not anymore later on	Moderate progress
Learning index – number of customs officials trained by using common training material	0	> 100%	186 140 in 2027	525 540 compared to a target of 186 140	On track
Use of key European electronic systems – number of messages exchanged on the key European electronic systems / system components	0	99%	20 billion in 2027	19.9 billion compared to a target of 20 billion	On track

Use of key European electronic systems aimed at increasing interconnectivity and moving to a paper-free customs union – number of records consulted in key databases	0	52%	1.2 billion by 2027	621 million compared to a target of 1.2 billion	On track
Union Customs Code (UCC) completion rate	75%	94%	100% in 2025	93.8% compared to a target of 100%	On track
Best practices and guideline index – percentage of participants that made use of a working practice/guideline developed with the support of the programme	0	43%	75% annually from 2022 to 2027	Milestones achieved for 2022 until 2024	On track

- In 2024, the programme's different strands ⁽¹⁴⁾ continued to provide a platform to discuss the most pressing issues for the customs union, including the challenges identified in the customs reform proposal ⁽¹⁵⁾, such as e-commerce; supporting enlargement countries in their task of integration into EU customs legislation and its application; and providing support to facilitate the work of the European Ports Alliance, supporting sanctions and the various customs actions announced in the Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council on the EU roadmap to fight drug trafficking and organised crime ⁽¹⁶⁾.
- The reporting period also demonstrated the continued vital role of digital systems in customs procedures and processes and witnessed the work towards full delivery of the systems under the Union Customs Code (UCC) in 2025 ⁽¹⁷⁾. In this respect, support to the development of the European digital customs environment remained a focal point of the programme (69 systems supported), as well as a top priority in the customs union. In 2024, 97% of the programme budget

⁽¹⁴⁾ Programme groups; working visits; seminars; training opportunities; common digital systems; expert teams.

⁽¹⁵⁾ Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing the Union Customs Code and the European Union Customs Authority, and repealing Regulation (EU) No 952/2013. [\(COM\(2023\) 258 final\)](#).

⁽¹⁶⁾ [COM/2023/641 final](#).

⁽¹⁷⁾ Commission Implementing Decision (EU) 2023/2879 of 15 December 2023 establishing the Work Programme relating to the development and deployment for the electronic systems provided for in the Union Customs Code.

was dedicated to supporting the development and maintenance of the European electronic systems for customs.

- The high demand for the use of these networks and systems is confirmed by the number of messages and consultations via these applications. The number of messages continued to increase in 2024, with the surveillance system continuing to see the largest increase in the number of entries. Equally, the number of consultations increased and reached beyond the estimated target.
- Except of the global power outage in March 2024, which affected the central common communication network (CCN) sites but not the local ones in the Member States, the availability of the CCN and the European electronic systems for customs remained high without service disruptions, at 99.63% and 99.49% respectively. Furthermore, in 2024 the CCN availability was challenged by, but successfully coped with, the significantly increased data volume due to UCC-related system deployments, including the Import Control System, the Central Electronic System of Payment Information and e-commerce data (mainly in surveillance). DG Taxation and Customs Union has upgraded the CCN wide-area network capacity, which ensures very good data transport performance and will continue to extend further in 2025 for the new and increasing e-commerce flows.
- The revision of the UCC work programme in 2023 due to delays in the Member States led to an update in the milestones for the work remaining towards 100% delivery of the 17 UCC systems by 2025. The figure for 2024 was slightly below target due to delays in Member States in transitioning their national systems into operations, even though the Commission provided the specifications and the common components well in time, as well as a secured timely entry into operations.
- In 2024, the programme started demonstrating more stability in certain trends in its collaborative activities. For example, the number of actions in the area of EU law and policy reflect the move towards more inclusive, macro-level actions, leading to the establishment of fewer actions, while the actual volume of activity behind these actions is at a stable high level.
- Actions promoting best practices continued to increase in 2024, accounting for 56 out of a total of 85 actions. A large proportion of such actions was that of working visits between Member States, or between enlargement countries and Member States. This demonstrates the added value of the Customs programme, actively fostering collaboration between participating countries.
- As in previous years, the number of recommendations and guidelines continued to increase, indicating the clear benefit associated with the actions ⁽¹⁸⁾. This was echoed in the percentage of participants that has made use of a working practice or guideline developed, which was above target at 84.4%.
- 220 online collaboration groups were active in 2024, where discussions could take place on a range of customs issues, such as the digital systems mandated by EU law, training, sanctions, etc.
- The post-COVID-19 era has been demonstrating the increased value put on human interaction, and this too was reflected in the number of physical meetings that took place in 2024, which increased compared to the previous years, but maintaining an overall balance with online meetings and reinforced online collaboration, hence respecting and contributing to the Commission's greening efforts. The increasing proportion of physical meetings allowed closer human interaction and networking. This had a positive impact on the networking opportunities created by the programme: 80.1% of the participants in the various activities reported strong satisfaction with this aspect.

⁽¹⁸⁾ Action managers providing feedback explained their difficulties to quantify the number of working practices/guidelines and recommendations, given the wide range of activities supported by the programme and their specificities. The numbers reported can thus be explained given the broad interpretation of the indicator.

- In terms of training, 525 540 customs officials were reported as having been trained in 2024 ⁽¹⁹⁾. In addition, counting also the various linguistic releases, 776 e-learning modules were in use, facilitating participation across the customs community. As regards the quality of e-learning courses provided in 2024, the satisfaction rate recorded was 76.6%, which is lower than for 2023 (80.1%). However, this is to be expected, as courses in the area of customs, especially those dedicated to UCC legislation, are getting older and the quality results (especially technology and methodology) are impacted by this. Even so, participants see a clear benefit from the courses, as evidenced by the high satisfaction rate, which remains above target.
- The programme also continued building synergies with and contributing to the European Commission's horizontal priorities, such as the digital transition, and green budgeting priorities.

Contribution to horizontal priorities

Contribution to green budgeting priorities (EUR million):

	Implementation				Estimates			Total	% of the 2021-2024 envelope
	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027		
Climate mainstreaming	0.0	4.1	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	4.1	0.4%

- In accordance with the table above, there were no actions that specifically contributed to green budgeting priorities in 2024. However, the programme continued indirectly supporting the Green Deal by means of reinforced digitalisation of electronic systems in the field of customs and related cooperation. These systems ensured strong links with greening, climate and environmental protection, specifically the EU single window environment for customs, and also through systems such as quotas, surveillance, the risk management applications and export control systems (e.g. in terms of waste exports).
- In addition, the collaborative actions promoted greening priorities through the emphasis given to online collaboration and networking, which accounted for almost half of all meetings in 2024.

⁽¹⁹⁾ These figures depend heavily on estimates provided by end users at the time of download regarding the potential number of officials using the courses. For example, some administrations estimate fewer officials who will use individual training courses, while others estimate higher numbers. The actual number of officers trained by the downloaded courses is not available. Obtaining this figure would require additional and disproportionate administrative burden, directly in contradiction with the Commission's effort to rationalise reporting obligations.

Contribution to gender equality (million EUR) (*)

Gender score	2021	2022	2023	2024	Total
2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
0*	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
0	125.5	130.4	121.6	135.7	513.2
Total:	125.5	130.4	121.6	135.7	513.2

(*) Based on the applied gender contribution methodology, the following scores are attributed at the most granular level of intervention possible:

- 2: interventions the principal objective of which is to improve gender equality;
- 1: interventions that have gender equality as an important and deliberate objective but not as the main reason for the intervention;
- 0: non-targeted interventions (interventions that are expected to have no significant bearing on gender equality);
- 0*: score to be assigned to interventions with a likely but not yet clear positive impact on gender equality.

The majority of the Customs programme funding (approximately 94% of the budget) relates to digital expenditure, in particular to the development and operation of European electronic systems, which are non-targeted interventions regarding gender equality.

The remaining types of expenditure (approximately 6% of the budget), relates to collaboration activities, training sessions, studies and communication. None of these activities have had any bearing on gender equality.

DG Taxation and Customs Union recognises the potential relevance of gender equality in the customs policy domain, among others, in light of the different impacts, challenges and opportunities that customs and trade policies can have on people, and of the importance of diversity and inclusion regarding the performance and quality of service within customs administrations. This potential relevance at the policy level is however not related to expenditures under the Customs programme.

Gender disaggregated information:

The gender disaggregated information is not applicable for the Customs programme, considering that the programme consists of interventions that are expected to have no bearing on gender equality (score 0). However, figures on female and male participants in a specific type of programme action (meetings of the general collaborative action grant) ⁽²⁰⁾ are available for 2024. It should be noted that these activities represent 0.8% of the programme's total implemented budget:

- 2 575 participants are indicated in the activity reporting tool as female; and

⁽²⁰⁾ The main beneficiaries of the programme are the customs/tax authorities in the participating countries. In particular for the collaborative activities grant, customs/tax authorities decide at their own discretion whom they delegate to the specific programme events according to the activity's customs/tax-specific agenda and objectives. The data reflects the information available in the activity reporting tool on 22.1.2025.

- 3 239 as male.

Contribution to the digital transition (EUR million):

	2021 implementation	2022 implementation	2023 implementation	2024 implementation	Total	% of the 2021- 2024 envelope
Digital contribution	116.6	125.3	113.4	131.7	487.0	94.9%

- The programme allocates the majority of its budget (97% in 2024) to digital transition, defined as the top priority in the programme's regulation (recital 16). Among the information technology capacity-building actions supported by the programme, the top priority is given to the European electronic systems that are necessary for the implementation of the customs union and for customs authorities to carry out their mission. In that respect, the programme has strong synergies with the European Commission's horizontal priority on digital transition.
- In 2024, EUR 131.7 million were committed to information technology procurement from the Customs programme.
- The amount above covers information technology procurement only, excluding collaborative activities on e-customs given their minimal budget use.

Contribution to sustainable development goals

SDG	Does the programme contribute to the goal?	Example (only for the most relevant SDGs)
SDG8: Promote sustained , inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all	YES	The Programme's contribution to the development of efficient, modern customs is an essential element to ensure a proper balance between effective controls and safety within the Single Market, and the facilitation of legitimate trade through paperless, efficient customs processes, a cornerstone for the economic prosperity of the EU. The programme secures this contribution through the support to digitalisation, efficiency of the EU customs union and operations, as well as at developing human competency and training for customs officials. As an example, 776 eLearning modules were used in 2024, 90 in English, and 686 in different languages. Extending the global reach of the training offered undoubtedly contributes towards the objectives of the programme, and ultimately, to the customs union's performance.
SDG9: Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation	YES	97% of the Customs programme budget in 2024 was devoted to the development and operation of the common components of the European electronic systems, a key element in the digitalisation of public services in the area of customs to ensure the customs union can respond to 21st century challenges and protect the Single Market in a context of growing and complex international trade. Another example for 2024 is the contribution of the Programme to the single window environment for customs, a framework whose objective is to facilitate trade by supporting quicker and more efficient sharing of electronic data between national customs administrations and EU regulatory authorities across policy domains (e.g. animal and plant health, product safety, protection of endangered species, dual-use goods, fluorinated greenhouse gases, organic products, etc.).

Support for reforms

The Customs programme is not per se a technical assistance programme, although the collaborative actions under the programme could contribute to technical assistance. The Customs programme's collaborative or cooperation activities allow for bringing together national customs administration officials of participating countries, by means of:

1. meetings and similar ad-hoc events such as seminars workshops, working/study visits and
2. project-based structured collaboration such as networks, project groups, expert teams, and monitoring activities.

Collaborative activities are a useful tool to implement the policy objectives and exchange best practices. Both the participating countries and the Commission can initiate such collaborative activities.

Contribution to strategic technologies (STEP)

N/A

EU SPACE PROGRAMME

Concrete examples of achievements

320 800 registered users of the Copernicus climate change service had access to about 140 terabytes of quality-controlled climate data per day in 2024.	> 600 companies supported through CASSINI actions (matchmaking, business accelerator, challenges). 300 companies in CASSINI matchmaking have raised a combined EUR 2 billion of private investment since their inception (e.g. 2019-2025).	98 activations of the rapid mapping and risk and recovery mapping services of the Copernicus emergency management service in 2024.	500 spacecraft were protected thanks to EU space surveillance and tracking (SST) in 2024.
4 billion Galileo-enabled devices were in service in 2024, and this number is growing.	32 Galileo satellites were in orbit in 2024.	> 1 000 European Geostationary Navigation Overlay Service (EGNOS) procedures were published by the end of 2024.	

Budget programming and implementation

Budget programming (million EUR):

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	Total
Financial programming	1 977.3	2 008.2	2 045.1	2 088.0	2 050.7	2 094.4	2 124.1	14 387.7
NextGenerationEU	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Decommitments made available again (*)	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Contributions from other countries and entities	123.4	103.0	115.9	276.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	619.0
Total	2 100.7	2 111.2	2 161.0	2 364.7	2 050.7	2 094.4	2 124.1	15 006.7

(*) Only Article 15(3) of the Financial Regulation.

Cumulative budget implementation at the end of 2024 (million EUR):

	Implementation	Budget	Implementation rate
Commitments	8 688.1	15 006.7	57.9%
Payments	7 353.2		49.0%

Implementation and performance

Key performance indicators

	Baseline	Progress	Target	Results	Assessment
Number of EGNOS and LPV-200 procedures published	690	87%	1 150 in 2027	1 006 in 2024 compared to a target of 1 150	On track
EU user satisfaction: Galileo services	80%	92%	90% in 2027	83% in 2024 compared to a target of 90%	On track
EU user satisfaction: EGNOS services	85%	96%	90% in 2027	86% in 2024 compared to a target of 90%	Moderate progress
Share of Galileo-enabled receivers worldwide	64%	99%	70% in 2027	69% in 2024 compared to a target of 70%	On track
Share of EGNOS-enabled receivers worldwide	63%	97%	65% in 2027	63% in 2024 compared to a target of 65%	Moderate progress
Amount of data generated by the Sentinel satellites (Pbytes per year)	35 million	62%	125 million in 2029	78 million in 2024 compared to a target of 125 million.	On track

– Galileo

- Activities ensured the continuity of the open service, public regulated service, search and rescue, and high accuracy service, while developing new services like the Galileo emergency warning service, authentication services and the Galileo timing service. In 2024, two dual-satellite launches added four satellites, resuming preparations for the Galileo open service full operation capability, delayed by the Ukraine conflict and unavailability of the Soyuz launcher. The public regulated service began broadcasting in April 2024, and the open service navigation message authentication started its final authenticated signal. Since 2023, the high accuracy service has provided excellent decimeter-level positioning globally. The search and rescue service achieved

its final performance with a new station in the Indian Ocean area. A new Galileo sensor station was deployed in Bonaire, and a telemetry station in Fucino, Italy, is under development.

– **EGNOS**

- The European Geostationary Navigation Overlay Service (EGNOS), Europe's regional satellite-based augmentation system, continued providing robust services in 2024 despite challenging space weather from the solar cycle peak and increased solar eruptions. Additionally, development of EGNOS V3 (the next generation of the service) progressed, culminating with a critical design review by the end of 2024.

– **EU Earth observation component – Copernicus**

- The key priorities of the Copernicus programme (space, services, in situ) in 2024 were to ensure the continuity of satellite data and information services, advance additional satellite missions, and promote market uptake of data and services. Operations continued smoothly, supported by EU contribution agreements in place. Two new Copernicus Sentinel satellites were launched, marking a milestone for EU space access. The Copernicus climate change service reported 2024 as the warmest year on record, with temperatures exceeding 1.5 °C above pre-industrial levels, a Paris Agreement threshold. The emergency management service was activated nearly 100 times, aiding disaster recovery for incidents like the floods in Spain. A new dynamic purchasing system increased the agility of missions and reduced barriers for new market entrants, particularly space companies. To enhance data uptake and its use in artificial intelligence, the Copernicus data space ecosystem, launched in 2023, improved data access and exploitation.

– **Space situational awareness**

- The newer component of the EU space programme takes a holistic approach to space hazards, with three subcomponents.
- **Space surveillance and tracking (SST).** In 2023, key milestones included establishing a 15-Member- State SST partnership, integrating the EU SST front desk into the European Union Agency for the space programme, and opening EU SST collision avoidance services to non-EU users. By 2024, the number of satellites registered for these services increased from about 400 to over 500, with a third belonging to non-EU operators, underscoring the global trust in EU SST services. Re-entry and fragmentation services, limited to EU users, remained smooth, with excellent service performance.
- **Space weather events.** Plans for an EU space weather service by 2025 included a 2024 socioeconomic study. This study analysed service impacts and technological readiness, concluding that space weather event services should prioritise the space domain. Performance data will follow once the service is operational, likely in 2026.
- **Near-Earth objects.** Efforts to boost preparedness included studying likely deflection missions and preparing a European catalogue for the physical properties of near-Earth objects.
- In addition, the SST subcomponent serves as the operational backbone of the EU approach on space traffic management (STM) ⁽²¹⁾ approach, which outlines 10 actions across four areas: 1) aggregating STM requirements from civil and military operators; 2) enhancing STM capabilities, particularly SST services, through the 'EU industry and start-ups forum on STM'; 3) developing regulatory aspects like standards and a legislative proposal; and 4) fostering a common approach

⁽²¹⁾ Joint communication to the European Parliament and the Council – An EU approach for space traffic management – An EU contribution addressing a global challenge, JOIN(2022) 4 of 22 February 2022.

with international partners. In 2024, the Commission and the European External Action Service progressed with the EU STM approach, with the STM stakeholder mechanism⁽²²⁾ meeting regularly to gather input and draft civil and military STM requirements. Preparations included a feasibility study on an ‘EU Space Label’, work on an EU Space Act proposal, and developing a ‘rules of the road’ standard. Capacity-building workshops and exchanges with international partners, including the United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs, were also conducted.

– **Governmental satellite communications component (GOVSATCOM)**

- The programmatic framework for GOVSATCOM was completed with the adoption of implementing acts in December 2024 to define the GOVSATCOM service portfolio, the operational requirements, the general security requirements and the location of the ground infrastructure⁽²³⁾. In 2024, the ground infrastructure for the initial services was fully developed and will be validated at the beginning of 2025, in order to start providing services. In the course of the following years, the infrastructure will evolve gradually with an increased level of automation and reach full operational capability as of 2027. The procurement of the initial common Union pool of resources has been prepared and will be implemented in the first quarter of 2025 for governmental capacity, followed by the enlargement of the service catalogue through the acquisition of commercial capacity. Downstream research for GOVSATCOM service uptake and upstream technology continue to be carried out by the European Union Agency for the Space Programme and the European Space Agency, notably for satellite communication technological building blocks and user terminals development.

CASSINI

In 2024, all CASSINI actions were fully deployed to strengthen the EU’s space sector competitiveness. The CASSINI Investment Facility saw the European Investment Fund partner with six new venture capital funds, bringing the total to fifteen CASSINI-backed funds. The CASSINI Investment Facility has also contributed to the InvestEU Programme through blending with the EU guarantee, which contributed to the mobilisation of additional investments. In particular, the EU Space programme contributed EUR 112 million for equity investments into the target area of space. The Commission organised 13 matchmaking events, attracting over 200 start-ups and 100+ investors. At the CASSINI ‘Entrepreneurship Days’ event in June 2024, 30 companies won prizes totaling EUR 1 million for their ideas, prototypes and products. Two hackathons focused on ‘Environment and green transition’ and ‘EU space for defence and security’, involving over 1000 participants from 20 countries, with Ukraine as a local organiser. Launched in January 2023, the CASSINI Business Accelerator aimed at boosting space startups and scale-ups, and has supported 80 companies, who have increased their commercial sales and investments significantly.

(22) A consultation forum co-chaired by the Commission and the European External Action Service, consisting of a main group and four subgroups mirroring the four avenues of the EU STM approach and bringing together experts in all four areas.

(23) OJ L, 2024/3195, 20.12.2024, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/dec_impl/2024/3195/oj.

Contribution to horizontal priorities

Contribution to green budgeting priorities (EUR million):

	Implementation				Estimates			Total	% of the total envelope
	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027		
Climate mainstreaming	253.6	295.0	320.6	347.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	1 216.2	8.5%
Biodiversity mainstreaming	120.0	120.0	120.0	120.0	165.0	0.0	0.0	645.0	4.5%

- The EU space programme places great emphasis on the green transition and has a key role to play. On the one hand, EU space data and services enable other sectors to achieve green ambitions and harness the potential of the green transition. On the other hand, the EU space industry sector itself must transform and adapt to comply with EU environmental policies and legislation, and hence improve its practices throughout its full value chain. To reduce the environmental impact of space activities and set out a standardised method to assess environmental impacts, a pilot project backed by the European Parliament was rolled out in 2024, aimed at developing a sector-specific life cycle assessment method – [product environmental footprint category rules for the space sector](#).
- Copernicus contributes significantly to the conception, implementation and monitoring of the EU's climate policy, both in terms of climate mitigation and in terms of climate adaptation. This includes the support from DG Climate Action in honouring the EU's international obligations, such as those under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. Copernicus's land monitoring, marine environment monitoring and atmosphere monitoring services notably contribute to this, and the climate change service is fully dedicated to supporting climate change policies and the transition to a carbon-neutral society and economy.
- Remote sensing and the services offered by Copernicus, in particular the land monitoring service, the climate change service and the marine environment monitoring service, play an increasingly important role in supporting biodiversity conservation and restoration. Today, the products and tools offered by these services contribute to monitoring changes in ecosystems and biodiversity loss and are used in the context of the EU biodiversity strategy, the Convention on Biological Diversity and reporting on sustainable development goals.
- The Ambient Air Quality Directive encourages Member States to exploit information products and supplementary tools for monitoring (e.g. regular evaluation and quality assessment reports, policy online applications) provided by the Earth observation component of the EU space programme, in particular the Copernicus atmosphere monitoring service.

Contribution to gender equality (million EUR) (*)

Gender score	2021	2022	2023	2024	Total
2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
0*	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
0	1 977.3	2 008.2	2 045.1	2 088.0	8 118.6
Total:	1 977.3	2 008.2	2 045.1	2 088.0	8 118.6

(*) Based on the applied gender contribution methodology, the following scores are attributed at the most granular level of intervention possible:

- 2: interventions the principal objective of which is to improve gender equality;
- 1: interventions that have gender equality as an important and deliberate objective but not as the main reason for the intervention;
- 0: non-targeted interventions (interventions that are expected to have no significant bearing on gender equality);
- 0*: score to be assigned to interventions with a likely but not yet clear positive impact on gender equality.

– In 2024, no dedicated budget was allocated specifically for gender equality. However, several initiatives contributed to its promotion.

– The European space sector is on an upward trajectory but faces many challenges in terms of workforce. A comprehensive analysis identified that the industry is aging, male-dominated and there is a critical gap between the hard and soft skills provided by current educational curricula. To address the needs of the industry, the Commission launched in 2024 the pilot phase of the ‘Space career launchpad’ ⁽²⁴⁾, a platform aimed at university students and young graduates to give them experience through internships with particular focus on new space companies. By offering a wide range of internships and entry-level jobs in various fields, and by actively encouraging participation from underrepresented groups, including women, the Commission wants to spark interest in the space sector and show its exciting career opportunities. The goal is to bridge the skills gap and foster a skilled, inclusive and diverse workforce. Further, in the area of space, on 7 June 2024 the *Transition Pathway for the Aerospace Ecosystem* report ⁽²⁵⁾ was published. The report initiates its co-implementation by collecting commitments from stakeholders. Among the 53 actions identified for implementation, seven specifically address social transitions, focusing on ensuring fairness, diversity and inclusion in the aerospace sector, including ensuring targeted education from an early stage.

– To spark interest in pursuing a vocation in the space sector, the Commission is also designing a pilot version of the CASSINI Space Camp, with a tentative launch date in mid-2025. With the support of local ecosystems, from companies to educational/training entities and other relevant actors, the aim is to offer an exciting camp for cooperation, learning and sharing experiences.

⁽²⁴⁾ https://defence-industry-space.ec.europa.eu/document/download/b0ae5705-0e5f-4c4a-bbbb-26a79f32a104_en?filename=Transition%20Pathway%20%20Aerospace%20Ecosystem%20%20EN.pdf.

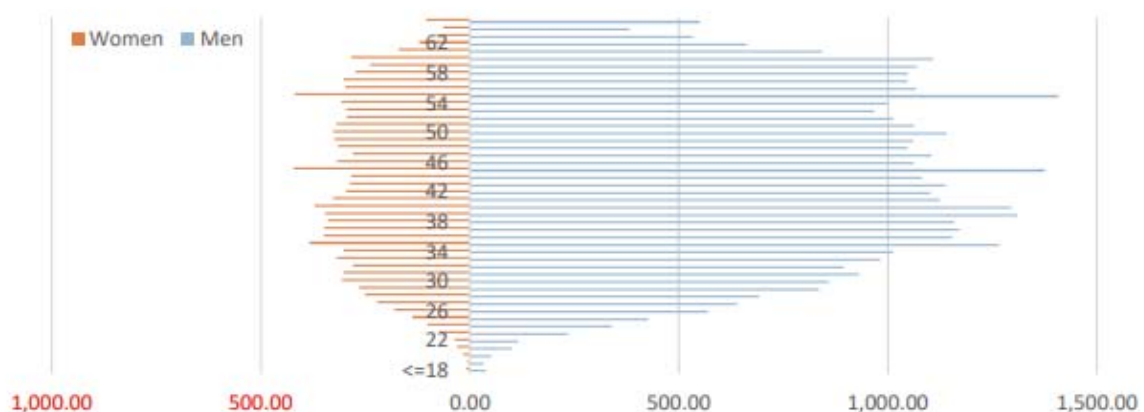
⁽²⁵⁾ https://defence-industry-space.ec.europa.eu/document/download/b0ae5705-0e5f-4c4a-bbbb-26a79f32a104_en?filename=Transition%20Pathway%20%20Aerospace%20Ecosystem%20%20EN.pdf.

- women in space science and technology. Activities and materials are developed to appeal to all genders, ensuring that teenage girls feel equally welcome and encouraged to participate. It is targeted at teenagers in the 14–18 age group and the goal is to teach them about the space industry, the use of space technology on Earth and the European space programmes.

Gender disaggregated information:

- The European space industry is quite specific in terms of age and qualification structures. The industry maintains a rather stable age structure. The employment distribution by age exhibits a larger proportion of employees in the 49–58 age range, with an average age of employees around 44, and a slight difference between women and men. About a fifth of space industry employees are women.
- Women accounted for roughly 23% of employment in the upstream segment in Europe in 2021, a share that has remained stable over the last decade.

Space industry employees age pyramid



Source: Eurospace, 2022.

Contribution to the digital transition (EUR million):

				Total	

	2021 implementation	2022 implementation	2023 implementation	2024 implementation		% of 2021- 2024
Digital contribution	334.3	487.5	369.6	708.6	1 900.1	23.4 %

- The services that will be provided under the GOVSATCOM component of the EU space programme are expected to boost the digital transition in Europe and worldwide. Programme activities are aimed at facilitating the further development of high-speed broadband and seamless connectivity, and secure and cost-effective satellite communications services for governmental users
Copernicus provides a wide range of Earth observation data and related model products, such as ‘reanalyses’, that generate a seamless data product without gaps in spatial or temporal coverage. These models also allow for forecasts and predictions in certain thematic areas. These data are valuable for a vast range of commercial applications, both in the professional and the consumer domains. The integrated data management of Copernicus covers, inter alia, harmonisation and interoperability with other EU programmes such as Digital Europe, and with other international organisations such as the European Space Agency and the European Organisation for the Exploitation of Meteorological Satellites. Some initial activities on complementing numerical modelling with artificial intelligence have been undertaken.

Contribution to sustainable development goals

SDG	Does the programme contribute to the goal?	Example (only for the most relevant SDGs)
SDG2 End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture	x	The EU space programme is providing innovative solutions with huge potential to make agriculture more productive and sustainable. For example, Earth observation data provided by the Copernicus land monitoring service help national institutions monitor crop conditions, providing early warnings on failing crops and predicting crop yields. This enables a considerable improvement in the use of fertilisers, fuel and pesticides, resulting in healthier food and reduced environmental impact. Galileo and EGNOS, in turn, link data to specific geographical coordinates and provide geolocation, tracking and positioning.

SDG3 Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages	x	EU space services provided by Galileo and Copernicus are key for the development of smart health apps, benefiting users worldwide. For example, there are numerous consumer apps for checking daily sport and fitness activities and performance levels, encouraging a healthy lifestyle. There are apps used for patient monitoring, such as for localising patients with Alzheimer's disease, to oversee patients with cardiac conditions and help with issuing emergency call warnings if needed, or for guidance to assist the visually impaired. The Copernicus atmosphere monitoring service issues daily air quality forecasts on a global scale, accounting for pollutant emissions or the consequences of events such as large wildfires or volcanic eruptions. This is valuable and reliable information for assessing health impacts. The eCall initiative helps save lives by speeding up emergency response times in the event of a road accident. This initiative requires all new car types sold in the EU to be fitted with eCall devices, which use space data from Galileo and EGNOS. eCall devices automatically dial the European emergency number 112 to alert rescue services in the event of an accident, while also communicating their accurate and exact location. It is estimated that in its first 10 years of operation, eCall will save more than 2 000 lives in Europe, avoid almost 20 000 severe injuries and significantly reduce the severity of injuries in 15% of all accidents resulting in injury.
SDG5 Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls	x	On 7 June 2024, the <i>Transition Pathway for the Aerospace Ecosystem</i> report was published, initiating its co-implementation by gathering stakeholder commitments for 53 actions, including seven focused on social transitions to ensure fairness, diversity, inclusion and targeted education in the aerospace sector.
SDG6 Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all	x	EU space technologies play a crucial role in optimising drinking water processing operations to achieve higher quality. For example, the Copernicus Land Monitoring Service systematically provides real-time information on the state of global inland water bodies and their seasonal replenishment, lake and river water levels, temperature, turbidity and trophic state, including potential water availability from snow and ice cover. Better information and forecasts help a broad range of water managers adapt their strategies when dealing with water allocation, flood management, ecological status and industrial water use, to mitigate the effects of climate change.

SDG7 Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all	x	The EU space programme, including Copernicus, plays a key role in advancing clean energy by providing critical satellite data to support environmental monitoring and sustainable energy initiatives. Copernicus delivers Earth observation data that tracks climate change, maps renewable energy resources and monitors air quality, helping to optimise energy production from renewable sources like wind, solar and hydropower. By offering accurate, real-time information on environmental conditions, the programme aids decision-making, promotes energy efficiency and supports the transition to a low-carbon economy across Europe.
SDG8 Promote sustained , inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all	x	The EU space programme, including Copernicus, boosts competitiveness and economic growth by providing valuable satellite data that enhances decision-making across various sectors. Copernicus offers Earth observation data that supports industries such as agriculture, transport and disaster management, driving innovation, efficiency and cost savings. By enabling businesses to access precise, real-time information, the programme fosters the development of new technologies, services and applications, creating new market opportunities and enhancing the EU's global economic position. This data-driven approach not only strengthens existing industries, but also spurs the growth of emerging sectors in the digital economy.
SDG9 Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation	x	The EU space-based technologies are key enablers for smart and sustainable transport and in particular for the connected and autonomous driving. In road transport, using navigation and positioning services by Galileo leads to a range of innovative applications that enable smart mobility and multi-mode transport digitalisation with optimised travel routes, in turn allowing for a reduction of carbon dioxide emissions. In air transport, using EGNOS for efficient definition of flight routes helps reduce fuel consumption and carbon dioxide emissions. Copernicus data and information will be used to assess the energy efficiency of residential areas and to monitor the impact of the energy efficiency policies.

SDG11 Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable	x	EU space services provided under the EU space programme are key enablers for smart cities, making urban planning more efficient. By using Galileo and EGNOS for navigation, positioning and timing, city services that are essential, for instance, for operating and managing public transportation, power supply, connectivity, waste management and much more, can be considerably improved and at a lower cost. Copernicus provides valuable satellite images and insights about urban areas. These include information about land use and land cover classification, urban growth and urban green areas that policymakers can use to improve life in cities. The Copernicus Climate Change Service provides information on city-scale climate, helping city planners to mitigate the effect of heat waves for their citizens. The Copernicus emergency management service provides information for emergency responses to different types of disasters, including floods, and related prevention, preparedness, response and recovery activities.
SDG12 Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns	x	The development of clear product environmental footprint category rules (PEFCR) for the space sector contributes to SDG12 by promoting sustainable consumption and production through standardised environmental impact assessments and improved resource efficiency.
SDG13 Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts	x	The Copernicus climate change service routinely monitors the Earth's climate and its evolution. It provides routine access to key indicators on a number of essential climate variables (temperature, sea-ice, carbon dioxide, etc.) and is therefore a powerful tool to monitor the success of the implementation of the Paris Agreement. The Copernicus atmosphere service provides already today information on greenhouse gas concentrations and their sources. Both services contributed to the preparation of the first global stocktake of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change in 2023.

SDG14 Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development	x	Copernicus is helping governments identify the sources of oil pollution. It is also a powerful tool used by fisheries control administrations from across the EU, for making maritime surveillance more effective. The combined use of Copernicus satellite images with vessel positioning information provided by Galileo reinforce monitoring activities and help authorities to detect and track movement and activity in restricted fishing grounds. The Copernicus marine service reported to Eurostat on SDG14 ('Life below water') on the impact of climate on waters acidification and eutrophication of direct impact on marine ecosystems.
SDG15 Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss	x	The EU space programme provides reliable services and reports supporting the formulation, implementation and monitoring of policies to protect natural environments and biodiversity (EU biodiversity strategy for 2030). Benefiting users worldwide, the Copernicus climate change service develops tailored information products on key indicators such as temperature, sea ice and carbon dioxide levels. In addition, the Copernicus atmosphere monitoring service uses near-real-time observations of the location and intensity of active wildfires to estimate the emissions of pollutants that may impact biodiversity in the affected areas.

SDG16 Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels	x	The EU space programme contributes to this SDG
SDG17 Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development	x	The EU space programme, in particular via Copernicus services, has developed numerous partnerships at the global, regional, national and local levels with institutional, non-governmental and private actors to support the implementation of the SDGs.

Contribution to strategic technologies

In line with **Regulation (EU) 2024/795** (the STEP Regulation), Horizon Europe is one of the EU budget instruments in direct management mobilised under the **Strategic Technologies for Europe Platform (STEP)** to strengthen the competitiveness and resilience of the European economy. As stipulated in **Article 4**, Horizon Europe is also among the programmes that can award the **STEP (Sovereignty) seal** under its calls for proposals.

- In 2024, two calls were flagged as pilots under Horizon Europe's Cluster 4 – Space (Destination 5) programme to contribute to the STEP objectives. The specificity of these calls is that they are for cross-country multi-beneficiary projects.

- The total budget allocated to these two calls amounts to EUR 34.3 million and Article 22(5) of the regulation establishing Horizon Europe applied to both calls. The article provides for the possibility to exclude from the calls for proposals entities controlled by non-associated non-EU countries or by entities established in such countries.
- The first call focused on **space technologies for Europe's non-dependence and competitiveness**. Six STEP projects were selected and funded for a total of EUR 18.2 million. A STEP seal was awarded to each of the selected projects, which are 100% funded by the European Commission. Additionally, they are being used as a pilot to test the support offered by the European Innovation Council's business coaching and/or Tech2Market services, depending on the interest in the projects.
- The second call focused on **quantum space gravimetry**. One project has been selected for funding (EUR 14 million), but the preparation of the grant agreement has been postponed due to the withdrawal of one major partner, which needs to be replaced by other partner(s) that expressed interest in taking over. The grant signature is expected in the second quarter of 2025, upon which the STEP seal will be granted, pending a favorable outcome of the ownership control assessment.

EU SECURE CONNECTIVITY PROGRAMME

Concrete examples of achievements

The EU secure connectivity programme was in its first years of implementation in 2024, with limited data available for presenting key achievements.

1 concession contract was signed in December 2024, setting in place an innovative public–private partnership to develop, deploy and operate the ‘IRIS ² ’ satellite constellation.	1 implementing act was adopted in April 2024, determining the location of the IRIS ² control centres, the main site and the backup site.	1 Council decision was adopted in December 2024, authorising negotiations for the participation of Norway in the union secure connectivity programme and access to its governmental services.

Budget programming and implementation

Budget programming (million EUR):

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	Total
Financial programming	0.0	0.0	186.3	213.4	357.4	320.7	290.2	1 367.9
NextGenerationEU	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Decommitments made available again (*)	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Contributions from other countries and entities	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Total	0.0	0.0	186.3	213.4	357.4	320.7	290.2	1 367.9

(*) Only Article 15(3) of the Financial Regulation.

Cumulative budget implementation at the end of 2024 (million EUR):

	Implementation	Budget	Implementation rate
Commitments	399.7	1 367.9	29.2%
Payments	300.0		21.9%

Implementation and performance

Key performance indicators

	Baseline	Progress	Target	Results	Assessment
Member State governments and EU institutions, bodies, offices and agencies can access a set of first governmental services in 2024	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Member State governments and EU institutions, bodies, offices and agencies can access full operational capability that meets the user needs and demand determined in the service portfolio in 2027	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Percentage of geographical availability of all deployed governmental services within Member State territories	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Programme participants participating in the programme in accordance with Article 11	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Number of third countries and international organisations participating in the programme in accordance with Article 39	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Number of in-orbit and functional satellites needed for the functioning of the European quantum communication infrastructure	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Number of satellites per orbital slot in 2025, 2026 and 2027	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Number of satellite subsystems, including payloads, serving other components of the Union Space Programme	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

- Regulation (EU) 2023/588 establishing the union secure connectivity programme was adopted on 15 March 2023 to strengthen the EU's sovereignty and security. This programme will provide secure satellite communication capacities to governmental users, businesses and citizens. It aims to deploy an EU satellite constellation – IRIS² (infrastructure for resilience, interconnectivity and security by satellite) – to support a wide variety of governmental applications, mainly in the domains of situational awareness (e.g. border surveillance), crisis management (e.g. humanitarian aid) and the connection and protection of key infrastructures (e.g. secure communications for EU embassies). On the commercial side, the programme will enable mass-market applications, including mobile and fixed broadband satellite access, satellite access for transportation, reinforced networks by satellite, and satellite broadband and cloud-based services.
- To roll-out the implementation of activities, the procurement process for a main concession contract was concluded in 2024, following a competitive procedure . In December 2024, [a 12-year concession contract with the 'SpaceRISE' consortium was signed](#). Next, and on the basis of an innovative public private partnership, the concessionaire will develop, deploy and operate IRIS² – a multi-orbital constellation of 290 satellites.
- To deploy the necessary ground infrastructure and following an open call for expressions of interest addressed to Member States, a Commission Implementing Decision was adopted in April 2024, determining the location of the IRIS² control centres ⁽²⁶⁾ in France, Italy and Luxembourg.
- IRIS² services will be provided using a phased approach. Initial **governmental services** are expected in 2025, building on the 'Govsatcom' component of the EU space programme, which constitutes the first building block of IRIS². A gradual deployment of activities will follow to complete the space and ground infrastructure, aiming to meet the needs of governmental users and to achieve full operational capability by 2027. **Commercial services** are expected by 2030.
- As regards the market uptake activities, a preparatory action to develop innovative user terminals for European secure satellite communication services was under definition in 2024, enabling production and market penetration with the use of open standards.
- Negotiations with third parties were pursued, with formal requests received from Iceland and Norway for their participation in the governmental satellite communications and IRIS² programmes. In December 2024, a Council decision was adopted authorising negotiations with Norway and in view of establishing an international agreement. A similar process is underway to allow for the opening of formal negotiations with Iceland.
- The Commission is working closely with the Member States, other EU institutions, the European Union Agency for the Space Programme and the European Space Agency, for the gradual roll-out of activities aimed at ensuring the operation, maintenance, continuous improvement and protection of space and ground infrastructure, including replenishment and obsolescence management and the future evolution of governmental services.
- The Commission entrusted the European Space Agency with tasks relating to the supervision of the development, the validation and the related deployment activities for the construction of the space and ground infrastructure required to provide governmental services.
- Furthermore, the Commission pursues the development and deployment of the European quantum communication infrastructure for gradual integration into the secure connectivity system, and entrusted to the European Space Agency with tasks relating to the space and related ground segments of the European quantum communication infrastructure.
- Overall, the programme will be monitored closely on the basis of a set of indicators intended to measure the extent to which the specific objectives of the programme have been achieved and

⁽²⁶⁾ OJ L, 2024/1067, 16.4.2024, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/dec_impl/2024/1067/oj.

with a view to minimising administrative burdens and costs. To that end, the annex to Regulation (EU) 2023/588 establishes a set of key performance indicators. In addition, the service definition document applicable to the programme will define more detailed key performance indicators with minimum performance levels, once available.

- The activities of the Commission financed under the union secure connectivity programme will be complemented by budgets of other EU programmes, i.e. Horizon Europe ('Digital, industry and space' cluster), the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument – Global Europe, the European Union space programme, the Connecting Europe Facility and the digital Europe programme. The funds will be implemented in accordance with the rules of these programmes.

Contribution to horizontal priorities

Contribution to green budgeting priorities (EUR million):

	Implementation				Estimates			Total	% of the total envelope
	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027		
Climate mainstreaming	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.0%

- The EU secure connectivity programme (and the European Union space programme) place great emphasis on the green transition and have a key role to play. On one hand, EU space data and services enable other sectors to achieve green ambitions and harness the potential of the green transition; on the other hand, the EU space industry sector itself must transform and adapt to comply with the EU environmental policies and legislation, and hence improve its practices throughout its full value chain.
- While the space-based assets do not themselves emit greenhouse gases while in use, their manufacturing and associated ground facilities do have an environmental impact. Procurements and contracts related to the EU secure connectivity programme therefore include provisions on environmental and space sustainability measures, i.e. to minimise and offset the greenhouse gas emissions generated by the development, production and deployment of the infrastructure and provisions establishing a scheme to offset the remaining greenhouse gas emissions. Carbon offsetting should be preferably done via carbon removal, applying consensus methods on accounting for greenhouse gas removal as soon as they are available.
- Green procurement principles were pursued to set in place the infrastructure that will be providing communication through space and avoiding the deployment of ground networks, submarine

cables, high power cables or fibres (buried in the ground or above the ground). No significant harm will therefore be done to the sustainable use and protection of water and marine resources.

- In addition, procurements and contracts will include provisions on measures to prevent light pollution, the use of appropriate collision-avoidance technologies for spacecraft and the submission and implementation of a comprehensive debris mitigation plan to ensure the avoidance of debris by the satellites of the constellation.
- To reduce the environmental impact of space activities and set out a standardised method to assess environmental impacts, a European-Parliament-backed pilot project was rolled out in 2024, aimed at developing a sector-specific life cycle assessment method (see https://defence-industry-space.ec.europa.eu/product-environmental-footprint-category-rules-pefcr-space-sector_en).

Contribution to gender equality (million EUR) (*)

Gender score	2021	2022	2023	2024	Total
2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
0*	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
0	0.0	0.0	186.3	213.5	399.8
Total:	0.0	0.0	186.3	213.5	399.8

(*) Based on the applied gender contribution methodology, the following scores are attributed at the most granular level of intervention possible:

- 2: interventions the principal objective of which is to improve gender equality;
- 1: interventions that have gender equality as an important and deliberate objective but not as the main reason for the intervention;
- 0: non-targeted interventions (interventions that are expected to have no significant bearing on gender equality);
- 0*: score to be assigned to interventions with a likely but not yet clear positive impact on gender equality.

- The regulation states that the programme should contribute to the development of advanced skills in space-related fields and support education and training activities, along with promoting equal opportunities, gender equality and women's empowerment, in order to realise the full potential of EU citizens in that area. In this respect, the Commission will promote and encourage increased participation of women .
- On gender equality, no dedicated budget expenditure incurred in 2024. The activities that were relevant to the promotion of gender equality were the following.
 - The European space sector is on an upward trajectory but faces many challenges in terms of workforce. A comprehensive analysis identified that the industry is aging and male-dominated, and there is a critical gap between the hard and soft skills provided by current educational curricula. To answer the needs of the industry, the Commission launched in 2024 the pilot phase of the Space Career Launchpad ⁽²⁷⁾, a platform aimed at university

⁽²⁷⁾ https://defence-industry-space.ec.europa.eu/space-career-launchpad-building-diverse-workforce-eu-space-sector-2024-10-17_en?prefLang=de.

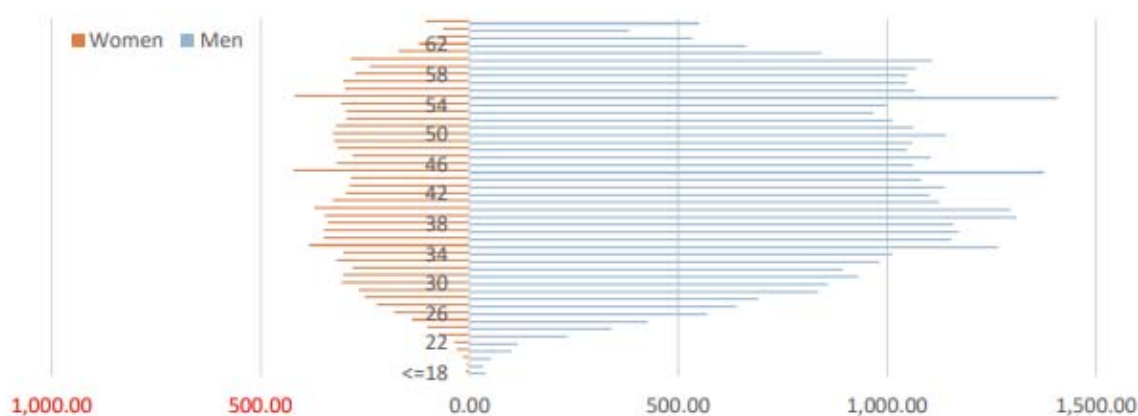
students and young graduates to give them experience through internships, with a particular focus on new space companies. By offering wide range of internships and entry-level jobs in various fields, the Commission wants to spark interest in the space sector and show its exciting career opportunities. The goal is to bridge the skills gap and foster a skilled, inclusive and diverse workforce. Further in the area of space, on 7 June 2024 the *Transition Pathway for the Aerospace Ecosystem* report⁽²⁸⁾ was published. The report initiates its co-implementation by collecting commitments from stakeholders. Among the 53 actions identified for implementation, seven actions specifically address social transitions, focusing in ensuring fairness, diversity and inclusion in the aerospace sector, including ensuring targeted education from an early stage in the education process.

- o To spark interest in pursuing a vocation in the space sector, the Commission is also designing a pilot version of the CASSINI Space Camp, with a tentative date of launch in mid-2025. With the support of local ecosystems, from companies to educational/training entities and other relevant actors, we want to offer an exciting camp for cooperation, learning and sharing experiences. The CASSINI Space Camp is built on a five-pillar foundation ('5I's') – innovative, inclusive, impactful, interdisciplinary and inspirational. It is aimed at teenagers in the 14–18 age group and its goal is to teach them about the space industry, the use of space technology on Earth and the European space programmes.
- o The Commission will also support initiatives to raise awareness of gender equality in the area of space.

Gender disaggregated information:

- The European space industry is quite specific in terms of age and qualification structures. The industry maintains a rather stable age structure. The employment distribution by age exhibits a larger proportion of employees in the 49–58 age range, with an average age around 44 and a slight difference between women and men. About a fifth of space industry employees are women.
- Women accounted for roughly 23% of employment in the upstream segment in Europe in 2021, a share that has remained stable over the last decade.

Space industry employees age pyramid



Source: Eurospace, 2022.

⁽²⁸⁾ https://defence-industry-space.ec.europa.eu/document/download/b0ae5705-0e5f-4c4a-bbbb-26a79f32a104_en?filename=Transition%20Pathway%20%20Aerospace%20Ecosystem%20%20EN.pdf.

Contribution to the digital transition (EUR million):

	2021 implementation	2022 implementation	2023 implementation	2024 implementation	Total	% of the 2021- 2024 envelope
Digital contribution	0.0	0.0	186.3	213.5	399.8	100.0%

- The services that will be provided under the programme are expected to boost the digital transition in Europe and worldwide. The programme was adopted in 2023 and the first activities will be rolled out in 2025, following the signature of the main concession contract in December 2024. The concessionaire is expected to support and facilitate the further development of worldwide high-speed broadband and seamless connectivity under the IRIS² programme.

Contribution to sustainable development goals

SDG	Does the programme contribute to the goal?	Example (only for the most relevant SDGs)
SDG5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls	x	On 7 June 2024, the Transition Pathway for Aerospace was published, initiating its co-implementation by gathering stakeholder commitments for 53 actions, including seven focused on social transitions to ensure fairness, diversity, inclusion, and targeted education in the aerospace sector.

SDG9: Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation	x	The services that will be provided under the EU secure connectivity programme are expected to contribute to several goals of sustainable development by connecting remote areas and areas with limited terrestrial connectivity infrastructure. A major programme objective is to improve secure connectivity over geographical areas of strategic interest of the EU, in particular Africa and the Arctic, and support the sustainable development and social cohesion in these regions. Ensuring environmental and space sustainability is another key programmatic focus where the new European constellation will satisfy space sustainability criteria and be an example of good practices in space traffic management and in space surveillance and tracking promoting responsible behaviour in space.
SDG12: Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns	x	The development of PEFCR4Space establishes clear Product Environmental Footprint Category Rules for the space sector, contributing to Sustainable Development Goal 12 by promoting sustainable consumption and production through standardised environmental impact assessments and improved resource efficiency. Also, the EU secure connectivity will mitigate and offset GHG emissions linked to the manufacturing and launch activities of the space system.

Contribution to strategic technologies (STEP)

- n/a

REGIONAL POLICY

COHESION FUND AND EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND

Concrete examples of achievements

Key achievements from the 2021-2027 European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and Cohesion Fund (CF) programmes

	262 000 businesses have been targeted to receive support through selected projects providing grants, equity, guarantees, loans and advice.	1.6 million households are covered by selected projects to provide very high-capacity broadband access.	223 000 enterprises are covered by selected projects to provide to very high-capacity broadband access.

242 000	20 million	24 million	22 million
dwelling are covered by selected projects to improve their energy performance.	people are covered by selected projects to provide new or modernised health services.	people are covered by selected projects to provide protection measures against climate-related natural disasters.	hectares of land are covered by selected projects to protect against wildfires.

Note: these values from the end of December 2024 are aggregated from the ERDF/CF and Interreg Europe programmes as of May 2025. The most recent values are available on the Cohesion Open Data, following any corrections introduced by the programmes.

Budget programming and implementation

Budget programming (million EUR)

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	Total
Financial programming	255.2	43 569.3	44 863.4	46 096.3	47 324.5	40 206.6	41 563.3	263 878.5
NextGenerationEU	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Decommitments made available again (*)	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Contributions from other countries and entities	0.0	0.0	234.7	120.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	354.9
Total	255.2	43 569.3	45 098.1	46 216.5	47 324.5	40 206.6	41 563.3	264 233.4

(*) Only Article 15(3) of the Financial Regulation.

Financial Programming REACT-EU:

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	Total
Financial programming	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
NextGenerationEU	24 038.5	5 904.7	38.4	3.0	22.0	0.0	0.0	30 006.6
Decommitments made available again (*)	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Contributions from other countries and entities	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Total	24 038.5	5 904.7	38.4	3.0	22.0	0.0	0.0	30 006.6

Cumulative budget implementation at the end of 2024 (million EUR)

	Implementation	Budget	Implementation rate
Commitments	132 368.6	264 233.4	50.1%
Payments	20 003.1		7.6%

Financial Implementation REACT-EU:

	Implementation	Budget	Implementation rate
Commitments	29 984.5	30 006.6	99.9%
Payments	28 052.4	0.0	93.5%

Implementation and performance

Key performance indicators

	Baseline	Progress	Target	Results	Assessment
Enterprises supported to innovate	0	Actual results: 7.6%, Selected operations: 34.4%	150 000 in 2029	11 395 enterprises (Selected operations: 51 377 enterprises) compared to a target of 149 454 enterprises	On track

Small and medium-sized enterprises supported to enhance growth and competitiveness	0	Actual results: 9.9%, Selected operations: 46.8%	446 000 in 2029	44 000 small and medium-sized enterprises (Selected operations: 208 568 small and medium-sized enterprises) compared to a target of 446 100 small and medium-sized enterprises	On track
Additional dwellings and enterprises with broadband access of very high capacity	0	Actual results: 0%, Selected operations: 50.2% for dwellings and 62.8% for enterprises	3.1 million dwellings in 2029 and 360 000 enterprises	573 dwellings (Selected operations: 1 573 678 dwellings), compared to a target of 3 132 734 and 46 enterprises (selected operations: 223 874 enterprises), compared to a target of 356 552 enterprises	On track
Savings in annual primary energy consumption	0	Actual results: 0.6%, Selected operations: 4.8%	272 million MWh/year in 2029	1 729 805MWh/year (Selected operations: 13 037 481MWh/year), compared to a target of 272 159 326 MWh/year	Moderate progress

Additional production capacity for renewable energy	0	Actual results: 4.9%, Selected operations: 34.6%	9 400 MW in 2029	465 MW (Selected operations: 3 262MW) compared to a target of 9 427 MW	On track
New, upgraded, reconstructed or modernised railways (TEN-T)	0	Actual results: 2.5%, Selected operations: 28.8%	4 100 km in 2029	102 km (Selected operations: 1 186km) compared to a target of 4 110 km	On track
New or modernised capacity for health care facilities	0	Actual results: 3.3%, Selected operations: 33.7%	59 million persons/year in 2029	1 939 322 persons/year (Selected operations: 19 983 659 persons/year) compared to a target of 58 812 363 persons/year	On track

Population covered by strategies integrated territorial development	0	Actual results: 9.0%, Selected operations: 43.2%	147 million people in 2029	13 million people (Selected operations: 64 million people) compared to a target of 147 million people	On track

The 2021-2027 programme implementation picked up significant speed in 2024. The project selection rate has quadrupled since the end of 2023. As of the end of 2024, Member States have selected operations amounting to 37.3% of their ERDF/CF allocation (including Interreg Europe), EUR 113 billion under ERDF and EUR 26 billion under CF (including national co-financing).

The 2021-2027 selection rate is comparable to the previous programming period taking into account that the 2021-2027 programmes were adopted on average more than seven months later than the 2014-2020 ones due to the COVID-19 crisis, the Russian war of aggression against Ukraine and the energy crisis, and the current programmes are even selecting operations slightly faster than in the previous period.

As of mid-March 2025, total net payments (including pre-financing) of EUR 18.3 billion were paid out (7% of the ERDF and CF allocations). These payments include the backlog of unpaid claims at the end of 2024, amounting to almost EUR 4 billion. The payment rates for ERDF and CF are still lagging behind in comparison with 2014-2020. However, similarly to the selection rate, if the 7-month delay is taken into account, the payment rate would be slightly higher than that of 2014-2020. The payments are expected to pick up pace in 2025.

In the 2024 budget, the allocation for ERDF and CF together was EUR 46 billion for mainstream programmes (EUR 39.2 billion for ERDF, EUR 6.8 billion for CF) in commitment appropriations. Out of this amount, EUR 43.7 billion has been committed, representing 97.8% of the total allocation. The remaining amount corresponds to the decommitments made on the Health Union programmes (EUR 1 billion).

Contribution to horizontal priorities

Contribution to green budgeting priorities (EUR million):

	Implementation				Estimates			Total	% of the total envelope
	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027		
Climate mainstreaming	39.1	13 728.9	13 790.8	14 788.7	17 006.2	14 440.0	14 932.8	88 726.5	33.6%
Biodiversity mainstreaming	0.0	2 644.8	2 737.5	2 800.7	2 873.0	2 439.5	2 522.7	16 018.2	6.1%

Cohesion policy uses a thematic ‘categorisation system’ to capture information of the thematic content of the 2021-2027 programmes. The multiannual thematic allocations are used to calculate the indicative share of investments under each annual commitment, as set out above. There are several tracking tools (e.g. climate, biodiversity, clean air, gender, digital).

The legislation set up minimum thresholds for two of the tracking mechanisms: climate and biodiversity mainstreaming.

For climate mainstreaming, ERDF and CF shall contribute 30% and 37% respectively of the EU contribution. Based on the adopted 2021-2027 programmes, the planned targets have been largely exceeded, reaching 33% for ERDF and 56% for CF. For 2021-2027, the [climate tracking data story](#) presents in detail the cohesion policy support to climate action.

For biodiversity, the ambition is to provide 7.5% of annual spending under the multiannual financial framework to the funds governed by Regulation (EU) 2021/1060 ⁽²⁹⁾ “Common Provisions Regulation” or “CPR”. Based on the adopted programmes, 6% has been earmarked so far for activities tackling the loss of biodiversity. This [biodiversity tracking data story](#), available on the Cohesion Open Data Platform, presents in more detail the cohesion policy investments benefiting biodiversity.

For clean air, based on the adopted 2021-2027 programmes, close to 16% of the planned EU amounts will be used to support interventions with a main objective of improving air quality, or with a substantial co-benefit for improving air quality.

The allocations to the different green budgeting objectives overlap to some extent. The amounts for the different cross-cutting priorities should not be directly aggregated, in order to avoid double counting. Data stories on the Cohesion Open Data Platform present the data and the methods for tracking in more detail.

⁽²⁹⁾ Regulation (EU) 2021/1060 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 June 2021 laying down common provisions on the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund Plus, the Cohesion Fund, the Just Transition Fund and the European Maritime, Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund and financial rules for those and for the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund, the Internal Security Fund and the Instrument for Financial Support for Border Management and Visa Policy (OJ L 231, 30.6.2021, p. 159, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2021/1060/oj>).

In relation to the taxonomy for sustainable activities, the Cohesion Policy Funds system of 182 intervention fields has undergone an alignment analysis with the taxonomy in the context of NextGenerationEU green bond reporting. As a result, groups of intervention fields were assessed as ‘fully aligned’, ‘substantially aligned’, ‘partially aligned’ or ‘not covered’. According to the planned values from the adopted cohesion policy programmes and from the taxonomy perspective, around EUR 79.96 billion was assessed as being fully aligned, EUR 36.97 billion as partially aligned and substantially aligned, while EUR 147.13 billion was assessed as not covered.

Under the climate tracking methodology, both mitigation and adaptation measures are supported. Mitigation measures include significant investments in renewable energies, energy efficiency and clean urban transport measures. Adaptation includes risk prevention linked to adjusting to the current and future effects of climate change. However, no explicit assignment of the different intervention fields to mitigation or adaptation has been made and there is some overlapping. Finally, there is likely to be under-reporting of adaptation measures where they are linked to infrastructures that bear a 0% climate coefficient.

In addition to climate tracking, the ‘do no significant harm’ principle was applied by national authorities in the assessment of the investment priorities contained in the programmes before adoption. Member States are responsible for the implementation of this principle throughout the programming period.

As concerns the recovery assistance for cohesion and the territories of Europe initiative and its climate contribution, in accordance with Regulation (EU) 2020/2221⁽³⁰⁾ and Regulation (EU) 2022/613⁽³¹⁾, the climate target of 25% was not binding for the initiative’s programmes but rather a political ambition. Even though programmes have allocated significant amounts to climate-targeted action, in the post-COVID-19 context other thematic investments have been prioritised, such as actions to support Member State healthcare systems and the development of small and medium-sized enterprises. More information is available in the [REACT-EU data story](#) on the Cohesion Open Data Platform.

Contribution to gender equality (million EUR) (*)

Gender score	2021	2022	2023	2024	Total
2	0.0	3 938.1	4 076.0	3 494.0	11 508.1
1	0.0	348.9	361.2	291.2	1 001.3
0*	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
0	225.2	39 282.3	40 661.0	42 431.4	122 599.8
Total:	225.2	43 569.3	45 098.2	46 216.5	135 109.2

⁽³⁰⁾ Regulation (EU) 2020/2221 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 December 2020 amending Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013 as regards additional resources and implementing arrangements to provide assistance for fostering crisis repair in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic and its social consequences and for preparing a green, digital and resilient recovery of the economy (REACT-EU) (OJ L 437, 28.12.2020, p. 30, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2020/2221/oj>).

⁽³¹⁾ Regulation (EU) 2022/613 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 12 April 2022 amending Regulations (EU) No 1303/2013 and (EU) No 223/2014 as regards increased pre-financing from REACT-EU resources and the establishment of a unit cost (OJ L 115, 13.4.2022, p. 38, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2022/613/oj>).

(*) Based on the applied gender contribution methodology, the following scores are attributed at the most granular level of intervention possible:

- 2: interventions the principal objective of which is to improve gender equality;
- 1: interventions that have gender equality as an important and deliberate objective but not as the main reason for the intervention;
- 0: non-targeted interventions (interventions that are expected to have no significant bearing on gender equality);
- 0*: score to be assigned to interventions with a likely but not yet clear positive impact on gender equality.

Cohesion policy uses a ‘categorisation’ information system, which includes a gender equality dimension to capture information on the gender contribution of the 2021-2027 programmes. These multiannual thematic allocations are used to calculate the indicative share of investments under each annual commitment as set above.

Based on the adopted programmes, close to 10% of the planned ERDF/CF EU amounts will be used to support interventions the principal objective of which is to improve gender equality or interventions that have gender equality as an objective.

For example, by activating hidden talents and offering a guided approach to information technology, from orientation to training, the ‘[Start your IT career](#)’ project aims at solving the mismatch in the information technology labour market. It was a finalist of the 2023 ‘REGIOSTARS’ awards. The ‘[Master craftsman start-up bonus](#)’ project supports the start-ups of young master craftsmen and women. In the event of the creation and filling of an apprenticeship position with a woman in a craft occupation, the funding can be increased, with the aim of promoting women start-ups in the field.

The [gender tracking data story](#), available on the Cohesion Open Data Platform, presents in detail the cohesion policy support to gender equality.

Gender disaggregated information: there is no information available, as the data is not disaggregated by gender.

Contribution to the digital transition (EUR million):

	2021 implementatio n	2022 implementatio n	2023 implementatio n	2024 implementatio n	Total	% of the 2021- 2024 envelop e
Digital contribution	0.0	5 117.8	5 297.3	5 272.2	15 687. 3	11.6%

Based on the adopted programmes, close to 12% of the planned EU amounts will be used to finance interventions that support the digital transition.

The calculation of the amount for the digital transition is based on coefficients applied to the intervention fields in Annex 1 to the Common Provisions Regulation. In the case of digital tracking, the amounts calculated are based on the assessment by Commission services of the relevance of planned thematic allocations.

The [digital tracking data story](#), available on the Cohesion Open Data Platform, presents in detail the cohesion policy support to the digital transition.

Contribution to sustainable development goals

SDG	Does the programme contribute to the goal?	Example (only for the most relevant SDGs)
SDG1: End poverty in all its forms everywhere	yes	No poverty. The 'Powerty' project, financed by Interreg Europe 2014-2020 with a budget of EUR 1 million, had the objective of increasing the use of renewable energies by vulnerable groups. The decarbonisation of the European energy system will require all citizens to make full use of renewable energies. However, currently many people face difficulties in accessing renewable energy facilities and equipment, as a result of economic and technological issues, particularly people facing energy poverty. The project also helped low-income households to gain access to affordable energy during times of high energy prices. Total amount planned for this goal: EUR 5.3 billion.
SDG3: Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages	yes	Good health and wellbeing. Based in Munich, Germany, the 'Perform-react' project has established a cutting-edge biosafety laboratory at the Helmholtz Munich research centre. Researchers now possess crucial infrastructure to conduct vital studies for pandemic prevention and management. The facility has created 25 new research positions and facilitates 28 projects worth EUR 125 million, underscoring its significance in advancing future pandemic research. Total amount planned for this goal: EUR 7.2 billion.
SDG4: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all	yes	Quality education. In the first half of 2020, the last stage of the Strategic Technologies for Europe Platform (STEM) project 'Modernization of the infrastructure of STEM study programs at Riga First Medical College' was completed. This project aims to modernise and improve the college's infrastructure. Total amount planned for this goal: EUR 37.2 billion.

SDG5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls	yes	Gender equality. Belfast City Council is leading the ‘Shankill Shared Women’s Centre’ project, which will deliver a purpose-built facility close to the Lanark Way interface area in west Belfast. It has received EUR 8.4 million under the ‘Shared Spaces and Services’ theme of the ‘PEACE IV’ programme. The Shankill Women’s Centre opened in 1987. Over the years, it has grown in success and popularity and has provided education, training, health awareness, childcare and activities for women in the Greater Shankill area and beyond. No amount is available, as there was no mapping for SDG5. See the gender tracking instead.
SDG6: Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all	yes	Clean water and sanitation. In Velika Gorica (Croatia) and the surrounding area, an EU-funded project is upgrading wastewater collection and treatment systems. The project will help to ensure compliance with EU legislation for urban wastewater and water quality and quantity. Total amount planned for this goal: EUR 13.3 billion.
SDG7: Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all	yes	Affordable and clean energy. The Interreg Europe North-West Europe Programme has granted EUR 1.6 million of support to a project led by the University of Liège (Belgium) which aims to save energy in the management of river routes. Traditionally, energy-intensive pumps control the water level of Europe’s rivers and canals. In order to reduce the environmental impact of such pumps, hydraulic researchers at the University of Liège have developed a test bench which enables submersible pumps to be tested in almost real conditions. Total amount planned for this goal: EUR 38.7 billion.

SDG8: Promote sustainable, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all	yes	Decent work and economic growth. The city of Pilsen has transformed a historic brewery into one of the most modern technology parks in Czechia. Known as TechTower, the park offers facilities and offices for innovative companies, technology enthusiasts, programmers and start-up entrepreneurs. In addition to its multifunctional events hall, the building's 10 000 square metres is home to offices, coworking spaces and other facilities. The TechTower project cost almost EUR 26 million, approximately EUR 7 million of which was funded by the cohesion policy. Total amount planned for this goal: EUR 29.4 billion.
SDG9: Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation	yes	Industry, innovation and infrastructure. Located in Poland, the Podkarpackie Innovation Centre fosters collaboration between academia and industry, driving innovation and entrepreneurship. The centre supports projects across diverse sectors, from air pollution sensors to autonomous transport systems. Through state-of-the-art facilities and expert guidance, the centre empowers students and researchers to transform ideas into tangible solutions, catalysing regional development and enhancing Poland's innovation ecosystem. Total amount planned for this goal: EUR 102.8 billion.

SDG11: Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable	yes	Sustainable cities and communities. Various metropolises are facing hotter summers, longer droughts and a growing mountain of organic waste, along with declining urban biodiversity. In Barcelona, the 'TOP SEC' project offers a solution: transforming flat rooftops into seasonal green or brown spaces that do not need irrigation. This is achieved by creating an innovative substrate made from biochar derived from organic waste digestate. Another action is to identify optimal plant species for low-maintenance roofs. The project is piloted in four different buildings and includes an educational programme to engage the community, changing mindsets and fostering harmony between residents and urban biodiversity. Total ERDF budget granted: EUR 3 676 724.80. Total amount planned for this goal: EUR 10.9 billion.
SDG12: Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns	yes	Responsible consumption and production. The 'Surface' project brought together 10 partners from Central Europe (Belgium, Czechia, Germany, Italy, Hungary, Austria Poland, Slovenia) with the aim to set up multi-stakeholder-based smart re-use parks as a possible solution for increasing sustainability in selected functional urban areas. The involved regions benefited from transnational cooperation through know-how exchanges and best practice examples. This knowledge exchange was specifically addressed through regularly held multi-stakeholder-fora and twinning learning journeys. Total amount planned for this goal: EUR 7.6 billion.
SDG13: Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts	yes	Climate action. The city of Genk, Belgium heralds a new era of sustainability and innovation with the 'ThorPark' redevelopment project. The initiative marks a bold reinvention of a once-thriving mining site. At the heart of ThorPark lies a commitment to sustainable energy solutions and cutting-edge services for businesses. With flagship projects like 'Energyville', 'T2 Campus', 'Smart Manufacturing Campus' and 'THOREAQ', the park emerges as a dynamic hub of progress. Total amount planned for this goal: EUR 14.2 billion.

SDG15: Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss	yes	Life on land. The ‘Ariem+’ project aims to support regions in northern Portugal and Spain where wildfires have devastated nearly one million hectares of land in the last five years. Managed from an emergency centre in the Galicia region, in collaboration with the Castilla y León and North of Portugal regions, the project has created an emergency plan to prevent and respond to major disasters such as floods, heavy storms and wildfires. The project aims to benefit some 600 000 people. Through coordinated communications, training and new technology equipment, Spain and Portugal will now be able to join forces when an emergency strikes. The Cohesion Policy Funds provided 75% of the EUR 4 million project budget, while the rest was funded by the regions of Galicia, Castilla y León and the North of Portugal. Total amount planned for this goal: EUR 9.5 billion.

Support to reforms

Under cohesion policy, reforms are supported via the enabling conditions mechanism. These ensure that the necessary conditions for the effective and efficient use of the funds are in place and are linked to:

- policy and strategic frameworks, to ensure that the strategic documents at the national and regional levels which underpin investments from the funds are of high quality and in line with standards commonly agreed by Member States at the EU level;
- regulatory frameworks, to ensure that implementation of operations co-financed by the funds complies with the EU *acquis*.

The progress of the fulfilment of these conditions since the programmes were adopted in 2022 is significant: currently, only 3.2% of the ERDF/CF allocations remain blocked by unfulfilled enabling conditions.

Contribution to strategic technologies

In line with the STEP Regulation, ERDF is one of the EU programmes in shared management mobilised under STEP to strengthen the competitiveness and resilience of the European economy. Under the ERDF, STEP investments can be supported under existing priority axes and/or under new STEP-dedicated priorities, if a Member State amends one or more of its ERDF programmes.

As of 31 December 2024, the Commission has adopted 22 programme amendments, including STEP-dedicated priorities, amounting to EUR 4.4 billion of ERDF allocations (in addition to amounts reprogrammed under the European Social Fund Plus and the Just Transition Fund).

ERDF allocations to STEP investments were approved by the Commission for five Member States (Germany, Spain, France, Italy and Romania). Meanwhile, further Member States have submitted amendment requests, and more are expected in the framework of the mid-term review.

Italy has allocated the most significant amounts to STEP – about 67% of the total – followed by Romania (14%) and Germany (13%).

The biggest share of the STEP ERDF allocation is used for productive investments in all three STEP sectors (EUR 3.2 billion). Investments in research- and innovation-related activities cover EUR 838 million and investments in skills development cover EUR 127 million. Around EUR 246 million of the STEP investments go to other activities, such as technology transfer and support to business incubation, spin-offs and start-ups, along with services linked to the low-carbon economy and resilience to climate change.

Zooming into productive investments and breakdown by type of enterprise, large enterprises account for EUR 2 billion and small and medium-sized enterprises for EUR 1.2 billion of the reprogrammed amounts. The split by STEP sector is quite proportionate: digital technologies and deep-tech innovation are set to receive EUR 1.2 billion, clean and resource-efficient technologies EUR 1 billion and biotechnologies EUR 1 billion.

Multiannual financial framework 2014-2020 – regional policy

Cumulative budget implementation at the end of 2024 (million EUR):

	Implementation	2014-2020 Budget	Implementation rate
Commitments	262 530.3	262 533.4	100.0%
Payments	259 908.1		99.0%

Key performance indicators

	Baseline	Progress	Target	Results	Assessment
Researchers working in improved research infrastructure facilities	0	69%, estimated: > 100%	105 327 in 2023	72 956 in 2022 compared to a target of 105 327	On track
Enterprises receiving support	0	> 100%	2.2 million in 2023	2.5 million in 2022 compared to a target of 2.2 million	Achieved
Additional employment in supported enterprises	0	98%, estimated: > 100%	376 537 in 2023	370 674 in 2022 compared to a target of 376 537	On track
Population covered by improved health services	0	75%, estimated: > 100%	91.9 million in 2023	68.5 million in 2022 compared to a target of 91.9 million	On track

Additional capacity of renewable energy production	0	67%, estimated: > 100%	8 944 in 2023	6 012 in 2022 compared to a target of 8 944	On track
Population benefiting from forest fire protection measures	0	62%, estimated: 88%	38.1 million in 2023	23.8 million in 2022 compared to a target of 38.1 million	Moderate progress
Households with an improved energy consumption classification	0	90%, estimated: 100%	626 249 in 2023	562 306 in 2022 compared to a target of 626 249	On track
Trans-European transport networks – total length of new and reconstructed railway lines	0	46%, estimated: > 100%	3 236 in 2023	1 495 km in 2022 compared to a target of 3 236	On track
Total length of new or improved tram and metro lines	0	47%, estimated: > 100%	543 in 2023	257 in 2022 compared to a target of 543	On track

Given the eligibility end date of 2023, the 2014-2020 programmes are in the closure process.

The total net payment rate as of 31 December 2024 is 99%.

TURKISH CYPRIOT COMMUNITY

EU AID PROGRAMME FOR THE TURKISH CYPRIOT COMMUNITY

Concrete examples of achievements

99	263	3 035	2 276
primary and secondary schools were modernised between 2021 and 2024.	kilometres of water-supply distribution networks had been renovated by 2024.	small and medium-sized enterprises, agricultural businesses and educational entities have received grants worth over EUR 54 million since the start of the aid programme in 2006.	Turkish Cypriots had been given educational opportunities in Member States through EU scholarships by 2024.
105	178	315	
grants were awarded to Cypriot civil society organisations between 2006 and 2024, with an allocation of over EUR 20 million.	cultural heritage sites across Cyprus had been renovated, restored and protected by 2024, with a total EU contribution of nearly EUR 27.5 million.	kWp of solar panels were installed in 2024.	

Budget programming and implementation

Budget programming (million EUR):

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	Total
Financial programming	32.0	34.3	33.6	34.3	35.5	37.7	36.2	243.6
NextGenerationEU	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Decommitments made available again (*)	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Contributions from other countries and entities	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Total	32.0	34.3	33.6	34.3	35.5	37.7	36.2	243.6

(*) Only Article 15(3) of the Financial Regulation.

Cumulative budget implementation at the end of 2024 (million EUR):

	Implementation	Budget	Implementation rate
Commitments	134.1	243.6	55.1%
Payments	53.0		21.8%

Implementation and performance

Key performance indicators

	Baseline	Progress	Target	Results	Assessment
Cross-Green Line trade volume	0	44%	EUR 9.0 million in 2029	Milestones achieved in all years including 2024 (2024: EUR 15.2 million, 4 out of 9 milestones achieved)	On track
Number of civil-society organisations having received EU support in the form of a grant	0	58%	52 in 2029	30 organisations compared to a target of 52	On track
Number of individuals having benefited from a scholarship	0	22%	145 annually from 2027	Milestones achieved in 2021 and 2022 (2024: 126 versus a milestone of 137, 4 out of 9 milestones achieved)	On track

- The total envelope under the 2021-2027 multiannual financial framework for the aid programme for the Turkish Cypriot community is EUR 241 million. Annually, around EUR 35 million is committed in the form of procurement, grants or delegation agreements. In 2024, the programme reached all its financial targets and continued to deliver on all six of its objectives.
- Given its high economic potential for the Turkish Cypriot community and important confidence-building value, a key achievement supported under the programme was the adoption in 2021 of two EU legislative measures registering ‘Χαλλούμι (Halloumi)/Hellim’ as an EU protected designation of origin covering the whole island of Cyprus and laying down the conditions for the movement of this product across the Green Line into the EU internal market. Significant EU support has been provided to all relevant Turkish Cypriot stakeholders to be able to access and benefit from this scheme. As a result, by the end of 2024, four producers and 24 farms in the

Turkish Cypriot community had been certified under the EU protected designation of origin scheme. Further assistance continues to be provided, particularly with a view to increasing the scope of the scheme and its sustainability and assisting the Turkish Cypriot community in their progress on the requirements necessary for the placement of the Halloumi/Hellim protected designation of origin on the EU internal market. This includes preventing, detecting and eliminating animal diseases and managing animal health in line with EU requirements. In 2024, in addition to technical assistance, 21 farms and three dairies were awarded grants amounting to EUR 2.6 million, helping them to meet EU standards in production processes and increase production capacity.

- The support provided to farmers and food business operators forms part of long-standing efforts by the EU to improve rural livelihoods and development in the Turkish Cypriot community, in view of its economic and social importance. Between 2009 and 2024, in addition to support for the Halloumi/Hellim protected designation of origin, a total of 274 grants to farmers amounting to EUR 13.6 million contributed to introducing new technologies in farm management and improving animal health. A new multiannual initiative called eunite: AgriBusiness was launched in 2024, aiming to strengthen the agricultural knowledge and innovation system in the Turkish Cypriot community, enhance farm advisory services and foster innovation and sustainable growth in agricultural and rural environments.
- Small and medium-sized enterprises constitute the largest share of companies in the economy of the Turkish Cypriot community. As such, the EU invests in upgrading the system of small and medium-sized enterprises and supports businesses, including with a view to increasing their potential for trade across the Green Line. A new multiannual assistance programme called eunite: SME was launched in 2024 to help small and medium-sized enterprises meet EU standards, to support innovation and to encourage entrepreneurship. In 2024, 45 companies were awarded grants worth nearly EUR 2 million to start or grow their business across the Green Line. Thus, more than 2 595 grants were provided to small and medium sized enterprises between 2006 and 2024, with an overall value of more than EUR 27 million.
- Under the objective on developing infrastructure, 263 kilometres of new water-supply networks have been financed, providing high-quality drinking water without traces of rust or asbestos fibres, and 139 kilometres of sewerage pipes have been laid to replace septic tanks that often leaked and contaminated groundwater. The investments also included the installation of water tanks and automatic pumping systems in Lefka/Lefke, the provision of sports facilities and equipment in five schools and the deployment of photovoltaic solar power systems in Lefka/Lefke and Kormakitis. Furthermore, a pre-feasibility study for a bi-communal solar power plant in the buffer zone was presented and handed over to the Cypriot communities in 2024.
- The programme continued to support education, focusing on vocational education and training, lifelong learning and the professional development of teachers. To bring the Turkish Cypriot community closer to the EU and boost economic development in the Turkish Cypriot community, by the end of 2024 more than 2 275 scholarships for Turkish Cypriots had been financed, allowing the recipients to study in a Member State.
- Under the objective for confidence-building measures and support for civil society, 178 cultural heritage sites were restored, conserved or protected across the island between 2010 and 2024. In total, 105 grants were provided to civil-society organisations between 2008 and 2024, promoting civil society as a key factor in developing peace, active citizenship and trust between the Turkish Cypriot and Greek Cypriot communities. A new grant contract worth EUR 1.7 million was signed in 2024 with the Cyprus Dialogue Forum, bringing together several stakeholders from both communities to create joint visions and instruments supporting the settlement process. The EU's scholarship programme for young Cypriots with the United World Colleges has so far provided

64 young Turkish Cypriots and Greek Cypriots with scholarships to complete a two-year International Baccalaureate course at one of the United World Colleges, which aim to unite people for peace and a sustainable future.

The technical assistance and information support instrument continues to provide an important contribution to the work of the aid programme, with more than 250 mobilisations of experts from Member States to support the Turkish Cypriot community in drafting legal texts in line with EU standards, produce studies and raise awareness about the EU *acquis*. In 2024, a total of 110 expert missions were organised for the benefit of the Turkish Cypriot community, along with one workshop. Technical assistance and information support instrument experts also continued to ensure that EU standards were met for all the food products traded across the Green Line. In 2024, the value of Green Line trade amounted to EUR 15.2 million. Since 2023, the EU one-stop-shop initiative has provided support and networking opportunities to businesses interested in or engaged in Green Line trade.

Contribution to horizontal priorities

Contribution to green budgeting priorities (EUR million):

	Implementation				Estimates			Total	% of the total envelope
	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027		
Climate mainstreaming	0.0	0.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.7	0.3%
Biodiversity mainstreaming	0.0	0.0	1.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.7	0.7%

The aid programme, governed by Council Regulation (EC) No 389/2006⁽³²⁾, is strictly related to the reunification of Cyprus and operates in relation to six fixed objectives. Although green priorities are not covered by these objectives, the programme has contributed to greening through the following initiatives.

- Various initiatives promoting the use of renewable energy, including the installation of solar-panel systems and the preparation of a pre-feasibility study for a bi-communal solar power plant in the buffer zone, which was handed over to the Cypriot communities in 2024.
- Construction, installation, refurbishment or extension of major water, wastewater and waste infrastructure, including sewage networks, wastewater treatment plants in Nicosia, Famagusta

⁽³²⁾ Council Regulation (EC) No 389/2006 of 27 February 2006 establishing an instrument of financial support for encouraging the economic development of the Turkish Cypriot community and amending Council Regulation (EC) No 2667/2000 on the European Agency for Reconstruction (OJ L 65, 7.3.2006, p. 5, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2006/389/oj>).

and Morphou, a composting facility in Lapithos/Lapta and a transfer station in Agios Epiktitos/Catalkoy.

- Grants given to civil-society organisations, including projects contributing to achieving zero-waste carbon neutrality by 2030 through recycling, waste reduction and relevant promotional and educational activities, and projects aiming to reduce use of pesticides through educational and advocacy activities.
- The ‘Capacity-building on environment’ project, which was contracted in 2023 with a budget of almost EUR 1.5 million, continues to improve the capacity of the Turkish Cypriot community to manage environmental projects, with the purpose of protecting and enhancing the natural capital and building a green economy.

The development and restructuring of infrastructure have been major components of the aid programme, with a third of the total resources allocated to this objective in the programme’s lifetime. The investments that have been made since the establishment of the taxonomy, which are aligned with the specific objectives of Regulation (EC) No 389/2006, are listed in the table below (for the period between 2022 and 2024).

Climate change mitigation	EUR 857 855.00
Climate change adaptation	EUR 0.00
Sustainable use and protection of water and marine resources	EUR 518 800.00
Transition to a circular economy	EUR 241 300.40
Pollution prevention and control	EUR 2 713 960.00
Protection of biodiversity and ecosystems	EUR 627 700.00

The amounts in the table above come from different apportionment levels to the specific objectives of the total investment values. The apportionment factors for these projects are assigned when projects make a substantial contribution to the specific objectives, do not harm others and comply with the minimum safeguards and technical criteria.

The projects funded in 2022 were the establishment of a capacity-building programme on the environment and air quality, environmental inspection and monitoring supplies; the production of a geochemical agent map in the western part of Cyprus; and measures to increase energy efficiency in local communities. In 2023, additional investment was made to bolster local energy-efficiency strategies and energy communities and to provide a grant for a research project on marine pesticides in Cyprus. Finally, in 2024, two projects aimed at increasing the environmental monitoring and noise-control capabilities of the Turkish Cypriot community were financed.

The principles established in the taxonomy are considered at the following stages in the project management cycle.

1. At the time the financing decision is programmed and drafted.
2. At the time of commitment (when certain amendments are inevitable or more specificity is needed in terms of objectives and targets).
3. When catering for all reporting needs (before, during and after project implementation).

Contribution to gender equality (million EUR) (*)

Gender score	2021	2022	2023	2024	Total
2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
1	0.6	0.3	0.5	0.0	1.4
0*	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
0	31.4	34.0	33.1	34.3	132.8
Total:	32.0	34.3	33.6	34.3	134.2

(*) Based on the applied gender contribution methodology, the following scores are attributed at the most granular level of intervention possible:

- 2: interventions the principal objective of which is to improve gender equality;
- 1: interventions that have gender equality as an important and deliberate objective but not as the main reason for the intervention;
- 0: non-targeted interventions (interventions that are expected to have no significant bearing on gender equality);
- 0*: score to be assigned to interventions with a likely but not yet clear positive impact on gender equality.

Gender priorities are not covered by the objectives and Council Regulation (EC) No 389/2006 does not have gender-specific indicators, and gender-disaggregated data are not systematically collected.

However, the programme contributes to gender equality in the following ways:

- promoting the inclusion of women in social and economic life;
- promoting EU values and inclusiveness, particularly in schools;
- supporting the drafting of legal texts on equality issues (e.g. lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTIQ) issues, anti-trafficking, domestic violence, patients' rights);
- providing direct support (via grants) to civil-society organisations addressing equality issues (including women, young people, older people, people with disabilities, LGBTIQ people and vulnerable groups);
- promoting gender equality education, prevention of domestic violence and sexual health education in schools.

Gender equality is a critical consideration for civil-society projects. These initiatives incorporate specific measures designed to achieve this goal, along with various activities that mainstream this fundamental human right. EU-funded projects include the following:

- the human rights platform (EU budget EUR 1 450 000), focusing on several thematic areas with a gender-equality dimension, such as refugee rights, LGBTIQ rights and combating human trafficking;
- equal rights for all: improving employee rights (EU budget EUR 248 874), including capacity-building activities and assistance with a focus on women's associations and female employees;
- the rainbow project (EU budget EUR 300 512.69), focusing on contributing to LGBTIQ inclusivity in the education and health sectors through awareness-raising, advocacy and capacity-building activities.

Furthermore, two ongoing grants are targeting the economic empowerment of women: 'partnership for improving women's access to productive resources' (EU budget EUR 165 000) and 'increasing women economic inclusion and women economic partnership across the Green Line' (EU budget EUR 156 933.96).

Despite these undertakings, because of the mandate and the nature of the aid programme, the short- and medium-term impact of these projects in producing positive and irreversible structural changes at the societal level is not measured.

Gender-disaggregated information

- n/a

Contribution to the digital transition (EUR million):

	2021 implementation	2022 implementation	2023 implementation	2024 implementation	Total	% of the 2021-2024 envelope
Digital contribution	1.0	2.6	0.0	1.4	5.0	3.7%

Digital priorities are not covered by the objectives of the programme.

Even so, the programme contributes to digital transition through the following projects.

- The Commission is funding the digitalisation and online accessibility of the cultural heritage of Cyprus. The initiative includes several digital resources available [online](#). A three-dimensional point cloud has been created for four important monuments, providing highly detailed digital models. 360 ° virtual tours have been developed for a further 29 monuments, allowing users to explore these heritage sites remotely. A multiplayer game based on the Othello Tower has also been designed to engage users in an interactive experience. Furthermore, a digital archive featuring 67 monuments has been established, preserving important historical and architectural information. As part of the project's educational efforts, an interactive web platform has been integrated into the online system. The total investment for this digital initiative amounts to EUR 229 610. Ten additional virtual tours and 40 more sites are currently being digitalised to be included in the archive, expected to be completed by the end of 2025.
- A digital database was developed under the EU legal and linguistic support project. It serves as a monitoring tool for EU-supported legal texts at the drafting stage and a repository of legal texts that are already in force. It is also a knowledge-management platform for all the legal drafting templates and training materials. The total value of this digital work is EUR 29 060. In addition, a highly innovative digital educational game, aiming to teach young people about Cyprus's linguistic heritage, is being developed as a pilot tool to raise awareness of and promote interest in multilingualism. It will be designed on the Minecraft platform as a bilingual computer game that will require players to learn some words and expressions from the other language, i.e. Greek or Turkish. The total cost of the game is expected to be EUR 40 000, including design, scriptwriting, localisation and development.
- Transition to digital broadcasting and freeing the 700-megahertz frequency band in Cyprus – technical assistance of EUR 207 740 to facilitate the transition and a supply contract for EUR 2 383 878.91, signed in 2022. The project contributed to the increased digitalisation of television in the Turkish Cypriot community, bringing improvements in the efficient use of the

bandwidth, the quality of the image and the audio, the capacity for more channels and compatibility with computers and the internet, among other things.

- Technical assistance for deploying an island-wide animal identification and registration database in Cyprus (EUR 186 400.00), signed in 2022, and subsequently the development of the animal identification and registration database in the Turkish Cypriot community (EUR 1 299 511), signed in 2024. The database represents an integrated digital management system that supports improvements in the health and overall well-being of animals in the Turkish Cypriot community, and will enhance the productivity and sustainability of agricultural and livestock operations.

Contribution to sustainable development goals

SDG	Does the programme contribute to the goal?	Example (only for the most relevant SDGs)

SDG2 End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture	Yes	Through the aid programme, projects worth more than EUR 34 million between 2021 and 2024 have been providing support in the areas of: — animal disease eradication and animal health management; — animal identification and registration infrastructure; — food safety: upgrading food safety standards and related controls throughout the food production chain; — monitoring of residues, pesticides and contaminants; — farm advisory services (preparing and implementing a strategy and increasing local capacity); — more efficient agricultural production via supplies, supporting the quality of seedlings and plant breeding materials; — inspections relating to the implementation of the EU Halloumi/Hellim protected designation of origin quality scheme in the Turkish Cypriot community; — a sheep and goat breeding programme; — development of sustainable and competitive fisheries; — agricultural knowledge and innovation system; — high potential agricultural value chains with Green Line trade potential; — primary- and secondary-level agricultural production through the provision of grants to farmers, food processors and their professional organisations, cooperatives and associations. The support has had a positive impact, promoting sustainable agriculture, animal health and food safety in the Turkish Cypriot community. In addition, between 2009 and 2024, grants to farmers amounting to EUR 13.6 million contributed to introducing new technologies in farm management and improving farm hygiene and animal welfare.
SDG3 Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages	Yes	A series of grants promoting health and well-being were funded under the aid programme and contracted between 2021 and 2023 for over EUR 1 million. These include grants relating to awareness raising and advocacy on patients' rights, LGBTIQ inclusivity in the education and health sectors, children's health and wellness, empowering people with disabilities and research on the effects of dysmenorrhea on women's quality of life in Cyprus. A series of activities funded under the technical assistance and information exchange instrument were organised to continue the support in the area of communicable diseases, including better protection against any possible outbreaks similar to COVID-19 and combating antimicrobial resistance between 2020 and 2024. A series of information-exchange and awareness-raising activities on consumer health and safety were organised under the technical assistance project on market surveillance capacity building, which is worth over EUR 1.9 million. This project started in 2021 and is still ongoing.

SDG4 Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all	Yes	The aid programme has provided support for curriculum reform, the continuous professional development of teachers and the modernisation of vocational education and training, along with improved labour-market practices. It has also provided equipment for schools, including science laboratories, a mobile laboratory in the form of a science lab bus and sports facilities. In addition, since 2007, the aid programme has provided more than 2 275 scholarships (with a total investment of EUR 38 million) for scholars to study, train and intern in EU Member States through the EU scholarship programme for the Turkish Cypriot community. Educational opportunities also include the bi-communal EU scholarship programme for young Cypriots to study at the United World Colleges at high-school level. Since 2019, 64 young Cypriots have been awarded a scholarship, with a total investment of EUR 6.8 million.
SDG5 Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls	Yes	All of the initiatives that the technical assistance for civil society (civic space) supports, including via its active citizenship component, promote gender equality and encourage gender mainstreaming. The project 'girl scouts leading the future' focused on increasing the number of women in leadership roles. Furthermore, there are two ongoing grant projects (signed in 2023) with a particular focus on gender equality: 'partnership for improving women's access to productive resources' (EU budget EUR 165 000) and 'increasing women economic inclusion and women economic partnership across the Green Line' (EU budget EUR 156 933.96). These projects are pursuing the economic empowerment of women.
SDG6 Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all	Yes	Through the aid programme, the upgrading of water treatment, distribution and sanitation infrastructure has been a priority. The most relevant projects in this field are the construction of the North Nicosia Trunk Sewerage pipeline and the Famagusta Sewerage Remedial Works, which were further funded to aid in their completion in 2023, with total financing of almost EUR 1.7 million. In addition, work to extend the Morphou wastewater treatment plant, worth about EUR 3.3 million, started in 2022 and was completed in 2023. Work to replace the Trunk-E sewerage pipeline section in the Nicosia urban area was implemented in 2024 at a cost of about EUR 1 million. In 2024, work started in Mandres/Hamitkoy to develop a new sewerage system and to decommission the old Mia Milia/Haspolat wastewater treatment plant, at a cost of about EUR 4.6 million and EUR 2.1 million, respectively.

SDG7 Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all	Yes	The aid programme has supported the increased uptake of renewable energies by local businesses, farmers and solid-waste facilities, with up to 1.6 megawatts of solar power being installed. New energy-efficiency measures regarding water and wastewater pumping in Lefka/Lefke were implemented in 2023 and 2024, at an overall cost of about EUR 380 000. Photovoltaic solar power systems were deployed in Lefka/Lefke (EUR 320 000) and Kormakitis (EUR 20 000) in 2023 and 2024, respectively. A pre-feasibility study relating to funding of EUR 437 000 for a bi-communal solar power plant in the buffer zone was presented and handed over to the Cypriot communities in 2024. Finally, in 2024, activity began on promoting the introduction of an energy management system in seven Turkish Cypriot local communities, at a cost of about EUR 250 000.
SDG8 Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all	Yes	In terms of economic development, the aid programme continued its cooperation with the World Bank on macroeconomic monitoring, statistics, the facilitation of trade and improving the business environment in the Turkish Cypriot community in support of economic convergence. In relation to private-sector development, a new multiannual assistance programme called eunite: SME was launched in 2024 to help companies and other actors across various value chains to meet EU standards, to support innovation and encourage entrepreneurship. A total of 44 companies were awarded grants worth nearly EUR 2 million to start or grow their business across the Green Line.

SDG11 Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable	Yes	The aid programme has supported projects to monitor, check and control environmental quality in urban environments, with the objective of improving living conditions. This intervention was supported with a supply contract of EUR 361 200, concluded in 2023, to further contribute to the improvement in the air quality sector, in addition to previous investment in strengthening the air quality monitoring network in 2017-2018. Further monitoring capabilities have been provided to the relevant control bodies to check on the quality of fuels being sold for residential combustion and transport, and to better manage water quality. The bi-communal Technical Committee on Cultural Heritage, which contributes specifically to SDG 11.4 'Strengthen efforts to protect and safeguard the world's cultural and natural heritage', received EUR 30 million in support in the 2011-2024 period (representing around 80% of the committee's budget). The Local Infrastructure Facility funded under the aid programme is undertaking a feasibility study to assess the current public services within the boundaries of Nicosia's walled city and prepare measures for improvement. The aim is to make the walled city more resilient and sustainable, benefiting the entire population of Nicosia (200 000 people). The value of the initiative was about EUR 440 000, and it was completed in 2024. The 'environmental education: a path to sustainable development' project (EU budget EUR 319 093.3) aimed to contribute to environmental education to increase the number of volunteers and individuals engaged in environmental activism in the Famagusta region.
SDG12 Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns	Yes	The aid programme provided grants worth nearly EUR 2 million to 45 small and medium-sized enterprises in the Turkish Cypriot community in 2024. These grants were provided to help companies start or grow their business across the Green Line, to support innovation, competitiveness, the digital and green transitions, sustainable production practices and the implementation of EU standards. This includes helping companies to obtain ISO certificates regarding environmental management, quality, hygiene, health and safety and other standards.

**SDG15
Protect,
restore and
promote
sustainable
use of
terrestrial
ecosystems,
sustainably
manage
forests,
combat
desertificati
on, and halt
and reverse
land
degradation
and halt
biodiversity
loss**

Yes

The Commission financed works amounting to around EUR 1.7 million to repair the Koukla water reservoir and protect the nearby wetland, which were completed in 2023. They aimed to improve the conservation of bird species nesting in the area, to better protect the natural environment and biodiversity and to increase the water supply for irrigation.

SDG16 Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels	Yes	The aid programme is supporting bi-communal projects that promote confidence building and reconciliation between the two Cypriot communities. It aims to contribute to developing a more just, equitable, democratic and inclusive society. It also supports grants that help to address discrimination against LGBTIQ and immigrants and to combat racism and hate crime, hate speech, violence and harmful practices. Under the 2022 EU grant scheme Cypriot civil society in action VIII, 17 projects were selected for funding (EUR 2.46 million), 11 of which are bi-communal (EUR 1.44 million). The projects started in 2023 and support bi-communal dialogue and civic engagement in the areas of confidence building, human rights protection and anti-discrimination, fighting human trafficking, health, environment, culture and sports. The aid programme has specifically targeted the problem of human trafficking and awarded grants to organisations working on both awareness raising and legal changes. Thanks to the support that has been provided, human trafficking has been categorised as crime in local legislation, a first conviction has been issued and potential victims have received assistance. The ‘human rights platform’ grants (EU contribution EUR 1 450 000) focus on five thematic areas: anti-human trafficking; refugee rights; LGBTIQ rights; democratic participation in decision-making; detention conditions and freedom from torture. A direct grant was allocated in 2024 to the ‘Cyprus Dialogue Forum: strengthening collaborative spaces for dialogue and shared knowledge creation’ project (EU budget EUR 1 700 000). This forum brings together around 80 stakeholders, such as political parties, trade unions, business/professional/employer associations and civil-society organisations from both communities, to create joint visions and instruments that support a wider peace process in Cyprus. In addition, the aid programme provides assistance to a series of confidence-building measures that support reconciliation, peacebuilding and intercommunal dialogue: support for the Technical Committee on Cultural Heritage, support for the Committee on Missing Persons and the Facility to support the work of the bicommunal Technical Committees.

Support for reforms

- Not applicable.

Contribution to strategic technologies (STEP)

- Not applicable.

RECOVERY AND RESILIENCE FACILITY

Concrete examples of achievements

The figures below are drawn from the latest reporting round of the RRF common indicators, for which the cut-off date was 31 December 2024. The common indicators show the progress of the implementation of the RRFs towards common objectives and the overall performance of the RRF. Member States collect the common indicators data and report their numbers to the European Commission twice a year, by the end of February and the end of August.

In total, the Parliament, the Commission and the Member States have identified 14 common indicators across all six policy pillars in Delegated Regulation (EU) 2021/2106. More information can be found at:

https://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/recovery-and-resilience-scoreboard/common_indicators.html?lang=en

110 655	31 082 568	16 157 339	163 613
megawatts of additional operational renewable energy capacity were installed by end 2024.	people had benefited from measures to protect against climate-related natural disasters provided by support under the RRF by end 2024.	additional dwellings were provided with internet access via very-high-capacity networks by end 2024.	researchers were working in research facilities supported by the RRF by end 2024.
2 694 998	29 018 617	10 657 109	915 995
pupils and students could use classrooms and new or modernised childcare and education facilities thanks to RRF support by end 2024.	people had participated in education or training thanks to support received through RRF measures by end 2024.	young people aged 15-29 had received support through the RRF – including monetary and in-kind support for education, training and employment by end 2024.	new or upgraded refuelling and recharging points for clean vehicles had been installed through measures under the RRF by end 2024.

Budget programming and implementation

Budget programming (million EUR) (**):

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	Total
NextGenerationEU grants	98 034.0	136 389.6	104 552.6	2 524.7	23.1	14.0	14.0	341 552.0
NextGenerationEU loans (*)	153 876.2	12 211.9	123 911.9	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	290 000.0
Decommitments made available again (*)	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Contributions from other countries and entities (additional grants)	0.0	0.0	20 000.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	20 000.0
Total	251 910.2	148 601.5	248 464.5	2 524.7	23.1	14.0	14.0	651 552.0

(*) Only Article 15(3) of the Financial Regulation.

(**) The total available budget for 2021-2027 displayed in this table includes the administrative budget line covering support expenditure, as encoded under SUMMA. The total amount of financial support under the RRF committed as of mid-October 2024, net of support expenditure, stood at EUR 650 billion.

Cumulative budget implementation at the end of 2024 (million EUR):

	Implementation	Budget	Implementation rate
Commitments	341 552.0	341 552.0	100.0%
Payments	197 033.5		57.7%

Financial Implementation (cumulative) for additional grants

	Implementation	Budget	Implementation rate
Commitments	19 499.3	20 000.0	97.5%
Payments	8 121.3		40.6%

Implementation and performance

Key performance indicators

	Baseline	Progress	Target	Results	Assessment
Savings in annual primary energy consumption	0	n/a	n/a	33 400 000 MWh/year	n/a
Alternative fuels infrastructure	0	n/a	n/a	915 995	n/a
Additional dwellings with internet access provided via very high-capacity networks	0	n/a	n/a	16.2 million	n/a
Users of new and upgraded public digital services, products and processes	0	n/a	n/a	1.6 billion	n/a
Enterprises supported	0	n/a	n/a	4.5 million	n/a
Number of participants in education or training	0	n/a	n/a	29 million	n/a
Capacity of new or modernised healthcare facilities	0	n/a	n/a	49.8 million	n/a
Number of young people aged 15–29 receiving support	0	n/a	n/a	10.7 million	n/a

– The RRF is an innovative, performance-based instrument, under which funds are disbursed solely on the basis of progress in achieving the reforms and investments that Member States committed to implementing in their RRP. In 2024, the Commission adopted 17 plan revisions, most of which consisted of targeted amendments. In revising their RRP, commitments that were no longer achievable due to objective circumstances were adjusted and, in many cases, replaced by more suitable alternatives, while keeping the original ambition of the RRP intact.

- A total of EUR 66.97 billion in pre-financing had been disbursed to Member States by the end of 2024. To support timely implementation, a total of EUR 10 billion in REPowerEU prefinancing has been disbursed to 21 Member States (EUR 7.1 billion in 2023 and EUR 3.3 billion in 2024).
- In 2024, the Commission disbursed 41 payments to Member States, amounting to EUR 85.3 billion (including EUR 29.4 billion in loans), and additional prefinancing payments of EUR 3.3 billion. This brought the total disbursements by the end of 2024 to EUR 306.1 billion, divided into EUR 197.5 billion in grants (55% of the total EUR 650 billion RRF envelope) and EUR 108.7 billion in loans (37% of the total EUR 650 billion RRF envelope).
- The Commission has continued to monitor the implementation of the RRF through the assessment of payment requests (data are regularly updated in the Recovery and Resilience Scoreboard), the analysis of the bi-annual reporting by Member States on the progress made in the achievement of their plans; and frequent bilateral exchanges, including missions to the Member States.
- The implementation of the RRFs was broadly on track as of the end of 2024. Almost half of the milestones and targets planned to be achieved by the end of 2024 have been assessed as fulfilled by the Commission (47.2%). In addition, Member States reported having completed 29% of the milestones and targets planned to be achieved by the end of 2024, although this will need to be confirmed by an assessment of the related payment requests by the Commission.
- With more than 2 000 unique RRF measures, there is a risk that some will not be completed on time. All Member States face implementation risks, stemming from multiple factors. For instance, some Member States may prefer to delay their payment requests until all related milestones and targets are achieved, rather than face a payment suspension, despite the clarifications brought by the publication of methodologies on satisfactory fulfilment and payment suspension. Some Member States also have to fulfil ‘supermilestones’ before their first payment, such as Hungary, which must provide necessary evidence in their first payment request of the fulfilment of 51 milestones and targets, including the 27 supermilestones related to the rule of law conditionality and judicial independence. No regular disbursement under the RRF including REPowerEU is possible without the prior fulfilment of supermilestones. Delays can also be caused by political changes, as some Member States cannot submit payment requests during an election cycle or while negotiations are ongoing to form a government.
- Several tools are available to mitigate disbursement delays. Firstly, Member States can submit a payment request that contains measures that have not been satisfactorily fulfilled. In that case, part of the payment will be suspended, but disbursement will be allowed accounting for the satisfactorily fulfilled milestones and targets. Member States have a period of six months to fulfil the milestones and targets and provide the necessary evidence to allow the Commission to reassess and unblock the suspended amount. In the meantime, the implementation of the plan can continue and payments are made for all milestones and targets that have been satisfactorily fulfilled. Suspension decisions were adopted in 2023 concerning seven milestones and targets. The Commission lifted the suspension for five milestones and targets in 2024 (one for Lithuania, three for Portugal and one for Romania) and reduced the Member State’s financial allocation concerning two milestones (one for Lithuania for grants and one for Romania for loans). Concerning the suspension decisions adopted in 2024, six milestones and targets were assessed as not satisfactorily fulfilled and disbursement was subsequently suspended for the payment requests submitted by Belgium, Czechia, Italy, Spain and Cyprus. In the case of Belgium and Italy, whilst a suspension decision was adopted, the suspensions have since been lifted as the RRF was subsequently revised.

– In order to address implementation challenges, Member States can proceed with targeted revisions when needed. This allows delays in implementation to be accounted for and the assessment of milestones and targets already completed to be frontloaded. The Commission works closely with Member States to address such implementation risks, notably through RRP revisions if specific measures can no longer be achieved due to objective circumstances. In July 2024, the Commission adopted updated guidance that provides more clarity on the possibility to amend an RRP under Article 21 of the RRF Regulation, where a Member State identifies a better alternative to implement a measure in a way that reduces the related administrative burden without lowering the ambition of the plan. The guidance also defines more clearly the scope for other changes that can be made to an RRP under Article 21. All RRPs have been revised so far, with 22 revisions requested in 2024, of which 17 were adopted. While the number of instalments is set out in the Council Implementing Decisions, Member States can bundle instalments and submit several payment requests at the same time. This allows Member State to catch up with the indicative timeline or even surpass the envisaged pace of implementation.

– The mid-term evaluation report assessed progress made until 31 December 2023 in achieving the objectives of the RRF Regulation in terms of effectiveness, efficiency, relevance, coherence and EU added value. The report shows that the RRF has paved the way for the EU's economic recovery following the pandemic and illustrates the key role played by the RRF in supporting structural reforms and common EU policy priorities, notably regarding the green and digital transitions and socio-economic convergence. The evaluation notes that the performance-based approach of the RRF is instrumental in enhancing the effectiveness of the Facility: disbursements upon the delivery of concrete outputs (i.e. milestones and targets) are carried out quickly. Combining reforms and investments into one funding instrument creates synergies between them, while the integration of a comprehensive reform and investment agenda into a single RRP supports the plans' internal coherence. In addition, the announcement of NextGenerationEU contributed to the narrowing of sovereign bond spreads. Policy action at the national level and in other institutions (the European Central Bank) also played a role in this regard. The RRF supported an increase in public investment, as around half of the expected increase in public investment between 2019 and 2025 is related to investment financed by the EU budget, particularly by the RRF. Furthermore, the provision by the EU of debt-financed non-repayable support constituted a new element in the EU's toolbox, and has been important in supporting the recovery, in particular in Member States with less fiscal space.

– However, despite these positive findings, some areas of improvement have been identified. The administrative work required at national and subnational level to implement the RRF is higher than initially expected by some Member States. Many Member States did not sufficiently strengthen their administrative capacity, including at the local and regional levels. This has hampered Member States' capacity to implement their plans. Moreover, political consensus on the implementation of key reforms, for example linked to country-specific recommendations or to audit and control milestones, is key. Member States see room for simplifying control and audit procedures, ensuring better coordination among the actors involved and avoiding multiple checks. Some Member States also noted a lack of flexibility in the interpretation of milestones and targets and pointed to the detailed information required to justify the fulfilment of milestones and targets, along with the resource-intensive revision procedures. The involvement of regional and local authorities, social partners, civil-society organisations and other relevant stakeholders is also a key factor in the planning and implementation of RRP measures.

Contribution to horizontal priorities

Contribution to green budgeting priorities (EUR million):

	Implementation				Estimates			Total	% of the total envelope
	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027		
Climate mainstreaming	103 608.4	67 368.6	104 571.9	1 076.1	9.9	6.0	6.0	276 646.7	42.5%
Biodiversity mainstreaming	4 419.5	2 614.4	4 355.5	44.4	0.4	0.2	0.2	11 434.7	1.8%

- The RRF will help achieve the EU's targets to reduce net greenhouse gas emissions by at least 55% by 2030 and to reach climate neutrality by 2050. The RRF regulation requires that at least 37% of the total allocation of each RRP supports measures that contribute to climate objectives. However, the reforms and investments proposed by Member States have exceeded the target, with more than 42.5% of the total plans' allocation contributing to climate objectives (calculated according to the climate tracking methodology, using Annex VI to the RRF Regulation).
- Progress in implementing measures related to the green transition has been good overall. 23.5% of the milestones and targets contributing to the green transition pillar, or 756 out of 3 213, were assessed as having been fulfilled as of the end of 2024. Green measures implemented by Member States in 2024 with the support of the RRF aimed, among other things, at rolling out renewable energy in public buildings, endorsing a Rail Strategy to set up a clear sustainable mobility-plan, installing additional publicly accessible recharging stations and mandating the end of public subsidies to coal-fired heat sources.
- The RRF makes a significant contribution to environmental sustainability in the broader sense by addressing climate change and pollution, protecting nature, biodiversity and water resources and promoting circular economy, while not doing any significant harm to any of the six environmental objectives of the EU Taxonomy. The assessment of the measures under the Taxonomy criteria is possible with the use of intervention fields. Some of them set conditions that are fully, substantially or partially aligned with the criteria defined in Regulation (EU) 2020/852(33) (the "Taxonomy Regulation"), which must be reflected in the scope and design of the measures for eligibility under the respective intervention fields. Measures with an estimated cost of EUR 125 billion are fully or substantially aligned with the Taxonomy's sustainable contribution criteria for climate-change mitigation and adaptation, while measures with an estimated cost of a further EUR 39.9 billion are partially aligned with these criteria.

(³³) Regulation (EU) 2020/852 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 June 2020 on the establishment of a framework to facilitate sustainable investment, and amending Regulation (EU) 2019/2088 (OJ L 198, 22.6.2020, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2020/852/oj>).

- In 2024, three Member States (Germany, Ireland and Luxembourg) introduced REPowerEU chapters in their RRP, thus benefiting from additional resources. This brought the total number of REPowerEU chapters to 26, accounting for total estimated costs of EUR 64.75 billion.

Contribution to gender equality (million EUR) (*)

Gender score	2021	2022	2023	2024	Total
2	3 091.9	1 823.9	3 031.4	30.6	7 977.8
1	5 446.3	3 212.8	5 339.7	54.7	14 053.5
0*	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
0	243 372.0	143 564.8	240 093.4	2 439.5	629 469.7
Total:	251 910.2	148 601.5	248 464.5	2 524.7	651 500.9

(*) Based on the applied gender contribution methodology, the following scores are attributed at the most granular level of intervention possible:

- 2: interventions the principal objective of which is to improve gender equality;
- 1: interventions that have gender equality as an important and deliberate objective but not as the main reason for the intervention;
- 0: non-targeted interventions (interventions that are expected to have no significant bearing on gender equality);
- 0*: score to be assigned to interventions with a likely but not yet clear positive impact on gender equality.

- In order to report on the number of measures with a focus on gender equality and the share of such measures included in each RRP, the Commission, in consultation with Member States, has assigned a tag to measures with a focus on gender equality ⁽³⁴⁾. RRP, continue to contribute significantly to gender equality and to focus on children and young people. Of the 253 milestones and targets with a focus on gender equality in the 27 RRP, 63 were already assessed by the Commission as having been fulfilled and another 60 had already been reported by Member States as having been completed as of the end of 2024, and. Of these, 20 of the milestones and targets contributing to gender equality were assessed by the Commission as having been fulfilled between 1 January 2024 and 31 December 2024.
- As set out in Article 4 of the RRF Regulation, mitigating the social and economic impact of the COVID-19 crisis on women is a clear objective of the RRF. Member States are required to explain how the measures in their RRP contribute to gender equality and equal opportunities for all, and to the mainstreaming of these objectives.
- In 2024, the first type of measures contributed around EUR 30.6 million to gender equality (score 2), while the second type of investments provided support amounting to around EUR 54.7 million (score 1). Furthermore, while all other investments were given a score of 0, due to the broad and cross-cutting scope of the RRF these investments and reforms with an estimated cost may have an impact on gender equality and will be reassessed if new data allow

⁽³⁴⁾ Based on the methodology set out in the delegated act on social expenditure reporting under the RRF (Delegated Regulation (EU) 2021/2105).

for the re-evaluation of such measures. Score 2, which is specifically designed to tackle gender inequalities, includes the development of a prototype gender-pay-gap tool in Estonia, to provide employers with data and information concerning the gender pay gap in their organisations and its possible reasons. An example of an RRP measure under score 1 directly or indirectly contributing to gender equality is the entry into force of the Sports Law in Spain, which fosters health, safety, gender equality, social inclusion and accessibility in the practice of sports at all levels.

Gender disaggregated information ⁽³⁵⁾

- Member States report gender-disaggregated data for results and outputs achieved with RRF support within common indicators 8, 10, 11 and 14.
- For example, research facilities supported by the RRF employed 67 160 male, 45 751 female and 11 non-binary full-time-equivalent researchers in 2024 (common indicator 8).
- In 2024, the number of participants in education and training supported by the RRF amounted to a total of 9.3 million across all age groups. Out of this total, 2.78 million female, 2.11 million male and 1 173 non-binary participants were reported for the second semester of 2024 (common indicator 10) for the second semester of 2024.
- The total of 448 114 people in RRF-supported employment or job-searching activities in 2024 is subdivided into 576 866 female, 516 242 male and 82 non-binary participants across all age groups (common indicator 11).
- The number of young people aged 15-29 receiving support in 2024 amounted to 1 583 714 male, 1 396 173 female and 878 non-binary recipients (common indicator 14).

- These crucial investments are complemented by structural reforms that, while being at zero cost, will have a considerable impact on gender equality. These include reforms to combat gender inequalities in Portugal, to better regulate the profession of nursing assistants in Sweden and to improve prenatal and neonatal health screening in Bulgaria. In terms of investments, Italy provided financial support for the creation or growth of 700 enterprises led by women, supporting female entrepreneurship and strengthening women's participation in business activities. France subsidised 160 000 additional apprenticeship contracts, the creation of 2 200 jobs for young people in the sports sector and the building or renovation of 1 500 places in boarding schools of excellence.
- The combination of investments and reforms is one of the main novelties of the RRF. National authorities have envisaged a number of measures to tackle gender-based discriminations. As for other policy areas, the interplay between gender-related investments and reforms will ensure the RRF spending achieves a higher level of impact. Specifically, these measures are expected to make the green and digital transitions more inclusive and to improve the capacity of Member States to mainstream gender equality in their resilience policies, which are crucial as Europe continues to face unexpected challenges.

⁽³⁵⁾ [Recovery and Resilience Scoreboard](#)

Contribution to the digital transition (EUR million):

	2021 implementation	2022 implementation	2023 implementation	2024 implementation	Total	% of the 2021 - 2024 envelope (¹)
Digital contribution	57 678.7	34 024.5	56 889.6	578.1	149 170.8	25.5 % (¹)

(¹) Excluding REPowerEU

- The RRF makes a significant contribution to the digital transformation in the EU. The RRF Regulation requires that at least 20% of the total allocation in each RRP support digital objectives (excluding REPowerEU). However, the reforms and investments proposed by Member States have exceeded the target, with around 25.45% of the total allocation of the plans contributing to the digital transformation (as calculated according to the digital tagging methodology set out in Annex VII to the RRF Regulation). The total available budget for 2021-2027 displayed in the programming table includes the administrative budget line covering support expenditure, as encoded under SUMMA. The total amount of financial support under the RRF committed as of mid-October 2024, net of support expenditure, stood at EUR 650 billion.
- By the end of 2024, important steps had been taken to implement measures relating to the selection of projects to support the development of innovative microelectronics and connectivity technologies, the digital transformation of justice and the entry into operation of new digital platforms. Member States have made significant progress in implementing measures relating to the digital transformation, and over a third of related milestones and targets have been reported as being complete or assessed by the Commission as having been fulfilled. Specifically, 605 out of 2 460 milestones and targets related to the digital transformation have already been assessed by the Commission as having been fulfilled.

Contribution to sustainable development goals

SDG	Does the programme contribute to the goal?	Example (only for the most relevant SDGs)
SDG1: End poverty in all its forms everywhere	Yes	By the end of 2024, the RRF supported a publication of a call for projects for housing for children at risk in Czechia.

SDG2: End hunger, achieve food security and improve d nutrition and promote sustaina ble agricultu re	Yes	By the end of 2024, the RRF supported supply-chain contracts for the agri-food, fishing and aquaculture, forestry, floriculture and plant nursery sectors in Italy through a dedicated fund (Fondo Rotativo Contratti di Filiera).
SDG3: Ensure healthy lives and promote well- being for all at all ages	Yes	By the end of 2024, the RRF supported Greece in establishing 48 mental health units, to support universal free access to quality mental health services.
SDG4: Ensure inclusive and equitabl e quality educatio n and promote lifelong learning opportun ities for all	Yes	By the end of 2024, the RRF supported Slovakia in introducing a state national education programme for primary and lower-secondary schools, which will bring updated curricula to classrooms.
SDG5: Achieve gender equality and empowe r all women and girls	Yes	By the end of 2024, Estonia rolled out a digital gender pay-gap tool for employers to provide the necessary information about the gender pay gap, its possible causes and solutions to address it.

SDG6: Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all	Yes	By the end of 2024, the RRF supported the construction or reconstruction of at least 517 kilometres of the public water supply network in Croatia.
SDG7: Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all	Yes	By the end of 2024, the RRF supported the adoption of the Act on Excise Duty on Electricity and Certain Fuels in Finland to change existing taxation of different types of energy with a view to contributing to the phasing out of fossil fuels by promoting the electrification of industry and low-carbon technologies.
SDG8: Promote sustainable, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all	Yes	By the end of 2024, the RRF supported the award of contracts to accelerate investment in innovative technologies for the green transition in France.

SDG9: Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation	Yes	By the end of 2024, the RRF supported the creation of a new Lithuanian Research Council that helps businesses and organisations take advantage of international research and innovation opportunities.
SDG10: Reduce inequalities within and among countries	Yes	By the end of 2024, the RRF supported Greece in adopting legislation for introducing a personal assistance scheme for people with disabilities to support independent living and shifting from institutional care to community-based alternatives (de-institutionalisation).
SDG11: Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable	Yes	By the end of 2024, the RRF supported the signature of contracts for the procurement of 197 zero-emission buses in Portugal and the construction of dedicated charging infrastructure.
SDG12: Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns	Yes	By the end of 2024, the RRF supported the adoption of standards for the construction industry with the aim of reducing the amount of construction and demolition waste generated and ensuring that it is suitable for treatment in line with the waste hierarchy in Malta.

SDG13: Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts	Yes	By the end of 2024, the RRF supported the update of Poland's National Clean Air Priority Programme, introducing a series of measures and policies to effectively improve air quality with considerable co-benefits for climate change mitigation: NAPCPs under Directive 2016/2284 address air pollutants, not CO2.
SDG14: Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development	Yes	By the end of 2024, the RRF supported the restoration of at least 50 kilometres of coastline in degraded areas and ecosystems; the protection of and an increase in the accessibility of coastal areas; the mitigation of erosion; better knowledge of and an increase in the resilience of coastal areas; and adaptation to the effects of climate change in Spain.

SDG15: Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss	Yes	By the end of 2024, the RRF supported the completion of 20 additional projects on torrent control (small-scale wooden and natural stone dams) to slow down surface runoff and on water retention in forests (retention and small reservoirs) in Czechia.

SDG16: Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels	Yes	By the end of 2024, the Open Government Act implemented in the Netherlands helped to enhance the transparency and accessibility of public administrations' information.
SDG17: Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development	N/A	Text

Support for reforms

- Within the framework of the RRF, Member States are delivering on the reforms and investments included in their RRP. The RRF brought about a new stimulus and financial incentives for implementing critical and long-awaited reforms, thanks to the requirements of the Regulation and to the novel link between reforms and investments.

The implementation of reform measures tends to be frontloaded compared to that of investments, across all RRF policy pillars, as they often serve a “preparatory” function vis-à-vis the relevant investments, notably to maximise the impact of the latter (36). A measure can contribute to multiple pillars at the same time, having a main and a secondary policy pillar, which can themselves vary between sub-measures.

- As the implementation of the RRF progresses, and consistently with the typical investment implementation cycle, the number of investment-related milestones and targets increases relative to that of reform-related milestones and targets. Starting in 2023, the implementation of investment-related milestones and targets surpassed that of reform-related ones, and in 2024 they account for double the number of reform-related milestones and targets. The forecast for 2025 projects an even wider gap, with approximately 600 more investments milestones and targets planned to be fulfilled compared to those for reforms.
- Reforms are distributed across the six RRF policy pillars, with a greater number of measures under the pillars covering growth- and resilience-enhancing policies (see Chart 1). The pillars represent many EU priorities consistent with the country-specific recommendations addressed to Member States in the context of the European semester. As such, RRF-supported reforms are expected to successfully address long-standing issues that hamper Member States’ ability to respond to the challenges identified in the recommendations.
- In the two years preceding the RRF, the share of 2016-2017 country-specific recommendations reaching at least ‘some progress’ increased by six percentage points, from 53% in 2018 to 59% in 2020. In comparison, the share of 2019-2020 country-specific recommendations reaching at least ‘some progress’ increased by 17 percentage points, from 52% in 2021 before the implementation of the RRF to almost 69% in 2023. For instance, Latvia’s RRP contributes to addressing the long-standing country-specific recommendation on the adequacy of social safety nets, through a reform of minimum income that successfully took into account the Council’s recommendations. Another example is the healthcare sector reforms in Germany’s plan, which contribute to addressing recommendations on the need to further enhance the efficiency of public spending in the sector.
- The implementation of milestones and targets so far is broadly in line with the share of each policy pillar in the total number of milestones and targets under the RRF. However, pillars such as ‘Smart, sustainable and inclusive growth’ and ‘Health, and economic, social and institutional resilience’, which have a relatively larger share of reform-related milestones and targets –

(36) The six policy pillars are ‘Green transition’, ‘Digital transformation’, ‘Smart, sustainable and inclusive growth’, ‘Social, territorial cohesion’, ‘Health and economic, social and institutional resilience’ and ‘Policies for the next generation’.

compared to pillars such as ‘Green transition’ and ‘Digital transformation’ with a higher share of investment-related milestones and targets – have so far shown the fastest progress.

- The Commission developed a categorisation system to track the types of milestones and targets and their action on the ground. Two broad categories can be clearly defined: one set of milestones and targets resulting in ‘Preparatory and regulatory processes’ (the majority in reform measures); and another set encompassing milestones and targets that result in the ‘Delivery on the ground’ of a tangible product (more present in investment measures).
- The ‘Preparatory and regulatory processes’ (Chart 2a) category involves milestones and targets related to ‘Law adoption/entry into force’, ‘Adoption of Strategies and Frameworks’ and ‘Policy preparation or evaluation’. The category “Delivery on the Ground” (Chart 2b) comprises such milestones and targets categories as ‘New public services or processes’, ‘Infrastructure upgrade’, ‘Financial support to enterprises’, ‘Equipment installation’, ‘Hiring and jobs creation’, ‘Financial support for R&D’, ‘Financial support to households’ and ‘Training and capacity building’. Chart 1 shows the distribution of reform-related milestones and targets across these broad categories.
- The largest number of reform-related milestones and targets fulfilled by the end of 2024 concerned the adoption of the entry into force of new legislation (524), followed by the adoption of strategies or frameworks (197) and the preparation or evaluation of policies (133). This is in line with the implementation logic of the RRF: preparatory and regulatory processes are implemented first and are followed by on-the-ground delivery and tangible results as the implementation of milestones and targets progresses.
- Reform-related milestones and targets under ‘New Public Services / Processes’ and “Infrastructure upgrade” currently have a lower rate of completion compared to those related to “Policy Preparation / Evaluation” or ‘Law adoption’. However, their implementation is accelerating, which confirms the gradual shift towards the delivery of tangible results, as explained above. The fulfilment of the milestones and targets under ‘Delivery on the Ground’ (Chart 2b) is expected to keep increasing as more and more measures will be completed by end of 2026.
- To illustrate such preparatory reform measures which will be followed by delivery on the ground, Estonia approved a strategic framework for a hospital network development roadmap and amended the reimbursement system for doctors and pharmacists in order to incentivise the health workforce to work in remote areas. This was followed by an increase in the number of people enrolled in nursing training. Poland successfully implemented wide-reaching reforms on renewable energy permitting and deployment, followed by the mobilisation of private-sector investments to increase the installed capacity of renewables.

Chart 1: Milestones and targets per pillar (weighted)

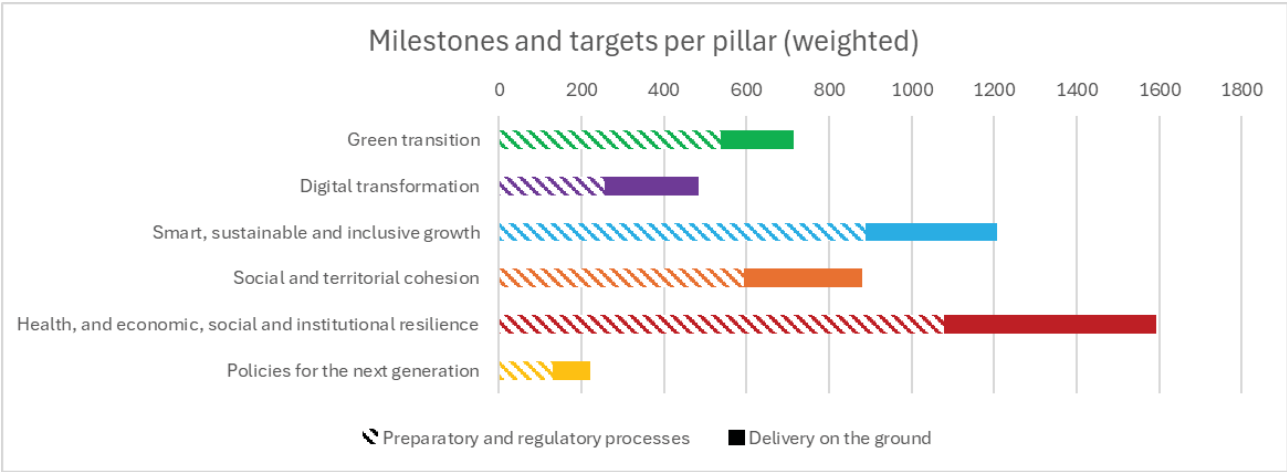


Chart 2a: Preparatory and regulatory processes

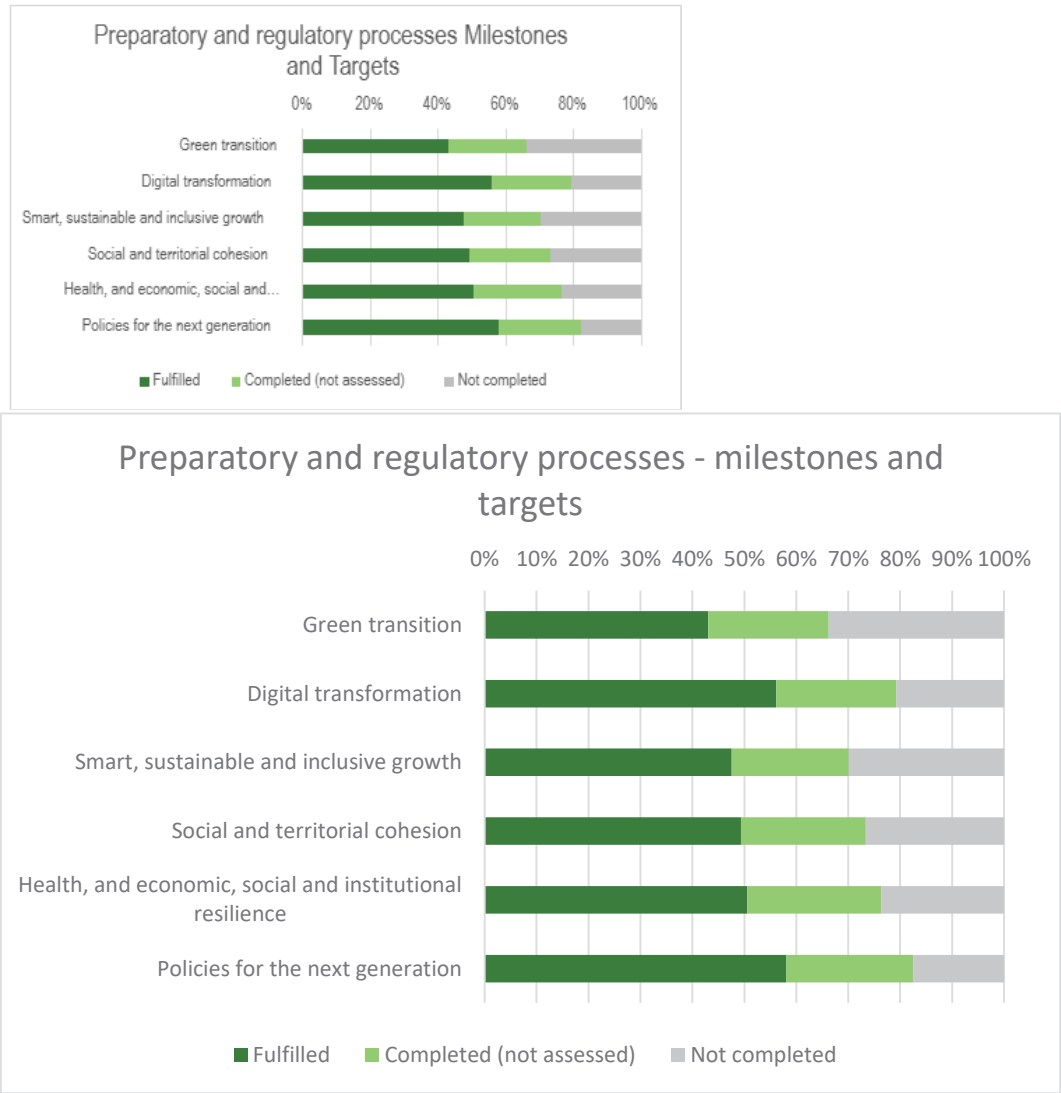
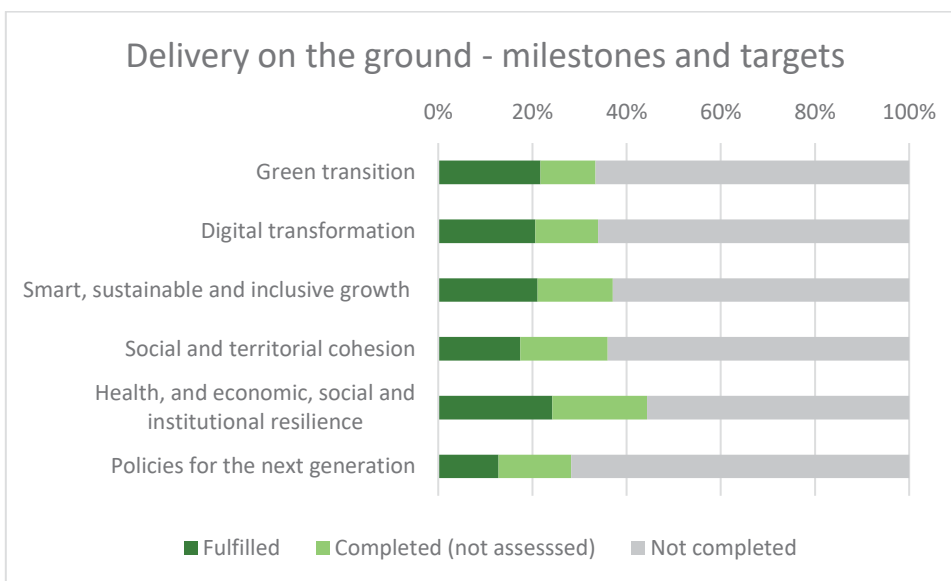
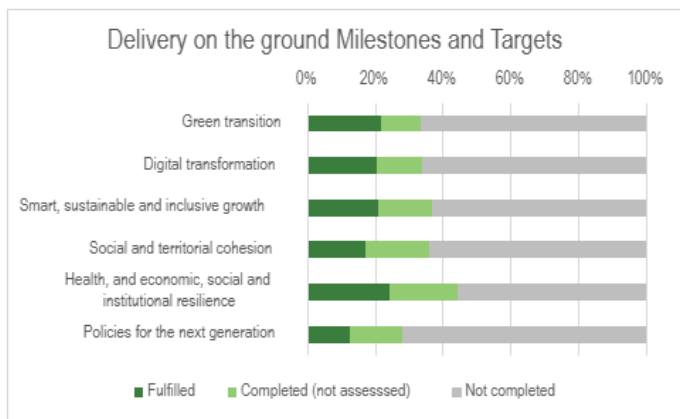


Chart 2b: Delivery: on the ground



Contribution to strategic technologies (STEP)

- In line with Regulation (EU) 2024/795 (the STEP Regulation), the RRF is one of the instruments mobilised under the Strategic Technologies for Europe Platform (STEP) to strengthen the competitiveness and resilience of the European economy. By integrating STEP priorities into their national RRP, Member States have the option to channel resources towards the development and scaling up of critical technologies.
- The STEP Regulation amended the regulation establishing the RRF. Member States can now allocate up to 6% of their RRF financial allocation to their InvestEU Member State compartment, specifically for measures supporting investment operations contributing to STEP objectives. This allocation is in addition to the existing option of transferring up to 4% of a Member State's financial allocation to the Member States' InvestEU Member State compartment for broader purposes, allowing a combined total transfer of up to 10%. Furthermore, when revising their RRP, Member States are required to consider projects awarded the STEP Seal (Sovereignty Seal) as a priority.
- As of 31 December 2024, no RRP had been amended to include a project awarded with the STEP Seal and no Member State had made use of the increased opportunity to use the Member State compartment under the STEP initiative.

TECHNICAL SUPPORT INSTRUMENT

Concrete examples of achievements

885 requests for reform support were received from the Member States under the 2025 call.	135 reform support projects translating into 390 reforms (national components of projects) were selected under the 2025 programme.	40 multi-country projects were selected under the 2025 Technical Support Instrument (TSI) call.	One third of the projects selected under the 2024 programme are directly or indirectly linked to national recovery and resilience plans.
94% of the projects selected for funding under the 2023 and 2024 calls were either running or completed at the end of 2024.	Over 3 000 online viewers attended the 2024 TSI annual conference, with the participation of 21 high-level speakers from 13 Member States, high-level representatives from the European Commission and other institutions.	Over 2 000 participants from 37 financial supervisory authorities in 26 Member States have participated in the EU Supervisory Digital Finance Academy since its launch in 2022.	9 Member States received support to prepare their national implementation plans under the European pact on migration and asylum.

Budget programming and implementation

Budget programming (million EUR):

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	Total
Financial programming	116.4	118.7	121.1	123.5	126.0	109.5	112.2	827.4
NextGenerationEU	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Decommitments made available again (*)	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Contributions from other countries and entities	0.0	6.4	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	6.4
Total	116.4	125.1	121.1	123.5	126.0	109.5	112.2	833.7

(*) Only Article 15(3) of the Financial Regulation.

Cumulative budget implementation at the end of 2024 (million EUR):

	Implementation	Budget	Implementation rate
Commitments	485.6	833.7	58.2%
Payments	300.4		36.0%

Implementation and performance

Key performance indicators

	Baseline	Progress	Target	Results	Assessment
Cooperation and support plans concluded	0	135%	20 annually from 2021 to 2027	TSI provided support to all Member States (27)	On track
Number of support measures	0	119%	170 in 2022 till 120 in 2027	Average results (193) versus average milestones (162): number includes multi-country projects	On track
The objectives set in the cooperation and support plans, which have been achieved due, inter alia, to the technical support received	0	107%	70% annually from 2021 to 2027	2021 result (75%) vs. average milestone (70%)	On track

2024 was the fourth year of implementation of the Technical Support Instrument (TSI) programme, following the adoption of Regulation (EU) 2021/240 ⁽³⁷⁾ (the TSI Regulation) in February 2021. Throughout the four TSI annual cycles (2021-2024), close to 780 projects supported around 1 200 reforms in all 27 Member States in a vast array of public policy areas, which contributed to good progress in the achievement of the TSI objectives. Moreover, under the 2025 TSI call, 135 reform support projects translating to 390 reforms were selected for funding.

The TSI's **design** demonstrates high flexibility to address Member States' unforeseen and emerging needs through dedicated calls and special measures, as provided for in the TSI Regulation. For instance, in 2024, following the entry into force of the pact on migration and asylum (Pact on Migration and Asylum - European Commission) and the adoption by the Commission of the communication of the common implementation plan for the pact on migration and asylum on

⁽³⁷⁾ Regulation (EU) 2021/240 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 10 February 2021 establishing a Technical Support Instrument (OJ L 57, 18.2.2021, p. 1, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2021/240/oj>).

11 June (Commission presents the Common Implementation Plan), a **dedicated call to offer Member States tailor-made technical expertise to prepare their national implementation plans** was launched under the TSI programme. Nine Member States applied, and as of 1 August had received hands-on support from experts with knowledge of the national legal frameworks and systems, and from international experts with knowledge of the national legal frameworks and systems, and from international experts with knowledge of relevant practices in other Member States.

As outlined in the **Commission staff working document on the TSI midterm evaluation**, the TSI is effective in improving all types of administrative capacity in the Member States, especially the internal administrative mechanisms that constitute the groundwork for reforms across the EU. The achievement of the programme's long-term results (outcomes) depends on national factors, such as ownership of reforms, availability of financial resources to follow-up on recommendations, staff turnover, and political and administrative continuity. Additionally, there is good potential to multiply these benefits and enhance their sustainability by fostering formal and informal connections among Member States and exploiting the knowledge created through the more systematic dissemination of project results, continued support from Commission officials and the exchange of knowledge among Member States.

The results of the TSI midterm evaluation demonstrate that beneficiary authorities regarded the TSI as being highly relevant and tailored to their needs, mainly due to the design of the instrument and its demand-driven nature. **Multi-country projects** are seen as a vehicle to tackle broader, cross-EU challenges while enhancing collaboration and the sharing of good practices among participating countries, and their number has increased over the years. Also, TSI projects have contributed substantially to implementing EU policies and priorities and supporting the twin digital and green transitions. In this regard, **flagship projects** add value by aligning with EU priorities, driving regulatory compliance and promoting the application of EU law.

TSI projects usually last between one and three years after the adoption of the financing decision. The final results and the assessment of the level of achievement of project outcomes are then captured via the TSI feedback mechanism within 18 months of the closure of the project. Therefore, 2024 is the first year for which the **result and impact indicators defined in the TSI Regulation** could be reported upon. A fully fledged analysis of the long-term results of the TSI and its aggregate contribution to the adoption and implementation of reforms in Member States presents shortcomings. The TSI midterm evaluation has shown certain limitations regarding the design of the TSI Regulation that affect the tracking of the outcomes, particularly the absence of direct references to specific reform achievements in the formulation of TSI specific objectives, together with the lack of specific reporting obligations on the status of the reforms supported.

Contribution to horizontal priorities

Contribution to green budgeting priorities (EUR million):

	Implementation				Estimates			Total	% of the total envelope
	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027		
Climate mainstreaming	23.1	23.2	18.2	24.6	0.0	0.0	0.0	89.1	10.7%
Biodiversity mainstreaming	0.0	0.0	6.4	6.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	12.3	1.5%

In 2024, the TSI continued to support Member States in the implementation of the **European Green Deal**. Technical support has helped Member States design and implement reforms on climate-change mitigation, tackling greenwashing and sustainability reporting, climate-change adaptation, energy, the environment and the circular economy, sustainable mobility and the just transition.

The TSI programme's contribution to the green budgeting priorities covered a broad number of measures, including the following.

- In terms of **climate-change adaptation**, the TSI continued to support Member States in achieving their targets. It supported the prevention and management of wildfires in four Member States. For example, Greece and Cyprus are enhancing their [civil protection and crisis response mechanisms](#). As a result, a comprehensive climate change and civil protection strategy and action plan will be delivered for each Member State. Additionally, the project will deliver a mechanism for the coordination of the different authorities and stakeholders.
- In line with the proposed 2023 TSI flagship project focusing on **climate-change adaptation**, the TSI is assessing climate risks and vulnerabilities in Cyprus and Slovakia with the aim of helping the two Member States to update their [national adaptation strategies and action plans](#).
- With regard to **climate-change mitigation**, the TSI is supporting administrative capacity building for the Finnish authorities to [implement the EU emissions trading system](#) with the aim of further reducing the climate and environmental impact of the building stock to phase out fossil oil heating.
- The TSI continues to support **biodiversity** by helping water birds in coastal wetlands all along the Atlantic coast thanks to the digitalisation of the monitoring system covering the migratory routes of birds in the [East Atlantic Flyway](#) (Denmark, Germany and the Netherlands). As a result, food availability and staging and breeding sites can be optimised along the flyway, as shown in the project [video](#).
- The TSI programme also assisted Member States in the area of **energy**. In particular, it helped them to accelerate permitting processes and increase the uptake of renewable energy. For example, the TSI is supporting Finland in [modernising and improving permitting for renewable and green investments](#). This involves establishing a single permitting authority, along with streamlining and digitising permitting procedures.

Since the TSI Regulation does not specify targets relating to green expenditure and the TSI is a demand-driven instrument, it is not possible to provide an estimate on the future thematic expenditure.

Due to its nature, the programme is not covered by the Taxonomy Regulation for sustainable activities. None of the measures eligible for technical support listed in Article 8 of the TSI Regulation is aligned with the economic activities described in Annex 1 to Delegated Regulation (EU) 2021/2139⁽³⁸⁾. Therefore, there is no taxonomy-relevant expenditure financed by the programme to declare.

Contribution to gender equality (million EUR) (*)

Gender score	2021	2022	2023	2024	Total
2	0.0	2.4	18.0	27.3	47.7
1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.2	0.2
0*	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
0	116.4	116.2	103.1	95.9	431.5
Total:	116.4	118.6	121.1	123.4	479.5

(*) Based on the applied gender contribution methodology, the following scores are attributed at the most granular level of intervention possible:

- 2: interventions the principal objective of which is to improve gender equality;
- 1: interventions that have gender equality as an important and deliberate objective but not as the main reason for the intervention;
- 0: non-targeted interventions (interventions that are expected to have no significant bearing on gender equality);
- 0*: score to be assigned to interventions with a likely but not yet clear positive impact on gender equality.

Under the TSI programme, a broad array of measures has been taken to promote **gender equality in institutional and legislative reforms**. The TSI emphasises gender equality as a cross-cutting priority, promoting the integration of the gender dimension into projects.

Several new gender-related projects started recently. For example, the **TSI programme supports the equality bodies of three Member States** (Belgium, Portugal and Finland) in assessing the implications of artificial intelligence technologies in the operations of their respective public administrations and their readiness to supervise them, in order to avoid discrimination. Their goal is to integrate artificial intelligence in a safe and trustworthy way and using a human-centric approach with the support of the project [upholding equality and non-discrimination by equality bodies regarding the use of artificial intelligence \(AI\) in public administrations](#).

Additionally, the TSI continues to provide tailor-made expertise to 12 administrations across nine Member States (Germany, Ireland, Greece, Spain, France, Italy, Cyprus, Portugal and Romania), embedded into national reform programmes under the TSI flagship project [gender mainstreaming in public policy and budget processes](#). The objective is to support these administrations in applying **gender mainstreaming and gender impact assessments**, and in bolstering their budgeting policies through gender-responsive budgeting. In 2024, the administrations benefited from tailored support

⁽³⁸⁾ Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2021/2139 of 4 June 2021 supplementing Regulation (EU) 2020/852 of the European Parliament and of the Council by establishing the technical screening criteria for determining the conditions under which an economic activity qualifies as contributing substantially to climate change mitigation or climate change adaptation and for determining whether that economic activity causes no significant harm to any of the other environmental objectives (OJ L 442, 9.12.2021, p. 1, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg_del/2021/2139/oj).

to review their legal frameworks and practices, and from knowledge-sharing and capacity-building activities aimed at enhancing the skills and knowledge of civil servants. Although the project is still ongoing, key results achieved to date include, among others: a guide to support the integration of gender equality in public procurement in France (Strasbourg); the development of gender equality indicators in Saxony-Anhalt; a gender mainstreaming circular with technical implementation guidelines in Greece; and a national action plan for women's economic empowerment in Romania. The project also facilitated peer-learning opportunities through a workshop dedicated to gender-responsive public procurement and two study visits, respectively in Austria and Finland, addressing specifically good practices and innovative approaches in gender mainstreaming and gender budgeting.

Contribution to the digital transition (EUR million):

	2021 implementation	2022 implementation	2023 implementation	2024 implementation	Total	% of the 2021-2024 envelope
Digital contribution	6.4	27.8	39.1	39.4	112.7	23.2%

In 2024, the TSI also provided Member States with support in a number of projects related to the digital transition, in line with the action plan on a Europe fit for the digital age and the communication ‘2030 digital compass: The European way for the digital decade’.

In terms of **connectivity**, the TSI supported the [improving the capacity of the Broadband Competence Office in Cyprus](#) to increase the population’s access to affordable, high-quality and high-speed broadband services. Specifically, the office should be able to coordinate and provide guidance to broadband project promoters (public or private, users or investors) in terms of technology, funding opportunities and administrative/regulatory issues by collecting and distributing the related information. Additionally, this project supports Cyprus’ recovery and resilience plan. In 2024, DG Structural Reform Support produced and disseminated the video [TSI Goes Digital: Enhancing connectivity in Cyprus](#), presenting this project.

The TSI is boosting the proper supervision of **artificial intelligence systems** in compliance with the Artificial Intelligence Act and other relevant legislation, for instance by delivering practical pathways and on-the-ground [assistance to the Dutch Authority for Digital Infrastructure](#) based on real pilot cases. The project will also engage other competent EU authorities to collectively address the complex and varied challenges associated with supervising artificial intelligence technologies.

The programme also helps the Member State authorities to reach **better standards of security in existing infrastructures thanks to the digital transition**. For example, the TSI is exploring solutions to [improve security and operational efficiency at the EU’s three largest ports](#) (those of Antwerp–Bruges, Rotterdam and Hamburg) and their chemical clusters. The project produced recommendations on how to enrich and extend the current solutions for physical and digital identity management in ports and the areas surrounding ports, a proposal for a business case, a to-be architecture for a federated solution, and a roadmap and action plan for the implementation

of the solution. The suggested federated model produced by the project enables a more coherent process for the management of identities, both physically and digitally. The model is ready to be employed for a use case and could be rolled out at the EU level.

In terms of **communication**, the video [TSI Goes Gen-D](#), created in 2024, shows how the TSI supports the digital agenda.

Contribution to sustainable development goals

SDG	Does the programme contribute to the goal?	Example (only for the most relevant SDGs)
SDG3: Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages	x	Under the 2024 TSI, the European Commission supports authorities with the promotion of well-being and the prevention of addictions. With the multi-country project healthier youth – addressing the risks of online gambling and gaming , the Commission supports nine EU Member States in improving their response to the growing phenomenon of online gambling and gaming among children and young people and in raising awareness of the risks of the excessive use of such platforms. As a result of this project, authorities should have the necessary understanding and scientifically founded information to design targeted interventions, along with tools and strategies for implementing concrete measures in the fields of prevention and treatment. (2025-2027, duration 24 months, nine Member States supported.)
SDG4: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all	x	In 2024, the TSI supported the project strengthening the capacity of Bulgaria and Romania to design and deliver curriculum reforms and improve student learning outcomes . This TSI project will develop curricular resources to help teachers apply new methods of instruction, monitoring and evaluation tools to assess and provide feedback on teaching and learning, and capacity-development models to empower teachers and schools to transform their practice. The reform is expected to increase the quality of educational outcomes and ultimately improve learners' basic skills such as literacy and numeracy. (2025-2027, duration 30 months, two Member States supported.)

SDG7: Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all	x	In 2024, the TSI supported the Cyprus Ministry of Energy, Commerce and Industry in the area of renewable energy and building renovation . In particular, the TSI delivered action plans and recommendations to support the creation of two digital one-stop shops to streamline permitting for renewable energy projects and to facilitate energy renovation in buildings. (2022-2024, duration 14 months, one Member State supported.)
SDG8: Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all	x	The TSI is supporting Spain in developing a strategy for streamlining the labour market inclusion of non-EU nationals , including through the use of a centralised online platform. The strategy targets non-EU nationals already in Spain, along with ways to attract talent from non-EU countries. The relevant platform will facilitate matches between skilled migrants and employers seeking workers with skills that are currently in short supply in Spain. As a result, the Ministry of Inclusion, Social Security and Migration will better attract skilled talent to bolster the Spanish labour market. (2023-2025, duration 17 months, one Member State supported.)
SDG9: Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation	x	In 2024, the TSI supported Portugal with technical analysis, workshops and recommendations on how to strengthen the policy framework to stimulate the greening of small and medium-sized enterprises and green entrepreneurship, with the aim of accelerating the green transition of Portugal's industrial ecosystems . (2023-2025, duration 20 months, one Member State supported.)

SDG10: Reduce inequaliti es within and among countries	x	Via the TSI, the Commission is helping the Belgian regions of Flanders and Wallonia improve their economic migration management to facilitate the attraction of non-EU nationals and the retention of sought-after profiles , resulting in the supply of a well-qualified workforce that can meet the labour needs of domestic employers. The project is expected to result in the regions being more able to attract and retain non-EU nationals with sought-after skills, along with improving their overall ability to govern economic migration and reduce structural labour shortages. (2023-2025, duration 18 months, one Member State supported.)
SDG11: Make cities and human settlemen ts inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainab le	x	The TSI is providing technical assistance to 15 Polish cities / urban areas / metropolitan areas to help build capacity in the preparation of sustainable urban mobility plans . This support is provided under the coordination and guidance of the Polish Ministry of Infrastructure, which will be provided with a best-practice study on how the national coordination of these plans is managed in other EU Member States. (2023-2026, duration 32 months, one Member State supported).
SDG13: Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts	x	The TSI is helping France implement the green transition roadmap of the general delegation for employment and professional training . At the end of the project, the Ministry of Labour will be provided with tools to make its policy schemes fit for the green transition and to monitor their impact on companies and individuals. In the longer term, French employment and training policies should be up to the challenges entailed by the green transition, and French businesses and individuals are expected to use the ministry's instruments to navigate the changes in the labour market linked to the green transition. (2024-2026, duration 18 months, one Member State supported.)

SDG15: Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss	x	
SDG16: Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels	x	In 2024, the TSI continued to support Spain in consolidating the Barnahus model in four different regions , aiming to improve relevant policies and tools and strengthen the capacity of professionals working for and with children, and to harmonise a high-quality response to child sexual abuse across the Spanish regions. (2023-2025, duration 28 months, one Member State supported.)

Support for reforms

By bringing together **expertise from different backgrounds**, such as international organisations, the private sector and other Member States, the TSI helps Member States to carry out reforms that create jobs, inclusive societies and sustainable growth.

In 2024, the TSI continued to support **smart, sustainable and socially responsible reforms** in a wide range of policy areas while strengthening all types of administrative capacities, especially the internal administrative mechanisms for reforms across the EU. These policy areas were included in the proposed [2024 flagship technical support projects](#), in line with the Commission's priorities.

The TSI's support for the **EU's competitiveness** continues to show significant results, as recently reported in the [2023 TSI annual report](#). The programme contributed to the achievement of a wide range of competitiveness drivers, from fostering the functioning of the single market to improving the Member States' capacity to deliver reforms for trade and open strategic autonomy. For example, in terms of public investment and infrastructure and as a result of a TSI project, [Romania has published guidelines on public-private partnerships to help local and national authorities](#) to successfully launch and implement investment projects. During the last year, the TSI selected support to competitiveness will enhance industrial production capacities. This will contribute the EU's capacity to reach its goal of becoming a global leader in strategic technologies, as presented in [The EU in 2024 – General Report on the Activities of the European Union](#).

Over the years, an increasing share of TSI projects have helped Member States carry out **reforms at the regional and local level in line with EU priorities**. In 2024, the Member States demonstrated their interest in strengthening cooperation at the regional level through various TSI projects, including support provided to 10 regions in five Member States to [enhance EU mining regional ecosystems to support the green transition and secure mineral raw materials supply](#).

Furthermore, in 2024 the TSI helped Member States to design reforms necessary for the implementation of their national **recovery and resilience plans**. TSI assistance has taken the form of general support, which is horizontally applicable for the smooth implementation of the plans, and thematic support, which targets specific reforms and investments in the recovery and resilience plans.

As an example of a **successful project delivering results** and supporting the implementation of the national recovery and resilience plans, the TSI supported Croatia in reducing water losses by developing a [national loss reduction action plan](#) and recommendations on how to monitor the performance of water companies. This technical support enabled Croatia to increase its capacity in the water sector and thereby effectively address both the governance issue (by providing the possibility to consolidate water suppliers) and the infrastructure issue (by delivering a national loss reduction plan developed in consultation with the relevant stakeholders) in the sector. The Croatian government adopted this plan in 2024 in line with a milestone under its national recovery and resilience plan. Croatia also created a new national monitoring body to ensure proper follow-up on the Croatian national loss reduction plan.

Contribution to strategic technologies (STEP)

No contribution.

PERICLES IV

EXCHANGE, ASSISTANCE AND TRAINING PROGRAMME FOR THE PROTECTION OF THE EURO AGAINST COUNTERFEITING

Concrete examples of achievements

554 000 counterfeit euro banknotes were detected in 2024 (*).	416 276 counterfeit euro coins were detected in 2024 (*).	9 illegal workshops (mints and print shops) were dismantled in 2024 (*).	9 competent authorities applied to the programme from 2021 to 2024.
99.36% of respondents across actions taking place in 2024 indicated being satisfied or highly satisfied.	98.78% of respondents across actions taking place in 2024 indicated that the programme has a moderate or high impact on their activities in protecting the euro against counterfeiting.		

(*) These indicators, while linked to the protection of the euro, should be considered as ‘context’ indicators, as the results are greatly influenced by factors external to the programme, such as counterfeiting activity and the detection rate consequence of the activities or the competent national and EU authorities.

Budget programming and implementation

Budget programming (million EUR)

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	Total
Financial programming	0.9	0.9	0.8	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.9	6.2
NextGenerationEU	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Decommitments made available again (*)	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Contributions from other countries and entities	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Total	0.9	0.9	0.8	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.9	6.2

(*) Only Article 15(3) of the Financial Regulation.

Cumulative budget implementation at the end of 2024 (million EUR)

	Implementation	Budget	Implementation rate
Commitments	3.4	6.2	54.7%
Payments	2.7		44.3%

Implementation and performance

Key performance indicators

	Baseline	Progress	Target	Results	Assessment
Counterfeit euro banknotes detected in circulation	0	0%	671 000 annually	Milestones not achieved for 2021-2024	Moderate progress
Counterfeit euro coins detected in circulation	0	57%	174 112 annually from 2021 to 2027	Milestones achieved for 2021-2024	Moderate progress
Illegal workshops dismantled	0	0%	22 annually from 2021 to 2027	Milestones not achieved for 2021-2024	Moderate progress

Competent authorities applying to the programme	0	38%	24 in 2027	9 compared to a target of 24	Moderate progress
Satisfaction rate of participants in the actions financed by the programme	0	57%	75% annually from 2021 to 2027	Milestones achieved for 2021-2024	On track
Feedback of participants on the impact of the programme on their activities in protecting the euro against counterfeiting	0	57%	75% annually from 2021 to 2027	Milestones achieved for 2021-2024	On track

In 2024, Pericles IV continued to support the Member States and to assist the competent national and EU authorities in protecting euro banknotes and coins against counterfeiting and fraud.

1. While the number of counterfeit coins detected exceeded the set target, the number of illegal workshops dismantled is lower than expected. At the same time, the number of counterfeit euro banknotes detected were lower than the target but have followed an increasing trend. It should be underlined that the link between the programme and these indicators is only indirect, as a variety of external factors (including the progress of police investigations, the amount of counterfeit production and the methods of distribution) play an important role in the development of the indicators.
2. On the other hand, the indicators that are more directly linked to the programme, such as the satisfaction rate of participants in the actions taking place in 2024 and the feedback from those who have already participated in previous Pericles actions, showed very positive results. While the number of unique applicants to the programme is increasing, it remains lower than the target.
3. 2024 saw the implementation of 13 Pericles IV projects.
 - a. Two projects funded under procurement (contracts).
 - i. The annual ‘Platform 1210 meeting’, in October 2024, represented the actions of all parties involved in the authentication of euro coins.
 - ii. The 3rd EU–China platform on the protection of currencies against counterfeiting (in September 2024).
 - b. Eleven projects funded under call for proposals (grants).
 - i. A technical training course (March 2024) was organised by the French Central Office for the Suppression of Counterfeiting Currency under the title ‘Technical and operational training on the protection of the euro against counterfeiting (TOTP)’.
 - ii. A technical training course on combating currency counterfeiting was organised by the Investigation Brigade of the Bank of Spain in November 2024 in Buenos Aires, Argentina.
 - iii. A staff exchange was organised between the national analysis centres of Spain, Austria and Portugal (April to December 2024).
 - iv. A staff exchange was organised, between April and June 2024, by the Bank of Spain in which the national analysis centres of Spain and the Netherlands took part.
 - v. A technical training course (June 2024) was organised by the Bank of Spain for participants from 15 Member States under the title: ‘Training activity on counterfeit coins analysis for technical experts (TA-Coins 2024)’.

- vi. The Currency Anticounterfeiting Unit of the Italian National Gendarmerie organised a staff exchange (March to September 2024) entitled ‘SEITACC3’, which involved Bosnia and Herzegovina, Hungary, Italy, Malta, Tunisia and Türkiye.
 - vii. A staff exchange was organised by the Guardia di Finanza (Italy), with participation from Albania, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Serbia and Türkiye (March and July 2024).
 - viii. The Currency Anticounterfeiting Unit of the Italian National Gendarmerie organised a staff exchange (May-June 2024) with Bulgaria entitled ‘SEITACC4’.
 - ix. The Guardia di Finanza (Italy), organised a staff exchange (in September-October 2024) with Türkiye.
 - x. A training course was organised by the Portuguese Criminal Investigation Police in September 2024 as part of a purchase of equipment for the Cape Verdean Criminal Police. The remaining part of the project will be carried out in 2025.
 - xi. In November 2024, the Croatian National Bank organised a meeting in Zagreb, Croatia, as part of the technical training course which involves: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Greece, Kosovo ⁽³⁹⁾, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia and Türkiye. The remainder of the project will take place in 2025.
4. The 414 participants in Pericles IV projects came from 51 countries: 51% from euro-area Member States, 6% from non-euro-area Member States, 12% from non-EU countries in Europe, 12% from Latin America, 6% from EU institutions, 6% from Africa and 7% from other regions.
 5. With respect to the professional background of participants: members of police forces represented 46% of the total. Experts from national central banks represented 33%, interior ministries 2%, customs 1%, members of the judiciary 2%, mints 3%, the coin-processing machine industry 3%, European institutions 6% and other categories 4%.
 6. The implementation of the programme therefore met the transnational and multidisciplinary dimensions required under Regulation (EU) 2021/840 ⁽⁴⁰⁾, displaying a high degree of diversification.
 7. During its fourth year of implementation, a total of 10 projects (eight grants and two procured projects) were committed under the Pericles IV programme.
 8. During 2024, a [mid-term evaluation of the Pericles IV programme](#) was finalised. The evaluation, grounded on the criteria of effectiveness, efficiency, relevance, coherence and EU added value, was contracted in 2023.

Contribution to horizontal priorities

Contribution to green budgeting priorities:

- Not applicable.

Contribution to gender equality (million EUR) (*)

Gender score	2021	2022	2023	2024	Total

⁽³⁹⁾ This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244/1999 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence.

⁽⁴⁰⁾ Regulation (EU) 2021/840 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 May 2021 establishing an exchange, assistance and training programme for the protection of the euro against counterfeiting for the period 2021-2027 (the ‘Pericles IV’ programme), and repealing Regulation (EU) No 331/2014 (OJ L 186, 27.5.2021, p. 1, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2021/840/oj>).

2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
0*	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
0	0.9	0.9	0.8	0.9	3.5
Total:	0.9	0.9	0.8	0.9	3.5

(*) Based on the applied gender contribution methodology, the following scores are attributed at the most granular level of intervention possible:

- 2: interventions the principal objective of which is to improve gender equality;
- 1: interventions that have gender equality as an important and deliberate objective but not as the main reason for the intervention;
- 0: non-targeted interventions (interventions that are expected to have no significant bearing on gender equality);
- 0*: score to be assigned to interventions with a likely but not yet clear positive impact on gender equality.

- The programme targets experts in protection of the euro against counterfeiting irrespective of gender.

Gender-disaggregated information:

- The programme targets experts in protection of the euro against counterfeiting irrespective of gender. Gender-disaggregated data is thus not collected.

Contribution to the digital transition

- N/A

Contribution to sustainable development goals

SDG	Does the programme contribute to the goal?	Example (only for the most relevant SDGs)

SDG8: Promote sustainable, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all	Yes	By preventing and combating counterfeiting and related fraud, Pericles preserves the integrity of the euro banknotes and coins, thus strengthening the trust of citizens and business in the genuineness of these banknotes and coins and therefore enhancing the trust in the Union's economy, while securing the sustainability of public finances.
SDG9: Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation	Yes	Pericles contributes to innovation in the development of secure currency and anti-counterfeiting technologies.

Support for reforms

- N/A

Contribution to strategic technologies (STEP)

- N/A

CIVIL PROTECTION

UNION CIVIL PROTECTION MECHANISM

Concrete examples of achievements

93 new requests for assistance were received and processed by the Emergency Response Coordination Centre in 2024. Furthermore, Ukraine updated 34 existing requests for assistance, and an additional 21 other requests for assistance, opened in 2022-2023, continued to be active during 2024.	26 prevention and preparedness projects in the EU Member States and Union Civil Protection Mechanism (UCPM) participating states – and three peer reviews (Greece, Italy and Brandenburg (Germany)) – were financed via the mechanism in 2024.	55 000 tonnes of life-saving assistance were deployed under the mechanism to Ukraine in 2024 (over 153 000 tonnes of assistance have been delivered since February 2022).	113 UCPM experts were deployed from 19 EU Member States and participating states, in addition to 46 Emergency Response Coordination Centre liaison officers.
1 490 participants from the civil protection practitioner's community gathered for the eighth edition of the European Civil Protection Forum, organised under the umbrella of the UCPM Knowledge Network, setting a new milestone as the largest and most inclusive gathering in the event's history.	87 training activities – including training courses, workshops and training-of-trainers courses – took place in 2024, with 865 course places offered to experts. One new e-learning course was also released.	148 response capacities were committed to the European Civil Protection Pool by the end of 2024, of which 101 were available for immediate deployment as registered response capacities under the European Civil Protection Pool.	900 patients from Ukraine were supported through Medevac operations in 2024. These operations have supported a total of 4 000 patients since 2022.

Budget programming and implementation

Budget programming (million EUR):

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	Total
Financial programming	182.6	354.3	253.0	240.3	211.3	167.7	180.0	1 589.2
NextGenerationEU	678.9	684.6	683.1	2.8	2.6	3.0	3.0	2 058.1
Decommitments made available again (*)	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Contributions from other countries and entities	23.7	22.5	26.7	9.4	0.0	0.0	0.0	82.3
Total	885.2	1 061.4	962.8	252.5	213.9	170.7	183.1	3 729.6

(*) Only Article 15(3) of the Financial Regulation.

Cumulative budget implementation at the end of 2024 (million EUR):

	Implementation	Budget	Implementation rate
Commitments	3 161.4	3 729.6	84.8%
Payments	2 057.9		55.2%

Implementation and performance

Key performance indicators

	Baseline	Progress	Target	Results	Assessment
Response time of the UCPM to a request for assistance in the EU	0	25%	Three hours annually	Target not achieved in 2021, 2022 or 2023. 59 hours compared to a three-hour target. Target achieved in 2024 (one out of four years of results)	On track
Response time of the UCPM to a request for assistance outside of the EU	0	25%	10 hours annually	Target not achieved in 2021, 2022 or 2024. Target achieved in 2023 (one out of four years of results)	Deserves attention
Adequacy of response of the UCPM	0	57%	90% annually from 2024	Milestones achieved in 2021-2024.	On track
Adequacy of response of the UCPM	0	43%	86% annually	Milestones achieved in 2021, 2022 and 2023. Milestones not achieved in 2024	Deserves attention

Number of committed and certified capacities included in the European Civil Protection Pool	60	57%	> 60 annually	Target achieved in 2021-2024.	On track
Number of Member States that provided the Commission with a summary of risk assessments and an assessment of risk management capability	27	14%	27 annually	26 compared to a target of 27 from 2021 to 2023. Target achieved in 2024	On track
Level of awareness of EU citizens on the level of risk of their region	n/a	n/a	> 64%	No results	No data

- Population risk awareness and preparedness gained increased attention in 2024, not least with the release of the first-ever Eurobarometer survey on this topic. The survey revealed considerable scope and demand for action in building societal resilience. Its findings are being used to further develop the preparEU flagship initiative.
- During the year, the Commission also published its first report on progress in disaster risk assessment and management across the Member States and the Union Civil Protection Mechanism (UCPM) participating states. This report provides recommendations for further strengthening risk assessment and management.
- In 2024, DG European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO) selected 26 prevention and preparedness projects. Twelve of these projects support national disaster risk management authorities in developing strategies and plans, implementing awareness-raising activities, enhancing disaster risk management governance and strengthening resilience. In relation to raising the population's awareness about the risk of wildfires, in May 2024 the directorate-general published an analysis of good practices and a framework for effective communication about wildfire risk.
- Under the umbrella of the EU Civil Protection Knowledge Network, 87 training activities were organised, in 2024, with 865 course places offered. The new e-learning course 'Mechanism introduction course for national civil protection and disaster management staff (NAT)' was released, complemented by four module exercises and one full-scale exercise.
- The Emergency Response Coordination Centre further improved its anticipatory planning and its analytical and scientific capacity in 2024, now also covering chemical hazards. Over the course of the year, the centre issued 436 scientific and technical reports.
- The UCPM was activated 93 times in 2024, and the response was very effective, particularly within the Member States and the UCPM participating states. Fifty-two out of 59 requests for assistance (88%) addressed to the Emergency Response Coordination Centre in 2024 (not

counting updates from Ukraine) received offers of support provided by Member States and UCPM participating states. The response rate within the UCPM remains very high, at 95% to requests from Member States and 100% to requests from UCPM participating states.

- Agreements for a fully-fledged European aerial firefighting fleet were signed in 2024, and production was launched, with the first aircraft to be delivered by 2028.
- Civil protection external cooperation was strengthened by Switzerland's application to join the UCPM, which was received in June.
- The year continued to be marked by Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine, the response to the situation in the Middle East, the intense European wildfire season, the Marburg virus disease outbreak in Rwanda and the evacuation and repatriations from Haiti and Vanuatu. The 34 updated requests from Ukraine constitute the largest part of the mechanism's initiatives, with over 153 000 tonnes of life-saving assistance having been delivered since the conflict started. Disasters induced by natural hazards constituted 44% of the requests for assistance in 2024. Requests from non-EU countries were responded to in the case of 23 out of 29 requests (79%).
- The evaluation of the UCPM activities for the 2017-2022 period – covering more than 500 activations, an enlargement of the UCPM participating states network and a major increase in the number of prevention and preparedness activities (including rescEU, the wildfire prevention action plan and knowledge for action in prevention and preparedness) – was concluded in 2024. The evaluation concluded that the implementation of UCPM activities has fully met expectations. The mechanism's adaptability was shown most prominently by its response to COVID-19 and to Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine. Furthermore, new tools and activities (e.g. rescEU, the European Civil Protection Pool, disaster risk management reports, etc.) developed during the evaluation period proved to be effective in strengthening European resilience. The recommendations suggest that the UCPM needs to further develop its mandate and activities so that it is equipped to support Member States in the event of future risks and disasters.
- The amount of assistance requested through the mechanism has continued to grow, as has the duration of civil protection operations. The types of assistance requested have also become more complex and diverse. The lower percentage of responses to activations by non-EU countries in 2024 (79%) is the result of increased activations of the UCPM in areas far from Europe (Latin America and the Caribbean, and Asia) depends on the responses from Member States / participating states.
- With a view to future challenges linked to climate change and the ongoing evolution of the risk landscape, including security-related risks, an increase in the number of activations with deployments to high-risk areas is expected. The security set-up for high-risk areas (e.g. Egypt/Sinai, Ukraine) has been enhanced and further discussions are ongoing to strengthen the Emergency Response Coordination Centre.
- The [Niinistö report](#), presented in October 2024, noted that concrete mechanisms to 'strengthen the connection between EU funding for civil security [research & innovation] and financial support for further operationalisation of innovative solutions' still need to be identified (p. 162). There are gaps in research, innovation, deployment and procurement for the emergence of new technologies in the world of disaster risk management, especially considering the significant amounts of funding available, for example, in the Horizon Europe programme. Defining more structured and operational means, including through the private sector, would be beneficial.

Contribution to horizontal priorities

Contribution to green budgeting priorities (EUR million):

	Implementation				Estimates			Total	% of the total envelope
	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027		
Climate mainstreaming	78.2	313.6	199.5	103.7	n/a	n/a	n/a	695.0	19.1%
Biodiversity mainstreaming	43.1	30.3	14.8	74.4	n/a	n/a	n/a	162.6	4.5%

- The mechanism will continue contributing to the overall Commission objective of climate mainstreaming through its various activities. A key achievement since 2019 has been the creation of the dedicated reserve of rescEU capacities in the area of forest firefighting through the rescEU transition phase, resulting in a total of 28 additional capacities to support Member States in forest firefighting activities. This additional support aims to reduce the devastation caused by wildfires – including increased carbon dioxide emissions – and is considered a key climate-related achievement.
- For the work of DG European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO), only the response to forest fires should be considered (at a level of 40%) as contributing to biodiversity mainstreaming. The Commission's measures on civil protection also contribute to biodiversity mainstreaming through the firefighting measures. In 2024, the Commission allocated EUR 38 million from the programme's budget to address the forest-fire season. The government-to-government agreements for the European aerial firefighting fleet were signed. In parallel, the focus was put on reinforcing the rescEU transition arrangement in the light of the increasing wildfire threat across the EU, with a doubling of the rescEU transition fleet, notably by leasing additional light planes and helicopters to also serve central Europe.

Contribution to gender equality (million EUR) (*)

Gender score	2021	2022	2023	2024	Total
2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
0*	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
0	182.6	354.3	253.0	240.3	1 030.2
Total:	182.6	354.3	253.0	240.3	1 030.2

(*) Based on the applied gender contribution methodology, the following scores are attributed at the most granular level of intervention possible:

- 2: interventions the principal objective of which is to improve gender equality;

- 1: interventions that have gender equality as an important and deliberate objective but not as the main reason for the intervention;
- 0: non-targeted interventions (interventions that are expected to have no significant bearing on gender equality);
- 0*: score to be assigned to interventions with a likely but not yet clear positive impact on gender equality.

- ECHO commits to gender-sensitive civil protection, including addressing specific vulnerabilities and exchanges on the issue of support for victims of gender-based violence during disasters. DG ECHO promotes gender equality through the disaster risk cycle and raises awareness of the principles of non-discrimination and inclusiveness. It also promotes a gender-inclusive approach in response activities and ensures that the gender component is considered. The voted budget implementations committed to the mechanism, amounting to EUR 240.3 million in 2024, have been marked preliminarily in the 0 category. This marking will be reviewed at the end of the multiannual financial framework cycle in order to recategorise funds under scores 1 or 2, should gender equality be relevant. Within the framework of the third phase of the regional programme for prevention, preparedness and response to natural and human-made disasters in the Eastern Neighbourhood, specific guidelines (in English and Russian) for the inclusion of gender equality have been developed to ensure gender mainstreaming throughout project implementation. This covers areas such as training and exercises, multi-risk assessments, early warning systems, public awareness, volunteerism and host nation support. The programme has a budget of EUR 6 million and will operate until the end of 2024. Gender mainstreaming is a cross-cutting theme that is integrated into all programme activities, in line with the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, which pays particular attention to all-of-society engagement.
- In the context of the training and exercises programme further refined under the umbrella of the Union Civil Protection Knowledge Network, online course modules are available on different disaster management topics and in different languages, such as ‘Cultural sensitivity and gender’.

Gender-disaggregated information

- No sets of data disaggregated by gender are compiled under the UCPM.

Contribution to the digital transition

The objective of the programme is to promote solidarity in face of disasters. The programme therefore does not contribute to the digital horizontal priority.

Contribution to sustainable development goals

SDG	Does the programme contribute to the goal?	Example (only for the most relevant SDGs)

SDG3: Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages	Yes	On top of the Medevac (medical evacuations) operations occurring almost every week since early 2022 in the context of Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine (900 patients transported from Ukraine to EU hospitals in 2024), other Medevac operations took place in 2024, notably Palestinian patients directly evacuated from Gaza (23 patients and 63 relatives) or Egypt (51 patients and 118 relatives).
SDG6: Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all	Yes	The EU provides safe drinking water, sanitation, and hygiene support through its humanitarian aid and Civil Protection Mechanism, with its main objective to save and preserve life and alleviate the suffering of populations facing severe environmental health risks and water insecurity in the context of anticipated, ongoing and recent humanitarian crises, for example in Ukraine; Austria, Germany, Denmark, Finland, Romania and Sweden have donated water pumps, water treatment units, purification tablets, sewage pumps and equipment and hygiene kits. Additionally, in response to ICRC's request for assistance in Gaza, Spain donated a desalination plant and Germany deployed technical experts to assist Burundi in protecting water infrastructure as Lake Tanganyika water levels rose threatening the main plant supplying safe water to the capital, Bujumbura. These donations were offered by Member States and the Emergency Response Coordination Centre co-funded transport and deployment costs.
SDG9: Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation	Yes	The programme stimulates research and innovation in the domain of disaster risk management to, for example, enable more cost-effective technologies, enhanced forecasting and prediction, as well as use of artificial intelligence around it – involving both the private sector and academia. A key focus is on outcome-based projects that can be deployed to operations and have an uptake in the market. Between 2019 and 2024, more than 90 disaster prevention and preparedness projects across have been funded across the programme's eligible states to operationalise and support knowledge transfer. Some examples of projects awarded in 2024 revolving research and innovation include INLINE (EUR 991 451.80 of EU grant), which aims to improve storm and flood impact forecasting in Europe by using Artificial Intelligence for improved predictions; and SMarAI (EUR 710 773), which aims to improve maritime disaster response by using Artificial Intelligence to optimise resource allocation and support decision-making.

SDG11: Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable	Yes	The programme continued to promote a better understanding of disaster risks and engaged in the analysis of the latest summaries of risk assessments and capability assessments submitted by Member States and participating states. The first progress report on disaster risk management under the prevention pillar of the Mechanism (Article 6 report) based on this analysis was published on 12 March 2024. The Commission further pursued mainstreaming disaster risk reduction across EU policies, with a special focus on mobilising long-term investments in disaster risk management from cohesion, agricultural and research policy funding and linking with the EU climate and environmental policies. One of the projects mainstreaming disaster risk management, is 'INVEST for DRM' from Croatia (EUR 611 453.20 of EU grant). One of the objectives of this action is prepare project proposals and technical documentation for investments in disaster risk management, including green transition (including for cohesion funds, Interreg Programme, etc.). These efforts aim to increase investments for disaster risk management and climate resilience in civil protection in Croatia.
SDG13: Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts	Yes	The UCPM contributed to a number of initiatives to implement the EU Forest 2030 strategy Adaptation and sustainable finance, as well as the Renovation Wave and Zero Pollution action plans. The programme notably supported the development of a harmonised EU monitoring system of forest fires and contributed to the Adaptation Strategy through improved collection of data on climate-related losses, improving the understanding of the economics of disaster prevention, preparedness and the cost of adaptation. Some UCPM-funded projects awarded in 2024 in these areas included: AHEAD (EUR 596 425 EU grant), which aims to develop a fully engineered system for collecting and analysing post-disaster damage and loss data in Europe; FirePlay (EUR 813 931.71 EU grant), which aims to design games to raise wildfire awareness, focusing on education across four European bioregions; FIRE-SCENE (EUR 862 053.47 EU grant), which aims to enhance wildfire risk management through new methodologies and tools for integrated risk governance in the Mediterranean; and WEDS (EUR 164 855.96 EU grant), which aims to improve understanding of wildfire risks in the Czech Republic and strengthens stakeholder collaboration.

Contribution to strategic technologies (STEP)

The programme does not contribute to the STEP priority.

Concrete examples of achievements

29	21	2 233 677	9
country cancer profiles and analytical EU reports had been produced under the European Cancer Inequalities Registry initiative by the end of 2024.	health data access bodies were being set up or their capabilities enhanced thanks to support from EU4Health as part of the forthcoming European health data space as at the end of 2024.	patients with rare conditions had benefited from access to diagnosis and treatment in the 24 European reference networks by the end of 2024.	European public health reference laboratories in were nominated in 2023/2024, providing important, high-quality assessment and training covering food and water borne diseases, high-risk, emerging and zoonotic bacterial pathogens, antimicrobial resistance etc.
25	778	215 000	19
Member States are participating in the joint action to support the development of sustainable, forward-looking national and EU stockpiling strategies.	healthcare and public health professionals had participated in training on preparedness and response to cross-border health threats and addressing medical countermeasures by the end of 2024.	mpox vaccine doses had been donated to the Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention by the end of 2024, amid an urgent outbreak.	public health laboratories and academic research institutes have been brought under the Durable consortium to reinforce the EU's capacity to rapidly respond to emerging pathogens posing serious cross-border threats to health.

Budget programming and implementation

Budget programming (million EUR):

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	Total
Financial programming	329.1	839.4	739.3	753.4	582.6	684.9	239.7	4168.4
NextGenerationEU	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Decommitments made available again (*)	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Contributions from other countries and entities	8.7	20.9	21.4	27.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	78.4
Total	337.8	860.4	760.6	780.7	582.6	685.4	239.7(**)	4 246.8

(*) Only Article 15(3) of the Financial Regulation.

(**) Article 5 credits are not included

Cumulative budget implementation at the end of 2024 (million EUR):

	Implementation	Budget	Implementation rate
Commitments	2 738.1	4 246.8	64.5%
Payments	1 244.4		29.3%

Implementation and performance

Key performance indicators

	Baseline	Progress	Target	Results	Assessment
Number of Member States implementing best practices regarding health promotion, disease prevention and addressing health inequalities	0	> 100%	20 in 2031	25 in 2024	Achieved

Preparedness and response planning of the EU and of Member States for serious cross-border threats to health	0	94%	32 in 2027	30 in 2024	On track
Number of actions aimed at increasing the security and continuity of the global supply chains and addressing dependence on imports from non-EU countries for the production of essential active pharmaceutical ingredients and medicinal products in the EU	1	23%	13 in 2027	3 in 2024	On track
Number of production facilities with enhanced capacities in increasing security and continuity of supply for medical countermeasures, raw materials, and components at the EU level	0	80%	5 in 2027	4 in 2024	On track
Number of audits conducted in the EU and in third countries to ensure good manufacturing practices and good clinical practices	10	80%	65 in 2027	52 in 2024	On track
Number of healthcare and public health staff trained and values updated	0	25%	3050 in 2027	778 in 2024	Moderate progress
Number of Member States participating in the European health data space	7	55%	27 in 2031	15 in 2024	On track
Number of studies supporting the evaluations of legislative and non-legislative health union policies	0	24%	25 in 2027	6 in 2024	Deserves attention
Number patients diagnosed and treated by the members of European reference networks	1 million	>100%	2 million in 2027	2.2 million in 2024	Achieved

The 2024 investments in crisis preparedness and response represent around 64% of the annual budget. The programme has significantly enhanced the EU's crisis response capabilities, enabling timely action such as the procurement of mpox vaccines. Its impact is already evident in areas such as intelligence gathering and crisis assessment relating to medical countermeasures, where networks such as Durable and EU-WISH play a key role. The EU4Health programme has also contributed to the InvestEU Programme through blending with the EU guarantee, which contributed to the

mobilisation of additional investments. In particular, the programme contributed EUR 110 million via an InvestEU top-up for EIB investments into innovative life science projects in the area of medical countermeasures.

Other procurement and grant initiatives bring products closer to the market. Particular attention was paid to antimicrobial resistance due to its growing impact on public health, for instance through collaboration with the Global Antibiotic Research and Development Partnership. Another important contribution by the programme is the establishment of EU FAB, an ever-warm network for vaccine production, ensuring rapid and sustained manufacturing capacity to respond to health emergencies. The contributions to improve national surveillance systems via direct grants to Member States attracted 23 proposals, which started between October 2024 and January 2025. There was a great deal of interest from Member States in taking up these grants. The programme will contribute approximately EUR 87 million. Likewise, the joint action on counteracting antimicrobial resistance, supported with EUR 50 million, attracted the participation of all Member States and a wide consortium of beneficiaries. In addition, EU funds are financing the further development of the EU early warning and response system and three waves of new European reference laboratories for human pathogens. To date, nine EU reference laboratories have been appointed, with funding secured for the next seven years. Contributions to the World Health Organization and the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control further support international coordination in relation to prevention, preparedness and control, such as to respond to the recent Ebola, mpox and Marburg virus outbreaks in Africa.

The initiatives implementing the **health promotion and disease prevention** strand (9.7% of the annual budget) are on track. The programme supports 142 pilot projects on the prevention and management of cardiovascular diseases under the joint action on cardiovascular diseases and diabetes. Nineteen Member States are implementing public health interventions at all stages of life to support a healthy living environment under the prevent non-communicable diseases joint action; under the mental health together joint action, 20 Member States are adopting a comprehensive approach to mental health; and the European programme for mental health exchanges, networking and skills is supporting the participation of around 300 mental health and other professionals in exchange programmes on mental health. Member States are working together to implement the Council recommendations on vaccine-preventable cancers and on smoke- and aerosol-free environments. Support is also being provided for the implementation and enforcement of tobacco-control legislation. New grants for European reference networks for rare diseases are running from October 2023 until September 2027 (with a total call budget of EUR 77.4 million, EUR 3 225 000 million per reference network and a funding rate of 100%). The work packages for the grants included seven compulsory work packages and up to four additional work packages, two of which can be for cooperation activities involving Ukrainian competent authorities. Progress in the seven compulsory areas is measured through 24 indicators. The introduction of unified areas of work and indicators is positive, catering for better comparability of results among the networks and enabling more efficient synergies and sharing of best practices. The joint action on the integration of European reference networks into national healthcare systems was launched in January 2024 for a duration of 37 months, involving 58 partner institutions from all of the Member States plus Norway and Ukraine with total funding of EUR 18.75 million. The goal is to improve the use of European reference network resources to improve access to diagnosis, care and treatment options for rare conditions.

The **health systems and healthcare workforce** investments (5.4% of the annual budget) delivered good results. The new edition of the *Health at a Glance: Europe 2024*, providing a cross-country assessment of the performance of national health systems in the EU, was published as planned at the end of 2024. The programme improved the placing on the market of safe, properly functioning medical devices and *in vitro* diagnostic medical devices under the new regulatory framework on medical devices, with 10 554 certificates for medical devices and 1 273 certificates for *in vitro* diagnostic medical devices issued as of October 2024. EU4Health financed an information-technology platform for the implementation of the [Health Technology Assessment Regulation](#). This platform is already supporting joint work on the part of nearly 500 users from the EU-27, Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway in their health technology assessments and joint scientific consultations for medicinal products. Moreover, 350 patients have been trained to participate in joint work on health technology assessments. The programme includes initiatives supporting the implementation of the pharmaceutical strategy and legislation, such as the project on electronic product information for medicines. This project will help to facilitate the delivery of information on medicines to healthcare professionals and patients in the EU's multilingual environment and to support the wider availability of medicines across the Member States. The programme has financed activities aimed at providing organisational support to Member States in implementing the new Substances of Human Origin Regulation, along with a project to ensure coherence with other regulatory frameworks. Additionally, EU4Health funds have been allocated to enhance national efforts and collaboration within the National Competent Authorities on Pricing and Reimbursement group and for a study on the implementation of the Clinical Trials Regulation.

Spending under the **digital** strand (3% of the annual budget) supported the digital transformation of healthcare systems that are reaching the set targets. Among the key initiatives, expanding the roll-out of MyHealth@EU, geographically and in services provided by each Member State (e.g. patient summaries, e-prescriptions, e-dispensations), rolling out HealthData@EU (e.g. the cross-border gateway to be deployed by health data access bodies) and setting up and strengthening the capabilities of health data access bodies will directly pave the way for and support the participation of Member States in the European health data space. A total of 22 countries launched 44 key projects in late 2023 and early 2024 to increase geographic coverage, cross-border interoperability or access by patients to their own health data. These projects are in line with the expected progress on implementation of the European health data space. The challenges encountered, such as the limited capacity that can be devoted to these projects across Member States in terms of expertise in health data interoperability, have been mitigated by improving the cooperation between work groups and communities in the eHealth Network, the eHealth Member States Expert Group and the Community of Practice of Health Data Access Bodies.

Implementation of the **cancer** strand (21.5% of the annual budget) is contributing to the objectives of Europe's beating cancer plan, with 74 initiatives launched successfully. The performance of this strand shows strong progress, as illustrated by the implementation review of Europe's Beating Cancer Plan published on February 2025⁴¹. For example, the CanScreen-ECIS project is developing and refining tools for data collection and monitoring in relation to cancer screening and for assessing the quality of cancer screening programmes. While the number of Member States participating was lower than expected, at only 18, it served to underline gaps in data collection at

⁴¹ SWD(2025) 39 final

the national level and an already high reporting burden on the part of countries, indicating the need for further support and funding in this area.

The programme continued to support the implementation of the global health strategy, contributing to the **international health initiatives and cooperation**. In 2024, the programme contributed to several initiatives with the World Health Organization, such as contributing to curbing antimicrobial resistance through successful collaboration with the Global Antibiotic Research and Development Partnership.

Contribution to horizontal priorities

Contribution to green budgeting priorities (EUR million):

	Implementation				Estimates			Total	% of the total envelope
	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027		
Climate mainstreaming	7.5	0.5	0.9	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	8.9	0.2%

The initiatives funded under EU4Health programme do not make a direct contribution to the climate, biodiversity and clean air horizontal priorities. To ensure a high level of human health protection in all EU policies the initiatives funded by the programme are implemented, where applicable, in line with the ‘one health’ approach, which recognises that human health is connected to animal health and to the environment, and that measures to tackle threats to health must consider those three dimensions. The funds allocated to ‘one health’ measures in 2024 amounted to about EUR 140 million. The amounts have varied over the last four years, with a total budget of about EUR 398.5 million during that period. The 2024 annual work programme provides programmed funding for nine initiatives addressing environmental risk factors and a ‘one health’ approach under the crisis preparedness strand.

Contribution to gender equality (EUR million) (*):

Gender score	2021	2022	2023	2024	Total
2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
1	15.0	75.9	23.3	20.0	134.2
0*	0.0	0.0	0.0	25.0	25.0
0	314.1	763.5	716.0	708.4	2 502.0
Total:	329.1	839.4	739.3	753.4	2 661.3

(*) Based on the applied gender contribution methodology, the following scores are attributed at the most granular level of intervention possible:

- 2: interventions the principal objective of which is to improve gender equality;
- 1: interventions that have gender equality as an important and deliberate objective but not as the main reason for the intervention;
- 0: non-targeted interventions (interventions that are expected to have no significant bearing on gender equality);
- 0*: score to be assigned to interventions with a likely but not yet clear positive impact on gender equality.

The EU4Health programme aims to keep all people healthy and active for longer, irrespective of gender. Several initiatives focus on women's health (e.g. breast or cervical cancer screening and vaccination coverage for human papillomaviruses) and provide relevant information for the purpose of gender tracking under the EU4Health programme. The European cancer inequalities registry initiative provides sound and reliable data to identify inequalities in cancer prevention and care across the Member States, Norway and Iceland. One of the inequality dimensions explicitly addressed is differences between men and women, through the inclusion of data on the cancer burden and certain risk factors disaggregated by sex. Certain other topics address a specific policy focus on gender differences (cancers caused by infections, vaccine-preventable cancers and addressing communicable diseases) and on differences across population groups (particularly women, children and other groups). The 2024 annual work programme budget allocated around EUR 45 million to initiatives considered relevant to gender (such as action on cancers caused by infections, vaccine-preventable cancers and addressing communicable diseases – with a focus on cervical cancer), which is above the average annual contribution of the first three programming years. The data that will allow disaggregation by gender are expected to become available in 2025.

Gender-disaggregated information

- Relevant information on the gender dimension will also be retrieved from the collection of data on several indicators that focus on male-related diseases – such as prostate cancer and the increase in vaccination coverage for human papillomaviruses in boys. In addition, in the case of certain indicators (the age-standardised five-year net survival rate for paediatric cancer and the percentage of the population covered by cancer registries reporting information on colorectal and paediatric cancer stage at diagnosis), relevant data that can be disaggregated are expected to become available in 2025.
- In the case of three other indicators, very limited gender disaggregation may be possible when data become available (the indicators 'Number of actions addressing the prevalence of major chronic diseases per Member State, by disease, gender, and age', 'Number of actions addressing the age prevalence of tobacco use, if possible, differentiated by gender' and 'Number of actions addressing the prevalence of harmful use of alcohol, if possible, differentiated by gender and age'). Future action-level indicators may provide relevant information on gender equality during the implementation of the programme, and data will be reported accordingly.

Contribution to the digital transition (EUR million):

	2021 implementation	2022 implementation	2023 implementation	2024 implementation	Total	% of the 2021- 2024 envelope
Digital contribution	86.1	140.1	67.0	80.8	373.9	14.1%

The EU4Health programme contributed substantially to the digital transition in 2021, 2022 and 2023 and 2024, with a total programmed budget of EUR 445million supporting initiatives in the following intervention fields: (1) human capital – information technology services and applications for digital skills and digital inclusion; support for the development of digital skills; (2) digital public services – government information and communications technology solutions, e-services and applications; e-health services and applications (including e-Care, the internet of things for physical activity and ambient assisted living), and digitalisation in healthcare.

The 2024 work programme includes initiatives (with funding of EUR 80.79 million) that contribute to the digital transition goal and are assigned to the following EU4Health annual programme strands: digital, crisis preparedness and health system.

The digital strand of EU4Health contributes directly to the implementation of the European health data space. The amounts programmed and committed so far under the 2024 work programme are broadly in line with the indicative budgets included in the legislative financial statement accompanying the [proposal for a regulation on the European health data space](#). Funding of EUR 25 million was planned in the legislative financial statement for 2024, and EUR 29.14 million was provided for in the 2024 EU4Health work programme for the European health data space (EUR 24.64 million) and artificial intelligence in healthcare (EUR 4.5 million) under the digital strand.

Contribution to sustainable development goals

SDG	Does the programme contribute to the goal?	Example (only for the most relevant SDGs)
SDG3: Ensure healthy lives and promote well- being for all at all ages	x	The EU4Health programme and its annual work programmes deliver initiatives to implement the ‘healthier together’ initiative, Europe’s beating cancer plan and the mental health initiatives. They also address selected health risk factors and health determinants. The programme also funds initiatives that are producing guidance to improve healthcare access, contributing to SDG 3.8.

SDG10: Reduce inequaliti es within and among countries	x	Under Europe's beating cancer plan, the EU4Health programme and its annual work programmes contribute to the European Cancer Inequalities Registry initiative. This provides sound and reliable data to identify inequalities in cancer prevention and care across the Member States, Norway and Iceland.

Support for reforms

Initiatives funded by EU4Health relate to reforms that Member States need to carry out in response to country-specific recommendations issued under the European semester. Initiatives implemented across all of the strands of EU4Health contribute to Member States' efforts to address country-specific recommendations relating to improving the resilience, accessibility and effectiveness of health systems; ensuring the supply of critical medical products; addressing shortages of health professionals; supporting the reskilling and upskilling of the health workforce; strengthening primary care; taking forward the deployment of e-health services; and supporting disease prevention measures.

Contribution to strategic technologies (STEP)

In line with the "STEP" Regulation, **EU4Health** is one of the EU budget instruments in direct management and indirect management mobilized under **STEP** to strengthen the competitiveness and resilience of the European economy. In accordance with **Article 4 of the STEP Regulation**, EU4Health is also among the programmes authorized to award the **STEP (Sovereignty) Seal** under its calls for proposals.

As of 31 **December, 2024**, EU4Health has launched and closed **three calls for proposals** in the **biotechnologies** space, each with one STEP-relevant topic, respectively targeting vaccines development, the development of antivirals, and innovative manufacturing technologies for medicines production.

As such, in **2024** EU4Health work programme earmarked a **total budget of EUR 129 million to the STEP objectives** of supporting the **development and manufacturing of critical technologies** throughout the Union or safeguarding and strengthening their respective value chains. These calls are aimed at introducing **cutting-edge innovations** with strong economic potential and **reducing or preventing strategic dependencies** within the EU.

In December 2024, under these calls, EU4Health awarded the STEP Seal to 7 projects, of which four are collaborative initiatives between entities from a variety of EU Member States and regions. Beyond the recognition of the STEP Seal, all seven projects awarded under the EU4Health programme calls also secured grant funding, covering a substantial share of their eligible costs. In total, **more than €130 million was awarded** under the STEP-linked calls of EU4Health.

EUROPEAN SOCIAL FUND+

Concrete examples of achievements

6.8 million people had been supported by the end of 2024 thanks to the shared management strand of the European Social Fund Plus.	1.8 million young people aged 18-29 had been supported by the end of 2024 thanks to the shared management strand of the European Social Fund Plus.	690 000 participants had found a job (including becoming self-employed) by the end of 2024 thanks to the shared management strand of the European Social Fund Plus.	1 million Participants had gained a qualification by the end of 2024 thanks to the shared management strand of the European Social Fund Plus.
320 000 participants were in education or training by the end of 2024 thanks to the shared management strand of the European Social Fund Plus.	2.3 million people benefited from food assistance in 2024 thanks to the shared management strand of the European Social Fund Plus.	620 000 people received material assistance in 2024 thanks to the shared management strand of the European Social Fund Plus.	4 708 job placements had been created under the direct management strand of the European Social Fund Plus (employment and social innovation) by the end of 2024 (European Employment Services targeted mobility scheme).

Budget programming and implementation

Budget programming (million EUR):

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	Total
Financial programming	174.0	15 967.8	16 373.9	16 816.3	17 234.0	14 564.2	15 013.4	96 143.5
NextGenerationEU	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Decommitments made available again (*)	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Contributions from other countries and entities	7.2	2.6	2.9	3.6	0.0	0.0	0.0	16.3
Total	181.2	15 970.4	16 376.8	16 819.8	17 234.0	14 564.2	15 013.4	96 159.8

(*) Only Article 15(3) of the Financial Regulation.

Financial programming – recovery assistance for cohesion and the territories of Europe:

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	Total
Financial programming	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
NextGenerationEU	15 434.9	5 151.8	11.5	1.3	13.5	0.0	0.0	20 613.0
Decommitments made available again (*)	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Contributions from other countries and entities	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Total	15 434.9	5 151.8	11.5	1.3	13.5	0.0	0.0	20 613.0

Cumulative budget implementation at the end of 2024 (million EUR):

	Implementation	Budget	Implementation rate
Commitments	49 154.7	96 159.8	51.1%
Payments	5 371.0		5.6%

Financial implementation (cumulative) – recovery assistance for cohesion and the territories of Europe:

	Implementation	Budget	Implementation rate
Commitments	20 596.0	20 613.0	99.9%
Payments	18 565.9		90.1%

Implementation and performance

Key performance indicators

	Baseline	Progress	Target	Results	Assessment
Unemployed participants reached	0	11%	21.5 million in 2029	2.4 million in 2024 compared to a target of 21.5 million in 2029	On track
Number of participants aged 55 years and above reached	0	10%	6.4 million in 2029	660 000 in 2024 compared to a target of 6.4 million in 2029	On track

Participants with lower-secondary education or less reached	0	12%	31.1 million in 2029	3.7 million in 2024 compared to a target of 31.1 million in 2029	On track
Participants considered part of disadvantaged groups reached	0	18%	10.9 million in 2029	2 million in 2024 compared to a target of 10.9 million in 2029	On track
Quantity of food distributed	0	n/a	n/a	96 000 in 2024	n/a
Number of children below 18 years of age benefiting from food, material or voucher support	0	n/a	43.6 million in 2029	542 000 in 2024	On track
Number of information-sharing and mutual-learning activities	0	42%	191 in 2029	81 in 2024 compared to a target of 191 in 2029	On track
Number of social experimentations	0	64%	14 in 2029	9 in 2024 compared to a target of 14 in 2029	On track

- DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion is attending the monitoring committee meetings for the 2021-2027 programming period and working together with the Member States on addressing any issues that arise. The monitoring committees discuss topics such as progress in programme implementation and in achieving the milestones and targets; the contribution of the programme to tackling the challenges identified in the relevant country-specific recommendations that are linked to the implementation of the programme; the progress made

in carrying out evaluations, syntheses of evaluations and any follow-up on findings; the implementation of communication and visibility measures; the fulfilment of enabling conditions and their application throughout the programming period; and progress in administrative capacity building for public institutions, partners and beneficiaries, where relevant.

- The performance of programmes is also normally discussed during the annual performance review meetings, in accordance with Article 41 of the Common Provisions Regulation. Given the adoption of the European Social Fund Plus (ESF+) programmes in late 2022, the period for achieving the milestones was reduced from four years to a little more than two years; however, the managing authorities were aware of the difficulty of setting milestones under such circumstances. In 2025, ESF+ shared management targets have been updated on the basis of the updated historical data, new information on inflation developments and the appropriate part of the overall ESF+ budget contributing to these results, and also taking into account the impacts of shifts in the programming focus compared to the previous programming period.
- In 2024, the budget implementation for the ESF+ programmes continued. The relevant budget allocation was committed, and the regulatory pre-financing payments were executed. In addition, close to EUR 2.8 billion of interim payment requests were submitted by the Member States and paid out.
- In 2024, DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion continued to work towards simplifying the implementation of the ESF+. According to the preliminary data from an ongoing study on the uptake of simplified cost options and financing not linked to cost, almost 50% of the ESF+ budget is implemented through the use of simplified cost options and financing not linked to cost, thus making the ESF+ the frontrunner among all funds encompassed by the Common Provisions Regulation. Whereas the use of simplified cost options has already been a reality for the past two years, the uptake of financing not linked to cost has also been increasing. In 2024, two new schemes relating to financing not linked to cost, in Estonia and Cyprus, were approved by the Commission, and four other schemes were officially submitted for approval (one in Lithuania, one in Poland and two in Romania). By the end of January 2025, nine such schemes had been adopted by the Commission in seven Member States (Estonia, France, Cyprus, Latvia, Hungary (two), Poland (two) and Portugal), amounting to EUR 3.5 billion. To support the Member States in preparing these schemes, DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion provided continuous support and guidance, including by making six models of schemes for financing not linked to cost available (one on individual learning accounts; three based on existing Recovery and Resilience Facility measures in the fields of education and skills, employment and social inclusion; and two for the integration of migrants and refugees). In addition, within the framework of the Transnational Network on Simplification, the Member States' representatives prepared three further models.
- The implementation of the ESF+'s direct and indirect management (employment and social innovation – EaSI) strand is on track overall, and improving as its execution progresses. Several EaSI/ESF+ information-sharing and mutual-learning activities are still in progress, as it remains slightly below the expected average per year (21 versus 27). The figures can partially be explained by the low number of activities in 2021 (only 15, just over half of the indicative average of 27). DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion will closely follow its evolution from the 2026 programming phase (now under discussion) and the subsequent 2027 programming phase. The number of jobs created under the targeted mobility scheme is likely to rise in the coming years, as confirmed by a clearly rising trend (the number of jobs created

in 2024 increased by 200% compared to 2023, and the number in 2023 increased by 464% compared to 2022).

- For the 2021-2027 period, transnational cooperation activities to accelerate the transfer and scaling up of social innovations are taking place under the [ESF+ social innovation initiative](#) (EasI). With a current budget of EUR 132 million, this initiative is implemented under indirect management by the Lithuanian European Social Fund Agency and was officially launched in November 2022. Within this framework, the agency is organising transnational exchanges and cooperation through knowledge sharing, mutual learning and capacity building for social innovation stakeholders. This includes five communities of practice on employment; education and skills; social inclusion; social innovation; migrant integration; and material support. In addition, the Lithuanian European Social Fund Agency supports the work of the ALMA (aim, learn, master, achieve) initiative and the EU Roma network.

Contribution to horizontal priorities

Contribution to green budgeting priorities (EUR million):

	Implementation				Estimates			Total	% of the total envelope
	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027		
Climate mainstreaming	0.4	1 263.7	1 303.7	1 396.6	969.3	817.8	843.2	6 594.8	6.9%

- The ESF+ fully supports the climate change objectives by promoting green skills jobs and contributing to the green economy. Climate measures can be undertaken under the majority (if not all) of the ESF's investment priorities (whether in the context of support for small and medium-sized enterprises, vocational education and training systems, lifelong learning or youth employment measures, among other things). It is for this reason that the Commission decided to add a dimension to the ESF to track climate change expenditure: the ESF+ secondary theme. All expenditure under this ESF+ secondary theme has a 100% coefficient.
- This contribution corresponds to the amount earmarked for the secondary theme (01) 'Contributing to green skills and jobs and the green economy' in the ESF+ programmes.
- The STEP Regulation introduced a new intervention field 145b ('Support for the development of skills or access to employment in clean and resource-efficient technologies'), which is dedicated to measures that are specific to the strategic technologies and also have a 100% contribution coefficient for the climate change objectives.
- The ESF+ promotes green skills and jobs and contributes to the green economy by:
 - supporting the labour force by enhancing knowledge and skills to develop, produce, use and apply new efficient and low-carbon technologies in a broad range of sectors and by matching these skills to jobs;

- offering support to the labour force to alleviate any negative impact on employment as a result of shifting to a low-carbon and climate-resilient economy, namely job cuts in energy-intensive industries.
- Through this type of investment, the programme also partially supports the development of biodiversity-relevant skills and jobs. However, the contribution of the ESF+ to biodiversity is marginal compared to the broader contribution to climate mainstreaming and cannot be tracked, as tracking is not envisaged in the regulation.

Contribution to gender equality (million EUR) (*)

Gender score	2021	2022	2023	2024	Total
2	0.0	507.5	1 439.3	688.6	2 635.3
1	0.0	14 775.4	13 384.2	14 162.1	42 321.7
0*	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
0	174.0	685.0	1 550.4	1 965.6	4 375.0
Total:	174.0	15 967.8	16 373.9	16 816.3	49 332.0

(*) Based on the applied gender contribution methodology, the following scores are attributed at the most granular level of intervention possible:

- 2: interventions the principal objective of which is to improve gender equality;
 - 1: interventions that have gender equality as an important and deliberate objective but not as the main reason for the intervention;
 - 0: non-targeted interventions (interventions that are expected to have no significant bearing on gender equality);
 - 0*: score to be assigned to interventions with a likely but not yet clear positive impact on gender equality.
- Under ESF+ shared management, Member States programmed targeted measures to increase women's employment and ensure gender equality in selection criteria and procedures. As one of six thematic enabling conditions (Annex IV to the Common Provisions Regulation, enabling condition 4.2), gender equality is a prerequisite for the effective implementation of fund objectives. DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion reviews Member States' assessments, advises monitoring committees and ensures ESF+ data are gender disaggregated, aligning with the Common Provisions Regulation's gender equality codes: 01 for gender targeting (score 2), 02 for gender mainstreaming (score 1) and 03 for gender neutral (score 0).
 - To strengthen gender equality in the 2021-2027 partnership agreements and programmes, DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion has given dedicated presentations to the managing authorities of all Common Provisions Regulation funds. Member States were asked to commit to horizontal principles in their partnership agreements and provide specific details on gender mainstreaming in each programme. This is assessed through internal checklists, horizontal enabling conditions and a dedicated procedure involving all relevant Commission services.
 - Gender equality is also a horizontal priority for the direct and indirect management strand of the ESF+, and should be taken into account in all activities. To identify to what extent the ESF+'s EaSI strand is successful in mainstreaming horizontal principles in the activities it supports, the performance framework of the strand includes an indicator on the percentage of stakeholders who declare that the activities funded through EaSI promote gender equality and non-discrimination.

This indicator is directly linked to sustainable development goal (SDG) 5 ⁽⁴²⁾. The 2024 survey indicates a decline in the gender equality indicator – from 79% in the 2021 survey to 71% – as measured under the previous EaSI programme. This comparison should be considered with caution, as the gender indicators used in the surveys were not drafted in exactly the same way (following the regulations), which could potentially affect the results

Gender-disaggregated information

All common indicators on participants are broken down by gender. Under ESF+ shared management, Member States transmit data twice a year on the participants supported, with a gender breakdown. By the end of 2024, the ESF+ had supported 6.8 million participants, of whom 3.5 million were women, 3.3 million were men and 50 000 were non-binary. Of these participations, 2.1 million led to an active job search, entry into education or training, or the gaining of a qualification or of employment, 1 million (48%) of which were by women.

Highlighted projects

FairPlusService, an ESF-funded project (Common Provisions Regulation gender code 01 – score 2), helps women in Austria access better jobs through training, coaching and career support, strengthening the labour market and promoting gender equality.

Development teams I, an ESF+-funded project in Slovakia, integrates gender-sensitive practices to support Roma families and children (Common Provisions Regulation gender code 02 – score 1). Roma women, known as ‘Nenes’ and ‘Nenementors,’ play a key role in supporting early childhood education and empowering their communities.

Contribution to the digital transition (EUR million):

	2021 implementation	2022 implementation	2023 implementation	2024 implementation	Total	% of the 2021-2024 envelope
Digital contribution	0.0	124.1	1 597.5	2 117.7	3 839.4	7.8%

Digital-relevant activities are well captured by the Recovery and Resilience Facility intervention field grid, a detailed methodology for tracking digital expenditure used to estimate financial contributions to the digital transition in 2022, 2023 and 2024. The ESF+ supports the digital transition through investment in digital skills. Previously, the reported amounts corresponded to funds earmarked for ‘Developing digital skills and jobs’ (secondary theme 02) in ESF+ programmes, whereas they now reflect actual implementation.

⁽⁴²⁾ More information is available below in the section on sustainable development goals, under SDG 5: ‘Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls’.

Contribution to sustainable development goals

SDG	Does the programme contribute to the goal?	Example (only for the most relevant SDGs)
SDG1 End poverty in all its forms everywhere	Yes	ESF+, 2021-2027 In Czechia, the ESF+ (employment+ programme) is helping people in need to rebuild their lives, starting with a roof over their head. Through the social housing initiative, individuals and families in need can access dedicated housing points in the city of Ostrava, while social workers make regular visits to the new residents to ensure stability. This sustained support has a high success rate, with over 85% of participants maintaining their housing stability. The city's proactive approach has already changed many lives, with 59 households benefiting from housing and a renewed sense of opportunity. Member State: Czechia EU contribution: EUR 763 168.64 Duration: 2022-2025
SDG2 End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture	Yes	ESF+, 2021-2027 In Luxembourg, the ESF+ supports the vocational reintegration workshop Caddy, fighting food waste and food insecurity. In partnership with a hypermarket, a team of 40 people collects and processes food that would otherwise be thrown away, under the guidance of chefs and educators. The food is turned into fresh juices and meals, which are given to disadvantaged people through Stëmm vun der Strooss and 10 other associations. Beyond reducing waste, the project helps tackle poverty by providing jobs to those struggling to find work. Member State: Luxembourg EU contribution: EUR 93 080 Duration: 2024-2025

SDG3 Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages	Yes	ESF+, 2021-2027 The ESF+ co-funds the social neighbourhood worker programme (implemented through the Thalia programme), aiming to transform community care in Cyprus. The programme deploys local teams of social workers who can leverage their understanding of the community to provide targeted counselling, psychological support and help to access social welfare services. The proactive and decentralised approach greatly improves the accessibility and speed of services, promoting the well-being of 639 participants who would otherwise be excluded from welfare services. Member State: Cyprus EU contribution: EUR 28 800 000 Duration: 2021-2027
SDG4 Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all	Yes	ESF+, 2021-2027 In Portugal, the ESF+ supports the national Escolhas programme, which aims to provide better access to quality education, employment and social services for children and young people from Roma communities and immigrant backgrounds. The programme's primary goal is to enhance educational success and develop the personal, social and digital skills needed for stable employment. For example, one of the projects in Santarém successfully integrated 50 children from diverse cultural backgrounds into the community through study support, Portuguese language teaching and engagement in sports and arts. The Escolhas programme is expected to reach over 17 000 participants across Portugal. Member State: Portugal EU contribution: EUR 10 499 999.98 Duration: 2023-2026

SDG5 Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls	Yes	ESF+ (EaSI strand), 2021-2027 The ESF+ supports a cross-country project, involving organisations from Germany, Greece, Iceland, Italy, Portugal and Romania, that promotes a holistic and intersectional approach to combating homelessness among women. The project's objectives include empowering marginalised women to overcome homelessness by providing access to tailored treatment pathways, integrating gender-specific approaches in trauma-informed care and influencing policy changes towards gender-sensitive and inclusive strategies. Member States and other countries: Germany, Greece, Iceland, Italy, Portugal, Romania EU contribution: EUR 3 897 758.16 Duration: 1 October 2024-30 September 2027
SDG7 Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all	Yes	ESF+ (EaSI strand), 2021-2027 The ESF+ is contributing to the green and social hub, which aims to integrate local measures supporting changes towards the green transition into the overall strategy to remove inequalities and poverty. The hub is expected to improve the knowledge and competences of local administrators, provide tools and strategies to tackle energy poverty in the overall multidimensional concept of poverty and make local communities more sustainable. This will prepare three local communities to become an energy community, equip disadvantaged groups with knowledge and skills to actively face and contribute to the green transition. Member States: Belgium, Italy EU contribution: EUR 727 401.20 Duration: 1 September 2023-31 August 2025

SDG8 Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all	Yes	ESF+, 2021-2027 The ESF+ supports the your EURES job 4 project, which focuses on helping people in countries particularly affected by the COVID-19 crisis and the energy crisis find a quick and sustainable path out of unemployment through job placements in Germany. The project aims to support 1 500 participants by offering measures such as labour market information, counselling, job search assistance and placement in internships or employment. These efforts are combined with funding measures aimed at overcoming major obstacles to transnational labour mobility. At least 70% of the funding is dedicated to jobseekers aged between 18 and 35, while 15% supports participants aged 50+. Consortium partners provide consultation services to small and medium-sized enterprises implementing integration programmes and offering post-placement support to participants. Member States: Germany, Spain, France, Croatia, Cyprus, Portugal EU contribution: EUR 5 793 745.65 Duration: 1 October 2023-30 September 2025
SDG10 Reduce inequalities within and among countries	Yes	ESF+, 2021-2027 In Austria, the ESF+ supports the 'ready to start school' initiative, a cornerstone of the national programme to fight material deprivation and ensure that every child has the chance to start the school year on equal foot. Every year, the initiative provides a voucher worth EUR 150 to approximately 48 000 pupils from households receiving minimum income or social assistance, allowing them to buy essential school supplies. In addition, the programme promotes social inclusion by providing information on services such as social markets, leisure activities, energy advisory services and violence prevention. Member State: Austria EU contribution: EUR 16 800 000 Duration: 2022-2028

SDG11 Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable	Yes	ESF+ (EaSI strand), 2021-2027 The ESF+ supports the ‘social ecosystems for fair and inclusive transitions’ (SEFIT) project in Ireland and Italy, which aims to develop new approaches to effectively help people facing challenges brought about by the green and digital transitions at the local level. By enhancing a collaborative approach, the project backs social innovations designed to assist individuals facing socioeconomic disadvantages during these transitions. In this way, it ensures a fair green transition while documenting insights from the public–private partnership between social innovators and policymakers. Member States: Ireland, Italy EU contribution: EUR 805 064.15 Duration: 1 August 2023-31 July 2025
SDG12 Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns	Yes	ESF+ (EaSI strand), 2021-2027 The ESF+ supports the Soulfood project, which tests innovative digital tools to foster sustainable production in the agri-food sector and enhance the connection between producers and social food distribution initiatives. By promoting a more sustainable, inclusive and connected agri-food value chain, the project aims to contribute to reducing food waste by 50% by 2030 and addressing the challenge of providing healthy and balanced meals to the most vulnerable populations. Soulfood includes nine partners from four Member States, representing various segments of the agri-food value chain. Member States: Greece, Spain, Lithuania, Romania EU contribution: EUR 721 565.90 Duration: 1 September 2023-31 August 2025

SDG13 Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts	Yes	ESF+ (EaSI strand), 2021-2027 Despite investments in cycling infrastructure, urban cycling continues to lag behind. The Bike2Green project, funded by ESF+, aims to support the social acceptance and adoption of urban cycling, thereby contributing to the green transition towards more sustainable transport. The project encourages this modal shift through a gamification scheme involving kilometric reimbursements and economic prizes that can only be redeemed in local bike shops. Bike2Green emphasises the importance of societal engagement and community-wide environmental activism for embracing sustainable mobility alternatives. Of the 1 500 expected users from schools, universities and research centres in Stockholm, 1 188 are already actively participating. Member States: Belgium, Italy, Sweden EU contribution: EUR 876 000.00 Duration: 1 October 2023-30 September 2025

Contribution to strategic technologies (STEP)

In line with the STEP Regulation, the ESF+ is one of the EU programmes under shared management mobilised under the STEP to strengthen the competitiveness and resilience of the European economy. Under the ESF+, STEP investments can be supported under existing priority axes and/or under new STEP-dedicated priorities, if a Member State amends one or more of its ESF+ programmes.

To facilitate the implementation of STEP-related initiatives, the STEP Regulation introduces a significant change in ESF+ financing. It allows for an exceptional pre-financing rate of 30% for programme priorities dedicated to STEP objectives. This increased pre-financing is designed to accelerate the launch of projects that contribute to the EU's technological advancement and strategic autonomy. Furthermore, the regulation amends the co-financing rules for ESF+. For dedicated priorities established to support STEP objectives, the maximum co-financing rate has been increased to 100%. This change aims to reduce financial barriers for Member States implementing STEP-related projects, potentially leading to the more rapid and widespread adoption of critical technologies across the EU.

In alignment with the ESF+, the STEP supports various objectives, including addressing skills shortages and creating opportunities for upskilling and reskilling workers.

As of the end of 2024, four Member States had introduced specific STEP priorities in their ESF+ programmes to benefit from the 30% pre-financing rate (applicable to programme amendments submitted before 31 August 2024). Eight new priorities across seven programmes will contribute almost EUR 840 million to STEP-related initiatives. Most of this funding is planned to be directed

towards policies relating to skills in digital technologies, deep technologies and biotechnologies. In 2024, a total of EUR 251 million was paid as pre-financing concerning seven programmes from the 2021-2027 programming period.

The budget allocation and expenditure for specific initiatives under the STEP are as follows:

- ESO4.a ‘Access to employment and activation measures’: EUR 189 285 797;
- ESO4.d ‘Adaptation of workers and enterprises to change’: EUR 29 640 000;
- ESO4.e ‘Improving education and training systems’: EUR 22 317 199;
- ESO4.f ‘Quality and inclusive education and training systems’: EUR 7 280 000;
- ESO4.g ‘Lifelong learning and career transitions’: EUR 589 806 693.

2014-2020 multiannual financial framework – European Social Fund (ESF)

Cumulative budget implementation at the end of 2024 (million EUR):

	Implementation	2014-2020 budget	Implementation rate
Commitments	93 619.5	93 630.6	100.0%
Payments	92 925.4		99.2%

Key performance indicators

	Baseline	Progress	Target	Results	Assessment
Participants in employment, including self-employment, upon leaving the ESF intervention	0	> 100%	24% in 2023	30% of participants compared to a target of 24%	On track

Participants gaining a qualification upon leaving the ESF intervention in education, training and vocational training for skills and lifelong learning	0	> 100%	23% in 2023	26% of participants compared to a target of 23%	On track
Inactive young people not in employment, education or training gaining a qualification or in employment upon leaving the youth employment initiative intervention	0	> 100%	0.26 million in 2020	0.28 million inactive participants compared to a target of 0.26 million	Achieved

The ESF has been successfully promoting sustainable and quality employment (in line with specific objective 1). Operations that promote sustainable and quality employment supported almost 18.5 million participations and led to over 7.1 million positive results (i.e. people either found a job, gained a qualification or otherwise improved their labour market position). Almost 3.9 million participants entered employment after participating in an ESF-supported intervention, which amounts to a total of 32% of participations recorded for unemployed and inactive people. This is well above the target of the core performance indicator set in the 2014-2020 multiannual financial framework for this objective (24%).

In the field of social inclusion (specific objective 2), the ESF contributes to reducing poverty in the EU, typically through attention relating to active inclusion, by targeting specific groups such as low-skilled people, (long-term) unemployed, older people, people with disabilities and people with a migrant/foreign background. In 2022, this specific objective supported almost 14.9 million participations and led to 4.1 million positive results. A total of 0.7 million inactive participants were engaged in job searching upon leaving, which amounts to 13% of all participations recorded for inactive people. Consistent progress was made towards the targets defined for the output indicators. At the end of 2022, at least half of all indicators had achieved 103% of their defined output targets. The achievements for results were not as high, reaching a median of 60.9% by the end of 2022. This underlines the fact that challenges also remain in the field of social inclusion in relation to reaching the 2023 targets.

The implementation of the key investment priorities focusing on education and training (specific objective 3) progressed steadily each year. By the end of 2022, a total of 23.7 million

participations had been recorded for all operations in education, of which 8.2 million had achieved an individual short-term result. More than 5.8 million participants gained a qualification through ESF investments with an education objective, which represents 25% of all participations recorded in this objective. This is already above the target defined as the core performance indicator by 2023 (23%). Another 1.4 million people were in education/training when they left the intervention. As expected, the numbers of people engaged in education were higher than those engaged in job search or those that had entered employment. Another relevant result recorded in various education programmes relates to improved skills (not necessarily leading to a qualification), which was recorded by another 5.3 million participants. The implementation rate for education investments was about average across all investment priorities, with higher implementation rates in measures focusing on the labour market relevance of education (91.5%), while those funding measures supporting access to higher education were at 77.1%.

By the end of January 2024, the Commission had received 46 programme amendments under the cohesion’s action for refugees in Europe initiative from 19 Member States. Investments made under cohesion policy programmes to address migration challenges through cohesion’s action for refugees in Europe and the flexible assistance to territories package amounted to EUR 1.672 billion. However, financial support for people fleeing Ukraine is also pursued under ESF+ thanks to the specific objectives of Regulation (EU) 2021/1057 ⁽⁴³⁾ (the “ESF+ Regulation”) enabling targeted support for non-EU nationals, children and people at risk of poverty.

The investments under the recovery assistance for cohesion and the territories of Europe initiative had almost been completed by the end of 2023, with a total of EUR 20.3 billion (over 100%) selected and over 50% already declared as expenditure. Implementation under this initiative of transversal investments with employment objectives showed slightly lower implementation rates as measured by expenditure declared (43%).

2014-2020 multiannual financial framework – Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived

Cumulative budget implementation at the end of 2024 (million EUR):

	Implementation	2014-2020 Budget	Implementation rate
Commitments	3 813.7	3 813.7	100.0%
Payments	3 645.2		95.6%

⁽⁴³⁾ 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 (OJ L 231, 30.6.2021, p. 21, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2021/1057/oj>).

Key performance indicators

	Baseline	Progress	Target	Results	Assessment
Number of people receiving assistance from the fund	0	> 100%	12.7 million annually from 2015 to 2020	17.1 million compared to a target of 12.7 million	Achieved

Around 15 million people benefited from the Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived in 2022, with more than 390 000 tonnes of food and 62 million meals distributed. More than 800 000 people were supported through basic material assistance and almost 225 000 people received vouchers.

Annual implementation reports in 2022 declared expenditure totalling EUR 669 million in 2022, resulting in a total implementation rate of 73%.

Around 400 000 tonnes of food was provided in 2022, which is slightly less than in the pandemic years of 2020 and 2021, but more than in the years before the pandemic. A rising trend can be observed in the overall monetary value of basic material assistance over the entire programming period. This amounted to EUR 40.6 million, half of which was used for voucher schemes in Romania.

In 2022, 14.2 million people received food assistance through the fund, 0.8 million received basic material assistance and 9 127 received social inclusion support. These numbers are lower than those in the COVID-19 years of 2020 and 2021, but higher than the average estimates for 2017-2019. Of this total of 15 million people, 49% were women, 30% were children, 10% were over 65 years old, 12% were migrants, people with a foreign background or minorities, 5% were people with disabilities and 6% were homeless.

By the end of 2022, the fund had successfully delivered assistance in all the Member States, making good progress towards its objectives. Most Member States (23 out of 27) had distributed food and/or basic material assistance, together with accompanying measures (operational programme I), and four Member States continued to run social inclusion programmes (operational programme II).

ERASMUS+

Concrete examples of achievements

More than 11 000 Erasmus+ participants from Ukraine.	Close to 1.3 million Erasmus+ mobility participants in 2023.	More than 34 000 Erasmus Mundus scholarships have been awarded since 2014.	31% of the budget cooperation projects supported environment and climate change in 2023.
49% of Erasmus+ cooperation partnerships supported digital transition in 2023.	Close to 314 000 pupils and staff in school education took part in learning mobility activities in 2023.	35% of young people in learning mobility activities in 2023 came from an underprivileged background.	More than 241 000 learners and staff in vocational education and training took part in learning mobility activities in 2023.

Budget programming and implementation

Budget programming (million EUR):

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	Total
Financial programming	2 663.0	3 420.7	3 684.0	3 806.1	3 977.2	4 281.3	4 117.3	25 949.7
NextGenerationEU	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Decommitments made available again (*)	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Contributions from other countries and entities	256.0	209.2	243.9	304.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	1 013.2
Total	2 919.0	3 630.0	3 927.9	4 110.2	3 977.2	4 281.3	4 117.3	26 962.9

(*) Only Article 15(3) of the Financial Regulation.

Cumulative budget implementation at the end of 2024 (million EUR):

	Implementation	Budget	Implementation rate
Commitments	14 504.0	26 962.9	53.8%
Payments	12 311.0		45.7%

Implementation and performance

Key performance indicators

	Baseline	Progress	Target	Results	Assessment
Number of participants in learning mobility activities – learners (education and training)	0	54%	5 million in 2027	2.7 million compared to a target of 5 million	On track
Number of participants in learning mobility activities – staff (education and training)	0	63%	1.4 million in 2027	885 100 compared to a target of 1.4 million	On track
Number of participants in virtual learning (education and training)	0	> 100%	224 300 in 2027	295 200 compared to a target of 224 300	Achieved
Number of organisations and institutions taking part in the programme (youth)	0	47%	156 210 in 2027	73 853 compared to a target of 156 210	On track

Number of organisations and institutions taking part in the programme (sport)	0	56%	11 422 in 2027	6 446 compared to a target of 11 422	On track
Number of small-scale partnerships supported by the programme (education and training)	0	56%	8 700 in 2027	4 890 compared to a target of 8 700	On track
Share of projects addressing climate objectives under cooperation projects (youth)	0	57%	25% in 2027	Milestones achieved for 2021-2024	On track

- In 2024, despite persisting external challenges (notably a fast-growing inflation rate since the energy crisis following Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine), the programme continued supporting transnational learning mobility, while promoting cooperation between organisations and policy development.
- The programme continued rolling out the numerous initiatives contributing to achieving the European education area by 2025. The programme supported this through flagship initiatives like the 'European Universities', centres of vocational excellence and 'Erasmus+ Teacher Academies'.
- The main activities for the mid-term evaluation of the Erasmus+ programme (2021-2027), together with the final evaluation of the predecessor programme (2014-2020), were finalised in 2024. The relevant evaluation report, covering both evaluations, is expected to be adopted during the second quarter of 2025.

Delivering on main priorities

- In 2024, the programme also continued to focus on its four main horizontal priorities, promoting inclusion and diversity, contributing to the green and digital transitions and to democratic participation and EU values via support to projects and to specific activities. Indicators monitoring the evolution of the cross-cutting programme priorities track their performance at different levels: the share of activities addressing climate objectives under Key action 1 shows a positive trend for all sectors. The relevance of the green priority is also confirmed by the data under Key action 2, where progress is above the target and increasing.
- The inclusion priority is measured through a varied set of indicators, tracking the number of participants with fewer opportunities taking part in the different strands of the programme, but also showing the inclusiveness of the programme through the number of newcomer

organisations reached thanks to the simplification measures introduced in the new programme.

- The set of results indicators introduced through the Delegated Act on the monitoring and evaluation framework allow a more thorough monitoring of the take-up of the four horizontal priorities by tracking positive change and learning outcomes linked to such priorities in participants, while additional output indicators complete the set monitoring the contribution to the priorities through Key action 2 projects.
- Synergies among Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps programmes are visible in the recently adopted monitoring and evaluation frameworks, where similar indicators (adapted to the peculiarities of the two programmes and their actions) are available, notably to monitor contributions to the cross-cutting programmes priorities.
- SALTO (support advanced learning and training opportunities) resource centres provide support to both national agencies and beneficiaries for a quality implementation of the four priorities across Erasmus+ and the European Solidarity Corps, fostering synergies among the programmes.
 - The aim of the centres is to improve the quality and impact of the Erasmus+ programme at a systemic level through providing expertise, resources, analysis, information and training activities in specific areas for Erasmus+ national agencies and other relevant actors.
- Rising inflation puts an increasing pressure on the costs of mobile learners. Following a first adjustment of the rates of individual support for the 2023 call for proposals, under the 2024 call the Commission has thoroughly revised the funding rules for learning mobility participants, adapting unit costs rates to market prices as far as possible, in order to improve the programme's inclusiveness. The use of sustainable means of transport became the default option (with exceptions when justified) when it comes to travelling for purposes of the programme.

Democratic participation and EU values

- In the 2024 Erasmus+ call, all three Jean Monnet actions in other fields of education and training ('Jean Monnet for Schools') were included, promoting teaching and learning about the EU in schools and vocational education and training institutions, and enhancing teachers' competences in this field. The objective of these funding opportunities is to empower teachers to teach about the EU, to improve learning outcomes on EU matters, strengthen EU literacy and create interest in the EU and democratic processes among learners (students and pupils), thus promoting active citizenship education in the programme countries. In 2024, three school networks and 14 teacher training projects were selected, along with 94 projects under the 'Learning EU initiatives' action. The Jean Monnet actions in the field of higher education continue to stimulate teaching, learning and research in European integration matters, to promote debates and contribute to spreading knowledge about the EU via the 267 selected projects.
- Youth participation activities aim to enhance young people's skills, competences and foster active citizenship. This action complements the existing support to non-formal learning activities, such as youth exchanges bringing together young people from different countries to exchange and learn outside their formal educational system. From 2021 to 2024, almost EUR 95 million has been devoted to this action, expected to generate participation opportunities for more than 480 000 young people.

- In line with Regulation (EU) 2021/817 ⁽⁴⁴⁾ (the “Erasmus+ Regulation”), the 2024 Erasmus+ annual work programme reaffirmed the key role of the programme in strengthening European identity and values and in contributing to a more democratic EU. Entities which are beneficiaries in EU projects have the obligation to commit to and ensure the respect of basic EU values. The implementing documents have reinforced this dimension from 2024 with an award criterion assessing the extent to which the proposal is relevant for the respect and promotion of shared EU values, and a check box on EU values in the application forms.

The international dimension

- After the successful launch of the international actions in 2022, Erasmus+ has reached its cruising speed. As the programme has demonstrated a strong level of budget absorption and the budget allocations remain consistent over the years, we expect to achieve similar results in 2025 as in 2024. Notably, in 2024 we supported around 1 200 international credit mobility projects aiming to provide opportunities to more than 50 000 higher-education students and staff to carry out their mobility periods. In 2024, through Erasmus Mundus actions, around 147 higher education institutions from 38 countries have been involved in the development of joint international master’s degree programmes. Additionally, 2 765 Erasmus Mundus scholarships were granted to students from more than 75 countries. Furthermore, 270 capacity-building projects were selected in 2024 to promote cooperation among institutions and organisations engaged in higher education, vocational education and training, and youth and sport. Since the launch of the Erasmus Mundus programme in 2004, 36 000 Erasmus Mundus scholarships have been awarded.⁴⁵

Continuing our support to Ukraine

- Since the start of Russia’s war of aggression against Ukraine, the Erasmus+ programme has been mobilised, thanks to its built-in flexibility, to support projects promoting educational activities and facilitating the integration of people fleeing the war in Ukraine into their new learning environments. Participating organisations have been encouraged to tailor their activities to address these challenges effectively. A focus was placed on Key action 1 (learning mobility) projects, given their capacity to support incoming mobility from Ukraine and facilitate the integration of learners and staff. Additionally, the programme has provided support to organisations, learners and staff in Ukraine through activities such as capacity-building projects. In 2024, the Commission continued its support for Ukraine’s educational system via the Erasmus+ programme, notably funding student and staff mobility, cooperation projects, and the printing of 1.5 million schoolbooks for 11-13-year-old pupils.
- In 2025 Ukraine will continue to be a key focus for the programme, with sector-specific priorities introduced under ‘partnerships for cooperation’ (Key action 2) in the fields of education, training and youth, specifically aimed at supporting those affected by the war. The range of actions in support of Ukraine is expected to be broad, reflecting the diverse needs of the education sector, from pupils and students to teachers and trainers, universities and schools, as well as with non-governmental organisations.

⁽⁴⁴⁾ Regulation (EU) 2021/817 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 May 2021 establishing Erasmus+: the Union Programme for education and training, youth and sport and repealing Regulation (EU) No 1288/2013 (OJ L 189, 28.5.2021, p. 1, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2021/817/oj>).

⁴⁵ [20 years of Erasmus Mundus, published in 2024](#)

- In 2024, a new publication, [Building Hope – Europe’s solidarity with Ukraine – 15 inspiring Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps projects providing support to people affected by the war](#), was released, featuring 15 Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps projects, which have provided support to those affected by the war in Ukraine.

Contribution to horizontal priorities

Contribution to green budgeting priorities (EUR million):

	Implementation				Estimates				
	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	Total	% of the total envelope
Climate mainstreaming	220.0	385.4	443.5	427.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	1 476.5	5.7%

- The actions supported by the programme contribute to the overall climate objective, both by the prioritisation of the green transition in the cooperation activities and by the promotion of green practices at the project level throughout the programme.
- In this respect, the programme supports the use of innovative and awareness-raising practices to make learners, volunteers, staff and youth workers true factors of change (e.g. save resources, reduce energy use and waste, compensate carbon footprint emissions, opt for sustainable food and mobility choices).
- Funding rules have been revised so that from 2024, sustainable travel became the default option, with the programme offering stronger incentives for those who travel in a sustainable way. Participants in learning mobility activities are thus encouraged to prioritise green travel as their first choice when planning their trip.
- The framework for implementing the green priority in Erasmus+, prepared in cooperation with the relevant thematic SALTO and in consultation with many stakeholders, was published at the end of 2024. It outlines the importance of the priority on the EU's political agenda and provides an overview of the measures and mechanisms to implement it in the programme.

The yearly contribution to climate objectives is based on beneficiary organisations' applications for receiving funding for the cooperation of projects (Key action 2) with climate-related topics. The environment and the fight against climate change are among the horizontal priorities of the programme which aim to support, across all sectors, awareness-raising about the green transition, environmental and climate-change challenges. Examples of cooperation projects addressing climate objectives can be found in the [Erasmus+ annual report 2023](#) and the [Erasmus+ project result platform](#).

Contribution to gender equality (million EUR) (*)

Gender score	2021	2022	2023	2024	Total
2	313.9	315.4	309.0	238.7	1 177.1
1	498.6	751.6	780.0	876.0	2 906.2
0*	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
0	1 850.4	2 353.7	2 595.4	2 691.4	9 490.5
Total	2 663.0	3 420.7	3 684.0	3 806.1	13 573.9

(*) Based on the applied gender contribution methodology, the following scores are attributed at the most granular level of intervention possible:

- 2: interventions the principal objective of which is to improve gender equality;
 - 1: interventions that have gender equality as an important and deliberate objective but not as the main reason for the intervention;
 - 0: non-targeted interventions (interventions that are expected to have no significant bearing on gender equality);
 - 0*: score to be assigned to interventions with a likely but not yet clear positive impact on gender equality.
- The programme framework of inclusion measures was adopted in 2021 in order to reinforce inclusion measures already implemented and to help adapt them to different circumstances in the Member States. With these measures in place, which also include the setting up of national inclusion plans and the nomination of inclusion contact points in each national agency, the programme opens up opportunities for many people to have a learning experience in another country, in particular by reaching out to increasing numbers of people with fewer opportunities. These measures are starting to bear fruit, with an estimated share in 2023 of 15% of participants with fewer opportunities under Key action 1 of the programme (compared with 13% in 2022).
 - In line with the principles of the 2020-2025 gender equality strategy, Erasmus+ contributes to fostering equality, including gender equality, in all of the sectors it addresses. The programme seeks, inter alia, to help overcome gender stereotypes in education and educational careers and strengthen the promotion of participation of women in the area of science, technology, engineering and mathematics education, especially in engineering, information and communication technologies and advanced digital skills. For instance, the programme contributes to fostering gender balance in higher education institutions, across fields of study and in leadership positions; in the vocational education and training sector, it supports targeted measures promoting gender balance in traditionally 'male' or 'female' professions and addressing gender and other stereotypes. The main programme indicators are disaggregated by gender when relevant and possible.
 - Regarding interventions of which the principal objective is to improve gender equality (score 2), the yearly contribution to gender is based on beneficiary organisations' applications for receiving funding for cooperation projects (Key action 2) with gender-related topics.
 - Regarding interventions with a neutral impact on gender equality (score 0), the yearly contribution to gender is the difference between the programme's budget as indicated in the relevant annual work programme and the yearly contribution to gender based on beneficiary organisations' applications for receiving funding for cooperation projects (Key action 2) with gender-related topics.

- The data are provisional, as the final results will only be available upon completion of the projects (normally 2-3 years after they start).
- Due to the specificities of the Erasmus+ programme, it is not possible to fully discern gender contribution from voted budget implementation commitments only. The split presented in the table above represents a pro-rata repartition based on the score proportions of the total implementation included in the relevant annual work programmes. This total of EUR 3 886 million ⁽⁴⁶⁾ includes other sources of funding on top of the voted budget implementation.

Gender disaggregated information:

Erasmus+ supports gender equality and encourages women to participate in mobility activities. In 2023, 60% of the provided mobility opportunities were taken up by women. The gender distribution varies depending on the field of education; adult education has the highest percentage of women (70%), followed by school education (67%), higher education (61%), youth (58%) and vocational education and training (54%).

Examples of cooperation projects addressing inclusion and diversity, including gender equality, can be found in the [Erasmus+ annual report 2023](#) and in the [Erasmus+ project result platform](#).

Contribution to the digital transition (EUR million):

	2021 implementation	2022 implementation	2023 implementation	2024 implementation	Total	% of the 2021- 2024 envelope
Digital contribution	534.5	778.6	861.8	372.4	2 547.3	18.8%

- Erasmus+ is heavily mobilised to respond to the necessary digital transformation of education and training, youth and sport. The year 2022 saw the launch of the SALTO digital resource centre, with the aim of supporting the qualitative implementation of the digital priority in the programme and for bringing programme and policy closer in the field of digital education. To this end, relevant guidelines for the creation and implementation of a digital strategy in Erasmus+ were launched in 2024.
- The mobility actions of the programme provide an increased number of opportunities to acquire and develop digital skills, through initiatives such as the digital opportunity traineeships scheme. The programme also complements physical mobility by promoting distance and

⁽⁴⁶⁾ Linked to interventions the principal objective of which is to improve gender equality (i.e. gender score 2) and to interventions that have gender equality as an important and deliberate objective, but not as the main reason for the intervention (i.e. gender score 1).

blended learning. Moreover, it has a broad offer of learning opportunities focusing on basic and advanced digital competence development and virtual exchanges, and it supports cooperation projects on digital education.

- The programme supports the implementation of the 2021-2027 digital education action plan. In line with the action plan priorities, the programme contributes to the development of digital skills and competences, promotes accessible and high-quality digital learning, fosters teachers' capacity to use digital tools, services and content to enhance student learning and develop student digital skills, provides blended learning opportunities (combinations of more than one approach to the learning process, blending school-site and distance-learning environments, and digital and non-digital learning tools). Erasmus+ also supports European online platforms for virtual cooperation and digital education.
- Following the 2023 adoption of the digital education and skills package, consisting of two Council recommendations, one on key enabling factors for successful digital education and training and one on the provision of digital skills and competences, two expert groups were set up on: (i) the development of guidelines and quality requirements for accessible, well-designed and high-quality digital education content, and (ii) the development of guidelines on high-quality informatics. As 2024 marks the mid-point of the 2021-2027 digital education action plan, the Commission has committed to undertake a comprehensive review to be completed in 2025.
- Throughout 2024, the Commission continued to implement the 'SELFIE' tool ('self-reflection on effective learning by fostering the use of innovative educational technologies'), which currently has been used by 6.7 million users in 32 875 schools in 88 countries.
- The European Digital Education Hub was launched in 2022. In December 2024, the hub community counted 6 000 members. Six squads were established, gathering around 25 members focusing on topics such as hybrid learning spaces, safety and security, immersive learning, digital wellbeing, featuring and explainable AI. The higher education interoperability workgroup, established within the hub, produced in December 2024 a draft version of the higher education interoperability framework, offering practical guidelines and tools to enable interoperability among learning and teaching systems in higher education. These guidelines and tools were tested by the workgroup, in preparation for the framework's official launch in February 2025.
- The European student card initiative aims at making it as easy as possible for students across Europe to be mobile. Through its key components – the Erasmus+ mobile app, the European student card and the digitalisation of student mobility management – the initiative constitutes a real revolution for the simplification of the way universities manage student mobility. By the end of 2024, the Erasmus+ mobile app had been downloaded more than 250 000 times and 3.2 million European student cards were produced. The 'Erasmus Without Paper' network has become the default option for higher education institutions to prepare intra-European student mobility. By the end of 2024, 196 000 interinstitutional agreements and 320 000 learning agreements were digitally exchanged and approved by partners.
- The yearly contribution to digital objectives is, among others, based on beneficiary organisations' applications for receiving funding for cooperation projects (Key action 2) with digital-related topics. Results also include centralised projects supporting digital education and managed directly by DG Education, Youth, Sport and Culture, and digital platforms supporting learners, staff and organisations.
- The data are provisional as the final results will only be available upon completion of the projects (normally 2-3 years after they start).

Contribution to sustainable development goals

SDG	Does the programme contribute to the goal?	Example (only for the most relevant SDGs)
SDG3 Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages	x	The mobility project 'path to harmony' has been designed to help youth workers find their balance, rejuvenate their energy and discover new techniques, tools and resources to incorporate in their youth work practice. Furthermore, by learning and practicing stress reduction techniques, yoga and mindfulness, youth workers can role model healthy behaviours for the young people they work with. This can help to promote positive mental health and well-being among young people and encourage them to develop their own self-care strategies. The project aims, among other things, at improving mental health outcomes, such as reducing symptoms of anxiety and depression, and improving overall well-being.
SDG4 Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all	x	The 'share the music for inclusive learning in education' (Smile) project was designed to support teachers in addressing this challenge by providing a practical framework and showcasing best practices for managing inclusion and diversity in education. Its primary goal is to offer pre-primary and primary schoolteachers new knowledge, key competencies and ready-to-use educational materials to effectively use music as a pedagogical tool for inclusive education. Additionally, the project aims to help teachers develop their social and digital skills through its digital repository and online training resources. While the project has been designed for teachers, the ultimate beneficiaries are the students, whose well-being and academic performance are expected to improve as a result of these integrated inclusive practices.

SDG5 Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls	x	The general objective of the project ‘step forward for women in basketball’ (Promise) is to promote the inclusion and participation of girls and women in basketball at all levels of responsibility through the design, implementation and evaluation of a holistic intervention programme. The project is fully aligned with the Erasmus+ Sport specific priority ‘combating violence and tackling racism, discrimination, and intolerance in sport (including gender equality)’. It project conducts focus groups involving all participant federations and 216 European stakeholders to assess the current situation of women in basketball, along with the programme methodology, which will be implemented in all six of the countries involved (Bulgaria, France, Ireland, Kosovo (*), Portugal and Spain). (*) This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244/1999 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence.
SDG8 Promote sustained , inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all	x	The project ‘fast-tracking women into new tech careers and supporting successful female-led start-ups’ (Femme forward) is a forward-looking project targeting the low representation of women in digital jobs and start-ups. Through an innovative and comprehensive training programme, women with various backgrounds are empowered to either start a career in tech or employ their experience and knowledge to set up a tech start-up. The project supports women with various backgrounds with a special focus on: migrants and refugees whose qualifications are not recognised in the EU; professionals and women who want to change careers for better job prospects; young graduates with non-tech degrees who want to move into tech positions; women who have a tech business idea and want to make it a reality; women re-entering the labour market after maternity, etc.
SDG11 Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable	x	The project ‘youth and city’ aims to provide training and resources to empower young people to actively participate in the development of their cities. By involving them in the planning process, the project hopes to create more inclusive and environmentally friendly communities.

SDG12 Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns	x	‘From the ground to the plate: capacitation to improve food sustainability’ (FG2P) is a youth project aimed at raising awareness of food sustainability in the target regions (Albania, Portugal, Spain and Tunisia), while exploring different ways to the dominant production and consumption model, enhancing the organic and sustainable alternatives. The main goals are: 1. raising awareness of the correlation of the food industry and climate change; 2. developing methods and materials to enhance food sustainability within the youth sector (both for youth workers and young people); 3. fostering the adoption of initiatives related to food sustainability, which improve the diet, health and well-being of young people.
SDG13 Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts	x	The project ‘digitally for climate’ (Digi4clima) established international cooperation to contribute to raising awareness of two global issues – the fight against climate change and digital transformation. It aimed at developing and promoting a digital learning tool on climate change that provides knowledge, raises awareness of environmental sustainability and promotes digital literacy. The tool supports teachers when educating primary school students about the dangerous effects of climate change on earth, developing a caring attitude towards nature, making them aware of the consequences of their daily actions, and encouraging them to live in a more environmentally friendly way.
SDG16 Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels	x	Under the action for ‘Capacity building in higher education’, the project ‘Academic alliance for reconciliation in the field of higher education in peace, conflict transformation, and reconciliation studies in the Middle East and North Africa’ aimed at building capacity in the field of higher education in peace, reconciliation and conflict transformation studies in the Middle East and North Africa.

Support to reforms

- N/A

Contribution to strategic technologies (STEP)

- N/A

EUROPEAN SOLIDARITY CORPS

Concrete examples of achievements

More than 886 000 young people have expressed an interest in joining the European Solidarity Corps by registering since the launch of the new-generation programme in 2021.	Close to 10 000 projects have received programme grants since the launch of the programme in 2021.	Nearly 4 500 organisations have participated in projects supported by the programme since its launch in 2021.	More than 90 000 opportunities for young people have been created under the programme since 2021.
More than 50% of participants in volunteering activities have been people with fewer opportunities since 2021.	About 63% of the total number of programme participants since its launch in 2021 have been women.		

Budget programming and implementation

Budget programming (million EUR):

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	Total
Financial programming	135.7	141.4	144.2	144.0	146.9	149.8	152.9	1 015.0
NextGenerationEU	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Decommitments made available again (*)	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Contributions from other countries and entities	11.0	7.0	7.4	8.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	33.6
Total	146.7	148.4	151.6	152.2	146.9	149.8	152.9	1 048.6

(*) Only Article 15(3) of the Financial Regulation.

Cumulative budget implementation at the end of 2024 (million EUR):

	Implementation	Budget	Implementation rate
Commitments	586.6	1 048.6	55.9%
Payments	470.3		44.9%

Implementation and performance

Key performance indicators

	Baseline	Progress	Target	Results	Assessment
Number of participants in solidarity activities	0	51%	185 755 in 2027	94 439 compared to a target of 185 755	Moderate progress
Number of organisations	0	68%	5 155 in 2027	3 512 compared to	On track

holding a quality label				a target of 5 155	
Share of participants with fewer opportunities	0	57%	30% annually from 2022	Milestones achieved for 2021 till 2024	On track
Share of activities that address climate objectives	0	>100%	20% annually from 2025	Sum of results 2021-2024 exceed sum of all milestones 2021-2027	On track

After five years of implementation the programme's volunteering projects absorb the allocated budget to a very large extent, due to the high demand by young people for volunteering opportunities. However, the number of young people who can be supported with the available budget is lower than initially expected. This is due to the lower-than-estimated take-up of short-term activities, which are less costly, and the higher-than-estimated take-up of long-term volunteering activities.

Short-term activities, which typically last between two weeks and two months, cost on average about 8 to 10 times less than longer-term activities, which last between several months and one year. The original estimates of the budget split between short- and long-term activities was 35% short-term versus 65% long-term, whereas we now observe a split closer to 15% for short-term and 85% for long-term activities. This, to a great extent, explains the implementation figures (in terms of the number of volunteers). Additional factors influencing these figures are inflation and a more significant uptake of the programme by young people with fewer opportunities, which exceeds the programme's original ambitions. The reduction in the number of participants was partly mitigated by the co-delegation of Horizon Europe mission funds to the European Solidarity Corps, which was implemented in 2023 and 2024. This is a concrete example of a fruitful synergy between two Commission programmes; however, it is not expected to be extended in the coming years until the end of the current multiannual financial framework. The interim evaluation of the programme⁴⁷ was adopted on 1 April 2025 and provides factual inputs into programme performance and suggest areas for possible improvement.

⁴⁷ REPORT FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, THE COUNCIL, THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE AND THE COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS on the interim evaluation of the 2021-2027 European Solidarity Corps and final evaluation of the 2018-2020 European Solidarity Corps: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=COM:2025:144:FIN>

COMMISSION STAFF WORKING DOCUMENT EVALUATION Accompanying the document REPORT FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, THE COUNCIL, THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE AND THE COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS on the interim evaluation of the 2021-2027 European Solidarity Corps and final evaluation of the 2018-2020 European Solidarity Corps: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex:52025SC0075>

Rising inflation and overall hosting costs have put increasing pressure on the costs of Corps participants. Therefore, the Commission adjusted the rates of individual support for the 2023 European Solidarity Corps call for proposals, with a focus on supporting individual participants, who are most affected by the increase in the cost of living. In 2024, the Commission even more thoroughly revised the funding rules to improve the programme’s inclusiveness and to ensure that volunteers have full support through their hosting organisations. In addition, funding for volunteering teams was made more attractive for organisations by removing the cap in that was place until 2024. This should help to increase the number of participants in the Corps for the last years of the programme.

The programme focuses, via support for projects and for specific activities, on four main transversal priorities: promoting inclusion and diversity; contributing to the green and digital transitions; contributing to democratic participation; and contributing to EU values. In 2021, a specific priority, ‘Prevention, promotion and support in the field of health’, was added to mobilise volunteers in addressing the impact of the pandemic and the recovery. In 2022, two priorities were indicated: ‘Promoting healthy lifestyles’ and ‘Preservation of cultural heritage’. In 2023, inclusion and diversity, environmental sustainability and climate goals, digital transformation and participation in democratic life were added, along with relief for people fleeing armed conflicts and other victims of natural or human-made disasters. The latter was maintained in 2024, and was seconded by fostering positive learning experiences and outcomes for young people with fewer opportunities.

The programme and its entire community once again showed extreme resilience and adaptability by quickly mobilising to provide relief to Ukrainian residents fleeing Russia’s war of aggression, along with communities across the EU that offered them a safe haven.

Launched in 2022, the European Voluntary Humanitarian Aid Corps is a centralised initiative that allows the deployment of young volunteers in non-EU countries. The first call for proposals was published in the 2022 programme guide, enabling organisations that had been awarded the specific quality label to request funding for volunteering opportunities in support of humanitarian aid projects. As 2023 was the first year of implementation, and based on the results of the first three calls, we can make more accurate estimates for the following years, notably regarding deployment in teams, which is much lower than had initially been expected. In practice, the number of volunteers is now expected to be much lower than the initial estimate, but their deployments are expected to last longer.

In 2025, projects that started in 2021 have largely been finalised. Therefore, data on 2021 can be considered rather stable. Data will further stabilise in the coming years. Meanwhile, data on forecasted awarded mobilities are encoded.

The 2018-2020 European Solidarity Corps final evaluation and the 2021-2027 European Solidarity Corps interim evaluation were adopted on 1 April 2025.

Contribution to horizontal priorities

Contribution to green budgeting priorities (EUR million):

Implementation	Estimates	

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	Total	% of the total envelope
Climate mainstreaming	21.5	15.8	16.5	17.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	71.6	7.1%

The programme contributes to the mainstreaming of climate action by targeting organisations and young people wishing to tackle current societal challenges, including climate action, through projects that benefit people and communities across Europe and beyond. A coefficient of 40% is applied to the relevant projects' budgets, in accordance with the EU climate coefficients methodology. Young people between the ages of 18 and 30 can take part in a wide range of solidarity activities, such as tackling societal challenges, supporting vulnerable people and contributing to positive change in communities across Europe and beyond, all while gaining valuable skills. Climate action, the environment and nature protection are increasingly popular areas within the programme. A strategic approach towards carbon-neutral and more environment-friendly post-2020 EU programmes for education, training, youth, sport and solidarity is under preparation. Meanwhile, the programme already supports sustainability and climate action in the following ways:

- supporting projects with the themes of climate action and sustainability;
- assigning a dedicated priority in its specific calls for 'Volunteering teams in high-priority areas' to climate change and sustainability;
- promoting sustainable awareness among programme participants.

Since 2021, the programme has supported projects and activities aiming to protect, conserve and enhance natural capital, to raise awareness about environmental sustainability and to enable behavioural changes linked to individual preferences, consumption habits and lifestyles. The programme supports initiatives aimed at preventing, mitigating or repairing the adverse effects of extreme weather events and natural disasters, along with activities that provide support to affected communities in the aftermath of such events or disasters.

In general, the programme promotes the incorporation of green practices into all projects, regardless of the main focus of their activities. Organisations and participants involved with the programme should have an environment-friendly approach when designing their activities. Activities contributing to other existing EU initiatives in the area of environmental sustainability (e.g. the new European Bauhaus) are highly encouraged.

Funding rules have been revised so that, from 2024, sustainable travel will become the default option, and the programme will offer stronger incentives for those who travel in a sustainable way. Participants will be encouraged to prioritise green travel as their first choice when planning their trip.

Combining funding from the programme and Horizon Europe EU missions in 2023 and 2024 further mobilised young citizens to give their time to climate and environmental projects and to health projects, linked to the goals of the missions. The extra budget allocated from these missions to the programme addressed the following priorities: green, health, digital, culture, civil security and food bioeconomy.

The yearly contribution to climate objectives is based on beneficiary organisations' applications for receiving funding for projects with climate-related topics. The environment and the fight against

climate change are among the horizontal priorities of the programme, which aims to support awareness raising about the green transition and about environment and climate-change challenges. Examples of European Solidarity Corps projects addressing the climate objectives can be found in the [*European Solidarity Corps – Report 2021-2023*](#) and on the [European Solidarity Corps projects results platform](#).

Contribution to gender equality (million EUR) (*)

Gender score	2021	2022	2023	2024	Total
2	12.8	36.0	65.7	76.0	190.5
1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
0*	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
0	122.9	105.4	78.5	68.1	374.8
Total	135.7	141.4	144.2	144.0	565.4

(*) Based on the applied gender contribution methodology, the following scores are attributed at the most granular level of intervention possible:

- 2: interventions the principal objective of which is to improve gender equality;
- 1: interventions that have gender equality as an important and deliberate objective but not as the main reason for the intervention;
- 0: non-targeted interventions (interventions that are expected to have no significant bearing on gender equality);
- 0*: score to be assigned to interventions with a likely but not yet clear positive impact on gender equality.

- The programme aims to promote social inclusion by facilitating access for young people with fewer opportunities. In some cases, young people need additional support to face obstacles such as gender-based discrimination, harassment and gender-based violence. A number of solidarity and volunteering projects address issues such as the promotion of gender equality, the fight against sexual violence, the promotion of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer plus equality, etc.
- Regarding interventions the principal objective of which is to improve gender equality (score 2), the total yearly contribution to gender is based on beneficiary organisations' applications for receiving funding for projects with gender-related topics (e.g. of which promotion of equality between women and men in the fields of arts and sports, fighting violence and discrimination against women and girls).
- From the beginning of the programming period, out of all the participants with fewer opportunities, 14 695 were women, representing 61% of all participants with fewer opportunities.
- Regarding interventions with a neutral impact on gender equality (score 0), the total yearly contribution to gender is the difference between the programme budget as indicated in the relevant annual work programme and the yearly contribution to gender, based on beneficiary organisations' applications for receiving funding for projects with gender-related topics.
- Data are provisional, as the final results will only be available upon completion of the projects.
- Due to the specificities of the European Solidarity Corps programme, it is not possible to fully discern gender contributions from voted budget implementation commitments only. The split presented in the table above represents a pro rata distribution based on the scores' proportions of the total implementation included in the relevant annual work programmes.

This total of EUR 237 million ⁽⁴⁸⁾ includes administrative credits on top of the voted budget implementation.

Gender-disaggregated information

The European Solidarity Corps supports gender equality and encourages women to participate in volunteering and solidarity projects. 63% of the total number of programme participants since the launch of the programme in 2021 are women, while 36% are men. See also the [European Solidarity Corps – Report 2021-2023](#).

Examples of gender-related projects addressing gender equality can be found on the [European Solidarity Corps project results platform](#).

Contribution to the digital transition (EUR million)

	2021 implementation	2022 implementation	2023 implementation	2024 implementation	Total	% of the 2021-2024 envelope
Digital contribution	13.1	35.2	52.7	39.2	140.2	24.8%

The programme aims to help Europeans, regardless of their gender, age and background, to live and thrive in the digital age through projects and activities that help to improve digital skills in general or foster digital literacy, and to develop an understanding of the risks and opportunities of digital technology.

In general, the programme promotes the use of appropriate information, communication and technology tools in all projects, regardless of the main focus of their activities.

The yearly contribution to digital objectives is based on beneficiary organisations' applications for funding for projects with digital-related topics. Data are provisional, as the final results will only be available upon completion of the projects (normally 2-3 years after they start).

2022 saw the launch of the Digital SALTO (Support Advanced Learning and Training Opportunities) with the aim of supporting the qualitative implementation of the digital priority in the programme and of bringing the programme and youth policy closer towards the digital objectives.

The European Solidarity Corps also supports virtual cooperation and digital education through the European Solidarity Portal embedded in the European Youth Portal, which manages the registration and implementation of volunteering and solidarity activities. By the end of 2024, 299 367 new users had been registered on the portal, and the European Solidarity Corps app was downloaded more than 18 400 times over the course of the year.

⁽⁴⁸⁾ Linked to interventions the principal objective of which is to improve gender equality (i.e. gender score 2).

The digital transformation is among the horizontal priorities of the programme, which aims to improve digital skills in general, or foster digital literacy, and to develop an understanding of the risks and opportunities regarding digital technology. Examples of European Solidarity Corps projects addressing the digital transformation can be found in the [European Solidarity Corps – Report 2021-2023](#) and on the [European Solidarity Corps project results platform](#).

Contribution to sustainable development goals

SDG	Does the programme contribute to the goal?	Example (only for the most relevant SDGs)
SDG3 Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages	x	The programme plays an important role in supporting health and social care systems, improving people's experience of care, building stronger relationships between services and communities. Through its activities, it also aims at mobilising volunteers around key health challenges, such as those related to cancer, mental health and wellbeing overall.
SDG4 Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all	x	The programme aims, among other things, at developing the skills and competences of participants for professional, social and civic development. In addition, given its strong focus on inclusion, this includes young people with fewer opportunities (37% of the total participants in 2023), including young people with disabilities.
SDG5 Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls	x	The programme aims at removing social obstacles for participation of people facing gender-based discrimination, among other reasons. It also supports projects dealing with the issue of gender equality, such as focusing on changing mentalities, sensitising communities to gender and diversity or contributing to breaking down barriers for women's access to employment. For example, Humanitarian Aid Volunteers can be recruited as gender experts to promote gender sensitivity and mainstreaming of gender considerations in disaster risk management in affected communities.

SDG8 Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all	x	All programme actions contribute to increase the employability of the young people who participate, as shown by several studies. This is achieved through a combination of outcomes, for example the acquisition of new skills, increased autonomy, increased knowledge of foreign languages. Additionally, solidarity projects can further help the entrepreneurial and innovative spirit of young participants. Finally, the emphasis on inclusion aims to ensure that everyone can reap these benefits, including people with fewer opportunities.
SDG10 Reduce inequalities within and among countries	x	Through its activities, the programme aims to strengthen cohesion and solidarity. It supports projects and activities actively addressing the issue of inclusion in society. Special attention ensures that activities supported by the programme are accessible to all young people, notably the most disadvantaged ones. To this end, special measures are in place to promote social inclusion, the participation of young people with fewer opportunities, as well as to take into account the constraints imposed by the remoteness of the outermost EU regions and overseas countries and territories. Similarly, the participating countries should endeavour to adopt all appropriate measures to remove legal and administrative obstacles to the proper functioning of the programme. These include – wherever possible and without prejudice to the Schengen acquis and EU law on the entry and residence of non-EU nationals – resolving administrative issues that create difficulties in obtaining visas and residence permits.
SDG11 Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable	x	Through its activities aiming at addressing societal challenges, the programme supports efforts to promote sustainable development of urban areas, and to protect and safeguard Europe's cultural heritage. In call year 2023, 85 solidarity projects have been awarded, with a focus on the development of disadvantaged rural and urban areas.

SDG13 Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts	x	The programme aims at integrating green practices into all projects and activities, and promoting environmentally sustainable and responsible behaviour among participants and participating organisations. Organisations and participants should thus have an environment-friendly approach when designing and implementing their activities. The programme also supports projects and activities addressing the topics of environmental protection, sustainability and climate goals, and aiming to protect, conserve and enhance natural capital, as well as raising awareness about environmental sustainability and enabling behavioural changes for individual preferences, consumption habits and lifestyles.

Support for reforms

- n/a

Contribution to strategic technologies (STEP)

- n/a

JUSTICE PROGRAMME

Concrete examples of achievements

5.03 million exchanges of information occurred in 2024 in the European criminal records information system.	30 186 justice professionals were trained in 2023 through the justice programme's financial support for cross- border training activities and thanks to the European Judicial Training Network.	2.70 million visits were made to pages addressing the need for information on cross-border civil and criminal cases on the European e-Justice Portal in 2024.	375 civil-society organisations, involved in grants and operating grants funded under the three specific objectives of the justice programme, were reached by support and capacity-building activities in the 2021- 2024 period.
More than 3 million people are expected to be reached via activities funded by the justice programme in the 2021-2024 period.			

Budget programming and implementation

Budget programming (million EUR):

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	Total
Financial programming	46.7	43.6	39.8	41.8	41.8	41.7	41.4	296.8
NextGenerationEU	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Decommitments made available again (*)	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Contributions from other countries and entities	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.2
Total	46.7	43.6	39.8	42.0	41.8	41.7	41.4	297.0

(*) Only Article 15(3) of the Financial Regulation.

Cumulative budget implementation at the end of 2024 (million EUR):

	Implementation	Budget	Implementation rate
Commitments	171.9	297.0	57.9%
Payments	128.6		43.3%

Implementation and performance

Key performance indicators

	Baseline	Progress	Target	Results	Assessment
Exchanges of information in the European criminal records information system	4.1 million	78%	6 million in 2027	Average result 2021-2024: 4.7 million compared to a target of 6 million	On track
Members of the judiciary and judicial staff who have participated in training activities	0	> 100%	15 000 in 2027	30 186 compared to a target of 15 000	On track
Hits on the European e-Justice Portal / pages addressing the need for information on cross-border civil and criminal cases	1.4 million	82%	2.8 million in 2027	Average results 2021-2014: 2.3 million compared to a target of 2.8 million	On track

Facilitate and support judicial cooperation in civil and criminal matters: civil-society organisations reached by support and capacity-building activities	0	82%	105 in 2027	86 compared to a target of 105	On track
Support and promote judicial training: civil-society organisations reached by support and capacity-building activities	0	86%	154 in 2027	133 compared to a target of 154	On track
Facilitate effective and non-discriminatory access to justice for all: civil-society organisations reached by support and capacity-building activities	0	57%	273 in 2027	156 compared to a target of 273	On track

The Justice programme's implementation in 2024 ran smoothly. Under the two open calls for proposals (action grants on judicial training and judicial cooperation) with a total budget of EUR 9.9 million, 63 project proposals were submitted, out of which 22 have been awarded funding. The programme funded operating grants to support the 15 justice framework partners and the European Judicial Training Network. In 2024, the programme continued to support the Council of Europe in setting up a network of prison-monitoring bodies and in the delivery of the *SPACE* report, an annual report on prison statistics providing clear insights into the detention situations in the Member States. Around 100 procurement contracts, for a total of EUR 10.3 million, were concluded in 2024 to support key EU policies in the justice field through activities such as a special Eurobarometer survey on the rule of law, the EU justice scoreboard, and various studies and EU-level conferences.

In 2024, no specific challenge significantly affected the performance of the programme, thanks in part to its flexibility and efficient financial management. The introduction of lump sums for all justice action grant calls occurred only recently, and in 2024 applicants continued to require additional support, notably in defining clear, measurable outputs, including providing more detailed descriptions of deliverables and justifying cost estimations in the detailed budget table. This support was crucial, as the EU's contribution is now paid according to the implementation of the work packages rather than as a reimbursement of costs.

The indicators that measure the performance of the justice programme show that the programme's objectives are on track.

Indicators for specific objective 1: judicial cooperation in civil and criminal matters

In 2024, the Member States exchanged 5.03 million messages through the European criminal records information system (a decentralised information technology system operated by the central authorities of the Member States). This shows steady growth since the post-COVID-19 pandemic period.

In total, in the 2021-2024 period, 86 civil-society organisations, involved in grants and operating grants funded under this specific objective (i.e. judicial cooperation), were reached by support and capacity-building activities.

Indicators for specific objective 2: judicial training

The justice programme is a key player in the area of judicial training, where the results demonstrate an improvement in the impact of the programme's measures in this field. In 2023, 30 186 justice professionals took part in training supported by the justice programme (around 47.3% of all those who received training on EU law (co-)funded by the EU that year), which marks an increase of around 25% compared to the previous year. Moreover, under the specific European Judicial Training Network annual training programmes, also supported via the programme, the number of participants increased to 9 320 and the cost-to-serve ratio (i.e. the price per person for one training day offered by the European Judicial Training Network) decreased to EUR 285.32, which is a very good average price (down from EUR 305 in the previous period). The data for 2024 will be available by December 2025, following the preparation of the annual report on European judicial training.

In total, in the 2021-2024 period, 133 civil-society organisations, involved in grants and operating grants funded under this specific objective (i.e. judicial training), were reached by support and capacity-building activities.

Indicators for specific objective 3: access to justice

Concerning the number of hits on the pages of the European e-Justice Portal relating to cross-border civil and criminal topics, which gives an indication of the need for information on these issues and of the relevance of these web pages in ensuring access to justice for all EU citizens, the 2024 milestone was achieved and surpassed in 2022.

In total, in the 2021-2024 period, 156 civil-society organisations involved in grants and operating grants funded under this specific objective (access to justice) were reached by support and capacity-building activities.

Overall, in 2024 only, over 470 000 people are expected to have been reached by activities organised by projects funded under all the three specific objectives of the justice programme, including activities organised by the programme's framework partners. Data are based on estimates provided by grant beneficiaries, to be verified at the reporting stage. According to data on projects awarded in the first four years of implementation, more than 3 million people should be reached via activities funded by the justice programme.

Contribution to horizontal priorities

Contribution to green budgeting priorities

- All projects funded under the justice programme must comply with EU policy interests and priorities, including in the environment field. Beneficiaries are always invited to limit the number of people from each co-beneficiary attending in-person meetings, to organise project meetings with partners in blended ways (in person, online and hybrid) and to prefer rail travel when it can be an efficient alternative to air travel.
- In 2024, no projects funded under the calls for proposals on judicial cooperation and judicial training focused specifically on climate and the environment.
- In 2024, several procurement contracts contributed to the 'do no significant harm' principle on the basis of their implementation methods (such as online meetings, information technology contracts and web application contracts). No procurement contracts were identified as contributing to climate/environmental goals based on their content.

Contribution to gender equality (million EUR) (*)

Gender score	2021	2022	2023	2024	Total
2	0.0	0.0	0.3	0.4	0.7
1	14.9	17.3	6.9	19.6	58.7
0*	15.1	15.1	22.1	6.5	58.8
0	16.7	11.2	10.4	15.4	53.7
Total	46.7	43.6	39.8	41.8	171.9

(*) Based on the applied gender contribution methodology, the following scores are attributed at the most granular level of intervention possible:

- 2: interventions the principal objective of which is to improve gender equality;
- 1: interventions that have gender equality as an important and deliberate objective but not as the main reason for the intervention;
- 0: non-targeted interventions (interventions that are expected to have no significant bearing on gender equality);
- 0*: score to be assigned to interventions with a likely but not yet clear positive impact on gender equality.

- **2.** After the first project under the justice programme that contributed to score 2, in 2023, the programme had another project in 2024 with a primary goal of promoting gender equality, funded under the access-to-justice call for action grants – a policy priority to promote victim’s rights. It focused on developing a bias-free artificial intelligence system for the fair prediction of recidivism, emphasising a gender-equality perspective, conforming to EU legislation on non-discriminative artificial intelligence. Procurement and indirect management did not contribute to this score.
- **1.** Funding for judicial training – and especially funding of about EUR 11 200 000 for the European Judicial Training Network – made a significant contribution, about 50%, to the budget assigned to score 1. The European Judicial Training Network receives an operating grant and promotes a shared understanding of EU legislation across Europe. It also helps justice professionals to obtain non-judicial skills, such as gender expertise. In training justice professionals of all genders, the network builds their capacities and thereby promotes gender equality. In total, almost half of the entire budget (46%) is assigned to score 1. Evidence from the justice programme’s interim evaluation underlines the programme’s attention to gender.
- **0*.** About 15% of the budget has been allocated to score 0* (action grants promoting judicial training count for a high share of the score). About two thirds of action grants promoting judicial training show the potential to promote gender equality. This stresses that judicial training can be a tool to promote gender equality, but training activities need sufficient gender mainstreaming to release their potential. Procurement and indirect management did not contribute to this score.
- **0.** Approximately one third of the programme’s budget is allocated to score 0. This part of the budget funds procurement contracts that focus on information technology management, cloud server maintenance and information technology development. In fact, 95% of the procurement budget of around EUR 10.3 million is allocated to this score. In addition, funding under the programme’s specific objective to promote judicial cooperation is also linked to score 0, as judicial cooperation is predominantly procedural and focuses on technical aspects such as the exchange of data and the mutual recognition of judicial decisions across the Member States. Support for the Council of Europe via indirect management contributed to this score by funding the collection of data on prisons in Europe.
- The allocations to the scores above include the reassessment of gender scores from finished projects that initially received a score of 0*. The allocation of scores to finished projects was revisited, to understand whether the proposals realised their potential to promote gender equality based on the project’s reporting, where available, and area of intervention ⁽⁴⁹⁾.

⁽⁴⁹⁾ Data collection began for the 2022 calls for proposals. Data for 2021 are based on programming estimates. Score reassessments are therefore either estimates based on programming or data from finished projects.

- The programme combined budgets from 2023 and 2024 for some calls for proposals. The funding was considered according to the year it was committed to.

Gender-disaggregated information

The programme collects gender-disaggregated data on the target audience, as follows.

First, the number of participants (people involved in or targeted by projects), disaggregated by gender, is collected through a dedicated form that is filled in by the beneficiaries at the start of their projects. Thus, the data are best estimates of the beneficiaries implementing the projects. The data inserted are tracked via key performance indicators on how awareness-raising, mutual-learning and training activities have reached the programme's target group. The data are disaggregated by gender and encompass data on female, male and non-binary people.

Overall, the programme reaches people of all genders. About half of the people estimated to have been reached by the programme identify as female. Somewhat less than 50% identify as men. The remainder of the people estimated to have been reached, about 1%, identify as non-binary. The balance in the share of women and men that are estimated to have been reached by the programme reflects the inclusiveness of the programme's activities.

Second, through the EU Survey on Justice, Rights and Values, the programme collects sex-disaggregated data. For example, survey data provide an insight into the percentage of respondents indicating that they are engaged in civic activities at the local, national or EU levels. The survey is accessible to all participants in justice-programme-funded activities at the following link: https://ec.europa.eu/eusurvey/runner/Justice_2021-2027.

Contribution to the digital transition (EUR million):

	2021 implementation	2022 implementation	2023 implementation	2024 implementation	Total	% of the 2021- 2024 envelope
Digital contribution	6.1	6.6	11.0	10.6	34.2	19.9%

Following the COVID-19 pandemic, the justice programme has put more and more emphasis on digitalisation. Contributing to the digital transition is currently a cross-cutting objective of the programme that informs all three of its specific objectives. One key element of the programme's ability to maintain its relevance for its beneficiaries and target groups is its enhanced focus on digitalisation and its capacity to harness digital technologies ⁽⁵⁰⁾. More specifically, the justice programme supports:

- o initiatives aiming to improve the effectiveness of justice systems in the EU and facilitate access to justice for all by using electronic means (e-justice);
- o initiatives aiming to achieve the objectives of the 2024-2028 European e-justice strategy;
- o the implementation of e-justice projects at the EU and national levels (as far as they have an EU dimension);
- o the maintenance of the e-Justice Portal;

⁽⁵⁰⁾ Interim evaluation of the justice programme for 2021-2027 – precise reference will be available in May.

- o the development of digital skills for justice professionals and the digitalisation of training, in terms of both content and methodology.

Procurement contribution to digital

In 2024, several procurement contracts linked to digitalisation were signed amounting to around EUR 6 million, which was used to finance information and communication technology contracts, among other items.

Grant contribution to digital

Concerning projects awarded in 2024 that support the development of digital skills for justice professionals, the following results were achieved.

Under the 2024 call for proposals to support transnational projects on judicial training, six projects that are particularly relevant for the digitalisation of justice were funded. For instance, the LITEL 2 project will develop training material that will contribute to training future/young lawyers on the use and impact of artificial intelligence within a safe and ethical framework, integrating an analysis of the provisions of the EU Charter on Fundamental Rights.

Under the 2024 call for proposals to promote judicial cooperation in civil and criminal matters, four projects that are particularly relevant for the digitalisation of justice were funded. For instance, the EuroLegalBot project aims to develop an intelligent chatbot to engage with practitioners active in the justice sector and provide them with tailored guidance, assistance and up-to-date information regarding the European Arrest Warrant process.

For e-justice action grants, the justice programme monitors the percentage of co-funded project proposals assessed positively at the final report stage as part of the digital tracking methodology. Most projects funded under 2021/2022 calls are still ongoing. According to the first results, those projects that have been assessed so far have received a good score.

Challenges

The increased information technology requirements (specifically for procurement) and the policy focus on the digitalisation of justice systems are putting pressure on the limited budget of the programme, requiring good planning of resources and the close monitoring of budget implementation.

Despite these challenges, the justice programme continues to contribute to the EU's digital transformation goals by expanding digital initiatives and modernising judicial cooperation mechanisms, thereby making justice systems more efficient, accessible and interconnected across a more cohesive European area of justice.

Contribution to sustainable development goals

SDG	Does the programme contribute to the goal?	Example (only for the most relevant SDGs)
SDG3: Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages	x	By supporting organisations working with victims of crime, the justice programme contributes to improved health outcomes.
SDG5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls	x	The Justice Programme Regulation stipulates in Article 4 that gender equality should be promoted in all funded activities. This is particularly the case for the ‘access to justice’ specific objective, which promotes activities that support victims’ rights and helps victims of crime to receive gender-sensitive support. Also, the ‘judicial training’ specific objective is important in promoting gender equality. Training activities funded by the programme help legal practitioners and judicial staff to build gender expertise and raise awareness of gender aspects when applying and interpreting EU law. More information on the key achievements on gender equality is provided under the section ‘Contribution to gender equality’.
SDG10: Reduce inequalities within and among countries	x	Thanks to the cross-border nature of the activities supported under its three specific objectives, the justice programme mainly supports transnational projects involving justice professionals from various Member States. By supporting judicial cooperation, funding the sharing of good practices, providing training on EU law and promoting awareness-raising activities, the programme contributes to reducing inequality and discrimination among EU citizens and among Member States in the justice field.

SDG16: Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels	x	One of the three specific objectives of the justice programme is to facilitate effective and non-discriminatory access to justice for all, including by electronic means (e-justice). In 2024, 34% of the programme's budget was dedicated to supporting this objective.

SDG17: Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development	x	The programme contributes to the goal as it is particularly successful in building long-lasting partnerships and in fostering the creation and awareness of EU-level networks. This ensures that projects funded by the programme have a long-term impact and that cooperation between Member States on justice matters across the EU is strengthened and sustained.

Support for reforms

The Justice programme contributes indirectly to national reforms by supporting initiatives at the EU level that equip Member States and their judicial systems with the necessary knowledge, tools and skills to be active players in the EU area of justice.

Contribution to strategic technologies (STEP)

The justice programme only indirectly supports the STEP objectives. It does so in two ways.

1. In general, the programme contributes to strengthening respect for rule-of-law principles, which is also a precondition for creating the right conditions for a stable environment for investment in strategic technologies.
2. More specifically, in terms of strategic technologies, the programme is raising awareness on artificial intelligence applications in the field of justice to ensure that their use respects fundamental rights and EU values, along with transparency and fairness.

CITIZENS, EQUALITY, RIGHTS AND VALUES PROGRAMME

Concrete examples of achievements

5 472 civil-society organisations have been supported by the citizens, equality, rights and values programme since 2021.	43 European citizens' initiatives were registered between 2021 and 2024.	At least 60 million people are expected to be reached by 2021-2024 citizens, equality, rights and values programme projects.	77% of funding from 2021-2024 projects went to civil-society organisations.
93% of participants assessed the event in which they participated in 2024 as good or very good.	1 609 projects were funded between 2021 and 2024.	51 calls for proposals took place between 2021 and 2024.	

Budget programming and implementation

Budget programming (million EUR):

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	Total
Financial programming (*)	98.9	214.9	214.3	218.6	236.3	290.9	90.8	1 364.7
NextGenerationEU	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Decommitments made available again (*)	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Contributions from other countries and entities	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.4	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.4

Total	99.0	214.9	214.3	219.0	236.3	290.9	90.8	1 365.2

(*) Without Article 5 of the MFF Regulation for the year 2027.

Cumulative budget implementation at the end of 2024 (million EUR):

	Implementation	Budget	Implementation rate
Commitments	747.5	1 365.2	54.7%
Payments	468.2		34.3%

Implementation and performance

Key performance indicators

	Baseline	Progress	Target	Results	Assessment
Civil-society organisations reached by support and capacity-building activities under the EU values strand	0	35%	6 300 in 2027	2 213 compared to a target of 6 300	On track
Civil-society organisations reached by support and capacity-building activities under the equality, rights and gender equality strand	0	75%	847 in 2027	639 compared to a target of 847	On track

Civil-society organisations reached by support and capacity-building activities under the citizen's engagement and participation strand	0	89%	2 372 in 2027	2 101 compared to a target of 2 372	On track
Civil-society organisations reached by support and capacity-building activities under the Daphne strand	0	59%	1 120 in 2027	662 compared to a target of 1 120	On track
Transnational networks and initiatives focusing on European memory and heritage as a result of programme intervention	0	44%	1 500 in 2027	652 compared to a target of 1 500	On track

- The preliminary results from the upcoming midterm evaluation show that the citizens, equality, rights and values (CERV) programme is progressing well towards its objectives, with most results far surpassing their milestones and targets. Between 2021 and 2024, 5 472 civil-society organisations were reached by support and capacity-building activities across all Member States and eligible non-EU countries. Overall, projects awarded funding under CERV calls for proposals in 2021-2024 are expected to reach out to at least 61 million people.
- The high ratio of quality projects helps to fulfil policy objectives. However, a funding gap is present in relation to equality, rights and gender equality and to combating violence against women and children and may limit the ability to fulfil the policy objectives served by these strands.
- The preliminary results from the upcoming midterm evaluation also show that the novelties introduced under the CERV programme, such as multiannual work programmes, lump sums and the streamlining of indicators, have significantly improved the predictability of the programme and programme monitoring, and have significantly reduced the administrative and reporting burden. The introduction of regranting mechanisms, a novel approach in this policy area, has

helped to improve the accessibility of the programme for smaller, less-experienced beneficiaries through simplified application processes facilitated by intermediaries.

- Under the 13 calls for proposals in 2024, with a total budget of more than EUR 206 million, 2 865 project applications were received, of which 279 have been awarded funding. In addition, in 2024, 95 procurement contracts were concluded amounting to more than EUR 17 million.
- In 2024, the Access City Award 2025, recognising the leading European cities in terms of accessibility for persons with disabilities, went to Vienna, Austria (first-place winner), Nuremberg, Germany (second-place winner) and Cartagena, Spain (third-place winner). Moreover, Borås, Sweden, was awarded a Special Mention for Role Model on Built Environment and Transport, and Nuremberg, Germany, was awarded a Special Mention for Accessible Sports Infrastructure.
- CERV supported the implementation of the European citizens' initiative with funding of more than EUR 2 million. In 2024, 11 new initiatives were registered that called for EU action in various areas, such as the protection of European agriculture, food security and water resilience; the provision of EU financial support for the protection of women's reproductive health; and the protection of consumer rights in relation to video games. In total, 43 European citizens' initiatives were registered between 2021 and 2024. The Commission continued its campaign to inform citizens of their right to use the European citizens' initiative through online and offline activities, with the support of a network of European citizens' initiative ambassadors and partners from all Member States.
- The CERV programme continued using the lump sum type II funding scheme in 2024, requiring additional support for applicants in defining clear outputs and justifying cost estimations. Re-granting scheme calls necessitated additional training and support for intermediaries.
- Under some specific calls, such as town twinning, the use of the proposal submission platform remained a significant challenge for some applicants, such as grassroots organisations and small municipalities. Many tools and procedures to assist applicants were put in place (increased communication, hands-on training sessions, etc.) and had a positive effect on the submission rate, though some difficulties remain.
- Since the CERV programme's launch in 2021, and following sustained efforts to communicate about the funding opportunities available, calls for proposals have gained in popularity and seen a substantial increase in the number of applications. This positive development in the programme's attractiveness may lead to a lower success rate, however, which may be a deterrent for some applicants.

Contribution to horizontal priorities

Contribution to green budgeting priorities (EUR million):

	Implementation				Estimates			Total	% of the total envelope
	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027		
Climate mainstreaming	0.0	2.7	2.8	5.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	11.3	0.8%

- The projects contributed to raising citizens' and stakeholders' awareness of environment-related topics through a variety of activities, events, conferences, summer camps and debates. These initiatives have sparked meaningful discussions on sustainability, the European Green Deal and eco-culture, setting the stage for deeper community involvement. For instance, projects have sought to initiate discussions on citizens' perception of the Green Deal and sustainability. Similarly, initiatives to address the climate and environmental crisis by promoting innovative ways of thinking and acting through creative and community-driven initiatives have been implemented successfully. The projects tackled a variety of topics such as the circular economy, climate resilience (including the right to repair), urban sustainability, how to alleviate energy poverty, the energy transition, biodiversity, sustainable food systems, practices related to waste management, fast fashion and the concept of throwaway culture, and ethical and responsible consumption habits. The climate and environmental justice were also at the core of several projects, underlining the unequal impacts of climate change on vulnerable or marginalised people.
- The main challenges faced by projects revolved around ensuring inclusive participation and representation of diverse stakeholders, including specific target groups such as single women in vulnerable situations and minorities, addressing environmental issues in a context of competing interests and reaching out to rural communities to foster active engagement in remote areas.
- Overall, projects enhanced democratic participation in environmental policymaking by bringing citizens' ideas to local- national- and EU-level stakeholders through structured dialogue, thus fostering citizens' ownership of EU and environmental policies. The projects will continue to provide opportunities for citizen-led environmental action, participation and engagement in addressing environmental issues, along with the promotion of sustainable practices.
- Regarding climate-change mitigation and adaptation, initiatives seem to cover both aspects. On the one hand, some projects focus on promoting sustainable practices, reducing carbon emissions and developing policy recommendations to address environmental issues, which may be considered mitigating measures. On the other hand, some projects focus on empowering target groups such as young people, children and women to adapt to the changing environment, promoting resilience and developing strategies to address the social and economic impacts of climate change, which could be considered adaptative measures.

Contribution to gender equality (million EUR) (*)

Gender score	2021	2022	2023	2024	Total
2	22.0	35.7	28.3	46.4	132.4
1	68.9	139.8	125.9	120.5	455.1
0*	0.0	14.8	47.5	31.9	94.2
0	8.0	24.7	12.6	19.8	65.1
Total:	98.9	215.0	214.3	218.6	746.8

(*) Based on the applied gender contribution methodology, the following scores are attributed at the most granular level of intervention possible:

- 2: interventions the principal objective of which is to improve gender equality;
 - 1: interventions that have gender equality as an important and deliberate objective but not as the main reason for the intervention;
 - 0: non-targeted interventions (interventions that are expected to have no significant bearing on gender equality);
 - 0*: score to be assigned to interventions with a likely but not yet clear positive impact on gender equality.
- **2.** CERV contributed greatly to the three pillars of the EU's gender equality strategy, as roughly every third euro invested via grants had gender equality as its primary objective. In 2024, the programme focused, with the Daphne call specifically, on protecting and preventing gender-based violence. In addition, the gender equality call provided targeted support to Member States in implementing the Pay Transparency Directive. These specific investments in promoting gender equality underline the programme's focus on gender, which is reflected in the overall high share of score 2 in the budget. Also, procurement contributed to score 2, with roughly 25% of its budget allocated to this score, supporting activities such as the LGBTQI subgroup, the European network of legal experts in gender equality and non-discrimination, and seminars for judges and legal practitioners on EU gender equality and EU non-discrimination legislation.
 - **1.** There were multiple calls that contributed strongly to score 1, such as the Union values call, under which two thirds of the total budget of EUR 75 million, which promotes civic space and civil-society organisations' capacities, contributed to score 1. Similarly, the call for proposals promoting European remembrance made a significant contribution to score 1, amounting to roughly two thirds of the total budget of about EUR 14 million. This illustrates that gender-mainstreaming calls that focus on Europe's shared history can help to look at history through a gender lens. At the programme level, about 60% of the budget was allocated to score 1.
 - **0*.** Although the CERV programme focuses intersectionally on non-discrimination, participation and equality, the potential of some projects to promote gender equality is yet to be explored, as around 8% of the programme's budget received a score of 0*. For example, in 2024, the programme provided dedicated funding for national Roma contact points in Member States focusing specifically on capacity building and promoting cooperation with non-governmental organisations, whereby the projects funded had some but not all of the elements needed to conclude that gender equality is an important project objective. It was not possible to make this conclusion because statements paying specific attention to gender-sensitive project implementation, data collection and project evaluation were not sufficiently reflected in the

projects' methodologies or needs assessments. Although projects showed some gender awareness by referring to their gender dimension, more concrete approaches to identifying needs, collecting data and measuring project impact would have been needed to conclude that these projects have gender equality as an important objective.

- **0.** A low proportion (around 9%) of the programme's budget, including its administrative budget, is allocated to score 0, as equality policy, including gender equality, is a cornerstone of the programme's architecture. Programme elements that do not contribute to gender equality are also included within this score, such as support provided by the Commission to national data protection authorities via a specific call for proposals to promote data protection and collaboration between competent authorities in the EU.
- Under the exercise for the 2024 budget, the gender scores from finished projects that initially received a score of 0* were revisited, to understand whether the proposals had realised their potential to promote gender equality. A new score was then assigned on the basis of project reporting, where available, and area of intervention ⁽⁵¹⁾.
- The programme combined the budgets for certain calls for proposals from 2023 and 2024. The funding was considered according to the year it was committed to.

Gender-disaggregated information

The programme collects gender-disaggregated data on the target audience, as follows.

- The number of participants (people involved in or targeted by projects), disaggregated by gender, is collected through a dedicated form that is filled in by the beneficiaries at the start of their projects. Thus, the data are best estimates of the beneficiaries implementing the projects. The data inserted are tracked via key performance indicators on how awareness-raising, mutual-learning and training activities have reached the programme's target group. The data are disaggregated by gender and encompass data on female, male and non-binary people.
- Overall, the programme reaches people of all gender. Based on the estimated data, somewhat more than half of the people estimated to have been reached are female, while somewhat less than 50% are male. Approximately 1% of the people reached were estimated to be non-binary. Considering the programme's dedicated support for non-binary people, their comparative low share out of the number of people the programme reached could be based on factors such as social acceptance bias when making estimates. Taking the potential bias in estimates into account, the data still indicate that the programme's design promotes gender equality, as people of all gender are reached, and women and men are approximately equally involved in the programme's activities.
- Second, through the EU Survey on Justice, Rights and Values, accessible to all participants in CERV-funded activities at https://ec.europa.eu/eusurvey/runner/CERV_2021-2027, the programme collects sex-disaggregated data on various areas such as the percentage of respondents indicating that they are engaged in civic activities at the local, national or EU levels.

⁽⁵¹⁾ Data collection began for the 2022 calls for proposals. Data for 2021 are based on programming estimates. Score reassessments are therefore either estimates based on programming or data from finished projects.

Contribution to the digital transition (EUR million):

	2021 implementation	2022 implementation	2023 implementation	2024 implementation	Total	% of the 2021- 2024 envelope
Digital contribution	1.1	5.1	1.6	1.4	9.2	1.2%

The CERV programme contributes to the digital transition by supporting initiatives on (1) innovative democratic approaches and tools, notably digital e-democracy tools; (2) increasing awareness of the protection of personal data as a pillar of citizens' empowerment and the EU's approach to the digital transition; and (3) the European citizen's initiative, by being a catalyst for the use of means of electronic identification and enabling citizens' participation by digital means.

CERV-supported projects align with the EU's digital strategy, supporting its goals of enhancing digital literacy, fostering digital inclusion, ensuring a safe and fair digital environment by protecting users and promoting the use of innovative e-democracy tools to empower citizens and strengthen participatory democracy across the EU.

For example, the 'my activist revolution' project funded under the citizens' engagement and participation call priority on 'countering disinformation and other forms of interference in the democratic debate and promoting media literacy' encourages young people to engage in democracy and participate actively at the European level through online activities (e-democracy tools).

As another example of contributing to digital skills and competences, projects funded under the data protection call support activities – involving practical guidance, templates or digital tools – carried out by national data protection authorities to facilitate the implementation of Regulation (EU) 2016/679 ⁽⁵²⁾ (the "General Data Protection Regulation") obligations by small and medium-sized enterprises.

⁽⁵²⁾ Regulation (EU) 2016/679 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 April 2016 on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data, and repealing Directive 95/46/EC (General Data Protection Regulation) (OJ L 119, 4.5.2016, p. 1, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2016/679/oj>).

Contribution to sustainable development goals

SDG	Does the programme contribute to the goal?	Example (only for the most relevant SDGs)
SDG4: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all	Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all	The programme supports projects for the inclusion of all in quality education, including minority groups such as young Roma people or people living with a handicap, and organisations promoting lifelong learning opportunities at all ages.
SDG5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls	Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls	The programme made specific contributions to gender equality by providing dedicated funding to support Member States in transposing the Pay Transparency Directive. The programme also bolstered the capacity of organisations fighting gender-based violence through its long-term investments in projects lasting two to three years. Through its scheme for financial support for third parties under the Union values strand, the programme provides funding via intermediaries to European small and grassroots organisations enabling them to engage at the local level and promote an active civil society, empower active and informed citizens to counter gender-based discrimination and promote gender equality. In 2024, about every fourth euro the programme committed had the primary goal of promoting gender equality. The first results from the programme's interim evaluation confirm that it helped build gender expertise among its stakeholders and was effective in promoting gender equality.

SDG8: Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all	Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all	Via the equality, rights and gender equality strand, the programme supports projects for equal access to work, equal participation in the labour market, diversity in public- and private-sector organisations and the elimination of barriers to career progression in all sectors.
SDG10: Reduce inequalities within and among countries	Reduce inequality within and among countries	The programme, through transnational projects sharing good practices, training courses and awareness-raising activities, contributes to reducing inequalities and eliminating discrimination among EU citizens and among Member States.
SDG16: Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels	Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels	Via the citizens' engagement and participation strand and the EU values strand, the programme promotes an inclusive society and the rule of law. Funds support entities that contribute to helping the EU's common values, rights and equality, and its rich diversity, remain alive and vibrant.

SDG17: Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development	Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalise the global partnership	The programme contributes to the goal, especially through the re-granting call, which aims to build the capacity of civil-society organisations and promotes strong partnerships with intermediaries.

Support for reforms

The CERV programme may contribute to national reforms, but only indirectly, for example by supporting initiatives at the EU level that equip Member States with the necessary knowledge, tools and skills to be active players in the EU, such as with projects funded under the data protection call that support activities – involving practical guidance, templates or digital tools – carried out by national data protection authorities to facilitate the implementation of General Data Protection Regulation obligations by small and medium-sized enterprises.

Contribution to strategic technologies (STEP)

CERV is not among the 11 EU programmes supporting investment areas under STEP, which was set up by the EU to support European industry and boost investment in critical technologies in Europe.

CREATIVE EUROPE PROGRAMME

Concrete examples of achievements

16.9 million people watched the videos of the '10 Years of Creative Europe' campaign on Instagram, LinkedIn and YouTube.	6 366 artists and cultural professionals benefited from mobility thanks to the 'culture moves Europe' action as of the end of 2024.	62 grants for multiannual actions were signed in 2024 to cover the 2025-2027 period for the 'European networks of cultural and creative organisations' and 'Pan-European cultural entities' actions, and the European platforms for emerging artists.	10 projects to reinforce the network of the European Heritage Label sites were launched to foster collaboration among sites and boost their visibility.
554 films were released in cinemas across Europe, outside of their production country, thanks to the distribution grants signed in 2021.	EUR 65 million is the size of the MediaInvest-supported Logical Content Ventures fund, which invested, inter alia, in the film <i>Emilia Pérez</i>.	1 Golden Globe and 2 Annecy Awards were awarded to Latvian film <i>Flow</i>, which was supported by the programme's 'Media strand'.	7 videogames developed with the support of the programme's Media strand won major industry awards (Apple Design, IndieCade, TIGA, IGF, Pegases, DEVGAMM, Gamescom and SXSW).

Budget programming and implementation

Budget programming (million EUR)

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	Total
Financial programming	306.4	406.5	332.8	334.8	352.2	396.0	254.6	2 383.4
NextGenerationEU	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Decommitments made available again (*)	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Contributions from other countries and entities	10.1	13.3	11.5	14.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	49.6
Total	316.5	419.8	344.3	349.5	352.2	396.0	254.6	2 433.0

(*) Only Article 15(3) of the Financial Regulation.

Cumulative budget implementation at the end of 2024 (million EUR)

	Implementation	Budget	Implementation rate
Commitments	1 425.3	2 433.0	58.6%
Payments	1 071.7		44.0%

Implementation and performance

Key performance indicators

	Baseline	Progress	Target	Results	Assessment
Transnational partnerships created with the support of the programme	0	68%	990 in 2027	670 compared to a target of 990	On track
The number of projects supported by the programme addressed to socially marginalised groups	0	82%	279 in 2027	229 compared to a target of 279	On track
The number of participants in learning activities supported by the programme who consider that they have improved their competences and increased their employability	0	23%	15 760 in 2027	3 647 compared to a target of 15 760	Moderate progress
The number of people accessing European audiovisual works from countries other than their own and supported by the programme	0	41%	93 million in 2027	37.9 million compared to a target of 93 million	On track

- In 2024, nearly halfway through the implementation of the current Creative Europe programme, a new selection of projects took place for several actions with multiannual commitments, which will last until its end in 2027.

- This explains the high number of calls published for the programme's 'Culture strand' in 2024, i.e. 11 calls under the 2024 annual work programme (compared to eight in 2023). Among others, new selections took place for the four cultural prizes (music, literature, architecture, heritage) as well as the European networks of cultural and creative organisations, the European platforms for emerging artists and the pan-European cultural organisations. Altogether, the prizes now represent an annual budget of EUR 2 150 000 and a EUR 23 575 000 annual budget for the networks, platforms and organisations. In all, 160 European cooperation projects were selected in 2024 (16% success rate), a high number given the budget of EUR 59 730 025, the smallest-ever since the start of the multiannual financial framework. This is the result of the decision not to fund large-scale European Cooperation projects and focus on small- and medium-scale projects in 2024. The decision to prioritise smaller projects every two years was the result of the dwindling success rate of this action, which receives an increasing number of proposals every year, reaching 963 proposals in 2024. Regarding the 'circulation of European literary works' action (EUR 5 000 000 budget), the call selected 42 projects to translate 530 books from 455 writers, necessitating the work of 525 translators. These books originate from 37 original languages and will be translated into 29 target languages.
- The MEDIA strand carried out 15 calls (compared to 13 in 2023). With a budget of EUR 167 million, they attracted 1 336 eligible proposals requesting EUR 471 million, out of which as many as 414 proposals were of high quality but had to be rejected due to insufficient budget (28%). Altogether the success rate was 45% (the same as in 2023), with 606 grants signed by the end of 2024 (the evaluation of one call which had a September application deadline is still ongoing in January 2025, so the selection results refer to 14 out of 15 calls).
- The 'Cross-sectoral' strand carried out four calls, which attracted 291 eligible applications, including 44 that were of high quality but had to be rejected due to limited budget. Success rates were as low as 5% for InnoLab and 7% for Media Literacy, and not much higher (around 15%) for the other two calls on news media. The eligible applicants requested EUR 197 million while the available was EUR 20 million. The applications consortia included on average 2–5 members.
- Since 2021, the MEDIA strand has been supporting the MediaInvest blending facility, which aims at encouraging private investment into the audiovisual and video games sectors. It blends public funds – from Creative Europe, InvestEU and the European Investment Fund – with private investments to obtain commercially viable projects. It ran a call for expression of interests to financiers for the 2022-2027 period. The first fund signed in 2023 was operating in 2024. Three new funds (from France, Finland and Sweden, with a total value estimated at EUR 243 million) were signed in 2024, set to start operations in 2025, and several other agreements were under due diligence process.
- There were two changes in the composition of the non-EU countries participating in the programme. Tunisia was suspended from participating in the Media and Cross-sectoral strands of the programme in 2024, as it had failed to align with the revision of the Audiovisual Media Services Directive within the agreed time limit after joining the programme with regards to media regulator independence standards. Due to the small volume of applications and projects from Tunisia, this decision has a negligible impact on the programme. Ukraine fully joined the Media strand in December 2024.

Contribution to horizontal priorities

Contribution to green budgeting priorities (EUR million):

	Implementation				Estimates			Total	% of the total envelope
	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027		
Climate mainstreaming	77.2	97.5	84.7	92.4	0.0	0.0	0.0	351.9	14.8%

In the 2021-2027 programme, ecological concerns are taken into account in the design and implementation of all funded projects, as a cross-cutting issue, in order to reduce their impact on the environment. The programme does not directly support climate mitigation initiatives; however, environmental sustainability remains one of the priorities of the programme and is referred to in all of its calls.

- In 2024, Creative Europe continued to take into account the results of *Greening the Creative Europe Programme – Final report*, published in May 2023, with the objective of enhancing good environmental practices among the programme stakeholders within the framework of the European Green Deal. The work of the network of greening contact points among the Creative Europe desks (Culture strand only) set up in 2023 continued in 2024.
- The Culture strand of the programme continues to encourage organisations in the cultural and creative sectors to support awareness-raising of the need for a green transition and to adopt more environmentally friendly practices when implementing co-funded projects. A document on the quality assessment of green aspects in the projects of the Culture strand was published in 2024 and will serve in the evaluation of submitted projects for the calls published under the 2025 annual work programme 2025 and onwards.
- MEDIA and Cross-sectoral strands: almost all proposals submitted within the Media strand are requested to provide a strategy to improve the greening of the industry (except for two actions where this is not applicable). Changes implemented in the markets and networks action and the MEDIA 360 ° action meant that supported events had to start the process of obtaining sustainability certification. This will apply to 49 supported events per year. A focus on greening was also proposed in the talent and skills action, in order to improve greening skills within the audiovisual industry. The results were positive, with additional training funded on greening and sustainability.
- In 2023, the Commission began development of a European carbon calculator for audiovisual productions to standardise and compare measurements used across the Member States. This tool, which should be launched in 2025, aims to combine a calculation methodology using data harmonised at the EU level together with a web application. It shall be free for use to audiovisual producers in all Member States and will complement existing national calculators through a ‘plug in’ approach. As the project progresses, there will be regular outreach activities with producers, calculators and stakeholders.

- The programme will step up its action in the years to come to support climate mitigation in the design of its annual work programmes.
- The yearly contribution to climate objectives is based on beneficiary organisations' applications for funding for projects with climate-related topics.

Contribution to gender equality (million EUR) (*)

Gender score	2021	2022	2023	2024	Total
2	24.8	22.9	14.2	135.7	197.5
1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
0*	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
0	281.6	383.7	318.6	199.1	1 182.9
Total:	306.4	406.5	332.8	334.8	1 380.5

(*) Based on the applied gender contribution methodology, the following scores are attributed at the most granular level of intervention possible:

- 2: interventions the principal objective of which is to improve gender equality;
 - 1: interventions that have gender equality as an important and deliberate objective but not as the main reason for the intervention;
 - 0: non-targeted interventions (interventions that are expected to have no significant bearing on gender equality);
 - 0*: score to be assigned to interventions with a likely but not yet clear positive impact on gender equality.
- Under the programme, special attention is given to applications presenting adequate strategies to ensure gender balance, a cross-cutting priority in all strands as of the 2021 annual work programme.
 - The Culture strand is anchored in policy development and EU policy cooperation in the field of culture, in line with the 2018 new European agenda for culture and the 2019-2022 Council work plan for culture. The programme mainstreams inclusion and diversity, and supports the 2020-2025 gender equality strategy. Special attention is given to applications presenting adequate strategies to ensure gender balance, inclusion, diversity and representativeness. Many projects aim at strengthening gender equality in cultural and creative projects, including mentorships or sector-specific evaluations. These projects are included in the yearly monitoring report and their results are shared through our supported networks. The cooperation scheme includes an inclusiveness priority encouraging projects to focus on gender issues: explore, test and disseminate innovative gender equality practices.
 - Media and Cross-sectoral strands: the 2021-2027 strategy of the audiovisual sector envisages policy development by including gender activities in all actions. Its focus has moved from gender alone to a broader concept of diversity. Since 2021, the Media strand has encouraged companies to include gender and inclusiveness strategies, and the 2021-2022 evaluations show that almost all applicants have applied this. Applicants are requested to show actions to support diversity and gender equality. Since 2022, the training scheme included a module targeting women, based on capacity building and mentoring opportunities.
 - Due to the specificities of the programme, it is not possible to fully discern gender contribution from voted budget implementation commitments only for the years 2021-2023. The split presented in the table above represents a pro-rata repartition based on the score proportions of the

total implementation included in the relevant annual work programmes. This total of EUR 61.1 million ⁽⁵³⁾ includes administrative credits on top of the voted budget implementation.

- Data for 2024 have been calculated by a new corporate reporting system called KPI Tool. The reason for the exponential increase is that in the KPI Tool, the selection of priorities is available both at the application and reporting stages. In all, 208 projects with a budget of EUR 135.8 million addressed the Commission sub-priorities ‘An economy that works for people – Social fairness’ and ‘An economy that works for people – A union of equality’.
- In total, in the 2021-2024 actions for which we have data (DEVs, TV and FILMOVE) that supported 13 233 filmmakers, women took on 32% of key creative roles. Women are more often scriptwriters (43% in 2021 v 51% in 2024) and directors/producers (42% in 2021 v 46% in 2024) than editors (32% v 29% in 2021-2024) or DOPs (23% v 26%), and least often composers (12% v 14%).

Gender-disaggregated information:

The participation of women in the programme is reported in the following two indicators:

- Number of artists and cultural and/or creative players (geographically) mobile beyond national borders due to programme support, by country of origin: in 2024, the initial results indicate that 50% of the grantees were women.
- Number of participants in the creative innovation labs call and news media actions activities: in 2023, the results show that 51% of the participants were women.
- Number of participants in learning activities supported by the programme who assess they have improved their competences and increased their employability: the results show that 72% of the respondents who gave a positive feedback were women.

More recent data will be available in the upcoming reporting years, once the multiannual projects are finalised and final data is reported (normally 2–3 years after the project start).

Contribution to the digital transition (EUR million):

	2021 implementation	2022 implementation	2023 implementation	2024 implementation	Total	% of the 2021- 2024 envelope
Digital contribution	104.5	91.2	71.2	275.3	542.3	39.3%

- Regulation (EU) 2021/818⁽⁵⁴⁾ sets out that the Creative Europe Programme contributes to the digital transition of the cultural and creative sectors.
- In the cooperation projects under the Culture strand, the digital priority to help the European cultural and creative sectors to undertake or accelerate their digital transition is included as the first or second priority in the project application. Moreover, Creative Europe networks have an objective to help the European cultural and creative sectors to fully take advantage of new technologies to enhance their competitiveness.

⁽⁵³⁾ Linked to interventions the principal objective of which is to improve gender equality (i.e. gender score 2).

⁽⁵⁴⁾ Regulation (EU) 2021/818 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 May 2021 establishing the Creative Europe Programme (2021 to 2027) and repealing Regulation (EU) No 1295/2013 (OJ L 189, 28.5.2021, p. 34, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2021/818/oj>).

- In line with the media and audiovisual action plan, the Media and Cross-sectoral strands have prioritised support for the digitisation of the audiovisual and news media industries.
- Under the Media strand, several existing schemes have integrated a strong digital dimension. The ‘Talents and skills’ scheme includes as a priority the strengthening of the capacity of audiovisual professionals to embrace the digital transition. Support is also given to television and online content to facilitate European and international co-productions for exploitation by digital platforms and TV broadcasters. In addition, European video-on-demand networks are supported in their efforts to screen a significant proportion of European works. Distribution of films is funded through a combination of theatrical and online distribution. Support to film markets and festivals has been adapted to support hybrid events online.
- Also, as of 2021, new schemes have been established to deepen support to digitisation. The ‘Innovative tools’ scheme supports the promotion and marketing of tools, including online and using data analytics, to increase the reach of European works. The ‘Video games and immersive content’ scheme is dedicated to supporting the development of digital content, including for virtual worlds. Furthermore, a virtual reality / augmented reality industry coalition was established to stimulate cooperation across industry sectors and ensure European leadership.
- Under the Cross-sectoral strand, the creative innovation labs call encourages innovative approaches for content creation and distribution, taking into account the opportunities of the digital transition, notably virtual worlds. Also, support to news media collaborations has been introduced to address structural challenges, including digitisation, to the production and monetisation of quality journalism.
- For the years 2021-2023, the yearly contribution to digital objectives is based on beneficiary organisations’ applications for funding for projects with digital-related topics. Data for 2024 have been calculated by a new corporate reporting system called KPI Tool. The reason for the exponential increase is that in the KPI Tool, the self-declaration of priorities is available both at the application and reporting stages. Data is provisional, as final results will be available upon the completion of projects (normally 2–3 years after the start).

Contribution to sustainable development goals

SDG	Does the programme contribute to the goal?	Example (only for the most relevant SDGs)
SDG3: Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages	X	The Cultural and Creative Sectors Guarantee Facility financed a study on the social impact of news media in 2021. Results show that healthy, thriving news media ecosystems increase the wellbeing of citizens. Support to cross-border journalism projects and media literacy projects in the cross-sectoral strand increases the diffusion of knowledge in society, helps mutual understanding and fights the spread of disinformation, thus improving, for example, public health (e.g. through informing about the COVID-19 vaccines).

SDG4: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportuni- ties for all	x	The skills and talents action in the Media strand is an example of promoting lifelong learning – it supports courses, training sessions, workshops, etc. directed at audiovisual professionals to become even better and broaden their skillsets (e.g. in promoting a film or creating visual effects).
SDG5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls	X	As described in the cross-cutting issues of the programme – gender equality section. For example, the films supported under the Media strand with ‘Films on the move’ show a higher average share of key female creators than in the market. Several projects funded under the European Cooperation Projects scheme are relevant to this sustainable development goal, in particular the one addressing gender inequalities in the cultural and creative sectors. Creative Europe networks of cultural and creative organisations also contribute to the sharing of good practices promoting gender equality in the sector.
SDG6: Ensure availabilit- y and sustainab- le manage- ment of water and sanitation for all		

SDG8: Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all	x	Through the support provided to artists and cultural professionals, Creative Europe promotes sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all. For example, the European platforms for emerging artists promote fair, inclusive, and diverse frameworks supporting emerging artists careers. Platforms must develop in their strategies effective ways to ensure and promote better working conditions and fairer remuneration, skill development and life-long learning as well as artistic freedom.
SDG10: Reduce inequalities within and among countries	x	All Creative Europe actions have an international collaboration aspect. In particular, the Media strand has an action that benefits coproductions with developing countries through cascade grants, under the 360 ° action. On the European scale, the Media strand introduced an array of measures to ensure a level playing field for audiovisual professionals from all countries, and small-capacity countries are encouraged to enter into collaboration with high-capacity countries (especially through co-development). Since 2021, there have been at least 498 collaborations under the Media strand involving partners from low- and high-capacity countries.
SDG11: Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable	X	In the 2022 Creative Europe work programme, the creative innovation labs call had a special angle: the projects should contribute to the New European Bauhaus framework for inclusive and sustainable product and experience design. The programme also develops synergies with the New European Bauhaus with projects such as the medium-scale European cooperation project 'ARCH-E, European Platform for Architectural Design Competitions', which aims to promote high-quality architectural solutions for the built environment by increasing the use of architectural design competitions in Europe.
SDG12: Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns	X	See the cross-cutting issues section – environmental requirements. The programme promotes green solutions, especially on the supply side, through bonus points that can be obtained in applications having sustainable working modalities (in the Media strand). The same strand is also preparing a carbon calculator translation tool to make it easier for co-producers to comply with different carbon regulation regimes (in progress in February 2024).

SDG16: Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels	X	Creative Europe decides on the distribution of the grants transparently and on a merit basis. Audits are established across the programmes and overseen by the Commission and other implementing institutions. The work programme for each year is accepted by Member States. Access to the programme is encouraged through a network of country desks, which reach out and explain to potential applicants how to apply. In addition, Creative Europe has funded an online tool (CulturEU) that allows potential applicants from cultural and creative sectors to check funding possibilities beyond Creative Europe.
SDG17: Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development	X	The Media strand supports co-production funds located in the EU aimed at cooperating with film institutions in developing countries. With support from the Media strand in 2022, 93 films were already coproduced by 2024 by partnerships involving partners from the Media strand and developing countries.

Support to reforms

- N/A

Contribution to strategic technologies

- N/A

COMMUNICATION

FINANCIAL INTERVENTION OF THE COMMUNICATION POLICY AREA

Concrete examples of achievements

52	1 225	1 100	86%
seconds was the estimated actual YouTube engagement rate in 2024, based on YouTube Analytics data.	political reporting products were provided by the Commission's Representations, covering reactions on EU topics in all Member States in 2024.	audiovisual products (messages, interviews, statements, clips) were provided to the College of Commissioners in 2024.	of users were satisfied with the answers received from the Europe Direct contact centre in 2024.
115 914	46 576	10 771	
visits were logged to anti-disinformation webpages, including positive communication on related topics in 2024.	people (including virtual visitors) visited the visitors' centre in 2024.	information and engagement activities were performed by the Europe Direct centres in 2024.	

Budget programming and implementation

Budget programming (million EUR)

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	Total
Financial programming	106.7	107.6	108.5	109.5	110.4	111.4	112.2	766.3
NextGenerationEU	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Decommitments made available again (*)	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Contributions from other countries and entities	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Total	106.7	107.6	108.5	109.5	110.4	111.4	112.2	766.3

(*) Only Article 15(3) of the Financial Regulation.

Cumulative budget implementation at the end of 2024 (million EUR)

	Implementation	Budget	Implementation rate
Commitments	432.3	766.3	56.4%
Payments	404.8		52.8%

Implementation and performance

Key performance indicators

	Baseline	Progress	Target	Results	Assessment
Political reporting products provided by the Representations covering reactions on EU topics in all Member States	0	60%	1 200 annually from 2022 to 2029	Milestones achieved for 2021 until 2024, sum of results compared to sum of milestones	On track
Audiovisual products provided to the College	0	67%	1 000 annually from 2022 to 2029	Milestones achieved for 2021-2024, sum of results compared to sum of milestones	On track
Target audience able to recall the messages of corporate campaigns	0	33%	25% annually from 2024 to 2029	Milestones achieved for 2021, 2022 and 2023, sum of results compared to sum of milestones	On track

Users satisfied with the answers received from the Europe Direct contact centre	0	44%	86% annually from 2024 to 2029	Milestones achieved for 2021-2024 (years for which the results are higher or equal to annual milestones)	On track
Engagement rate on social media	0	11%	60 seconds annually from 2021 to 2027	Milestones not achieved for 2021, 2022 and 2024. Milestone achieved for 2023 (years for which the results are higher or equal to annual milestones)	On track

Indicator 4 is not available because in 2024, in the context of the European elections, DG Communication did not run large-scale communication campaigns. This indicator cannot therefore be provided for 2024.

The communication actions in 2024 ensured that the College received up-to-date communication advice and intelligence. Information and communication services addressed citizens directly, with messages aligned with the Commission's policy priorities.

In 2024, DG Communication continued to communicate on the six headline ambitions of the von der Leyen Commission, focusing mainly on successfully delivering the green and digital transitions and the implementation of the NextGenerationEU recovery plan.

In 2024, the Directorate-General invested in communication actions to inform and engage citizens, supporting the Parliament's election campaign, and continued its effort to communicate the positive impact of the NextGenerationEU recovery plan. Through its Representations in Member States, the Directorate-General designed and launched a series of local campaigns showcasing concrete projects funded under NextGenerationEU and how they benefit citizens and communities. The Representations reported regularly to the College with intelligence on the ground across the Member States while cooperating at the national, regional and local levels.

The number of audiovisual products provided to the College (messages, interviews, statements, clips) in 2024 exceeded the target of 1 000. There was a drop in the recording of statements in our studios by Commissioners because of the huge increase in visits outside Brussels (requiring audiovisual coverage) and because of the transition from the previous Commission to the new one.

Users were overall satisfied with the answers received from the Europe Direct contact centre in 2024. The satisfaction rate in 2024 was 89% against a target of 86%.

In 2026 the new model of Europa Direct centres will start, involving different geographical coverage, new contractors and a new relationship with the citizen. Although the aim of the new model is to better inform the citizens at the local level, it is unknown, above all in the first period of deployment of the new model, whether citizen satisfaction will still be at the current satisfactory level. In 2024, the average view duration on YouTube was 52 seconds against a target of 60 seconds. DG Communication started to produce shorter videos (maximum 1 minute) because that has become the current practice on social media (e.g. reels on YouTube). This explains the shorter engagement time on YouTube. We cannot exclude that, if the strategy to shorten the videos to increase their effectiveness continues, in the future the target value will need to be revised as not fully reflecting the new communication strategy of the platform.

Contribution to horizontal priorities

Contribution to green budgeting priorities (EUR million):

	Implementation				Estimates			Total	% of the total envelope
	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027		
Climate mainstreaming	4.2	1.6	0.5	0.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	6.9	0.9%

DG Communication uses all available communication channels (notably via the Representations) to disseminate different corporate communication messages ⁽⁵⁵⁾, including messages on climate change and the effect of this change on people.

One example is the joint communication with the Union of European Football Associations for promoting energy-saving measures in households, in support of the EU carbon neutrality target.

DG Communication’s activities make a contribution to both climate change mitigation and climate change adaptation by raising awareness about clean, home-grown energy and energy independence, emphasising their benefits to the planet, climate, security, and shared values.

Another example is the ‘You are EU’ campaign. It raises awareness of how EU values, the clean energy transition and energy independence are closely intertwined, and about the

⁽⁵⁵⁾ An example of a key DG Communication action on communicating the climate change priorities is the multi-year partnership with the Union of European Football Associations on the television campaign ‘The world’s best trick’, which reached an average of around 262.9 million people per season, totaling over 1.6 billion views cumulatively.

need to move towards an energy-independent EU to preserve EU values like democracy and freedom.

The main communications campaigns currently planned do not focus on greening contribution, although messages on the importance of the greening priorities and the Commission's action on this policy priority might be present in these campaigns. This is without prejudice of possible unplanned requests of campaigns and communication on climate, greening and climate mainstreaming formulated by the Presidency. No forecast is carried out internally in DG Communication with this granularity.

Contribution to gender equality (million EUR) (*)

Gender score	2021	2022	2023	2024	Total
2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
0*	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
0	106.7	107.6	108.5	109.5	432.3
Total:	106.7	107.6	108.5	109.5	432.3

(*) Based on the applied gender contribution methodology, the following scores are attributed at the most granular level of intervention possible:

2: interventions the principal objective of which is to improve gender equality;

1: interventions that have gender equality as an important and deliberate objective but not as the main reason for the intervention;

0: non-targeted interventions (interventions that are expected to have no significant bearing on gender equality);

0*: score to be assigned to interventions with a likely but not yet clear positive impact on gender equality.

Currently, DG Communication is not systematically collecting data on indicators with sex/gender disaggregation dimensions, since the communication actions developed by the Directorate-General are of a horizontal nature and generally not directed to specific groups based on sex/gender (i.e. other criteria are used to define target groups).

However, DG Communication is committed to ensuring equality mainstreaming. To this end, the Directorate-General's working group on equality was created in March 2021 and includes representatives from all DG Communication directorates. The group produced a working plan on equality, endorsed by senior management, and monitors its implementation.

The equality working plan covers external communication (for which DG Communication is the domain leader) and aims at mainstreaming equality in communication practices, as carried out by the Directorate-General and in support of the work of other Directorates-General under the domain leadership of DG Communication. The equality plan also covers internal communication and aims at mainstreaming equality within the DG Communication administration.

Some of its objectives are shown below.

-Facilitate community management on social media across Commission services with respect to diversity of EU societies and in line with EU messaging on equality. The repository is available for consultation by all Directorates-General.

- Ensure that people with disabilities have improved access to documents and publications managed by DG Communication, including Representations. Progress is monitored by the Equality Coordinator with regular reporting to the Task Force on Equality, in coordination with OP (OP indicator: percentage of publications accessible to visually impaired person; OP target 2021: 25%).

- Facilitate inclusive and accessible communication practices by all Directorates-General using DG Communication framework contracts. Progress is monitored by the Equality Coordinator with regular reporting to the Task Force on Equality.

- Contribute to promoting equality topics to EU audiences. Management indicator: number of equality topics included in CN agendas or information products. Target: four per year.

- Improve awareness among DG Communication staff of equality issues relating to management and internal communication practices and external communication practices. Information should be available to all staff and promoted regularly.

Regular reports are produced to measure the progress of the objectives and monitor the initiatives undertaken to achieve the objectives both in the internal and external dimensions of the communication. The last report highlighted that while there is good progress on all the objectives, the objective to ensure equal access to the Conference on the Future of Europe has been achieved and completed. In particular, gender balance was 50% men to 49% women in each of the panels.

Gender-disaggregated data: DG Communication does not systematically collect gender-disaggregated information.

Contribution to the digital transition

DG Communication is only contributing indirectly, through its communication activities. The digital transition embraces a large array of aspects (such as tools for a common industry strategy, tools for technology transfer, commercialisation of research and development and better integration in value chains, development of skill capabilities for digitalisation, support to entrepreneurial discovery processes, cooperation between academia and businesses) which are not mapped and/or measured. DG Communication has not envisaged dedicated communication actions on the digital transition but it communicates separately on these aspects: it is not possible to gauge the impact of this communication on the various aspects of its priority. Therefore this horizontal priority is not applicable to DG Communication's action.

Contribution to sustainable development goals

SDG	Does the programme contribute to the goal?	Example (only for the most relevant SDGs)
SDG4 Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all	Indirectly	Through the NextGenerationEU corporate campaign (“Make it Strong” theme). DG Communication corporate campaigns, content and messages remain in general at top level, addressing the general public and communicating on broad political issues, showcasing for example how NextGenEU supports the modernisation of education. These address issues relevant to the sustainable development goal 4.
SDG7 Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all	Indirectly	The ‘You are EU’ campaign aimed to raise awareness on how EU values, the clean energy transition and energy independence are closely intertwined and about the need to move towards an energy-independent EU to preserve EU values like democracy and freedom. And we want to show how we can work together to accelerate the transition to a green society. This addresses issues relevant to SDG7.
SDG8 Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all	Indirectly	Through the NextGenerationEU corporate campaign (“Make it Strong” theme). DG Communication corporate campaigns, content and messages remain in general at top level, addressing the general public and communicating on broad political issues, showcasing for example how NextGenEU supports businesses, research and skills. These address issues relevant to the sustainable development goal 8.

SDG9 Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation	Indirectly	Through the NextGenerationEU corporate campaign (“Make it Strong” theme). DG Communication corporate campaigns, content and messages remain in general at top level, addressing the general public and communicating on broad political issues, showcasing for example how NextGenEU supports businesses, research and skills. These address issues relevant to the sustainable development goal 9.
SDG11 Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable	Indirectly	Through the NextGenerationEU corporate campaign (“Make it Green” and “Make it Digital” themes). DG Communication corporate campaigns, content and messages remain in general at top level, addressing the general public and communicating on broad political issues. These may address issues relevant to the sustainable development goal 11 but there is no direct link between the two.
SDG13 Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts	Indirectly	Through the NextGenerationEU and You are EU corporate campaigns and the relevant cooperation agreement with UEFA. These actions inform the public about EU climate actions and inspire citizens to take action at a personal level, too. They address issues relevant to the sustainable development goal 13.

**SDG16:
Promote
peaceful
and
inclusive
societies
for
sustainable
developmen
t, provide
access to
justice for
all and build
effective,
accountabl
e and
inclusive
institutions
at all levels**

Indirectly

Through the You are EU corporate campaign. DG Communication corporate campaigns, content and messages remain in general at top level, addressing the general public and communicating on broad political issues. These may address issues relevant to the sustainable development goal 16 but there is no direct link between the two.

Support for reforms

DG communication's activities make substantial contribution in communicating the positive impact of the RRF in MS.

Our NextGenerationEU local and national campaigns demonstrate how RRF is boosting Europe's economy and making our societies stronger and more resilient, delivering tangible results for Europeans through its many projects. As the largest ever stimulus package undertaken in the EU, it is leading by example and setting the blueprint for a new growth model based on a clean, innovative and inclusive economy and digital and tech sovereignty.

By investing in **healthcare**, NextGenerationEU is contributing to a fairer, more caring society, equipped for the challenges that lie ahead.

By supporting **education and skills**, it is helping prepare our workforce for new opportunities in a tech-driven world.

By assisting our **SMEs and young entrepreneurs**, it is also nurturing innovation, creating jobs and spurring future growth.

Contribution to strategic technologies (STEP)

N/A

COMMON AGRICULTURAL POLICY

Concrete examples of achievements

5.6 million farmers benefited from direct payments in 2023.	5.6 million hectares benefited from the 'complementary income support for young farmers' type of intervention in 2023.	20.0 million beehives were supported in 2023.	21% of agricultural land was covered by management contracts contributing to biodiversity in 2023.
4.89 million hectares were under land-management contracts targeting the reduction of greenhouse gases or ammonia emissions in 2023.	2.55 million hectares of agricultural and forest land were covered by management contracts contributing to carbon sequestration or conservation in 2023.	18.2 million children benefited from school schemes in the 2022/2023 school year.	3.03 million beneficiaries received vocational training in agriculture in 2023, the 2025 target being 3.7 million.

Budget programming and implementation

Budget programming (million EUR):

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	Total
Financial programming	55 712.9	53 096.6	53 626.9	53 673.1	53 201.9	53 796.9	54 000.9	377 109.1
NextGenerationEU	2 365.7	5 688.5	0.3	0.4	15.7	1.5	0.0	8 072.0
Decommitments made available again (*)	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Contributions from other countries and entities	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Total	58 078.6	58 785.0	53 627.2	53 673.4	53 217.6	53 798.4	54 000.9	385 181.1

(*) Only Article 15(3) of the Financial Regulation.

Cumulative budget implementation at the end of 2024 (million EUR):

	Implementation	Budget	Implementation rate
Commitments	222 931.6	385 181.1	57.9%
Payments	222 310.0		57.7%

Implementation and performance

Key performance indicators

	Baseline	Progress	Target	Results	Assessment
To increase agricultural factor income	2013: 102	100%	Overall increase in the long term	Index above the baseline each year from 2014 to 2024. 2024 index value: 137	N/A
To increase agricultural productivity	2010: 100	100%	Overall increase in the long term	Index above the baseline each year from 2014 to 2024. 2024 index value: 108.6	N/A
To increase the rural employment rate	2013: 63%	100%	Overall increase in the long term	Index above the baseline each year from 2014 to 2023. 2023 index value: 70%	N/A
Support for investment in restructuring	0	88%	3.5% in 2025	Support reached 3.08% of agricultural holdings out of 3.5%	On track
Business development plan for young farmers	0	96%	2.0% in 2025	Support reached 1.93% of agricultural holdings out of 2.0%	On track

Contributing to biodiversity and landscapes – agricultural land	0	> 100%	19.7% in 2025	21% of agricultural land reached, compared to a target of 19.7%	On track
Improving water management – agricultural land	0	> 100%	17% in 2025	17.5% of agricultural land reached, out of 17%	On track
Preventing soil erosion and improving soil management – agricultural land	0	> 100%	16.2% in 2025	16.8% of agricultural land reached, compared to a target of 16.2%	On track
New or improved services/infrastructure	0	> 100%	22% in 2025	31.6% of rural population reached, out of 22%	On track

The common agricultural policy (CAP) for 2023-2027 was fully applicable as of 1 January 2023, through the new national CAP strategic plans. The European Commission continued to work closely with Member States to guarantee the smooth implementation of those plans in 2024, maintain the overall ambition of the plans and find appropriate solutions to allow progress towards the objectives of the CAP, including when reviewing amendments to the plans proposed by Member States.

The first year of the CAP strategic plans made it clear that adjustments were necessary to ensure that they bring the expected effects, cut red tape and take better account of external events affecting farmers.

After widespread farmer protests in early 2024, the Commission, delivering on its commitment to ease the administrative burden on EU farmers and the call from the [European Council](#) to act, put forward a simplification package of measures to ease the administrative burden on farmers and help them tackle the challenges that had arisen since the reform of the CAP for 2023-2027. The Commission proposed targeted changes to the underlying CAP basic legislation to deliver simplification while maintaining the overall orientation of the current CAP and its role in supporting the transition of European agriculture to sustainable farming.

The CAP has helped to support and stabilise farm income. As in previous years, the markets continued to be volatile in 2024. In certain sectors, the effects of the war in Ukraine continued to influence prices and thus farm income. While prices and farm income remain largely driven by market forces, the CAP contributed to the resilience of farms by providing targeted and strategic support. In this context, the Commission ensured and facilitated the consistent

adaptation and subsequent implementation of interventions set out in the CAP strategic plans, supporting farm income and resilience. It also supported Member States in the process of developing coherent strategies to ensure that interventions work effectively for farmers across the EU, and made sure that the rules are well understood by Member States. The CAP helped farmers cope with dramatic losses in production and production potential as a result of natural disasters, such as floods in autumn in central Europe. The Commission continued to undertake analytical and market-oriented work in relation to access to finance for EU farmers and the use of financial instruments under the CAP strategic plans.

Achieving a higher environmental ambition and supporting climate-change mitigation and adaptation is the cornerstone of the CAP. The CAP strategic plans play a key role in ensuring that the CAP successfully contributes to addressing climate change and the protection of natural resources and biodiversity. The CAP contributes to climate-change adaptation and mitigation through adequate prevention and restoration measures, complemented by risk management tools. Furthermore, support is available to the forestry, bioeconomy and carbon farming sectors.

Various interventions contribute to increasing the competitiveness of farmers by helping them to modernise. In 2024, DG Agriculture and Rural Development supported Member States in planning and implementing effective interventions under the CAP strategic plans in synergy with other economic interventions. This also included the creation and launch of new financial instruments.

Generational renewal remains one of the main challenges facing European agriculture in the coming years and is one of the priorities of the 2023-2027 CAP. Strategies to benefit young farmers in the strategic plans generally include a combination of interventions such as income support, installation aid, investments at a higher support rate and cooperation on farm succession. National measures are also needed, taking into account that national factors under the competence of Member States have an important role to play (i.e. access to land, succession law, etc.). In 2024, when modifying CAP strategic plans, it was ensured that the level of ambition was increased or maintained.

CAP financial instruments also support investment and the setting up of young farmers across the EU. The CAP aims to facilitate the creation and maintenance of jobs and to improve the quality of life in **rural areas** by supporting investment in rural businesses (non-agricultural activities), infrastructure and basic services while paying specific attention to the territorial disparities between the various rural areas. Rural areas are often less well served by essential infrastructure and services (e.g. broadband, public transport, healthcare services), and there is a need to prioritise them through the use of other EU policies as well.

Research and innovation, digitalisation and technological tools are seen as major enablers fostering the transition to a greener and more competitive agriculture and supporting the viability of rural areas. The strategic dialogue on the future of agriculture recognised the key role that research and innovation is playing in the ongoing transitions in European farming. Member States have laid out research and innovation solutions and digital strategies in their CAP strategic plans, integrating digital solutions across the various CAP specific objectives in synergy with other EU programmes.

Performance results in 2024 – preliminary analysis

Member States report on the implementation of the CAP strategic plans via the annual performance report. To monitor the progress of the implementation, the Commission checks the result indicators that are defined in the CAP Strategic Plans Regulation (Regulation (EU)

2021/2115⁽⁵⁶⁾). The first full report shows that **most parts of the CAP plans are being implemented as intended**. In some cases, the aggregated EU results show that the plans are performing better than expected. However, there are also parts of the plans that are performing less well, for instance interventions linked to risk management and social sustainability. Most of this underperformance is linked to the early stage of the programme cycle. Some Member States are still funding interventions under the rural development programmes from the previous financial period. In other cases, the interventions have a long lead time between the call for proposals and payment. In particular, interventions linked to investment, knowledge sharing and advisory services or funded under Leader (*liaison entre actions de développement de l'économie rurale* – links between activities for the development of rural economy) do not automatically lead to expenditure shortly after a Member State has activated the intervention. It is expected that implementation will pick up relatively quickly. There is an organised process to discuss the performance with the Member States. They will be asked for clarifications both via observation letters regarding the annual performance reports and in the annual review meetings. Eventually, discussions regarding the elements of the CAP strategic plan implementation that lag behind the planned output may trigger modifications to the plans.

There is good reason to be optimistic about the implementation of the CAP strategic plans in line with the policy's specific objectives, rules and implementing mechanisms.

Economic sustainability

Overall, the interventions supporting economic sustainability are implemented according to plan. Income support interventions have been part of the CAP for a long time, and their continuation in the CAP strategic plans was easy for the Member States. As a result of the CAP implementation, though many other factors also play a role, farm income per worker has gradually improved (a 56% increase between 2013 and 2022).

However, some parts of the CAP strategic plans are implemented less successfully. This relates particularly to interventions concerning risk management and, to a lesser extent, interventions that target income support for small farms.

Climate and environmental sustainability

The CAP strategic plans tackle climate and environmental sustainability targets in many ways. As a first layer, the enhanced conditionality standards are applicable to 90% of EU farmland, which plays an important role in mainstreaming sustainable farming practices.

Good achievements have been reported under the objective to contribute to climate-change mitigation and adaptation by means of environmental, climate-related and other management commitments that contribute to improving climate adaptation, and through commitments to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from agricultural land and to maintain or enhance carbon storage (permanent grassland, agricultural land in peatland, etc.) (R14, 35% achieved against planned 25%).

Under the objective to foster sustainable development and the efficient management of resources, such as water, soil and air, the highest uptake has been reported by commitments that lead to the sustainable use of pesticides (R24, 29% achieved against 21% planned),

⁽⁵⁶⁾ Regulation (EU) 2021/2115 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 2 December 2021 establishing rules on support for strategic plans to be drawn up by Member States under the common agricultural policy (CAP Strategic Plans) and financed by the European Agricultural Guarantee Fund (EAGF) and by the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) and repealing Regulations (EU) No 1305/2013 and (EU) No 1307/2013 (OJ L 435, 6.12.2021, p. 1, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2021/2115/oj>).

commitments beneficial to soil quality (R19, 51% achieved against 43% planned) and commitments to improve air quality by reducing ammonia emissions (R20, 7% achieved against 6% planned).

Commitments for biodiversity conservation or restoration on agricultural land (R31) under the objective to contribute to halting and reversing biodiversity loss, enhance ecosystem services and preserve habitats and landscapes also showed a good uptake, and are not too far off the course set at the aggregated EU level (22% achieved against 26% planned). The milestones set for the maintenance of landscape features (R34, 1.45% achieved against 1.40% planned) under the same objective are well on course.

Support for the conversion and maintenance of organic farming (R29) showed differing levels of progress at the Member State level. The overall market difficulties in the sector are reflected in the aggregated EU results for 2024, which lag a little behind the milestone for this period (5.9% achieved against 7% planned).

Over 22 million livestock units have benefited from animal welfare aid under the CAP strategic plans, highlighting the strong interest in this aid, particularly in eco-schemes. The cumulative EU milestone target for 2024 for R44 was set at 20.8% of livestock units, with Member States achieving 19.8%, thus reflecting a satisfactory uptake of animal welfare interventions. In 2024, more than 16 million livestock units benefited from CAP strategic plan measures aimed at reducing antimicrobial resistance. A total of 16.3% of EU livestock units were covered by this aid, falling short of the 19.8% milestone target set for R43. This shortfall was partly attributed to the lower uptake of support for organic livestock producers, which contribute to R43 in certain Member States.

Nevertheless, the Member States are showing good initiatives to make the most out of their CAP strategic plans. Examples of the optimisation of resources include targeting grants at green interventions that have a lower chance of receiving private funding or loans and using financial instruments to support productive investments (e.g. through favourable interest rates for loans).

Social sustainability

The CAP strategic plans support the socioeconomic development of rural areas by facilitating the installation of young and new farmers and business development; by promoting employment, business development and basic services for rural populations; and by encouraging participatory local development tools, such as Leader/community-led local development, and other forms of cooperation, such as smart villages.

In most CAP strategic plans, this objective is going to be delivered primarily via two interventions specifically dedicated to young farmers: complementary income support and setting-up support. The implementation of these interventions advanced well in most Member States in 2024, but more effort is still needed to launch all of the planned calls under the CAP strategic plans as soon as possible in 2025.

CAP support has both significant direct effects and spillover effects on the wider rural economy, especially in less-developed regions. The main interventions that directly contribute to wider territorial development are Leader and support for improved access to services and infrastructures that target the wider rural population. In 2024, the majority of approximately 2 700 Leader local development strategies were selected. The Leader network includes more than 120 000 members of local partnerships: private and public social and economic partners are engaged in development of their territories in rural Europe.

Leader's implementation seems disappointing (only 29.62% of the rural population is covered by local action groups instead of the planned 51.50%; see R38). However, this is linked to the slow start-up phase and errors in the calculation of the indicator by a number of Member States. It is expected that the implementation and the relevant result indicator will improve in next year's report.

By 2024, milestones relating to the promotion of employment, growth and local development were achieved through several rural development interventions contributing to various CAP specific objectives, including specific objective 8, as follows:

in terms of new jobs supported by CAP projects, the milestone target for 2024 was exceeded by 11.9%: 202 727 jobs (R37) were created, with the largest contribution coming from interventions supporting the setting up of young farmers;

projects supporting improved access to services (R41) started to be implemented, and benefited 7.75% of the rural population, which represents around 17 046 509 inhabitants.

Contribution to horizontal priorities

Contribution to green budgeting priorities (EUR million):

	Implementation				Estimates			
	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	
Climate mainstreaming	17 209.7	17 557.3	13 086.5	24 168.4	24 540.0	24 566.8	24 565.4	
Biodiversity mainstreaming	9 943.2	9 236.2	9 033.8	8 791.1	9 217.6	9 217.6	9 217.6	

The enhanced green architecture of the 2023-2027 CAP includes a range of instruments that can contribute to protecting and restoring natural resources and biodiversity and to the fight against climate change. This is in line with the CAP's specific objectives on these areas.

The reinforced conditionality links area- and animal-based support to the respect of a number of statutory management requirements and nine standards for good agricultural and environmental conditions. Conditionality is also the baseline for other incentive measures supported by the CAP. The wide area coverage (90% of EU farmland) and the compulsory nature of conditionality amplify its positive effects. In addition, the eco-schemes – the new instrument put in place by the 2023-2027 CAP and representing at least 25% of direct payments – are being used by Member States to contribute to various environmental objectives, including climate change and biodiversity.

Moreover, rural development measures such as agri-environment-climate commitments, organic farming, Natura 2000 payments and non-productive investments make an important contribution to biodiversity and climate objectives. So do measures for knowledge building, innovation and cooperation, and training and provision of farm advice.

According to the CAP Strategic Plans Regulation, from 2023 onwards, measures under the CAP are expected to contribute 40% of the overall financial envelope of the CAP, at the EU level, to climate-related objectives. Using information provided by Member States, the Commission will account for the CAP contribution using the EU climate coefficients. This climate-relevant expenditure serves as input to monitor progress on the goal for climate mainstreaming across all EU programmes, with a target of 25% of EU expenditure contributing to climate objectives.

The methodology developed to track the biodiversity contribution of the 2023-2027 CAP takes into account the CAP architecture and its increased green ambition. As from the draft budget 2024, the contribution of the CAP to biodiversity is estimated by the Commission through the application of EU coefficients (100%, 40% and 0%) and weighting factors (100%, 70% and 50%) that aim to reflect the differentiated contribution of each type of intervention towards the biodiversity objective. This includes direct and indirect contributions, including whether the support is subject to conditionality. The CAP is the policy with the highest level of support for biodiversity, representing 57% of the support from the multiannual financial framework.

Contribution to gender equality (million EUR) (*)

Gender score	2021	2022	2023	2024	Total
2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
1	0.0	0.0	0.0	113.2	113.2
0*	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
0	55 712.9	53 096.6	53 626.9	53 559.9	215 996.2
Total:	55 712.9	53 096.6	53 626.9	53 673.1	216 109.5

(*) Based on the applied gender contribution methodology, the following scores are attributed at the most granular level of intervention possible:

2: interventions the principal objective of which is to improve gender equality;

1: interventions that have gender equality as an important and deliberate objective but not as the main reason for the intervention;

0: non-targeted interventions (interventions that are expected to have no significant bearing on gender equality);

0*: score to be assigned to interventions with a likely but not yet clear positive impact on gender equality.

The 2023-2027 CAP includes, for the first time in the history of policy, a specific reference to the need to enhance the participation of women in farming and to improve the situation of rural women.

As a result, attention was paid to recognising the importance of gender issues and the need to increase the participation of women in farming and to improve the socioeconomic situation of rural women. Member States were encouraged and requested to improve the participation of women and young people in the governance structures of local action groups.

Two Member States introduced specific interventions that aim to enhance gender equality, therefore those interventions should receive a gender score of 1.

The Spanish CAP strategic plan introduced complementary income support for young farmers, where the aid amount is increased by 15 percentage points in each of the 20 regions in the case of female owners applying for this aid.

Ireland introduced three interventions with a clear gender mainstreaming component:

farm capital investments, under Article 73 of the CAP Strategic Plans Regulation ('Investments'): the target agriculture modernisation scheme provides women farmers with a higher support rate for aid;

European innovation partnerships, under Article 77 ('Cooperation'): support under stream A of this intervention will be provided for bottom-up innovative projects including approaches to support gender balance in farming in Ireland;

a knowledge transfer programme, under Article 78 ('Knowledge exchange and dissemination of information'): to address the cross-cutting CAP policy objective of gender balance, knowledge transfer groups can be set up for participation by women only, based on the need to address shared challenges.

Gender mainstreaming works in particular when women are involved and empowered in the decision-making process. In this light, the majority of Member States imposed a requirement for Leader decision-making bodies to be composed of at least 50% women. In the sample of data for the monitoring and evaluation of local action groups ⁽⁵⁷⁾, out of the total of 27 183 people, there were 10 543 women. Currently these data cannot be associated with the budgets, but it will be possible in 2026, when local action groups will add their budgets to the database.

Furthermore, according to the CAP Strategic Plans Regulation, Member States must organise a partnership including, where relevant, bodies responsible for promoting social inclusion, fundamental rights, gender equality and non-discrimination. Most Member States committed explicitly in their CAP strategic plans to include organisations representing the rights of women in CAP partnerships and monitoring committees. Furthermore, the 2023-2027 CAP strengthened the collection of data disaggregated by gender.

⁽⁵⁷⁾ Shared fund management common system data for monitoring and evaluation cover local action groups selected in 2023: $n = 1\,775$ out of an expected total of approximately 2 600 local action groups; data from 20 Member States on the number of women in decision-making bodies for local action groups. This information is available by local action group and by Member States. More data will be available by end of April 2025 for the local action groups selected in 2024.

Gender-disaggregated information

Total number of farmers receiving CAP support directly (provisional data for 2024): 5 713 335:

women: 1 796 858 (31.45%);

men: 3 612 428 (63.23%);

non-binary: 1 841 (0.03%);

no prevalence: 229 833 (4.02%);

prefer not to say: 72 232 (1.26%).

Contribution to the digital transition (EUR million):

	2021 implementation	2022 implementation	2023 implementation	2024 implementation	Total	% of the 2021- 2024 envelope
Digital contribution	66.8	61.7	69.2	0.0	197.6	0.1%

The 2023-2027 CAP brings forward digitalisation in agriculture as it forms an inherent part of its cross-cutting objective on ‘Modernising the sector by fostering and sharing of knowledge, innovation and digitalisation in agriculture and rural areas, and encouraging their uptake’. For the first time, Member States set out digitalisation strategies under their CAP strategic plans outlining how they intend to support the sustainable digital transformation of agriculture and rural areas under the CAP and in synergy with other programmes, such as the Recovery and Resilience Facility, the Connecting Europe Facility, Horizon Europe and the digital Europe programme.

The CAP supports digitalisation mainly through investments, but also through eco-schemes and agro-environmental-climate commitments. It also supports the expansion of broadband connectivity in rural areas, the development of digital skills, and advisory services on digital matters through knowledge exchange and cooperation. For example, the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development made an important contribution to support broadband infrastructure and various ICT solutions in rural areas. This has had a positive effect on the quality of life of EU citizens, with nearly 13 million people living in rural areas benefiting from improved access to ICT services and infrastructure. In addition, smart villages initiatives are supported under Leader. The CAP also stimulates the digital transformation of public administrations, enabling the integration of digital technologies into agricultural administrative systems, such as the integrated administration and control system.

Broadband access in rural areas continued to improve in 2023. The most recent data show that the largest growth in coverage in 2023 took place in relation to technologies capable of achieving at least 1 gigabit per second (i.e. fibre to the premises and DOCSIS 3.1 networks, an essential connectivity target of the European gigabit society policy initiative).

Since 2023, 55.7% of rural homes in the EU (around 17.0 million) have had connectivity of at least 1 gigabit per second – more than double the level recorded in 2020. However, this remains notably lower than the total for urban and rural coverage of 78.8%, which leaves rural households with a gigabit connectivity gap of 23 percentage points. Nonetheless, this growth has contributed to an increase in next generation access coverage (at least 30 megabits per second), with 78.7% of rural households now having access to such networks.

Currently, it is not easy to quantify the budget associated with the digital-related interventions. This will become possible when more data are received regarding the implementation of these measures.

Methodology:

2021-2023: declared expenditure for focus area 6C on enhancing the accessibility, use and quality of information and communication technologies in rural areas;

2024: all interventions linked with R3 ‘Digitalising agriculture’: share of farms benefiting from support for digital farming technology through CAP and interventions on precision farming (5-year average). The figure for 2024 is not available yet.

Contribution to sustainable development goals

SDG	Does the programme contribute to the goal?	Example (only for the most relevant SDGs)

**SDG2:
End
hunger,
achieve
food
security
and
improved
nutrition
and
promote
sustaina
ble
agricultu
re**

yes

The CAP is supporting productivity and efficiency gains, and thereby contributing to SDG 2.

The EU school scheme supports the distribution of fruit, vegetables and milk to schools across the European Union as part of a wider programme of education about European agriculture and the benefits of healthy eating. The consumption of fresh fruit and vegetables and of milk in the EU does not meet international or national nutritional recommendations, while that of processed food that is often high in added sugar, salt, fat or additives is on the rise. Unhealthy diets, together with low physical activity, result in overweight and obesity. This is why the EU takes action to help children follow a healthy diet and lead healthy lifestyles. In the 2022/2023 school year, 18.2 million children benefited from this scheme, with a budget of EUR 180 million in 2024.

**SDG4:
Ensure
inclusive
and
equitable
quality
educatio
n and
promote
lifelong
learning
opportun
ities for
all**

yes

Text

**SDG6:
Ensure
availabili
ty and
sustaina
ble
manage
ment of
water
and
sanitatio
n for all**

yes

Text

**SDG7:
Ensure
access to
affordab
le,
reliable,
sustaina
ble and
modern
energy
for all**

yes

Text

**SDG8:
Promote
sustaine
d,
inclusive
and
sustaina
ble
economic
growth,
full and
productiv
e
employm
ent and
decent
work for
all**

yes

Text

SDG9: Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation	yes	The CAP offers explicit support for setting up, expanding and improving broadband infrastructure and for the provision of broadband internet access (i.e. improved connections to infrastructure) and access to e-government. The contribution from the CAP budget to the digital transition for the 2021-2023 period amounted to at least EUR 198 million (some support for digitalisation under the CAP cannot be tracked yet), as part of the EU's broader efforts to modernise and innovate agricultural practices and rural development. This allocation supports the implementation of digital technologies in areas such as precision farming, smart rural services and digital infrastructure development, contributing to the EU's goals for a more sustainable and competitive agricultural sector.
SDG12: Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns	yes	Text
SDG13: Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts	yes	Text

**SDG15:
Protect,
restore
and
promote
sustaina
ble use
of
terrestri
al
ecosyste
ms,
sustaina
bly
manage
forests,
combat
desertifi
cation,
and halt
and
reverse
land
degradat
ion and
halt
biodivers
ity loss**

yes

Recent production and market trends show the importance that the area of organics has gained over the last decade. Organic farming responds to specific consumer demand for sustainable food products, promoting more sustainable farming practices and contributing to the protection of the environment and improved animal welfare.

For the 2014-2022 period, rural development support planned for organic farming amounted to EUR 12.06 billion.

The share of the EU's agricultural area under organic farming increased from 5.9% in 2012 to 9.1% in 2020, corresponding to an increase from 9.5 million to 14.7 million hectares.

EMFAF – EUROPEAN MARITIME, FISHERIES AND AQUACULTURE FUND

Concrete examples of achievements

2014-2020 period

30 037	226 524	Over 117 000	12 934
fishing vessels (about 40% of the EU fleet) benefited from the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF) between 2014 and 2023. 63% of the vessels supported belonged to the small-scale coastal fishing fleet.	fishers benefited from the EMFF between 2014 and 2023.	operations were addressed to small and medium-sized enterprises or individuals from a total of 145 109 selected to receive funding under the EMFF between 2014 and 2023	projects addressing the environment and resource efficiency were selected between 2014 and 2023, with an EMFF contribution of EUR 1 960 million .
11 159	111 911		
operations were supported relating to better management of Natura 2000 and other marine protected areas between 2014 and 2023, with an EMFF contribution of EUR 552 million.	employees of processing companies benefited from the EMFF between 2014 and 2023.		

2021-2027 period

1 796	154		915
fishing vessels benefited from the European Maritime, Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund (EMFAF) between 2022 and 2023. 57% of the vessels supported belonged to the small-scale coastal fishing fleet	businesses achieved higher turnover with support from the EMFAF between 2022 and 2023.		actions contributing to good environmental status were selected between 2022 and 2023. These include nature restoration, conservation, protection of ecosystems, biodiversity, and animal health and welfare.
644			
operations were addressed to small and medium-sized enterprises or individuals from a total of 3 883 operations selected to receive funding under the EMFAF between 2022 and 2023.			

Budget programming and implementation

Budget programming (million EUR):

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	Total
Financial programming	109.1	1 134.4	1 103.1	1 070.2	946.5	803.5	812.9	5 979.6
NextGenerationEU	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Decommitments made available again (*)	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Contributions from other countries and entities	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Total	109.1	1 134.4	1 103.1	1 070.2	946.5	803.5	812.9	5 979.6

(*) Only Article 15(3) of the Financial Regulation.

Cumulative budget implementation at the end of 2024 (million EUR):

	Implementation	Budget	Implementation rate
Commitments	3 414.1	5 979.6	57.1%
Payments	489.7		8.2%

Implementation and performance

Key performance indicators

	Baseline	Progress	Target	Results	Assessment
Businesses created	0	1%	491 in 2029	4 in 2023	No data
Jobs maintained	0	0%	17 266 in 2029	73 in 2023	No data
Persons benefiting	0	0%	4 751 104 in 2029	9 666 in 2023 compared to a target of 4.7 million	No data
Actions contributing to good environmental status, including nature restoration, conservation, protection of ecosystems, biodiversity, animal health and welfare	0	4%	22 010 in 2029	915 in 2023 compared to a target of 22 010	No data

Energy consumption leading to carbon dioxide emissions reductions	0	0%	16 500 in 2029	No results	No data
Number of small and medium-sized enterprises supported	0	5%	14 000 in 2029	644 compared to a target of 14 000	No data
Number of small-scale coastal fisheries vessels supported	0	15%	7 000 in 2029	1 016 in 2023	No data

Up to 31 December 2023 ⁽⁵⁸⁾, EUR 560 million of EMFAF support (9%) was committed for 3 883 operations. This represented a 70% increase in commitments and more than a doubling of the number of operations from June 2023. 91% of all operations implemented are under EMFAF priorities 1 and 2. However, priorities 3 and 4 have a relatively higher proportion of their allocations already committed (29% and 24% respectively).

Challenges in implementation

2023 was the last year of EMFF implementation, causing the managing authorities to focus heavily on maximising the absorption of the remaining available funds. This limited their ability to further accelerate the EMFAF programmes' implementation. The speed of this process (notably the launch of calls for proposals, the assessment of applications, and the award of contracts) depends on national administrative procedures, which vary between Member States. DG Maritime Affairs and Fisheries is taking all reasonable steps to assist Member States in accelerating EMFAF programme implementation.

Achievements and challenges regarding programme performance

The achievements and challenges relating to performance are directly tied to those of implementation, and the data remain very limited. The picture will become clearer in subsequent years.

⁽⁵⁸⁾ The latest period for which validated data are available.

In 2024, a total of EUR 108.7 million was paid by the Commission to the Member States under shared management (EUR 26.7 million of pre-financing and EUR 82 million of payments relating to cost claims).

The primary aim of operations implemented under direct and indirect management is to help fishing communities strengthen their resilience, innovate and adapt. This includes making better use of the support available through EU funding instruments, in particular support for innovation and the diversification of economic activities, support for the energy transition and increasing gear selectivity. Moreover, the Commission works closely with Member States to make sure that the horizontal targets set out in the multiannual financial framework for the climate and biodiversity objectives are achieved.

All commitment appropriations in the year 2024 from the European Commission's voted budget, representing EUR 96.2 million, have been implemented. The initiatives supported were in the field of maritime policy, scientific advice, international ocean governance, regional fisheries organisations and activities delegated to the agencies under the United Nations' umbrella.

For shared management at the level of specific objectives, the highest commitment rates can be observed for the specific objectives 'Technical assistance' and 'Control and data collection', with 15.4% and 14.6% respectively of the total available allocations provided for these specific objectives.

Priority 1 (fostering sustainable fisheries and the restoration and conservation of aquatic biological resources). Scientific advice is an essential element of decision-making under the common fisheries policy. The provision of scientific advice to the relevant EU bodies and institutions and to some regional fisheries management organisations (notably the North-East Atlantic Fisheries Commission) has been ensured by renewing the various contractual and administrative arrangements in place with the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea, the Scientific, Technical and Economic Committee for Fisheries and the Joint Research Centre.

Regional fisheries management organisations are vital for promoting sustainable fisheries under international law. The EU's voluntary contributions to these organisations have supported scientific knowledge, improved fisheries governance, enhanced compliance and helped combat illegal fishing.

Priority 2 (fostering sustainable aquaculture activities and processing and marketing of fishery and aquaculture products, thus contributing to food security in the EU). The Commission has financed several initiatives, including an [aquaculture assistance mechanism](#) and a contract for the continuation of the operations of the European Market Observatory for Fisheries and Aquaculture Products to support EU aquaculture. These ongoing initiatives provide the Commission and stakeholders with relevant data, analyses and advice on economic, operational and social aspects of the fisheries and aquaculture sector.

Priority 3 (enabling a sustainable blue economy in coastal, island and inland areas and fostering the development of fishing and aquaculture communities). In 2024, the fund financed two cross-border maritime spatial planning projects in the EU with the goal of supporting Member States in adapting their maritime spatial plans to the ambitions included in the European Green Deal and its implementation in areas such as biodiversity, food and energy. It continued to finance the Blue Forum for sea users, aiming to hold a dialogue between stakeholders in different blue economy sectors to develop synergies between their activities and reconcile competing uses of the sea. Since 2021, European Maritime Day has gathered together a wide range of European stakeholders to discuss matters of common interest.

The European Marine Observation and Data Network has continued to provide marine data on a findable, accessible, interoperable and reusable basis, resulting in annual benefits of between EUR 150 million and EUR 400 million through increased productivity and innovation for users of the data and reduced uncertainty on the state and dynamics of our seas and oceans.

In 2024, the Commission also financed the blue economy observatory initiative, which will continue to provide relevant economic analysis, data and knowledge.

EMFAF has also contributed to the InvestEU Programme through blending with the EU guarantee, which contributed to the mobilisation of additional investments. Since 2021, EMFAF has contributed the amount of EUR 59.5 million to a thematic financial instrument blended with guarantees under the InvestEU programme and contributions from the European Investment Bank for a sustainable blue economy. It is expected to leverage equity investment from other private and public investors for European blue-economy entrepreneurs by 2028.

Priority 4 (strengthening international ocean governance). The programme continued to promote the objectives of the EU's international ocean governance agenda by providing support to international organisations, regional and sectoral bodies, and entities that are active in promoting the conservation and sustainable use of the ocean.

In 2024, the EMFAF supported the ratification of the Agreement under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Marine Biological Diversity of Areas beyond National Jurisdiction by developing countries through [the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea and the Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea](#). The BlueInvest Africa event in Kenya in 2024 generated great interest, with pitching applications and business-to-business meetings tripling in number compared to 2022 in the Seychelles. Entrepreneurs' feedback has been very positive, fostering a growing BlueInvest Africa community. The EU continued supporting the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations in combating illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing by promoting international instruments and tools, such as the Food and Agriculture Organization's Agreement on Port State Measures, the Compliance Agreement, the UN Fish Stock Agreement and guidelines relating to illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing. Additionally, the EU enhanced the participation of developing countries in relevant meetings and assisted the Food and Agriculture Organization in advancing the Guidelines on Sustainable Aquaculture and cooperation on small-scale fisheries.

Contribution to horizontal priorities

Contribution to green budgeting priorities (EUR million):

	Implementation				Estimates			Total	% of the total envelope
	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027		
Climate mainstreaming	35.0	598.4	588.2	591.1	494.3	413.3	419.8	3 140.1	52.5%
Biodiversity mainstreaming	52.5	339.0	331.9	320.9	282.7	242.1	245.5	1 814.7	30.3%

EMFAF programmes do not finance taxonomy-relevant expenditure, as the programmes focus on the fisheries and aquaculture sector and the marine environment, with no corresponding fisheries categories covered by the Taxonomy Regulation. However, the EMFAF is strongly linked with the preservation and restoration of marine biodiversity for healthy ecosystems and makes an expected contribution of approximately 28% to biodiversity and 58% to climate change. Furthermore, the EMFAF is structured in such a way that all operations financed fall under the 'do no significant harm' principle on which the taxonomy is based.

As at December 2023, 883 operations under shared management, worth EUR 180 million (the majority of EMFAF support), were reported by Member States as dealing with climate change and climate-change mitigation – a near-doubling of operations and support during the second half of the year. The contribution of the EMFAF to EU climate and environmental objectives is tracked through the application of environmental and climate markers and reported on regularly within the monitoring framework of the fund.

In relation to biodiversity, the largest tranche of support given so far was for the retrieval and disposal of marine litter. Specifically, the EMFAF has financed the digital mapping and collection of 'ghost nets', which are environmentally harmful if left. Operations on climate change currently relate largely to research and data collection, but investments in sustainable aquaculture and measures to reduce pollution have also been financed (the latter two areas account for almost 300 of the 883 operations cited above).

Of all the EMFAF contributions covered by the table above, the estimated amounts stemming from operations under direct and indirect management account for EUR 216 690 771 for climate change objectives (in 2021-2027) and EUR 331 801 897 for biodiversity (in the same period). The EMFAF does not have objectives relating to clean air. No data are available in this respect.

Contribution to gender equality (million EUR) (*)

Gender score	2021	2022	2023	2024	Total
2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
0*	0.0	20.6	20.0	19.3	59.9
0	109.1	110.8	1083.1	1050.9	3353.9
Total:	109.1	1131.4	1103.1	1070.2	3413.8

(*) Based on the applied gender contribution methodology, the following scores are attributed at the most granular level of intervention possible:

2: interventions the principal objective of which is to improve gender equality;

1: interventions that have gender equality as an important and deliberate objective but not as the main reason for the intervention;

0: non-targeted interventions (interventions that are expected to have no significant bearing on gender equality);

0*: score to be assigned to interventions with a likely but not yet clear positive impact on gender equality.

The contribution to gender equality is estimated at EUR 106.5 million under the EMFAF (2021-2027 programming period).

Gender inequality in the fisheries sector is influenced by the [following factors](#):

the participation of women and men in fisheries subsectors;

women's invisible work in the fisheries sector;

women's participation in decision-making.

The EU's fisheries policy promotes sustainable fish stocks and sustainable marine ecosystems as a precondition for a competitive European fishing industry. Although the gender-equality dimension is not present in the EMFAF in the form of gender-specific objectives and measurable gender commitments, the fund covers broader gender-related aspects in line with the equality provisions set out in the Common Provisions Regulation.

Under direct management, the EMFAF currently supports two 'women in the blue economy' projects aiming to (1) increase women's participation in blue economy sectors, (2) improve data collection on gender distribution, (3) increase visibility, awareness and recognition of women's role in the blue economy and (4) strengthen women's leadership, to the amount of EUR 2.5 million. The projects [WIN-BIG](#) and [Winblue](#) were launched in May 2023.

Of the EMFAF support provided as at December 2023 (EUR 560 million), 96% (EUR 537 million) was provided to legal persons. The EUR 23 million of support for natural persons comprised EUR 16.7 million for those who defined themselves as male, EUR 3.2 million for non-defined and EUR 0.57 million for female, with EUR 2.4 million attributable to multiple individuals. In terms of the number of operations, however, slightly more than one third were attributed to natural persons, with a predominance of male beneficiaries.

Gender-disaggregated information

n/a

Contribution to the digital transition (EUR million):

	2021 implementation	2022 implementation	2023 implementation	2024 implementation	Total	% of the 2021- 2024 envelope
Digital contribution	4.5	95.1	92.1	87.9	279.6	8.2%

The digital contribution envisaged for the EMFAF programmes (shared management component) amounts to EUR 464 million, or 9%, of the total allocation to the Member States (for the 2021-2027 programming period). The digital contribution relating to EMFAF operational expenditure under direct and indirect management is estimated at EUR 30 million (for the same period).

Most of the commitments were made to actions supporting control and enforcement; to data collection and analysis, and the promotion of marine knowledge; and to maritime surveillance and security.

Contribution to sustainable development goals

SDG	Does the programme contribute to the goal?	Example (only for the most relevant SDGs)
SDG1: End poverty in all its forms everywhere	YES	The EMFF contributes to SDG 1 by helping to improve the economic results from the EU fisheries sector and the living standards of the coastal populations that depend on that sector, allowing operators to modernise their productive tools, to diversify their sources of income or to switch to alternative economic activities. For example, a Danish producer organisation and its members want to ensure that their label is a success and that it benefits small-scale coastal fishers as much as possible. Their main goal is to ensure the future of Denmark's small-scale, low-impact coastal fishery and create better access to the market for sustainably caught fish.

SDG2: End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture	YES	By promoting the conservation of the marine living resources and the protection of the marine ecosystem, the EMFF contributes to the sustainability of the EU fisheries sector's production of healthy, high-quality food, and thus to SDG 2 and SDG 3. For example, Romania enhanced rainbow trout production on Lake Oaşa by installing floating fish aquaculture tanks.
SDG3: Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages	YES	See above, SDG 2.
SDG5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls	YES	See the section on gender equality above.
SDG14: Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development	YES	The main objective of the EMFF is to support the implementation of the common fisheries policy and the integrated maritime policy, thereby contributing first and foremost to SDG 14. The EMFF funds projects on preserving the marine environment and ensuring better resource efficiency, and operations relating to the better management of Natura 2000 areas. For example, Czechia has used EMFF funds to restock European eel.

Support for reforms

Not applicable to the EMFAF or the EMFF.

Contribution to strategic technologies (STEP)

Not applicable to the EMFAF or the EMFF.

2014-2020 multiannual financial framework – European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF)

Cumulative budget implementation at the end of 2024 (million EUR):

	Implementation	2014-2020 Budget	Implementation rate
Commitments	6 368.7	6 381.6	99.8%
Payments	5 747.7		90.1%

Key performance indicators

	Baseline	Progress	Target	Results	Assessment
Value of aquaculture production in the EU	0	> 100%	EUR 4.43 billion in 2022	EUR 4.8 billion in 2022 compared to a target of EUR 4.43 billion	Achieved
Number of small-scale coastal fishing vessels supported	0	N/A	N/A	18 785 in 2023	N/A
Number of small and medium-sized enterprises supported	0	N/A	N/A	117 187 in 2023	N/A

Level of employment maintained with support from the EMFF	0	> 100%	41 665 in 2023	51 329 jobs in 2023 compared to a target of 41 665	Achieved

By the end of December 2020, all appropriations available under the EMFF had been successfully committed. As of January 2021, no further commitments were possible for the EMFF. The implementation of the programme was at full speed in 2024, in terms of both the part of the fund executed under direct management action and the part implemented by the Member States.

Payments claimed by beneficiaries continued to advance, financing by the end of 2023 approximately 145 000 operations (an increase of over 33 000 from 2022.).

The cumulative EMFF amount decommitted between 2018 and 2022 totals EUR 131.6 million.

There has again been a significant increase in the number of small-scale vessels supported, from 13 684 to 18 785. A similarly encouraging increase is also seen in the number of small and medium-sized enterprises supported (2023 – 117 187; 2022 – 86 969). Although the reported level of employment (jobs) maintained with support in the EMFF fell to 51 329 in 2023 (61 521 in 2022), it still comfortably exceeded the target of 41 665.

For initiatives implemented under direct and indirect management, see the ‘Performance assessment’ section for the EMFAF above.

The initiatives under shared management continue to help improve the sustainability of fishing and aquaculture, to maintain and protect the natural environment, to encourage innovation and the adoption of new technology and to increase cooperation and partnerships between businesses, thus contributing to the achievement of these objectives. Examples are provided below.

For the objective of promoting competitive, environmentally sustainable, economically viable and socially responsible fisheries and aquaculture, the programme financed a project which set out to apply participatory co-management for octopus fishing in the Algarve. The goal of the project is to promote the sustainable management of the species and the related fishery, including its environmental, economic, and social aspects.

For the objective of fostering the implementation of the common fisheries policy, the programme financed a project to develop an AI-based tool for the fully documented fisheries project, which can improve the processing of catches on board, reduce the workload of the crew and lessen the administrative burden. It can also monitor total catches in real time by size,

species and weight, and generate detailed data that can be used for scientific purposes, stock estimates, research and fisheries policy.

For the objective of promoting a balanced and inclusive territorial development of fisheries and aquaculture areas, the programme financed the design of a coastal management plan focused on three local high value species identified by the sector at regional level. Small-scale coastal fishers and fish farmers have been actively involved.

For the objective of fostering the development and implementation of the EU's integrated maritime policy in a manner complementary to cohesion policy and the common fisheries policy, the programme financed a project aimed at defining long-term conservation measures and preserving biodiversity through monitoring of dolphins in the coastal waters. The project enabled the applicant to perform extensive fieldwork, collect further data all year round and assess population trends and dynamics.

REGIONAL FISHERIES MANAGEMENT ORGANISATIONS AND SUSTAINABLE FISHERIES PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENTS

Concrete examples of achievements

97%	19	15 000	30%
of conservation measures adopted by regional fisheries management organisations (RFMOs) in 2024 for the management of the stocks under their purview were in line with scientific advice.	out of 20 tuna and tuna-like stocks targeted by the EU fleet in 2024 were fished at a sustainable level.	jobs are created or maintained through sustainable fisheries partnership agreements (SFPAs) each year (6 000 direct, 9 000 indirect).	of estimated spending in the context of SFPAs was used directly to support sustainable fisheries policies in non-EU countries.

Budget programming and implementation

Budget programming (million EUR)

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	Total
Financial programming	151.6	159.3	116.8	129.9	156.7	160.5	175.6	1 050.4
NextGenerationEU	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Decommitments made available again (*)	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Contributions from other countries and entities	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Total	151.6	159.3	116.8	129.9	156.7	160.5	175.6	1 050.4

(*) Only Article 15(3) of the Financial Regulation.

Cumulative budget implementation at the end of 2024 (million EUR)

	Implementation	Budget	Implementation rate
Commitments	557.6	1 050.4	53.1%
Payments	538.9		51.3%

Implementation and performance

Key performance indicators

	Baseline	Progress	Target	Results	Assessment
Sustainable fisheries agreements in force	12	43%	15 annually from 2026 to 2027	Milestones achieved for 2021, 2022 and 2023, not in 2024 (10 compared to a milestone of 14)	On track
Fishing possibilities for EU vessels – tuna	129	57%	150 annually from 2026 to 2027	Milestones achieved for 2021 until 2024 (2024: 167 compared to a milestone of 140)	On track

Fishing possibilities for EU vessels – mixed	264	43%	300 annually from 2026 to 2027	Achieved for 2021, 2022 and 2023, not for 2024 (259 v 300) – annual results v target	On track
Conservation measures based on scientific advice adopted, for all species under the purview of RFMOs of which the EU is a member	0	102%	95% annually from 2024 to 2027	97% in 2024 compared to a target of 95%	On track
Sustainable management of emblematic tuna and tuna-like species as per relevant scientific advice; in particular, highly significant tuna and tuna-like species are fished at sustainable levels	17	106%	18 in 2024	19 compared to a target of 18	Achieved

Overall, the EU remains one of the key drivers of progress in RFMOs, increasing their performance with concrete proposals. The EU's voluntary contributions (grants) to RFMOs played a key role in allowing them to provide scientific advice.

The Commission continued to deliver on its commitment to achieve more sustainable fisheries worldwide: for the current reporting period, 45 out of 46 conservation measures adopted by RFMOs for key species fished by the EU fleet were in line with scientific advice (i.e. 97% of all conservation measures adopted by RFMOs of which the EU is a member). This result shows improvement since 2023 (88%) and is above the target of 95%.

19 out of 20 tuna and tuna-like stocks fished by the EU fleet are in good shape. This is set against an overall context where in 2024 65% of tuna and tuna-like stocks were at a healthy level of abundance, 13% were overfished and 22% were at an intermediate level. In terms of exploitation, 87% of the stocks are not experiencing overfishing, 9% are experiencing overfishing and 4% are at an intermediate level. In relation to catch, 88% of the total catch comes from healthy stocks in terms of abundance. This is because skipjack stocks contribute more than one half of the global catch of tunas, and most are in a healthy situation. Regarding exploitation, 90% of the total catches comes from stocks that are not experiencing overfishing.

Regarding SFPAs, the general objective has been to implement and renew the network of agreements and active protocols to i) contribute towards resource conservation and sustainable exploitation of marine resources in the waters of the partner non-EU countries, and ii) promote the continuity in the activities of the EU's long-distance fishing fleet in non-EU waters and to support the development of a sustainable fisheries sector in the partner non-EU countries.

On some occasions, negotiations took longer than expected because the financial expectations of the non-EU countries could not be met, which implied a disruption in the activities of the EU fleet in those countries. The fight against illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing also had an impact as, for example, the renegotiation of the protocol with Senegal was suspended due to the identification of Senegal as a non-cooperating country in the fight against illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing. Finally, some protocols were impacted by judgements of the European Court of Justice (e.g. Morocco: [EUR-Lex - 62016CJ0266 - EN - EUR-Lex](#)).

In the context of the implementation of the protocols, which is an important part of programme's performance and concerns both access conditions for EU vessels and the monitoring of sectoral support, joint committee meetings were held regularly with all partner countries.

Direct employment generated by SFPAs includes crew on board EU vessels benefiting from fishing opportunities in SFPAs and covers both EU and non-EU nationals. As for indirect jobs, they are mostly in the processing sector and are to a large extent occupied by women. SFPA protocols have also reinforced the provisions regarding the social dimension of fishing and the social rights benefiting fishers.

The horizontal SFPA evaluation completed in 2023 shows that SFPAs generate substantial revenue for the EU and partner countries. A percentage of the catches made in the framework of SFPAs land in non-EU countries, where they are processed, thus generating added value for the local economy and job opportunities. Certain SFPAs were also able to generate economic benefits for the partner countries in sectors such as shipyards and port activities.

Regarding the budget implementation, 4.9% of the 2024 commitments (all of which have now been paid) went towards paying membership fees to RFMOs. The rest of the appropriations were spent on fishing access for the EU fleet to the waters of non-EU countries, mostly in West Africa and in the Indian and Pacific Oceans, and contributing to the sustainable development of their local fishing activities.

Contribution to horizontal priorities

Contribution to green budgeting priorities (EUR million):

	Implementation				Estimates			Total	% of the total envelope
	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027		
Climate mainstreaming	15.7	17.7	10.1	9.3	11.1	18.1	18.2	100.1	9.5%
Biodiversity mainstreaming	18.8	21.1	13.3	15.3	14.8	21.9	22.0	127.2	12.1%

Climate change

The actions financed by the European Commission support, in RFMOs, the integration of climate change considerations in the management of the marine biological resources and their ecosystems, with the final objective of promoting their adaptation and resilience to climate change, at a bilateral level, through SFPAs.

Climate change considerations are, where appropriate and available, incorporated into the scientific and stock management discussions in RFMOs. They are also incorporated into SFPAs, as they follow the management decisions of RFMOs.

In total, in the 2021-2027 period, SFPAs and RFMOs will contribute an estimated EUR 100.1 million to this priority. The contribution of the SFPAs represents 40% of the sectoral support, whereas the contribution of the RFMOs represents 40% of the total amount allocated.

Biodiversity

The actions financed by the European Commission in RFMOs are consistent with the objectives of the EU biodiversity strategy to conserve marine stocks, prevent the loss of biodiversity and protect fragile ecosystems. RFMOs promote the sustainability of the stocks and their ecosystem. This includes not only the sustainable management of targeted species, but the implementation of mitigation measures for by-catch species (turtles, vulnerable shark species, rays, seabirds, etc.) and the protection of vulnerable marine ecosystems (e.g. corals).

An area where the EU actions on climate change and biodiversity come together is the support to the development of management procedures and management strategy evaluation frameworks for key fish stocks, that are robust to uncertainties, including those introduced or exacerbated by climate change. In that regard, the EU will promote the development of dedicated robustness tests that could provide meaningful proxies for designing future management procedures that are resilient to stressors driven by climate change.

Likewise, SFPAs support some actions to enhance the scientific capacity of non-EU countries in areas covering both the conservation of marine resources and the assessment of the effect of climate change, with concrete measures regarding, for example, the management of marine protected areas.

In addition, actions supported through the sectoral support component of SFPAs promote long-term resource conservation, ecosystem protection measures, the fight against illegal fishing and the sustainable development of our partners' local fisheries sector, with a positive effect on biodiversity.

In total, in the 2021-2027 period, SFPAs and RFMOs will contribute an estimated EUR 127.2 million to this priority. The contribution of the SFPAs represents 40% of the sectoral support, whereas the contribution of the RFMOs represents 100% of the total amount allocated.

Contribution to gender equality (million EUR) (*)

Gender score	2021	2022	2023	2024	Total
2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
0*	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
0	151.6	159.3	116.8	129.9	557.6
Total:	151.6	159.3	116.8	129.9	557.6

(*) Based on the applied gender contribution methodology, the following scores are attributed at the most granular level of intervention possible:

2: interventions the principal objective of which is to improve gender equality;

1: interventions that have gender equality as an important and deliberate objective but not as the main reason for the intervention;

0: non-targeted interventions (interventions that are expected to have no significant bearing on gender equality);

0*: score to be assigned to interventions with a likely but not yet clear positive impact on gender equality.

Gender disaggregated information:

No information available.

Contribution to the digital transition

RFMOs and SFPAs do not target projects with a digital component.

Contribution to sustainable development goals

SDG	Does the programme contribute to the goal?	Example (only for the most relevant SDGs)
SDG14: Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development	YES	The programme promotes the conservation and sustainable use of the oceans, seas, and marine resources for example by improving management measures adopted following scientific advice and by promoting healthy tuna stocks in the Atlantic and Indian Oceans, and through the governance framework established by SFPAs with a number of non-EU countries.

Support for reforms

There is no support related to strategic reforms.

Contribution to strategic technologies (STEP)

There is no support related to strategic technologies.

LIFE

PROGRAMME FOR THE ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE ACTION

Concrete examples of achievements

More than 1.4 million tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent are expected to be avoided thanks to LIFE projects awarded in 2022 and 2023.	7 799 gigawatt hours/year of primary energy savings are expected by the 2022-2023 LIFE projects.	176 species are expected to see losses halted or reversed thanks to LIFE nature and biodiversity projects in 2022 and 2023.	More than 1.8 million cubic metres of water are expected to be managed more efficiently thanks to LIFE projects awarded in 2022 and 2023.
More than 450 projects awarded in 2022 and 2023 calls are expected to develop, demonstrate and promote innovative techniques and approaches.	EUR 1.84 billion of total EU contributions were awarded to LIFE projects in 2022 and 2023.	EUR 4 660 million of investments are expected to be mobilised by projects awarded in 2022 and 2023.	5 000 organisations benefit from LIFE support under 2021-2023 calls implementing 648 projects.

Budget programming and implementation

Budget programming (million EUR):

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	Total
Financial programming	738.8	755.5	758.4	767.7	776.0	802.9	845.7	5 445.0
NextGenerationEU	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Decommitments made available again (*)	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Contributions from other countries and entities	1.1	1.1	1.4	1.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	5.1
Total	739.9	756.6	759.8	769.3	776.0	802.9	845.7	5 450.2

(*) Only Article 15(3) of the Financial Regulation.

Cumulative budget implementation at the end of 2024 (million EUR):

	Implementation	Budget	Implementation rate
Commitments	3 024.8	5 450.2	55.5%
Payments	997.3		18.3%

Implementation and performance

Key performance indicators

	Baseli ne	Progr ess	Target	Results	Assessm ent
Populatio n benefitin g from an improve ment in air quality	2.5 mill ion	78%	4.6 milli on in 2030	3.6 milli on at the end of 2024 compar ed to a target of 4.6 milli on	On track
Reductio n in greenhou se gas emission s	12 milli on	82%	16.5 mil lion in 2030	13.4 mil lion at the end of 2024 compar ed to a target of 16.5 mil lion	On track
Populatio n benefitin g from a reduction in their vulnerabi lity to the adverse effects of climate change	1.7 mill ion	> 100 %	3.1 milli on in 2030	3.4 milli on in 2024 compar ed to a target of 3.1 milli on	Achieved

Additional annual renewable energy production	0	62%	4 463 in 2030	2 761 gigawatts in 2024 compared to a target of 4 463 (sum of results v target)	On track
Habitats where loss of biodiversity is being halted or reversed	1.6 million	66%	3.1 million in 2030	2 million in 2024 compared to a target of 3.1 million	On track
Additional annual primary energy savings	0	94%	8 344 in 2030	7 799 at the end of 2024 compared to a target of 8 344	Achieved
Reduction in the production and use of dangerous chemicals	300 000	76%	543 121 in 2030	415 211 in 2024 compared to a target of 543 121	On track
Area of land with improving soil quality	4 200	131%	7 500 in 2030	9 829 compared to a target of 7 500	Achieved

For the 2021-2027 programme, performance data are available only for projects awarded in 2022 and 2023, as the evaluation of the 2024 call for proposals is still being finalised. During this period, a total of about 700 projects received financing. They mobilise about EUR 3 billion for environment, nature and biodiversity, climate action and clean energy transition, with an EU contribution of EUR 1.8 billion.

Since the beginning of the programming cycle (2021-2023 calls), the **nature and biodiversity subprogramme** financed 118 projects. The oversubscription remains high, with only 28% of eligible 'standard action' project proposals receiving funding (oversubscription of 357%). In total, 97 standard action projects and 8 'strategic nature' projects are being implemented. LIFE projects awarded in 2022 and 2023 are expected to halt or reverse biodiversity loss in about 500 000 hectares of habitats. Since the beginning of the programming cycle (2021-2023 calls), the **circular economy and quality of life subprogramme** financed 141 projects with an EU contribution of more than EUR 401 million. The oversubscription remains high, with only 17% of eligible standard action project proposals receiving funding (oversubscription of 577%). In total, 117 standard action projects and 8 'strategic integrated' projects were implemented. LIFE projects awarded in 2022 and 2023 are expected to improve the management of 95 000 tonnes of waste per year. Some of these projects will contribute to reducing EU dependency on imports for some critical raw materials, as shown below.

'Demonstrating unprecedented synthetic fluorspar production method allowing for circularity among three value chains, for CRM substitution, using fertilizer wastes, by-producing industrial green silica' ([Synfluor](#)). Producing fluorspar – essential for the production of steel, aluminium and chemical products – from waste from the fertiliser industry.

'Waste graphite recycling for new lithium and alkaline batteries' ([Graphirec](#)). Establishing the first EU-wide plant to recover recycled graphite from battery waste and produce new batteries. The demand for graphite is expected to increase 25-fold by 2040, due to the growing need for electric vehicles and grid storage.

'Recovery of phosphorus from wastewater for reuse in EU' ([Phos4EU](#)). Providing the water sector with cost-effective methods for phosphorus and iron recovery.

'Industrial production of mixed rare earth elements oxides and carbonates from spent magnets recycling' ([Inspiree](#)). Establishing Europe's first industrial-scale plant for recycling rare earth elements contained in permanent magnets.

Since the beginning of the programming cycle (2021-2023 calls), the **climate change mitigation and adaptation subprogramme** has financed 108 projects, providing a total contribution of EUR 308 million. LIFE projects awarded in 2022-2023 are expected to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 250 000 tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent. Oversubscription remains high, with 19% of eligible standard action project proposals receiving funding. For example, the 'peatland restoration for greenhouse gas emission reduction and carbon sequestration in the Baltic Sea region' ([Peatcarbon](#)) project will implement climate change mitigation measures in peatlands, demonstrating innovative tools and applicable methods for greenhouse gas monitoring. Aiming to create replicable and transferable simulation model for cost-effective monitoring and estimation of project actions on greenhouse gas emissions. It is expected to reduce carbon dioxide emissions, comprising 37 117 tonnes and 3 500 tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent per year in Latvia and Finland respectively.

Since the beginning of the programming cycle, the **clean energy transition subprogramme**, with an overall EU contribution of EUR 336 million, has financed a total of 209 projects

addressing the key intervention areas of supporting EU energy transition policy implementation, market uptake of energy transition solutions, mobilisation of sustainable energy investments and citizen empowerment in the energy transition. The 2021-2022 LIFE-funded projects are expected to deliver 7 799 gigawatt hours of primary energy savings per year, and 1 922 gigawatt hours/year of potential additional renewable energy production. The 2024 clean energy transition call confirmed the high attractiveness of the subprogramme, with 310 proposals submitted, 273 eligible proposals evaluated, 44 proposals retained for funding and 66 proposals in the reserve lists, indicating a 150% oversubscription. The subprogramme projects promote the market uptake of technologies, solutions and services for the clean energy transition. As an example, the ‘LIFE giga regio factory: going next stage in market uptake and factory development for more affordable net zero energy renovation industrialised solutions packages’ ([Lifegigaregiofactory](#)) project focuses on upscaling solutions for large-scale energy renovation for housing to guaranteed zero-energy level across four Member States (Belgium, Germany, France, Italy) through industrialisation and off-site prefabrication, with the aim of renovating 12 000 homes to zero-energy level and strengthening the industrial value chain for large-scale energy renovations. As another example, the ‘Coheat2 – Paving way for energy renovations and the transition from fossil fuels to green, local heat supply in the region of southern Denmark’ ([Coheat2](#)) project aims at supporting the transition to clean heating and the phase-out of natural gas use in 100 000 buildings in Denmark through the installation of individual heat pumps, local microgrids, connection to clean district heating networks and energy efficiency measures.

The **ex post evaluation of the 2014-2020 LIFE programme**, completed in 2024, has demonstrated that the programme was successful in achieving most of its targets.

It reaffirmed and underscored the previously observed significant contributions of the LIFE programme to the protection of nature, among others, by cofinancing the extension of EU protected areas by more than 3 000 square kilometres.

The evaluation confirmed that by engaging a diverse range of stakeholders, including private companies, the programme effectively promoted resource efficiency and climate action across the EU by:

achieving a carbon dioxide reduction of 11.8 million tonnes/year, exceeding Cyprus’s 2021 net greenhouse gas emissions;

reducing improper waste management by 4.3 million tonnes/year;

decreasing primary energy consumption by 2.4 million megawatt hours, equivalent to the average yearly electricity consumption of over 970 000 EU households;

reducing nitrogen oxide emissions to about 152 000 tonnes per year, surpassing Portugal’s 2019 nitrogen oxides emissions.

Contribution to horizontal priorities

Contribution to green budgeting priorities (EUR million):

	Implementation				Estimates			Total	% of the total envelope
	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027		
Climate mainstreaming	438.6	432.2	456.3	453.1	455.8	467.2	485.3	3 188.5	58.6%
Biodiversity mainstreaming	353.3	382.6	393.4	378.1	385.1	403.1	433.5	2 729.1	50.1%

The LIFE programme significantly contributes to nature protection through its three subprogrammes. The nature and biodiversity subprogramme directly funds projects fully dedicated to protect EU nature, halting biodiversity loss and supporting the Natura 2000 network and EU directives. The other two subprogrammes, circular economy and climate change, also support biodiversity through initiatives like water and air quality improvement, soil restoration and nature-based solutions for climate resilience.

The LIFE programme contributes to the EU's 30% climate spending target for 2021-2027 through its three subprogrammes. The climate change subprogramme directly funds activities to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and improve climate resilience. The nature and biodiversity subprogramme also contributes to climate action by protecting and restoring natural ecosystems, while the circular economy subprogramme supports a sustainable environment by reducing resource consumption and promoting climate resilience.

Taxonomy-relevant expenditure ⁽⁵⁹⁾

The objectives of the LIFE programme are similar to the six environmental objectives defined in the Taxonomy Regulation. Most LIFE activities under all four subprogrammes aim to contribute to one or more of the environmental objectives set out in the regulation and could be taxonomy-eligible, as they have direct and measurable environmental benefits. Still, LIFE finances multiple activities – such as standard action projects, integrated projects, technical assistance, awareness-raising activities and access to justice – so it is necessary to differentiate the types of activities and their alignment with the taxonomy criteria. While an evaluation at the project level would be necessary, it is assumed that all standard action projects (except those targeting climate and environment governance and information) are taxonomy-relevant, as they provide a substantial direct contribution to the defined objectives. Therefore, based on a high-level analysis, all standard action projects are considered as a first approximation to LIFE expenditure that is relevant to taxonomy.

LIFE contributions to projects (EUR)	2021	2022	2023	Total
Standard action projects for climate change mitigation and	60 509 984	57 056 129	60 365 932	177 932 045

⁽⁵⁹⁾ The detailed methodology to identify taxonomy-relevant expenditure has been described in the 2023 programme performance statement.

LIFE contributions to projects (EUR)	2021	2022	2023	Total
adaptation, excluding climate governance and information projects				
Standard action projects for nature and biodiversity, excluding governance and information projects	168 005 105	165 484 513	153 076 376	486 565 994
Standard action projects for resource efficiency, circular economy and zero pollution, excluding governance and information projects	93 106 460	92 629 138	72 280 276	258 015 875
Total amounts				922 513 914

The minimum total amount of EU funding assumed to be taxonomy-relevant is thus EUR 922 513 914 (based on data extracted from the European Climate, Infrastructure and Environment Executive Agency project dashboard on 10 February 2024).

Contribution to gender equality (million EUR) (*)

Gender Score	2021	2022	2023	2024	Total
2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
1	2.1	2.5	1.0	2.1	7.7
0*	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
0	736.7	753.0	757.4	765.6	3 012.7
Total:	738.8	755.5	758.4	767.7	3 020.4

(*) Based on the applied gender contribution methodology, the following scores are attributed at the most granular level of intervention possible:

2: interventions the principal objective of which is to improve gender equality;

1: interventions that have gender equality as an important and deliberate objective but not as the main reason for the intervention;

0: non-targeted interventions (interventions that are expected to have no significant bearing on gender equality);

0*: score to be assigned to interventions with a likely but not yet clear positive impact on gender equality.

The LIFE programme does not directly target gender equality, since its main objective is linked to climate and environment spending. Still, a gender dimension is considered in some areas of intervention where information on how men and women relate to the environment and to climate action in different ways can help to address specific gender vulnerabilities (e.g. inherent to harmful chemicals such as endocrine disruptors and persistent organic pollutants).

A gender perspective is also included, where relevant, at the project level, often as a component of multidimensional projects. For example, the ‘generating equity, nurturing diversity, energising resilience 4 power against energy poverty’ ([Gender4power](#)) project aims to enhance living conditions and energy efficiency in buildings (and households) affected by energy poverty. It emphasises a holistic, gender-responsive, multi-stakeholder and people-centred approach to renewable energy and energy efficiency solutions, aligning with EU policies and strategies, such as the Gender Equality Strategy and the Energy Efficiency Directive.

Considering the level of granularity of the data, the limited size of the LIFE programme and its bottom-up approach, it is not appropriate to provide annual estimates of the project components contributing to gender equality in line with the principle of proportionality. The above figures can therefore be considered a *de minimis* contribution. Most key performance indicators under LIFE target natural resources and not people, such as the area of land on which soil quality is improving, increased efficiency in water management, improvements in waste management, reductions in the use of dangerous chemicals and additional annual renewable energy production. For those key performance indicators targeting people, numbers are collected at an aggregated level and differentiation between genders is difficult, for example the population benefiting from an improvement in air quality, the population benefiting from a reduction in noise pollution, and the population benefiting from a reduction in vulnerability to the adverse effects of climate change.

Generally, LIFE does not meet the conditions for either score 1 (‘A firm commitment toward gender equality of the programme, which has positive effects *ex post*, proven by quantitative or qualitative analysis’) or score 2 (‘The top-level ambition of the project/programme is to advance gender equality and/or women’s empowerment’), since its primary objective is climate action and the environment. Therefore, most of its budget is reported under score 0.

Gender disaggregated information:

No gender disaggregated data are available.

Contribution to the digital transition (EUR million):

	2021 implementation	2022 implementation	2023 implementation	2024 implementation	Total	% of the 2021- 2024 envelope
Digital contribution	11.0	7.5	6.0	0.0	24.5	0.8%

The LIFE programme contributes to the digital transition via the clean energy transition subprogramme support for projects promoting smart energy solutions that improve energy efficiency and energy management, notably by deploying digital and data-based approaches, smart services and technologies for buildings, enterprises, communities and districts. With this, the subprogramme supports, inter alia, the EU action plan for the digitalisation of energy and other key policies that promote digitalisation, data sharing, responsiveness and interconnectivity in the energy sector, as established for example in Directive (EU) 2024/1275⁽⁶⁰⁾ (the “[Energy Performance of Buildings Directive](#)”). As part of the LIFE ‘clean energy transition’ calls for 2021-2023 proposals, a total of 14 grant agreements were signed in the area of buildings data, information instruments, smart readiness and smart energy services, for a total EU contribution of about EUR 24.5 million. As a cross-sector element, digitalisation is also an important aspect in other clean energy transition projects, such as those addressing skills for the energy transition and integrated heating and cooling planning.

⁽⁶⁰⁾ Directive (EU) 2024/1275 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 April 2024 on the energy performance of buildings (recast) (OJ L, 2024/1275, 8.5.2024, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/dir/2024/1275/oj>).

Contribution to sustainable development goals

SDG	Does the programme contribute to the goal?	Example (only for the most relevant SDGs)
SDG1 End poverty in all its forms everywhere	The LIFE programme does not aim to end poverty . However, some projects may include activities directed at not leaving anyone behind and/or to promote social justice in reaching climate neutrality.	The ‘supporting progress towards deep energy retrofit in district, scaling up to fight energy poverty’ (Energy poverty zero (EP-0)) project aims to support the scale-up of deep energy retrofits in vulnerable districts in Europe to fight energy poverty. It deploys industrialised solutions for renovation and for implementing district-based dynamics. The projects developed an approach that connects efforts in diminishing costs of deep energy retrofit with industrialised prefabricated solutions in social housing with the private housing market. The project aims to trigger the renovation to high energy performance levels of 1 600 dwellings in 10 districts in Belgium, France and Italy (and the renovation of a further 80 000 homes by 2030). Besides the 10 gigawatt hours/year of final energy savings, at least 100 facilitators will be trained to ensure stakeholders’ engagement in renovation interventions at the neighbourhood level.
SDG2 End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture	The LIFE programme promotes sustainable agriculture in some of its projects.	The ‘futureproof farming water management’ (Future of farming) project aims at providing the agricultural sector with optimised precision farming technology and thereby minimising the EU’s vulnerability to drought and water scarcity. The project will apply a smart water management technology by deploying 450 sensors and involving 300 farmers in using the optimised irrigation technology in six Member States (Greece, Spain, France, Italy, Portugal and Romania). This is expected to result in higher water efficiency: the project’s ambition is to save 3.5 thousand million cubic metres of irrigation water Europe-wide by 2028 and to encourage the uptake of this technology.

SDG3 Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages

The LIFE programme aims to **ensure healthy lives**, as it supports pollution reduction.

The ‘innovative technologies to monitor and reduce non-exhaust emissions, particles and microplastics of vehicles and pavements to improve air quality and human health’ ([Neeve](#)) project focuses on improving air quality by reducing the emissions from wearing down motor vehicle brake pads, tires, roads themselves, and unsettling of particles on the road (non-exhaust emissions). These pollutants contribute significantly to particulate matter concentrations in the air and pose environmental and health risks. The project develops and demonstrates innovative methods for measuring and reducing these emissions, including by designing, developing and testing low-polluting vehicle and road components like brake pads/discs. The project will also implement strategies to promote and replicate the innovations across the EU.

SDG4 Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all

LIFE promotes **lifelong learning**, specifically on sustainable practices and green skills. Several projects implement knowledge sharing, awareness raising and training activities.

For example, the ‘build up skills – upskilling and reskilling interventions enabling a decarbonised building stock and energy system integration’ (Buildskills) projects under the clean energy subprogramme support training and qualification initiatives for the energy transition, particularly addressing energy efficiency in buildings, heating and cooling, and on-site renewable energy. The projects focus on initial and continuing education of blue-collar workers, as well as continuing education of professionals working as building planners and managers, such as architects, designers and engineers. Such projects are implemented inter alia in [Ireland](#), [Spain](#), [France](#), [Lithuania](#), [the Netherlands](#), [Austria](#) and [Poland](#).

SDG5 Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls

LIFE projects have a gender dimension only in exceptional cases.

SDG6 Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all

LIFE aims to **ensure sustainable water management**, as it supports pollution prevention, the climate-resilient, sustainable use and management of water, and the improvement of the ecological status of water bodies.

The ‘desalination for environmental sustainability and LIFE’ ([Desalife](#)) project aims to demonstrate and validate a groundbreaking zero-emission desalination technology using wave energy. The project pilots a small fleet of innovative devices called ‘desalination buoys’ at the Arucas-Moya desalination plant in the Canary Islands. Each buoy is expected to produce 500 cubic metres of fresh water per day. With four buoys operational by the end of the project, they will produce 2 000 cubic metres of fresh water daily – equivalent to the daily water consumption of approximately 15 000 households. The project thus supports equitable access to safe and affordable drinking water for all, to address water scarcity, and to share knowledge and build capacity in developing countries regarding water- and sanitation-related activities and programmes.

SDG7 Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all

LIFE aims to **ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all**, specifically thanks to its subprogramme for the clean energy transition.

The ‘consumers leading the EU’s energy ambition response through uptake of heat pumps’ ([Clear-HP](#)) project aims to facilitate consumers’ access to heat pumps – a decarbonised solution for heating. The project accompanies consumers throughout the whole purchasing journey and addresses financial and regulatory barriers. The project engages at least 43 000 consumers in collective purchase campaigns across seven countries and brings them together with European and international consumer organisations and heat pump associations to empower consumers for the clean energy transition. They provide information on the availability and suitability of heat pumps for their homes; identify available financing opportunities; develop partnerships with heat pump suppliers and installers; launch collective purchase schemes; and upskill installers of heat pumps. The project triggers EUR 3.5 million of new investments in renewable energy sources technologies, two gigawatt hours of primary energy savings, and reductions of 639 tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent in greenhouse gas emissions within the project duration.

SDG8 Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all

LIFE is a catalyst for investments in innovative green businesses that will help generate more jobs, both directly and indirectly, and thereby contribute **sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth.**

SDG9 Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation

LIFE aims to **foster innovation** by catalysing investments into innovative green solutions.

The 'expansion of the WEELOOP model for a circular hob industry' ([Weeeloop](#)) project proposes a new holistic management system for waste from electrical and electronic equipment, applying new technologies for the recovery of materials and components. In a first phase, the project focuses on kitchen hobs, with recovery rates of 90%. The project will later be expanded to other lines of appliances and electronic devices (e.g. dishwashers, washing machines) and to other Member States beyond Spain. In addition, the project will implement a Digital Passport solution for the electrical and electronic components recovered and will industrialise an eco-designed induction hob that will include components and materials recovered from waste. The project supports the transition for a circular economy, minimising the environmental impact, the extraction of virgin valuable materials and the dependence on suppliers from outside the EU.

SDG10 Reduce inequalities within and among countries

In specific cases, LIFE can help to **reduce inequalities within and among countries** by supporting adequate policies, laws and regulations responding to the environment, climate and energy emergencies and tackling economic and social injustice.

The 'Basque integrated renovation model (Opengela): enabling a fair, clean energy transition through a unique network of one-stop shops' ([Birtuoss](#)) project aims to upgrade and expand an existing service for the 'Opengela' integrated home renovation model, by including a wider target of homeowners, creating collaborations with local stakeholders, defining a governance structure with a sustainable business model and extending the service to the whole Basque Country region, with a focus on vulnerable neighbourhoods. The new approach for neighbourhood renovation of multi-family buildings will strongly build on building renovation passports and using a pilot (living lab) to test the model. The model will be extended to nine additional one-stop shops during the scope of the project, covering 4 800 inhabitants and 2 102 dwellings. This is expected to lead to primary energy savings of 62.83% (11.41 gigawatt hours/year) and a reduction of greenhouse gas emissions of 13 028.54 tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent/year. During the five years after the project end, it aims to achieve 10 more one-stop shops, covering a total of 6 350 inhabitants and 2 744 dwellings.

SDG11 Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable

LIFE aims to **make cities and human settlements more resilient and sustainable**.

The 'beautifying cities through nature: implementation of biodiversity-friendly NBS framed by the New European Bauhaus in 3 pilot neighbourhoods of Spain, Italy and Hungary' ([Seedneb](#)) project applies solutions of the New European Bauhaus and nature-based solutions in three municipalities: Lorquí (Spain), Potenza (Italy) and Dunaújváros (Hungary). The project will demonstrate urban strategies and onsite interventions based on nature, such as green roofs and facades. These can foster biodiversity, reduce the impact of heat waves and improve the well-being of their residents.

The project will re-naturalise three buildings and their surroundings (cultural centre, private housing block, school), provide technical and administrative for the implementation of nature-based solutions in private buildings, develop local communication strategies to raise close-to-nature behaviour and increase capacity while involving citizens.

SDG12 Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns

LIFE aims to **ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns**, specifically through its subprogramme circular economy and quality of life.

The main objective of the ‘fibre to fibre full circularity in the textile sector through novel polyester recycling technologies’ ([Politex](#)) project is to reduce and eliminate the amount of polyester textiles that are currently sent to landfills or incinerated, thereby moving to a more circular textile production process. The project implements new recycling methodologies for polyester polyethylene terephthalate and processes to depolymerise polyester textiles into their basic constituents. These constituents are used as secondary raw material for obtaining new recycled polyester filament yarns that can be used to create recycled textiles. Two prototypes of both processes will be implemented in Spain and Italy.

SDG13 Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts

LIFE aims to **take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts**, specifically through its subprogramme climate change adaptation and mitigation.

The ‘green hydrogen mobility for the transition to climate neutrality’ ([Greenh2orn](#)) project supports the transition to decarbonised transport by implementing the first operational green hydrogen refuelling station in Greece. The project will demonstrate the potential for local production, distribution and use of green hydrogen in the mobility sector, namely for heavy-, medium- and light-duty vehicles. It focuses on the production of green hydrogen via electrolysis, and its use as a fuel for municipal fleets. Moreover, the project aims to promote new sources of hydrogen with a circular approach by two feasibility studies, and an information technology platform will be developed for central data collection. Replication of the projects is supported by training skills packages to help employees of declining industries move to greener jobs. Finally, a socioeconomic assessment regarding the development of the demonstrator will be carried out to conduct a new green circular approach in western Macedonia, providing policymakers with clear recommendations to efficiently use green hydrogen as an energy resource and fuel.

**SDG14
Conserve and
sustainably
use the
oceans, seas
and marine
resources for
sustainable
development**

LIFE aims to enhance the **conservation and sustainable use of the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development** by specific projects on nature and biodiversity.

The strategic integrated project [MPA-LIFE-Ireland](#) supports Ireland in the implementation of EU biodiversity *acquis*. The project has as an objective to develop a network of marine protected areas in the Irish marine territory, to meet 'good environmental status' and the 30% by 2030 target of marine protected areas of the EU biodiversity strategy. This will be achieved through a participatory ecosystem-based management process involving the co-design, co-production and co-delivery of outcomes, in close collaboration with marine stakeholders, universities and citizens.

**SDG15
Protect, restore and
promote sustainable
use of
terrestrial
ecosystems,
sustainably
manage
forests,
combat
desertification, and halt and
reverse land
degradation
and halt
biodiversity
loss**

LIFE aims to **protect, restore, and promote the sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss**, specifically through its subprogramme on nature and biodiversity.

The 'urgent conservation actions to sustain Portuguese and transborder populations of the Montagu's harrier' ([SOS Pygargus](#)) project implements conservation measures for Montagu's harrier (*Circus pygargus*) populations, which is in the unfavourable conservation status 'Bad'. The project undertakes habitat management, improves breeding success by preventing and mitigating disturbances affecting the breeding productivity, mitigates threats and reduces mortality. Specific conservation measures will be applied on more than 2 000 hectares of land, in order to improve habitat conditions. Furthermore the projects aims at making agricultural practices compatible with the reproductive cycle of the species, raising awareness and promoting capacity building. The project aims to halt the population decline and increase the breeding population by 50% within the six years of project implementation and to improve the breeding success, bringing the productivity from the current value of 0.6 to 1.5, which is needed to sustain a viable population. The project will also promote a significant reduction of mortality and nest destruction (by about 75%).

**SDG16
Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels**

LIFE promotes **access to justice** on environmental matters by increasing the capacity of an EU network of environmental prosecutors and supporting projects on environmental governance.

The ‘supporting governance action to improve the prevention, prosecution and law enforcement of wildlife crime’ ([Wildlifecrime](#)) project supports the recovery of endangered species by preventing wildlife crime. This can be achieved by enabling the necessary governance conditions for successful wildlife crime investigations along the law enforcement chain, starting with civil society and competent authorities under investigation until judiciary. Geographically, the project focuses on six hotspots in Germany and Austria. It tackles prevention, case management, prosecution and conviction of any crimes detected. It identifies bottlenecks and shortcomings to improve effectiveness at all stages. The project will help to: strengthen reliable cooperation between supportive non-governmental organisations and governance authorities against wildlife crime; improve the subsequent steps along the governance process and boost replication among governance partners across Europe; and support the shaping of adequate policies to effectively and efficiently fight wildlife trade.

**SDG17
Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development**

LIFE does not have an objective to **revitalise global partnership for sustainable development.**

Support for reforms

Two main features of the LIFE programme support the implementation of reforms in Member States: the strategic projects and the subprogramme for the clean energy transition.

Strategic projects help Member States in fully implementing environmental and climate plans, thus complying with key EU legislation in areas such as nature conservation, water management, air quality, waste management, circular economy, climate change mitigation and adaptation. To be eligible for support, regional, multi-regional or national strategies or action plans must meet the following conditions.

Required by EU legislation or policy. The strategy or action plan must be mandated by specific environmental, climate, or energy union legislation or policy.

Adopted. The strategy or action plan must have been officially adopted.

Competent authority participation. The competent Member State authorities must be involved in the development and implementation of the strategy or action plan.

Stakeholder involvement. All relevant stakeholders must be engaged in the strategy or action plan.

Multi-funding source. The strategy or action plan must foresee the mobilisation of at least one other EU, national or private funding source.

Strategic projects focus on building strategic capacities among competent authorities and stakeholders to ensure the long-term sustainability of project actions and results. This is achieved by actively involving stakeholders in the design and implementation of the project and encouraging actions that complement the support given by the project. In all, 25 strategic projects have been financed following the 2021-2023 calls. An example is the ‘effective implementation of the air quality plan for the Podkarpackie voivodeship, taking into account the problem of energy poverty: Podkarpackie – live and breathe’ ([Podkarpackie](#)) project for reducing air pollution in the Podkarpackie region in Poland. This project aims to effectively implement the air quality plan for the region, thereby reducing energy poverty and improving air quality. The project will eliminate outdated solid fuel boilers, increase primary renewable energy production and reduce carbon dioxide, ‘PM10’, ‘PM2.5’ and ‘B(a)P’ emissions. The expected results include: elimination of approximately 325 000 outdated solid fuel boilers by 2026; an increase of at least 48% in primary renewable energy production by 2033; and an annual reduction of 5 852.7 tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent/year.

The **LIFE subprogramme for the clean energy transition** has as one of its main objectives to support policy implementation. For example, it funds projects that facilitate capacity building and provide technical support to national and regional authorities for the design, monitoring and evaluation of policy programmes, measures and plans (e.g. measurement and verification schemes for energy savings; support for the setting up and implementation of sustainable energy and climate action plans). Moreover, the subprogramme funds the ‘Concerted Actions’, which are fora for national authorities of the 27 Member States to exchange on good practices and challenges in implementing specific legislation and policies.

Contribution to strategic technologies (STEP)

N/A

JUST TRANSITION MECHANISM

The Just Transition Mechanism (JTM) was proposed as part of the European Green Deal investment plan to make sure that no one and no region is left behind in the transition to a climate-neutral economy. The primary goal of the mechanism is to provide support to the most negatively affected regions and people and to help alleviate the socioeconomic costs of the transition.

Concrete examples of achievements

96	10	150	EUR 10.2 billion
territories in all Member States are supported by the Just Transition Fund (JTF), following the successful approval of the JTF programme for Bulgaria.	Just Transition Platform conferences for all stakeholders in JTM regions were organised by DG Regional and Urban Policy to support their just transition efforts.	Just transition experts support the EU regions in transition through a dedicated Just Transition Platforms database.	has been allocated to selected JTF projects.
EUR 1.5 billion	18	Over 90%	
of public investments has been mobilised in total by the public sector loan facility in Czechia, Greece, France and Sweden.	Member States have received technical assistance support in implementing the JTF through the Just Transition Platform (JTP Groundwork and JTPeers).	of projects selected in Just Transition Programmes of five Member States (Estonia, Luxembourg, Malta, the Netherlands and Sweden).	

Budget programming and implementation

Budget programming (million EUR)

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	Total
Financial programming	4.0	1 437.9	1 560.3	1 585.7	1 611.8	1 337.2	1 364.3	8 901.1
NextGenerationEU	5.4	4 982.1	5 815.5	6.0	59.5	0.0	0.0	10 868.5
Decommitments made available again (*)	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Contributions from other countries and entities	46.3	121.5	104.6	252.4	0.0	0.0	0.0	524.7
Total	55.6	6 541.5	7 480.4	1 844.1	1 671.3	1 337.2	1 364.3	20 294.3

(*) Only Article 15(3) of the Financial Regulation.

Cumulative budget implementation at the end of 2024 (million EUR)

	Implementation	Budget	Implementation rate
Commitments	15 921.7	20 294.4	78.5%
Payments	6 365.7	0.0	31.4%

Implementation and performance

Key performance indicators

	Baseline	Progress	Target	Results	Assessment
Enterprises supported	0	Actual results: 1%, Selected operations: 23%	37 000 in 2029	513 enterprises (Selected operations: 8 355 enterprises) compared to a target of 36 916 enterprises	Moderate progress
Additional production capacity for renewable energy	0	Actual results: 0%, Selected operations: 18%	12 000 megawatts in 2029	0 MW (Selected operations: 2 151 MW) compared to a target of 11 903 MW	No data
Additional capacity for waste recycling	0	Actual results: 0%, Selected operations: 4%	1.5 million tonnes/year in 2029	0 MW (Selected operations: 58 097 tonnes/year) compared to a target of 1 491 459 tonnes/year	No data
Jobs created in supported entities	0	Actual results: 0%, Selected operations: 28%	60 000 jobs in 2029	45 jobs (Selected operations: 16 659 jobs) compared to a target of 59 929 jobs	No data

Annual users of new or modernised public transport	0	Actual results: 0%, Selected operations: 13%	28 million users in 2029	0 users (Selected operations: 3 603 033 users) compared to a target of 28 041 493 users	No data
Overall investment mobilised	0	NA	No target	No results	No data
Number of projects receiving financing under the facility	0	NA	No target	No results	No data
Greenhouse gas emissions reduced, where relevant	0	NA	No target	No results	No data

Pillar I – the Just Transition Fund

The JTF is implemented in all Member States through 70 territorial just transition plans (JTTPs), which support 96 different territories. The framework of the fund provides a solid basis for achieving its specific objective and ensuring the relevance of funding, as all investments must demonstrate a link with transition pathways, resulting negative impacts, challenges and needs in the most-affected territories.

While implementation had a slow start, progress in project selection shows that it has picked up and is accelerating. At the end of 2024, the selection of projects at the EU level stood at 38.1% of the total allocation (compared to 6.2% in December 2023), showcasing a project pipeline with the potential to translate into spending and the achievement of output and result targets. Including pre-financing, the EU payment rate amounts to 32.2% of the total JTF budget.

A range of measures was deployed to address implementation challenges. Introducing STEP, along with 30% pre-financing for JTF programmes, reduced decommitment pressure. Deployed Commission technical assistance – through the dedicated Just Transition Platform, but also other streams such as the Joint Assistance to Support Projects in European Regions Partnership (JASPERS) and the Technical Support Instrument (TSI) – in synergy with technical assistance envelopes available to Member States, aims to address lacking capacities and strengthen the project pipeline. Better coordination between DG Regional and Urban Policy and DG Competition was initiated to accelerate state aid notification, coupled with a stronger focus on state aid knowledge dissemination. The mid-term review of programmes in 2025 also presents an opportunity to reallocate resources from funding streams with suboptimal delivery. JTF

performance is monitored by the Commission in various ways, including through presence at programme monitoring committees, annual performance reviews and data regularly transmitted by Member States, as well in the mid-term and ex-post evaluation exercises. The former also encompasses a review of JTF implementation as laid down in Article 14 of the JTF Regulation.

Pillar II – Just transition scheme under InvestEU (under the lead of DG Economic and Financial Affairs)

To implement pillar II under the JTM, a dedicated just transition scheme under the InvestEU programme is established to support investment to benefit the territories identified in TJTPs. The scheme focuses on economically viable investments aligned with just transition objectives.

By mid-2024, the InvestEU Advisory Hub partners reported 14 assignments providing advisory support for a total of EUR 2.3 million to projects benefiting territories identified in the TJTPs.

As of the end of December 2024, the InvestEU Fund implementing partners reported a total of EUR 6.76 billion of investment mobilised by operations under the JTM. These operations are supporting projects in territories identified in territorial just transition plans, or projects that benefit the transition of those territories, even if they are not located in the territories themselves, but only when funding outside the just transition territories is key to the transition in those territories.

Pillar III – the Public Sector Loan Facility

The first call for proposals was launched in July 2022, when enough TJTPs had been adopted. The call has three cut-off dates per year and will remain open until the end of 2025. A second call for proposals will be launched in 2026.

Until now, seven grant agreements (9.5% of the budget of the grant component) have been signed in Czechia, Greece, France and Sweden, in the sectors of sustainable transport, energy efficiency, cultural and social infrastructure, and economic diversification. An additional 10 projects, corresponding to 8% of the budget, have been selected by the Public Sector Loan Facility (PSLF) evaluation committee. The European Investment Bank's assessment of the corresponding loans is ongoing and needs to be finalised before grant agreements can be signed.

The total public investment foreseen for the PSLF amount to EUR 1.5 billion, out of which EUR 124 million in grants awarded by the Commission, EUR 733 million in loans from the European Investment Bank and EUR 621 million from other sources of funding.

In the context of the mid-term revision of the multiannual financial framework (Council Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2024/765 ⁽⁶¹⁾), the budget of the PSLF grant component was reduced by EUR 150 million. After these redeployments, the maximum budget available for the PSLF grant component was recalculated at EUR 1.3 billion together with the estimated European Investment Bank loan contribution ranging between a maximum of EUR 6 billion and EUR 8 billion.

In each Member State, future demand for the PSLF mainly depends on a combination of the following factors: (i) the availability of other sources of EU (JTF, Recovery and Resilience Facility, European Regional Development Fund or Cohesion Fund) or national funding which

⁽⁶¹⁾ Council Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2024/765 of 29 February 2024 amending Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2020/2093 laying down the multiannual financial framework for the years 2021 to 2027 (OJ L, 2024/765, 29.02.2024, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2024/765/oj>).

crowd out the PSLF because they offer to co-finance the same projects with a higher proportion of the total investments with grants, (ii) the development of a mature pipeline of quality projects, and (iii) public authorities' administrative capacity to apply and incur debt.

From 2026, the remaining budget of the PSLF will be allocated without any pre-allocated national shares and on a competitive basis at the EU level until the exhaustion of remaining resources. This is expected to support the uptake of the PSLF, in particular in Member States which have exhausted their national shares or in those which had the smallest national shares.

Contribution to horizontal priorities

Contribution to green budgeting priorities (EUR million):

	Implementation				Estimates			Total	% of the total envelope
	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027		
Climate mainstreaming	2.7	6 396.9	7 406.5	1 785.5	1 326.0	1 326.0	1 326.0	19 569.6	99.0%
Biodiversity mainstreaming	0.0	271.6	310.8	66.7	67.7	56.2	57.3	830.3	4.2%

Cohesion policy uses a categorisation information system to capture information on the thematic content of the 2021-2027 programmes. These multiannual thematic allocations are used to calculate the indicative share of investments under each annual commitment, as set out above. There are several tracking tools (e.g. climate, biodiversity, clean air, gender, digital).

The allocations to the various green budgeting objectives overlap to some extent. The amounts for each priority should not be directly aggregated, as that would result in double counting. Data stories on the Cohesion Open Data Platform present the data and the methods for tracking in more detail; see for example the [climate tracking data story](#) available on the platform.

In relation to the EU taxonomy of sustainable activities, the JTM directly helps to deal with the negative social, economic, environmental, demographic and health impacts of the climate transition. While all Member States can benefit from the JTM, funding is targeted at those regions most negatively affected by the transition towards climate neutrality. For these reasons, the JTF is considered under climate tracking using a 100% climate coefficient for all allocations under the intervention fields.

Taking a more conservative approach in relation to the JTF assessment under the taxonomy for sustainable activities, we have used the cohesion policy funds system of 182 intervention fields, which have undergone an analysis of alignment with the taxonomy in the context of NextGenerationEU green-bond reporting. As a result of that analysis, groups of intervention fields were assessed as 'fully aligned', 'substantially aligned' / 'partially aligned' or 'not covered'. This system is used under cohesion policy shared management as an alternative to project-based analysis, not least because of the burden of assessing tens of thousands of projects

over a programme period. When applying the results of this assessment to the 2021-2027 JTF budget, the following financial amounts can be reported: EUR 4 billion is ‘fully aligned’, EUR 1.8 billion is ‘substantially/partially aligned’ and EUR 13.8 billion is ‘not covered’ (these are primary interventions to support economic diversification and the reskilling of workers).

For biodiversity investment and mainstreaming in the 2021-2027 period, Member States plan expenditure totalling 4% of the total JTF envelope (0.64% in 2024).

In addition to climate tracking, the ‘do no significant harm’ principle is applied. Member States are responsible for the implementation of this principle throughout the programming period. The JTM supports those regions facing the most serious socioeconomic challenges due to the transition process. These regions will need to phase out certain activities and restructure their industries.

By addressing the investment needs of the territories that are most negatively impacted by the transition towards a climate-neutral economy, the PSLF will provide a key contribution to mainstream climate action. It covers a wide range of sustainable investments, including in relation to biodiversity, provided that such investments contribute to meeting the development needs of territories that are caused by the transition towards the EU’s 2030 climate target, as established in Regulation (EU) 2021/1119⁽⁶²⁾, and climate neutrality in the EU by 2050, as described in the TJTPs. The PSLF is implemented by a call for proposals. Therefore, its final contribution to climate, biodiversity and clean air is subject to the applications and advisory support requests it receives.

Contribution to gender equality (million EUR) (*)

Gender score	2021	2022	2023	2024	Total
2	0.0	49.8	56.5	13.8	120.1
1	0.0	1 770.6	2 008.5	491.7	4 270.8
0*	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
0	9.4	4 599.6	5 310.8	1 086.2	11 006.0
Total:	9.4	6 420.0	7 375.8	1 591.7	15 396.9

(*) Based on the applied gender contribution methodology, the following scores are attributed at the most granular level of intervention possible:

2: interventions the principal objective of which is to improve gender equality;

1: interventions that have gender equality as an important and deliberate objective but not as the main reason for the intervention;

0: non-targeted interventions (interventions that are expected to have no significant bearing on gender equality);

0*: score to be assigned to interventions with a likely but not yet clear positive impact on gender equality.

The JTM aims at ensuring that the transition to a climate-neutral economy happens in a fair way, leaving no one behind, independent of gender and age. Territorial just transition plans

⁽⁶²⁾ Regulation (EU) 2021/1119 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 June 2021 establishing the framework for achieving climate neutrality and amending Regulations (EC) No 401/2009 and (EU) 2018/1999 (‘European Climate Law’) (OJ L 243, 9.7.2021, p. 1, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2021/1119/oj>).

should, where relevant, address demographic challenges in the regions affected by the transition. mechanism investments (e.g. in reskilling and upskilling and diversification of the economy) should take into account the equal treatment of all genders.

By the end of 2024, gender mainstreaming expenditure was at 11.25% of total allocation. Numerous JTF projects support gender mainstreaming by addressing issues of energy poverty, energy efficiency in housing, reskilling of the workforce and diversification of economy-supporting start-ups led by women.

For the third pillar, the contribution to gender equality is specifically mentioned in the application form that the applicants need to complete. Among other things, applicants are asked to explain the project's impact on gender equality and how they approach this issue. They also have to explain how the project helps to fill gender gaps that may be linked to just transition, how the activities will contribute to improve the situation and how it will contribute to the promotion and advancement of gender equality and non-discrimination mainstreaming. For each proposal, the elements will be analysed by the Commission as part of the assessment of the 'Relevance and impact' award criteria.

Among the projects supported by the PSLF up to now, investments in mobility supported in France are in line with public transport providers' gender equality strategies. For example, Nantes's public transport provider has adopted an integrated gender equality approach, notably to ensure a gender security dimension in the use of public transport, but also to achieve a gender-balanced participation in employment and training. Lille's public transport provider is implementing a multi-year action plan that focuses on professional equality and combating stereotypes. It aims to ensure equal opportunities by implementing diversity policies that prevent gender-based discrimination, and undertakes specific actions against gender-based harassment. In Sweden, gender mainstreaming is ensured in PSLF-supported investments in the sector of affordable housing, in line with Swedish law.

Regarding gender categorisation, the JTF uses a categorisation information system, which focuses specifically on the gender equality dimension, to capture information on the gender contribution of the 2021-2027 programmes. These multiannual thematic allocations are used to calculate the indicative share of investments under each annual commitment. Based on the adopted programmes, about 27% of the planned EU amounts will be used to improve gender equality or interventions that have gender equality. For the 2021-2027 period, the [gender tracking data story](#) available on the Cohesion Open Data Platform presents cohesion policy support for gender equality in more detail.

Gender-disaggregated data:

No data are available for gender disaggregation. All JTF programmes have to describe the social impact of the transition to climate neutrality: how it is primarily linked to employment, with direct consequences for the livelihoods of households and families, social exclusion and gender implications.

For the PSLF, two indicators are disaggregated by gender: in terms of the estimated number of jobs created by the PSLF for the signed grant agreements, 50% (2 870 out of 5 745) are declared by applicants to be filled by women. In terms of the individuals which should be reached by the signed PSLF projects, 52% (1 237 232 out of 2 450 527) are estimated to be women.

Contribution to the digital transition (EUR million):

	2021 implementation	2022 implementation	2023 implementation	2024 implementation	Total	% of the 2021- 2024 envelope
Digital contribution	0.0	820.5	938.7	201.3	1 960.5	12.7%

Addressing the impacts of the transition towards a climate-neutral economy also means digitalisation. In 2023, more than EUR 950 million was invested in digitalisation, including for the digitalisation of public and private services, with a special focus on small and medium-sized enterprises (business development and internationalisation, including productive investments, e-commerce, digital innovation hubs and digital processes) and on innovation clusters, including businesses, research organisations and public authorities and business networks.

Contribution to sustainable development goals

SDG	Does the programme contribute to the goal?	Example (only for the most relevant SDGs)
SDG1: End poverty in all its forms everywhere	yes	No poverty. In several Romanian counties (Dolj, Galați, Gorj, Hunedoara, Mureș and Prahova), the JTF support of EUR 2.14 billion goes to investments in renewable and clean energy technologies, such as hydrogen, to combat energy poverty.
SDG3: Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages	yes	Good health and well-being. In Romania, the JTF supports, for example, the rehabilitation of brown fields in the mining sector and the rehabilitation of abandoned industrial sites by creating new green spaces contributing to the well-being of citizens (such as parks, commercial and residential areas for social housing).

SDG4: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all

yes

Quality education. One of the main goals of JTF investments is to support workers in the coal- and carbon- intensive industries with extensive training programmes for up- and reskilling to the new green sectors and to be prepared for the economic diversification planned for the regions.

In Czechia's Karlovarsky region, over 1 000 jobs are related to polluting power generation activities. It is the least developed region in Czechia but has a potential for the development of small and medium businesses. To make sure the industrial transition in this region benefits everyone, the JTF supports entrepreneurs by helping to re- and upskill workers. In Poland's Silesia region, the JTF invests in the training of 100 000 workers, many of whom currently work in the fossil fuels sector, to equip them with new skills to work in renewable and climate-neutral industries. In all, 27 000 new jobs are expected to be created directly as a result of the measures. In the Wielkopolska region, the JTF supports training and reskilling activities for 5 500 workers in the lignite industry.

SDG5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls

yes

Gender equality. The TJTPs often refer to women's lower participation in the labour market and point to the need for quality childcare services. In Greece, there are investments in infrastructure to enable childcare services and elderly care. A large part of the funds (20.4% of the total EUR 1.63 billion) strengthens human resources and workforce skills in the areas most affected by the transition process and promotes employment and skilling/upskilling/reskilling, for example among women.

SDG7: Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all

yes

Affordable and clean energy. In Poland's Western Małopolska, to help reduce energy bills and to allow citizens to benefit from stable, ecological and affordable energy sources, the JTF invests in the energy efficiency of public buildings and housing, including by supporting home insulation, rooftop solar installations and heat pumps. In all, the JTF invests EUR 2.4 billion in Silesia and Western Małopolska.

In Czechia, the Moravskoslezsky region (the biggest coal-mining region) faces several challenges related to the environment, especially air pollution and groundwater contamination due to industrial activities. The JTF invests in decontamination and supports the phase-out of coal in the region. Investments are also planned in the area of energy storage and energy research. In all, Czechia will receive EUR 1.64 billion from JTF.

In Greece, the PSLF supports the West Macedonia region to increase energy efficiency of public infrastructure, to reduce energy cost, using low-consumption lamps (using light-emitting diodes) for road lighting, and to increase solar energy production.

SDG8: Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all

yes

Decent work and economic growth. 80% of Czechia's lignite (or brown coal) is extracted in the Ustecky region, where there are over 5 000 coal-related jobs, four coal mines, the largest Czech coal-fired power plants and a high concentration of chemical industry firms. The JTF supports investments to transform the economy into one based on renewable energy sources and a circular economy.

SDG9: Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation	yes	Industry, innovation and infrastructure. In Austria, JTF creates employment and mitigates job losses linked to the green transition. This will be done by investing EUR 76 million in the development of new business models and sustainable green business areas, proactively accompanying companies in their transition process. JTF finances advisory services to local small and medium-sized enterprises and start-ups (incubation, acceleration, related infrastructure investments) and local start-up ecosystems. This includes strengthening already established incubators, building new incubation capacities with a focus on green business models and improving access to incubation capacities (e.g. in cooperation with tertiary education and research institutions). In Belgium, the fund allocates around EUR 14 million for research and innovation activities.
SDG10: Reduce inequalities within and among countries	yes	Reduced inequalities. JTF tackle inequalities in the EU regions that are most affected by the transition towards climate neutrality. In all 27 Member States, the JTF will particularly support the most impacted workers and regions by investing in new job opportunities, training and skilling for workers and their families, so that they benefit from the economic diversification that will be offered by renewables and modern businesses and industry.
SDG11: Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable	yes	Sustainable cities and communities. In Belgium, the cities of Tournai, Mons and Charleroi receive JTF support to be more sustainable and move towards clean energy production, namely by the replacement of fossil fuels by renewable hydrogen and biomethane. EUR 40 million is dedicated to renewable energy, and about EUR 68 million to energy efficiency. The PSLF supports three cities in France (Lille, Marseille and Nantes) to invest in sustainable transport, namely by the renewal and improvement of tramway rolling stock and infrastructure, as well as the development of cycling paths. PSLF grants are estimated to leverage public investments worth a total of EUR 1.1 billion in these areas.
SDG12: Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns	yes	Responsible consumption and production. In Romania, the JTF supports economic diversification with EUR 2.14 billion by financing the establishment of small and medium-sized enterprises in sectors that promote responsible consumption and production. Examples include the circular economy, traditional activities like crafts or the production of environmentally friendly construction materials.

SDG13: Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts	yes	Climate action. All 27 Member States are supported by JTF to mitigate the socioeconomic consequences of the transition process towards climate-neutrality. For instance, in Poland, EUR 3.85 billion supports a just climate transition in the coal regions of Silesia, Małopolska, Wielkopolska, Lower Silesia and Łódzkie.
SDG15: Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss	yes	Life on land. In Silesia, Poland, the investments made with JTF support aim to restore environmental damage from the mining activities. The JTF invests in the rehabilitation and decontamination of 2 800 hectares of post-mining areas, in line with the 'polluter pays' principle.

Support to reforms

As a result of its conditionality (granting the funding only if a transition process towards a climate-neutral economy has been demonstrated in a given territory), the JTF has been key in speeding up coal phase-out in the EU. Several Member States (e.g. Czechia, Hungary, Romania, Slovenia) did not have a coal phase-out date before the establishment of the fund. The just transition plans provide a clear decarbonisation commitment at the national level and outline the transition pathway, including in terms of job creation and preservation.

For the carbon-intensive regions, the JTF was an opportunity to reflect on how the transformation of carbon-intensive industries (such as steel, cement or chemicals) could be achieved without creating negative spillovers in communities and places. The JTF played a transformative role in local economies of JTF territories, i.e. in Belgium, Germany, France and Austria. Moreover, the JTF was instrumental in examining the impacts of the transition on workers, skills and communities, beyond a mere focus on technologies and innovation.

For insular and archipelago-type regions, the JTF provided a new opportunity for the transition to decarbonisation of certain fossil-fuel activities.

Contribution to strategic technologies (STEP)

In line with the STEP Regulation, the JTF is one of the EU programmes in shared management mobilised under STEP to strengthen the competitiveness and resilience of the European economy. Under the JTF, STEP investments can be supported under existing priority axes and/or under newly set up STEP priorities, if a Member State amends one or more of its JTF programmes. Three JTF STEP amendments were adopted in 2024 (Denmark, Germany and Romania), amounting to a total of EUR 620 million of JTF re-directed funds for pursuing STEP objectives.

The biggest share of the STEP allocation is used for productive investments (around EUR 412 million). Investments in research and innovation-related activities cover EUR 68 million and investments in skills development cover around EUR 21 million. Around EUR 119 million of the STEP investments go to other activities, such as supporting business incubation, spin-offs and start-ups or promoting the circular economy research and innovation processes.

The productive investments can be further broken down by type of enterprise (large enterprises account for around EUR 152 million and small and medium-sized enterprises for around EUR 261 million) and by the three STEP target investment areas (digital technologies and deep-tech innovation projects to receive EUR 107 million, clean and resource-efficient technologies around EUR 247 million, and biotechnologies around EUR 58 million).

ASYLUM, MIGRATION AND INTEGRATION FUND

Concrete examples of achievements

36 353 places in reception accommodation infrastructure were set up in line with the EU <i>acquis</i> between 2021 and 2024.	16 290 people were trained in asylum-related topics between 2021 and 2024.	77 458 people participated in pre-departure measures between 2021 and 2024.	25 170 people were resettled between 2021 and 2024.
30 144 people received reintegration assistance between 2021 and 2024.			

Budget programming and implementation

Budget programming (million EUR):

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	Total
Financial programming	497.6	1 398.7	1 484.3	1 502.4	1 866.8	2 071.9	2 114.7	10 936.3
NextGenerationEU	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Decommitments made available again (*)	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Contributions from other countries and entities	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Total	497.6	1 398.7	1 484.3	1 502.4	1 866.8	2 071.9	2 114.7	10 936.3

(*) Only Article 15(3) of the Financial Regulation.

Since 2021, the initial financial programming for the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF) has been affected by further modifications. On the one hand, a total of EUR 4.3 million was transferred to other shared management funds through Article 26 of the Common Provisions Regulation (i.e. EUR 1.1 million to the Border Management and Visa Policy Instrument; EUR 3.2 million to the Internal Security Fund). The AMIF was also reduced by EUR 48.1 million to finance a legislative initiative requiring additional resources for the European Union Agency for the Operational Management of Large-Scale IT Systems in the Area of Freedom, Security and Justice to develop the Eurodac database in the context of the pact on asylum and migration. On the other hand, the AMIF was reinforced by EUR 66 million in the context of various annual budget procedures, and it absorbed EUR 59.7 million of unused appropriations from home affairs agencies. It was also reinforced by the transfer of EUR 74 million from the Solidarity Emergency Aid Reserve, and EUR 100 million was mobilised from the margin of heading 4 of the multiannual financial framework. Finally, as part of the midterm revision of the multiannual financial framework, the AMIF was reinforced by EUR 810 million for the years 2025-2027.

Cumulative budget implementation at the end of 2024 (million EUR):

	Implementation	Budget	Implementation rate
Commitments	4 881.6	10 936.3	44.6%
Payments	2 623.5	0.0	24.0%

Implementation and performance

Key performance indicators

	Baseline	Progress	Target	Results	Assessment
Number of people placed in alternatives to detention	0	0%	10 263 in 2029	1 in 2024	Deserves attention
Number of participants in language courses who have improved their proficiency level in the host-country language upon leaving the language course by at least one level in the common European framework of the reference for languages or the national equivalent	0	4%	381 831 in 2029	14 717 in 2024 compared to a target of 381 831	On track
Number of participants who applied for long-term status	0	26%	40 156 in 2029	10 402 in 2024 compared to a target of 40 156	On track
Number of returnees voluntarily returned	0	24%	247 545 in 2029	59 133 in 2024 compared to a target of 247 545	On track
Number of returnees who were removed	0	2%	264 355 in 2029	4 846 in 2024 compared to a target of 264 355	Moderate progress

Number of applicants for and beneficiaries of international protection transferred from one Member State to another	0	37%	4 297 in 2029	1 573 in 2024 compared to a target of 4 297	On track
Number of people resettled	0	50%	50 377 in 2029	25 170 in 2024 compared to a target of 50 377	On track
Number of people admitted through humanitarian admission	0	50%	60 029 in 2029	29 804 in 2024 compared to a target of 60 029	On track

The programme is implemented under shared, direct and indirect management. The largest share of resources (57%) is allocated to the Member States' programmes under shared management. The remaining share (43%) is allocated to the Thematic Facility, which is programmed by the Commission.

Funding allocated to the Thematic Facility can be used for specific measures (shared management) implemented by the Member States nationally or transnationally, EU measures (direct/indirect management), emergency assistance (shared, direct or indirect management), transfers of beneficiaries of and applicants for international protection (shared management), resettlement (shared management) and support for the European Migration Network (direct management). With the Thematic Facility, funds can be allocated to emerging or unforeseen needs and steered towards the changing EU priorities and evolving challenges.

The programmed initiatives under the Thematic Facility to be implemented under direct/indirect management throughout the programming period include calls for proposals regularly published to support, for example, transnational measures in migrants' integration via legal pathways, the integration of women, children and victims of trafficking, labour market integration and integration through local and regional networks, along with information and awareness-raising campaigns along the main migratory routes. The Thematic Facility also provides additional support to Member States to, for example, strengthen their reception capacity. The AMIF Thematic Facility has also provided emergency assistance to support Member States hosting displaced persons from Ukraine or facing a situation of exceptional migratory pressure.

As regards the voted budget in 2024, the programme amounted to EUR 1 502.4 million in terms of commitment appropriations. Those appropriations covered the initial allocations to Member States (EUR 969.9 million), Thematic Facility amounts for specific measures, EU measures,

the European Migration Network, emergency assistance, relocation and resettlement (EUR 528.2 million), and expenditure for technical assistance (EUR 4.3 million).

For the Member States' programmes, due to the delays in the adoption of the legal basis for 2021-2027 and the time needed for the programming procedure, shared management programmes were formally approved only in the last quarter of 2022.

By the end of 2024, after two full years of implementation of the Member State programmes, progress could be seen from both the financial and the performance perspective. Overall, the number of operations selected by the managing authorities has accelerated, for a total cost that amounted to 62% of the Member State programmes' allocations across all specific objectives. Furthermore, the EU expenditure rate across all specific objectives amounts to 25% of the Member States programmes' allocations.

The pressure on asylum and integration seems to be reflected in the financial progress, as per the information transmitted in the Member State programmes. Compared with the indicative allocations in the programmes, progress is particularly noticeable for operations on reception conditions and children in migration (almost EUR 1 billion of EU resources committed, nearly 94% of the allocation). Beneficiaries of these two types of operations have declared high rates of expenditure, with expenditure rates of 52% and 25% of their allocation respectively. Marked progress can also be seen on integration operations concerned with basic needs, civic orientation and early integration of non-EU nationals (almost EUR 500 million of EU resources committed). Legal migration and integration operations targeting vulnerable persons, including unaccompanied minors, also show rapid progress (84% of EU resources committed).

As outlined below on performance in shared management, reporting on output and result indicators has started for most indicators, although it is expected to gain momentum at a slightly later stage, especially for the result indicators, once the number of operations being completed reaches cruising speed.

Under specific objective 1, strengthening and developing the common European asylum system, the rate of selection of operations from 2021 to the end of 2024 is rather high, at 73% of the total allocation of Member State programmes, evidencing the significant needs of the Member States in this area. Achievements recorded during this programming period relate to non-EU nationals supported, including more than 159 000 vulnerable individuals and more than 35 000 non-EU nationals who received legal assistance, but also to the number of staff trained, which amounts to more than 16 200. Additionally, 820 reception places for unaccompanied minors were created on top of over 1 130 reception places refurbished for unaccompanied minors in line with the EU *acquis*.

Under specific objective 2, on legal migration and integration, since the beginning of the programming period more than 488 000 non-EU nationals have been supported in their early integration, including temporary protection beneficiaries fleeing Ukraine. Longer-term results are expected to take longer to materialise, but already over 14 700 participants have improved their language skills by at least one level in the common European framework of reference for languages, and almost 65 000 participants have reported that the activity was helpful for their integration. Progress has also been achieved through information campaigns to raise awareness of legal migration channels to the EU and through information on and assistance in applying for family reunification. While it will take more time for the results to materialise, progress can already be seen, in particular relating to the number of people supported in applying for long-term residence.

Under specific objective 3, on combating irregular migration, from 2021 to the end of 2024 more than 59 000 people returned voluntarily with the support of the fund and more than 30 000 received reintegration assistance.

Under specific objective 4, on solidarity among Member States, a significant number of resettlements and humanitarian admissions (almost 55 000) took place from 2021 to the end of 2024.

As of the end of 2024, most indicators were making progress and demonstrated no clear indication of issues with the implementation of the programmes. However, the number of people placed in alternatives to detention has made little progress so far and deserves attention. The number of returnees who were removed is making moderate progress. Return measures are inherently challenging due to the demanding needs in terms of coordination and high dependence on the cooperation of non-EU countries.

Importantly, Member States' implementation of the pact on migration and asylum is expected to be accompanied by a change in the targets for operations benefiting from the additional allocations that will be made available for this purpose in 2025, 2026 and 2027. The strengthening of the legal framework is another factor that could favourably affect the performance – and more broadly the effectiveness – of the support provided under the AMIF. Most Member States have also qualified for their midterm allocations for 2025-2027. The impact on the targets will become clear once Member States have incorporated the additional funding into the amendments to their AMIF programmes.

Overall, the implementation of the programme will inevitably be affected by the general increase in prices, which vastly exceeded expectations in many Member States. Continued pressure on resources could result in a lower level of achievement of the key performance indicators or a need to revise the original strategy but could also influence the implementation of transnational measures.

As regards performance in direct management, in view of their specific nature and legislative objectives, the performance of transnational EU measures cannot fully be captured by the key performance indicators, but they effectively complement the implementation of the policy objectives at the national level through Member States' programmes by developing policy analyses, innovations, transnational mutual learning and partnerships, and by testing new initiatives and measures across the Union.

Contribution to horizontal priorities

Contribution to green budgeting priorities

In line with the EU's commitment to work towards achieving the United Nations sustainable development goals, the programme regulation (Regulation (EU) 2021/1147⁽⁶³⁾, the "AMIF Regulation") commits (with no specific programme target) to contributing to the EU's goal of spending at least 30% of the total EU budget on supporting climate objectives and its ambition to spend 7.5% of the annual EU budget on biodiversity in 2024 and 10% in both 2026 and 2027, while considering the existing overlaps between climate and biodiversity goals.

⁽⁶³⁾ Regulation (EU) 2021/1147 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 7 July 2021 establishing the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (OJ L 251, 15.7.2021, p. 1, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2021/1147/oj>).

This could happen, for example, by focusing on green procurement regarding infrastructure assets / information technology systems – subject to specific provisions ensuring the choice of products/services that reduce the climate impact by applying the best available technologies, the use of renewable energy in buildings, enhanced isolation, etc. For the time being there are no strict conditions set for national programming or project selection, but Member States are encouraged to prioritise environmentally friendly measures.

Contribution to gender equality (million EUR) (*)

Gender score	2021	2022	2023	2024	Total
2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
1	497.6	1 398.7	1 484.3	1 502.4	4 883.0
0*	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Total:	497.6	1 398.7	1 484.3	1 502.4	4 883.0

(*) Based on the applied gender contribution methodology, the following scores are attributed at the most granular level of intervention possible:

2: interventions the principal objective of which is to improve gender equality;

1: interventions that have gender equality as an important and deliberate objective but not as the main reason for the intervention;

0: non-targeted interventions (interventions that are expected to have no significant bearing on gender equality);

0*: score to be assigned to interventions with a likely but not yet clear positive impact on gender equality.

The programme is committed to the horizontal approach of the EU budget, in which equality between women and men, rights and equal opportunities for all and the mainstreaming of these objectives should be considered and promoted throughout the preparation, implementation and monitoring of relevant programmes, as stipulated in Article 6 of the AMIF Regulation.

In the broader context, to receive payments from the Commission, the Member States' programmes for DG Migration and Home Affairs funds will have to comply with several horizontal enabling conditions, one of which concerns the effective application and implementation of the Charter of Fundamental Rights, including the equality of men and women. The horizontal enabling conditions must be fulfilled throughout the entire programming period, and Member States must report on their application to the programme monitoring committee and the Commission.

The AMIF regulation specifically stipulates that eligible measures need to consider the human-rights-based approach to the protection of migrants, refugees and asylum seekers and should,

in particular, ensure that special attention is paid to, and a dedicated response is provided for, the specific situation of vulnerable persons, in particular women, unaccompanied minors and victims of trafficking in human beings. The AMIF may have an important impact on gender equality, but any interventions supported from the fund do not have gender equality as their principal objective. Therefore, the interventions contributing to gender equality are reported under gender score 1.

Gender-disaggregated information

Indicators relating to individuals (be they staff, volunteers or non-EU nationals) are disaggregated by gender.

Looking at the gender disaggregation of the main result indicators, women participants tend to represent a larger share of the staff trained who considered the training useful and who report that they are using the skills acquired three months after the training (over 60%).

There is a slight prevalence of women participants over men in relation to the indicators on the application for long-term-residence status and for the recognition of skills and qualifications.

In the area of returns, the results predominantly concern men (about 70%).

Resettlement shows an almost identical distribution of women and men, as does the indicator on participants who have improved their language skills.

Non-binary participants represent 5% of those admitted through humanitarian admission, with percentages below 1% for the other indicators.

Contribution to the digital transition

It is considered that activities under the following specific objectives of the programme may partially contribute to the goal of digital transition:

- strengthening the common European asylum system;
- strengthening and developing legal migration to the Member States;
- contributing to countering irregular migration.

However, since the AMIF regulation did not envisage that expenditure contributing to the goal of digital transition should be tracked, it is not possible to develop a tracking methodology to estimate the amount of such expenditure.

Contribution to sustainable development goals

SDG	Does the programme contribute to the goal?	Example (only for the most relevant SDGs)

SDG3 Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages	Yes	'The children's rights check digital – improved quality for sheltering refugee children' runs from 2023 to 2026, with a total budget of EUR 1 649 758 (of which, an EU contribution of EUR 1 215 208). The project aims to improve reception and accommodation conditions for refugee children and their families. To achieve this, accommodation operators and authorities need to be able to evaluate the accommodation situation. Children, parents and professionals can be interviewed digitally easily with the Child Rights Check. To this end, the previous child rights check tool will be further developed as a digital self-evaluation tool.
SDG4 Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all	Yes	The project 'SchlaUA – Das Beste von beidem' ran from 2022 to 2024, with a total budget of EUR 2 214 853 (of which, an EU contribution in the agreement of EUR 1 974 345). This project transitioned into the new project 'SchlaUA 2.0' running from 2024 to 2027, with a total budget of EUR 7 130 487 (of which, an EU contribution of EUR 6 417 437). The project aims to provide Ukrainian students with a Ukrainian degree in Munich (Atestat Pro Povnu Zagal'nu Serednyu Osvitu). This is done in cooperation with two partner schools in Ternopil, the education authority there and the Ministry of Science and Education of Ukraine.

SDG10 Reduce inequalities within and among countries

Yes

Regional Development and Protection Programme North of Africa Phase 7 is running from 2025 to 2028 with a budget (EU grant amount maximum) of EUR 37 500 000. The main objective of the proposed action is to support non-EU countries in North Africa and across the Atlantic and Mediterranean migration route to consolidate their migration and asylum systems and build their capacity to provide adequate reception, protection and durable solutions for vulnerable migrants, asylum seekers and refugees.

In line with the RDPP concept, the priorities identified in the 2023-2025 AMIF annual work programme for Union actions, the proposal builds on and expands the ongoing projects implemented in Algeria, Egypt, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco, Niger and Tunisia under the previous RDPP's with specific reference to the Protection Component.

Support for reforms

n/a

Contribution to strategic technologies (STEP)

n/a

INTEGRATED BORDER MANAGEMENT FUND

Concrete examples of achievements

10 337	11 915 581	805	229
pieces of equipment were purchased for border crossing points (BCPs) and border surveillance purposes during 2021-2024 (*).	visa applications were made using digital means during 2021-2024 (*).	means of land transport for border control tasks were purchased during 2021-2024 (*).	information-technology functionalities for visa processing purposes were developed, maintained or upgraded during 2021-2024 (*).
573	334	100%	EUR 255 million
pieces of customs control equipment were purchased with Customs Control Equipment Instrument (CCEI) funds and put into use in EU BCPs by 2024, amounting to 40% of the total equipment expected to be purchased from the first CCEI invitation to submit proposals.	pieces of customs control equipment were purchased with CCEI funds and put into use in EU customs laboratories by 2024, amounting to 65% of the total equipment expected to be purchased from the first CCEI invitation to submit proposals.	is the satisfaction rate for programme management support and guidance provided (collected via an annual online survey addressed to recipients of CCEI funds).	has already been transferred to beneficiaries of CCEI funds since 2022 split between projects from the two Invitations to Submit proposals launched for the CCEI so far.

(*) The data for Denmark is from June 2024, whereas the data for all other Member States is from December 2024.

Budget programming and implementation

Budget programming (million EUR)

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	Total
Financial programming	289.0	999.2	1 205.3	1 257.8	1 492.9	1 355.4	1 786.8	8 386.4
NextGenerationEU	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Decommitments made available again (*)	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Contributions from other countries and entities	0.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	176.8	0.0	0.0	177.3
Total	289.5	999.2	1 205.3	1 257.8	1 669.6	1 355.4	1 786.8	8 563.7

(*) Only Article 15(3) of the Financial Regulation.

Since 2021, the initial financial programming for the Border Management and Visa Instrument (BMVI) has been affected by further modifications. On the one hand, a total of EUR 5.7 million was transferred from the BMVI to the Internal Security Fund in accordance with Article 26 of the Common Provisions Regulation. The fund was reduced by EUR 500.1 million to finance various legislative initiatives requiring additional resources for home affairs agencies. On the other hand, the BMVI was reinforced by almost EUR 620.8 million from the Structural Funds in the context of the Greek partnership agreement, EUR 97.5 million was added in the context of various annual budget procedures, and it absorbed EUR 49.6 million of unused appropriations from home affairs agencies and was reinforced by a transfer of EUR 1.1 million from the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund in accordance with Article 26 of the Common Provisions Regulation. Moreover, the fund was reinforced between 2021 and 2024 by EUR 453 million stemming from fines and another EUR 181 million will reinforce the 2025 budget. Finally, as part of the mid-term revision of the multiannual financial framework, the BMVI was reinforced by EUR 1 billion over the years 2025-2027.

Regarding the CCEI, the budget for the whole multiannual financial framework period is EUR 1 006 407 000 and no modification to its budget has been incorporated by the end of 2024.

Cumulative budget implementation at the end of 2024 (million EUR)

	Implementation	Budget	Implementation rate
Commitments	3 803.1	8 563.7	44.4%
Payments	1 440.3		16.8%

Implementation and performance

Key performance indicators (64)

	Base line	Progress	Target	Results ⁽⁶⁵⁾	Assessment
Number of items of equipment registered in the technical equipment pool of the European Border and Coast Guard Agency	0	9%	2 257 in 2029	210 in 2024	On track
Number of items of equipment provided to the European Border and Coast Guard Agency	0	33%	1 119 in 2029	367 in 2024	On track

⁽⁶⁴⁾ Regarding the BMVI, the data for Denmark is from June 2024, whereas the data for all other Member States is from December 2024.

⁽⁶⁵⁾ Cumulative values for the 1.1.2021-31.12.2024 period.

Number of initiated/improved forms of cooperation of national authorities with the national coordination centre of the European Border Surveillance System	0	0%	115 in 2029	0 in 2024	Deserve s attention
Number of addressed recommendations from Schengen evaluations and from vulnerability assessments in the area of border management	0	0%	2 475 in 2029	9 in 2 024	N/A
Number of new/upgraded consulates outside the Schengen area	0	23%	842 in 2029	195 in 2024	On track
Number of addressed recommendations from Schengen evaluations in the area of the common visa policy	0	1%	2 210 in 2029	26 in 2024	N/A

Number of visa applications using digital means	0	19%	62.8 million	11.9 million in 2024	On track
Percentage of BCPs and customs laboratories with equipment that meets the common list of equipment that should be available per customs laboratory / type of BCP	0	2%	80% in 2027	Baseline 9.3%, 10.7% in 2024	Moderate progress

The BMVI is implemented under shared, direct and indirect management. The largest share of the resources (i.e. EUR 4.29 billion) is allocated to the Member State programmes under shared management. The remaining share (i.e. EUR 3.43 billion) is allocated to the Thematic Facility, which is programmed by the Commission. The programmed initiatives under the Thematic Facility will be implemented throughout the programming period with calls for proposals regularly published to support, for example, the purchase of technical equipment for the European Border and Coast Guard Agency, implementation of information technology systems and interoperability, actions to reinforce border control capabilities to deal with high migratory pressure at the EU external borders, and actions to contribute to the good functioning of the Schengen area.

Funding allocated to the Thematic Facility can be used for specific actions (shared management) implemented by the Member States nationally or transnationally, EU actions (direct/indirect management) and emergency assistance (shared, direct or indirect management). The Thematic Facility offers flexibility in the management of the BMVI in addressing priorities with a high level of EU added value or responding to urgent needs.

The voted budget for the BMVI amounted to EUR 1 114 million in 2024 in terms of commitment appropriations. Those appropriations covered the initial allocations to the Member State programmes (EUR 725 million), Thematic Facility amounts for specific actions, EU actions and emergency assistance (EUR 386.2 million) and expenditure for technical assistance (EUR 2.8 million).

The transmission of financial information from the Member State BMVI programmes confirms the focus on the strengthening of the control of the EU external borders; the total eligible cost of operations selected for support related to border surveillance exceeded EUR 1.9 billion (of

which the contribution from the fund to the selected operations is EUR 1.4 billion) by the end of 2024, at almost 80% of the total indicative allocation for this type of intervention.

For the Member State BMVI programmes, due to the delays in the adoption of the legal basis for 2021-2027 and the time needed for the programming procedure, shared management programmes were formally approved only in the last quarter of 2022.

By the end of 2024, with two full years of implementation of the Member State programmes, progress is becoming visible from both the financial and performance perspectives. Operations were selected by the managing authorities across both specific objectives, for a total cost that amounted to 62% of the Member State programme allocations. Furthermore, the EU expenditure rate across both specific objectives amounts to 15% of the Member State programme allocations.

Operations related to integrated border management are advancing at a faster pace than those related to visa policy (64% and 46% of EU resources committed, respectively). Progress is particularly noticeable for operations on border surveillance (maritime equipment and other measures), with almost EUR 780 million of EU resources committed. Marked progress is also visible for support to Lithuania for the Special Transit Scheme to ensure the transit of Russian citizens to and from the Russian Kaliningrad exclave (almost EUR 163 million of EU resources committed, 77% of the allocation). For operations related to visa policy, the most progress has been made for operations supporting the Visa Information System (almost EUR 65 million of EU resources committed, 63% of allocation).

As regards performance in shared management, under the first specific objective, on European integrated border management, the main achievements recorded during this programming period relate to units of equipment purchased for BCPs or border surveillance purposes, together with the development of information technology functionalities and large-scale information technology systems, and training for staff involved in the implementation of the integrated border management. The first outputs have also been registered in connection to the purchase or lease of heavy and light equipment, such as means for maritime and land transport for border control tasks. Progress was also made in the deployment of joint liaison officers to non-EU. The results, in terms of equipment purchased by Member States and registered in the technical equipment pool of the European Border and Coast Guard Agency or put at the agency's disposal, are beginning to materialise.

Under specific objective two, on the common visa policy, the main achievements recorded during this programming period relate to projects on the digitalisation of visa processing, on the deployment of staff to consulates in non-EU countries and on the development or upgrading of large-scale information technology systems. The results, in terms of the number of visa applications submitted using digital means and the number of new or renovated consulates outside the Schengen area, are showing progress.

As of 2024, most indicators are making progress and demonstrate no clear indication of issues with the implementation of the programmes. The number of initiated/improved forms of cooperation of national authorities with the national coordination centre of the European Border Surveillance System has made no progress so far, but this may be due to the time required to develop the European Border Surveillance System architecture and to provide guidance before the relevant operations take place.

Importantly, Member State implementation of the Pact on Migration and Asylum is expected to be accompanied by a change in the targets for operations benefiting from the additional allocations that will be made available for this purpose in 2025, 2026 and 2027. The

strengthening of the legal framework is also a factor that could favourably affect the performance – and more broadly the effectiveness – of the support provided under the BMVI. Most Member States have also qualified for their mid-term allocations for 2025-2027. The impact on the targets will become clear once Member States have incorporated the additional funding in amendments of their BMVI programmes.

As regards performance in direct management, in view of their specific nature and legislative objectives, the performance of transnational EU actions cannot be captured by the key performance indicators. Nonetheless, they complement the implementation of policy objectives at the national level through Member State programmes, by developing policy analysis and innovation, transnational mutual learning and partnerships, and by testing new initiatives and actions across the EU. With these actions, the Commission supports valuable projects on innovations in border management. Their results are expected to be communicated to the Commission in 2025.

Customs Control Equipment Instrument (CCEI)

For the Customs Control Equipment Instrument CCEI, there were no commitments or payments granted in 2021, therefore the full budgetary envelope for the first programming period (EUR 273 514 000) was committed in 2022.

In terms of payments made, EUR 136 756 632 was transferred to Member States by the end of 2022 through pre-financed grants. In total, 42 grant agreements were signed by the end of 2022, triggering the allocation of funds to co-finance the purchasing, upgrading and maintenance of more than 1 300 pieces of customs control equipment at over 200 BCPs and more than 500 pieces of equipment in over 30 customs laboratories. In 2023, EUR 140 872 000 was committed for the 2024 grants, and EUR 78 817 paid to Member States as a result of the completion of their projects signed under the first work programme.

For the CCEI, the objectives of the second programming period focus on safety and security, and in particular the fight against drugs in line with the Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council on the EU roadmap to fight drug trafficking and organised crime of 18 October 2023 ([EUR-Lex - 52023DC0641 - EN - EUR-Lex](#)), which reconfirmed the key role of advanced customs control equipment to support customs authorities in the fight against drugs and drug precursors. Among the actions announced, the roadmap aims to mobilise EU customs in ports and customs laboratories against drug trafficking, and strengthen related risk management and controls. The invitation to submit proposals addressed to Member States at the end of 2023, as part of the second work programme, reflected this new Commission priority.

For the budgetary envelope for the second (2023-2024) programming period (EUR 283 963 000), as for the first programming period, no payments from this budget were executed in 2023. In all, 43 new grant agreements were signed during 2024, corresponding to EUR 237 million in EU contributions for financing customs control equipment. In this way, more than EUR 200 million was allocated to equipment supporting the fight against drugs, aiming to reinforce the control capacity of key EU ports in a targeted manner.

In addition, EUR 392 013.84 was paid in 2024 to Member States as a result of the completion of their projects signed under the first work programme.

The instrument's funding committed until now, after the first two calls of 2021 and 2023, amounts to EUR 558 million for a total of 86 grants awarded to customs administrations of all

27 Member States. It aims to improve the overall performance of the European Union Customs Union by focusing on five priorities in order to (i) ensure EU safety and security; (ii) strengthen the capacity of customs to mitigate and adapt to international crises; (iii) address the challenges in dealing with the exponential growth in e-commerce; (iv) contribute towards the European Green Deal; and (v) continue to promote innovation in customs control equipment, including interoperability of the equipment.

With regard to the main performance indicator of the instrument – the availability of customs controls equipment and its adherence to the common list of equipment⁽⁶⁶⁾ that should be available for each type of BCP / customs laboratory – there is currently an overall adherence level of 10.67%⁶⁷ for all BCPs, with a further breakdown for BCPs as follows: air: 15% (+ 15%); land: 7% (+ 0%); mobile: 33% (– 8%); post: 14% (+ 0%); rail: 10% (+ 11%); sea: 16% (+ 60%). For customs laboratories, the adherence level was 29.55%. The low result of 10.67% for BCPs compared to the target of 60% is due to various factors, as shown below.

Results appearing later than expected because of slow implementation of projects. The target was set ambitiously and too early for 2024. Overcoming initial challenges in the implementation of projects and a learning curve will improve results in later years.

Data reported by beneficiaries does not seem fully accurate and complete due to high administrative burden. Efforts will be continued to have complete information reported by beneficiaries on available equipment that will increase the value of the indicator.

The indicator is calculated by comparing available equipment with a common list of equipment to be (ideally) available at the various BCP categories. Experience shows that the definition of the common list of equipment should be further developed by taking into account other characteristics such as size/volume of the BCP. The review of this methodology and the targets is part of the ongoing mid-term evaluation of the instrument and its follow up actions.

Nevertheless, the results show that there are still significant equipment needs across all borders, in which the CCEI continues to play an essential role.

(66) The common list of equipment that should be available per BCP / customs laboratory is established by crosschecking:

- risk and threats identified by Member States at the time of their proposals for each of their BCPs / customs laboratories;
- which equipment items should be available at the BCP / customs laboratory to address the identified risks and threats, which in turn define the ideal common list of equipment that should be available for that BCP / customs laboratory.

To calculate the degree of adherence to the ideal common list of equipment, the customs control equipment available at each BCP / customs laboratory is checked against the ideal common list of equipment that should be available at that BCP / customs laboratory.

(67) The information is based on data provided by Member States, the data comprehensiveness rating for which is assessed at 73.6% for BCPs compared to 67.1% in 2023. The rating takes into account data on available equipment, BCP categorisation, traffic modalities and threats/risks identified by member States.

Contribution to horizontal priorities

Contribution to green budgeting priorities (EUR million):

	Implementation				Estimates			Total	% of the total envelope
	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027		
Climate mainstreaming	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.2	0.0%

In line with the EU's commitment to work towards achieving the United Nations sustainable development goals (SDGs), the BMVI regulation ([Regulation - 2021/1148 - EN - EUR-Lex](#)) and CCEI ([Customs Control Equipment Instrument \(CCEI\) | EU Funding & Tenders Portal](#)) commit, without having a fund-specific target, to contributing to the EU's goal of spending at least 30% of its total budget on supporting climate objectives and its ambition to spend 7.5% of the annual EU budget on biodiversity in 2024 and 10% in both 2026 and 2027, while considering the existing overlaps between climate and biodiversity goals.

This could happen, for example, by focusing on green procurement regarding (small-scale) assets and infrastructure / information technology systems, subject to specific provisions ensuring that products/services are chosen that reduce climate impacts by applying the best available technologies, using renewable energy in buildings, enhancing insulation, etc. For the time being there are no strict conditions set for national programming or project selection, but Member States are encouraged to prioritise environmentally friendly actions.

Contribution to gender equality (million EUR) (*)

Gender score	2021	2022	2023	2024	Total
2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
0*	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
0	289.0	999.2	1 205.3	1 257.8	3 751.4
Total:	289.0	999.2	1 205.3	1 257.8	3 751.4

(*) Based on the applied gender contribution methodology, the following scores are attributed at the most granular level of intervention possible:

2: interventions the principal objective of which is to improve gender equality;

1: interventions that have gender equality as an important and deliberate objective but not as the main reason for the intervention;

0: non-targeted interventions (interventions that are expected to have no significant bearing on gender equality);

0*: score to be assigned to interventions with a likely but not yet clear positive impact on gender equality.

The Integrated Border Management Fund and the BMVI are committed to the horizontal approach of the EU budget, in which equality between women and men, rights and equal opportunities for all and the mainstreaming of these objectives should be considered and promoted throughout the preparation, implementation and monitoring of relevant programmes.

In the broader context, to receive payments from the Commission, the Member State programmes for funds managed by DG Migration and Home Affairs will have to comply with the horizontal enabling conditions, one of which concerns the effective application and implementation of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, including the equality of women and men. The horizontal enabling conditions must be fulfilled throughout the entire programming period, and Member States must report on their application to the programme monitoring committee and the Commission.

As regards the types of action supported by the BMVI, gender-specific issues are not specifically tackled. The interventions supported from the fund do not significantly support gender equality and managing authorities have not submitted gender disaggregated data. Therefore, no contribution to gender equality is reported (score 0).

Gender disaggregated information

Reporting on gender disaggregated data is not mandatory under the BMVI. Managing authorities can decide, if they wish, to transmit gender-disaggregated data for indicators focusing on individuals. As of 2024, no managing authorities had opted to transmit gender-disaggregated data.

Due to the nature of the programme, the CCEI was excluded from reporting on gender-disaggregated data.

Contribution to the digital transition (EUR million):

	2021 implementatio n	2022 implementatio n	2023 implementatio n	2024 implementati on	Total	% of the 2021- 2024 envelop e
Digital contribution	54.4	305.0	377.0	394.6	1 960. 5	12.7%

It is considered that activities under the following specific objectives of the Integrated Border Management Fund and the BMVI may partially contribute to the goal of digital transition by:

supporting effective European integrated border management at the external borders;

supporting the common visa policy.

The amounts contribute to activities and interventions relating to the digitalisation of administration (government information and communications technology solutions, e-services, etc.) covering dimensions of digitalisation of public services (e.g. the Visa Information System)

and skills (information technology training) by supporting investments in the large-scale information technology systems, such as the Entry/Exit System, the European Travel Information and Authorisation System, the Schengen Information System, the Visa Information System), interoperability between systems, the Eurodac database, automated border surveillance such as automated border control gates, and identification systems at borders.

The CCEI does not have activities that contribute to the goals of the digital transition.

Contribution to sustainable development goals

SDG	Does the programme contribute to the goal?	Example (only for the most relevant SDGs)
SDG10: Reduce inequalities within and among countries	yes	CALO 2 is running from 2024 until 2025 with a total budget (EU grant amount) of EUR 1 424 828. The main goal of the activities is to tackle illegal migration, overcome and hinder the actions of migrant smuggling organisations. The activity “Common Airport Liaison Officers” (CALO) intends to bolster airline controls on boarding, especially for connections with Schengen countries. The CALO are meant to be deployed from 3 months (renewable) to a maximum period of 24 months, and act as short-term operational advisers in the regions targeted through risk analysis and would work for more all Member States. The main ambition is to enhance on-site operational cooperation, facilitate information exchange and provide greater reactivity and flexibility in response to arising new irregular migration flows at air borders.

Support for reforms

NA

Contribution to strategic technologies

NA

INTERNAL SECURITY FUND

Concrete examples of achievements

95	30	4 130	2 590
joint investigation teams were in action between 2021 and 2024.	projects were implemented in the area of crime prevention between 2021 and 2024.	staff were involved in cross-border operations between 2021 and 2024.	events (expert meetings, workshops, study visits, common exercises, exchange programmes and study visits) were organised between 2021 and 2024.
2 620			
items of equipment were purchased in the areas of preventing and combating crime, terrorism and radicalisation and managing security-related incidents, risks and crises between 2021 and 2024.			

Budget programming and implementation

Budget programming (million EUR):

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	Total
Financial programming	70.0	254.1	309.9	322.8	338.2	329.0	284.5	1 908.6
NextGenerationEU	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Decommitments made available again (*)	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Contributions from other countries and entities	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Total	70.0	254.1	309.9	322.8	338.2	329.0	284.5	1 908.6

(*) Only Article 15(3) of the Financial Regulation.

Since 2021, the initial financial programming for the Internal Security Fund (ISF) has been affected by further modifications. On the one hand, the ISF was reinforced from the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund with EUR 8.9 million through Article 26 of the Common Provisions Regulation. It was also reinforced with EUR 7 million between 2021 and 2024 in the context of various annual budget procedures, and absorbed EUR 4.5 million of unused appropriations from home affairs agencies. On the other hand, the ISF was reduced by EUR 48.1 million to finance legislative initiatives requiring additional resources for home affairs agencies.

Cumulative budget implementation at the end of 2024 (million EUR):

	Implementation	Budget	Implementation rate
Commitments	956.4	1 908.6	50.1%
Payments	435.0		22.8%

Implementation and performance

Key performance indicators

	Baseline	Progress	Target	Results	Assessment
Number of information and communication technology systems made interoperable in the Member States / with security relevant EU and decentralised information systems / with international databases	0	4%	764 in 2029	31 in 2024 compared to the target	On track
Number of administrative units that have set up new or adapted existing information exchange mechanisms/procedures/tools/guidance for the exchange of information with other Member States / EU agencies / international organisations / non-EU countries	0	4%	151 in 2029	6 in 2024 compared to the target	On track
Estimated value of assets frozen in the context of cross-border operations	0	4%	EUR 229 million in 2029	8.9 million compared to the target	On track

Quantity of illicit drugs seized in the context of cross-border operations by type of product	0	13%	164 830 in 2029	21 882 in 2024 compared to the target	On track
Quantity of weapons seized in the context of cross-border operations by type of weapon	0	4%	2 520 in 2029	92 in 2024 compared to the target	On track
Number of initiatives developed/expanded to prevent radicalisation	0	11%	104 in 2029	11 in 2024 compared to the target	On track
Number of critical infrastructures / public spaces with new/adapted facilities protecting against security-related risks	0	1%	939 in 2029	10 in 2024 compared to the target	Moderate progress

The programme is implemented under shared, direct and indirect management. The largest share of the resources (71.7%) is allocated to the Member States' programmes under shared management. The remaining share (28.3%) is allocated to the Thematic Facility, a financial instrument managed by the Commission. The initiatives programmed under the Thematic Facility will be implemented throughout the programming period, with calls for proposals being published regularly to support, for example, exchanges of information; operational law enforcement cooperation; and the protection of public spaces, including places of worship, and critical infrastructures. Further calls will be published on fighting organised crime, including cybercrime, drug trafficking, trafficking in human beings, migrant smuggling, etc. The Thematic Facility also funds specific measures that allocate additional support to Member States to, for example, take up the results of EU security research, pilot the use of artificial intelligence technologies and enforce the implementation of the Council Recommendation on operational law enforcement cooperation.

The voted budget for the ISF amounted to EUR 322.8 million in 2024. It was reinforced by EUR 1 million through internal transfers to strengthen the Thematic Facility. The 2024 appropriations covered the initial allocations to Member States' programmes (EUR 226.8 million) and to the Thematic Facility (EUR 93.6 million), along with expenditure for technical assistance (EUR 2.45 million).

The deterioration of the geopolitical context in 2024 compounded internal security threats. The European Council conclusions of 27 June 2024 reiterated that:

to strengthen security within the Union, the EU will continue to fight crime offline and online and prevent and tackle corruption, using all the law enforcement and judicial cooperation tools, and will be resolute against organised crime and disrupt the flow of illicit profits from cross-border criminal activity. The EU will also fight attempts to sow division, radicalisation, terrorism and violent extremism.

In line with the political priorities outlined above, in 2024 the ISF's calls focused on activities considered to relate to increasingly challenging areas. For instance, nine projects were selected under specific measures combating cybercrime and developing innovative technologies to fight serious and organised crime, for a total of EUR 4.6 million.

By the end of 2024, progress could be seen from both the financial and the performance perspective. Operations were selected by the managing authorities across all three specific objectives, for a total cost that amounted to 60% of the Member State programmes' allocations (about EUR 666 million). Furthermore, the EU expenditure rate across all specific objectives amounted to 13% of the Member States programmes' allocations.

Operations on the exchange of information (specific objective 1) and strengthening Member States' capabilities in fighting organised crime and terrorism (specific objective 3) are advancing at a faster pace (64% and 63% of EU resources committed, respectively) than operations on cross-border cooperation (specific objective 2) (44% of EU resources committed). Operations under specific objectives 1 and 3 also have a larger total allocation (about EUR 438 million and about EUR 493 million of EU resources, respectively), compared to operations under specific objective 2 (almost EUR 170 million of EU resources).

Compared with the indicative allocations in the programmes, progress is particularly noticeable for operations under specific objectives 1 and 3 relating to information and communication technology systems, interoperability and data quality (excluding equipment) (75% of EU resources committed – about EUR 316 million). Under specific objective 2, on cross-border cooperation, progress is noticeable for operations relating to the exchange of best practices and joint operations (70% and 58% of EU resources committed, respectively, for about EUR 16 million and EUR 17 million).

As regards performance in shared management, the achievements recorded during the programming period relate to events such as workshops, seminars and study visits across the three specific objectives.

Under specific objective 1, on the exchange of information, the first achievements relate to Member States' information and communications technology systems being made interoperable with security-relevant EU and decentralised information systems or international databases.

Under specific objective 2, on cross-border cooperation, the achievements are being recorded on cross-border operations carried out, including joint investigation teams and the operational actions of the European multidisciplinary platform against criminal threats, resulting in the first recording of assets being frozen in the context of cross-border operations. The first outputs have also been registered in connection to the purchase or lease of both equipment and means of transport for cross-border operations. The first results recorded concern the number of staff involved in cross-border operations and the development and adaptation of mechanisms, procedures, tools or guidance for cooperation. The cross-border operations conducted have also resulted in the seizure of illicit drugs, particularly cannabis and synthetic drugs.

Under specific objective 3, on strengthening Member States' capabilities in fighting organised crime and terrorism, achievements were recorded in relation to training organised for staff; the launch of projects to prevent crime and assist its victims; and the development of initiatives to prevent radicalisation. The first outputs have also been registered in connection to the purchase or lease of equipment and means of transport and to security-related infrastructure or facilities constructed or improved.

As of 2024, most indicators were making progress and demonstrated no clear indication of issues with the implementation of the programmes. While progress is relatively slow across the ISF indicators, the values achieved are exponentially increasing. The number of critical infrastructures / public spaces with new or adapted facilities to protect against security risks is demonstrating less progress than other indicators, though it is making moderate progress. Conversely, the quantity of illicit drugs seized in the context of cross-border operations has made the most progress (13% of target achieved).

As regards performance in direct management, in view of their specific nature and legislative objectives, the performance of transnational EU measures cannot be fully captured by the key performance indicators focused on capacity building and intensifying cross-border cooperation. However, they effectively complement the implementation of the policy objectives at the national level through Member States' programmes by developing policy analyses and innovations, transnational mutual learning and partnerships, and the testing of new initiatives and measures across the EU.

Contribution to horizontal priorities

Contribution to green budgeting priorities

In line with the EU's commitment to work towards achieving the United Nations sustainable development goals, the programme regulation commits (with no specific programme target) to contributing to the EU's goal of spending at least 30% of the total EU budget on supporting climate objectives and its ambition to spend 7.5% of the annual EU budget on biodiversity in 2024 and 10% in both 2026 and 2027, while considering the existing overlaps between climate and biodiversity goals.

This could happen, for example, by focusing on green procurement regarding (small-scale) assets, infrastructure / information technology systems – subject to specific provisions ensuring the choice of products/services that reduce the climate impact by applying the best available technologies, the use of renewable energy in buildings, improved insulation, etc. For the time being, no strict conditions have been set for national programming or project selection, but Member States are encouraged to prioritise environmentally friendly actions.

Contribution to gender equality (million EUR) (*)

Gender score	2021	2022	2023	2024	Total
2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
0*	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
0	70.0	254.1	309.9	322.8	956.8
Total:	70.0	254.1	309.9	322.8	956.8

(*) Based on the applied gender contribution methodology, the following scores are attributed at the most granular level of intervention possible:

2: interventions the principal objective of which is to improve gender equality;

1: interventions that have gender equality as an important and deliberate objective but not as the main reason for the intervention;

0: non-targeted interventions (interventions that are expected to have no significant bearing on gender equality);

0*: score to be assigned to interventions with a likely but not yet clear positive impact on gender equality.

The programme is committed to the horizontal approach of the EU budget, in which equality between women and men, rights and equal opportunities for all and the mainstreaming of these objectives should be considered and promoted throughout the preparation, implementation and monitoring of relevant programmes.

In the broader context, to receive payments from the Commission, the Member States' programmes for DG Migration and Home Affairs funds must comply with several horizontal enabling conditions, one of which concerns the effective application and implementation of the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights, including the equality of men and women. The horizontal enabling conditions must be fulfilled throughout the entire programming period, and Member States must report on their application to the programme monitoring committee and the Commission.

As regards the types of action supported by the programme, gender-specific issues are not specifically tackled. The interventions supported by the ISF do not significantly support gender equality, and managing authorities have not submitted gender-disaggregated data. Therefore, no contribution to gender equality is reported (score 0).

Gender-disaggregated information

Reporting on gender-disaggregated data is not mandatory under the ISF. Managing authorities can decide, if they wish, to transmit gender-disaggregated data for indicators focusing on individuals. As of 2024, no managing authorities had transmitted gender-disaggregated data.

Contribution to the digital transition (EUR million):

	2021 implementation	2022 implementation	2023 implementation	2024 implementation	Total	% of the 2021- 2024 envelope
Digital contribution	25.9	93.9	114.5	119.3	1 131.0	30.1%

It is considered that activities under all specific objectives of the programme may partially contribute to the goal of digital transition by:

improving and facilitating the exchange of information between and within competent authorities and relevant EU bodies, offices and agencies and, where relevant, with non-EU countries and international organisations;

improving and intensifying cross-border cooperation, including joint operations, between competent authorities in relation to terrorism and serious and organised crime with a cross-border dimension;

supporting the strengthening of Member States' capabilities in relation to preventing and combating crime, terrorism and radicalisation, and managing security-related incidents, risks and crises.

The amounts contribute to activities and interventions relating to the digitalisation of administration by improving and facilitating the **exchange of information** between and within law enforcement authorities and other bodies (e.g. passenger name record – advanced passenger information, Schengen information system II, secure information exchange network application, Prüm II, etc.); improving and intensifying **cross-border operational law enforcement cooperation**; and supporting the strengthening of Member States' **capabilities in relation to preventing and combating serious and organised crime, cybercrime, terrorism and radicalisation**.

Contribution to sustainable development goals

SDG	Does the programme contribute to the goal?	Example (only for the most relevant SDGs)
SDG16: Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels	Yes	ALUNA – Child-protection based strategies to fight against sexual abuse and exploitation crimes’ is running from 2023 till 2025 with a budget (EU grant amount) of EUR 3 599 886 . Child sexual abuse and exploitation are among the worst forms of violence against children and constitute serious crimes that know no borders. The fight against these awful crimes is a global fight that involves governments, law enforcement agencies, civil society, communities, and, of course, companies. ALUNA project proposes an innovative, ambitious, interdisciplinary, international child-protection-centred approach to fight against child sexual abuse. ALUNA focuses on the three main components (Prevention, Investigation, and Victim Assistance) to establish a coordinated contribution with law enforcement authorities to develop an appropriate approach addressing specific needs and providing protection to childhood.

Support for reforms

n/a

Contribution to strategic technologies (STEP)

n/a

NUCLEAR DECOMMISSIONING

(LITHUANIA)

NUCLEAR DECOMMISSIONING ASSISTANCE PROGRAMME OF THE IGNALINA NUCLEAR POWER PLANT IN LITHUANIA

Concrete examples of achievements

100%	41%	100%	100%
of all fuel assemblies had been removed from the pools and were safely stored in casks in the interim spent fuel storage facility by the end of 2022.	of 180 000 tonnes of material had been dismantled from reactor buildings, controlled areas and clean areas by June 2024.	of optioneering studies for reactor core dismantling had been delivered by July 2024. The subsequent stages are on track.	of the decommissioning licence was issued for unit 1 and unit 2 in October 2024.
1 219			
out of 2 052 reactor channels have been dismantled at unit 1.			

Budget programming and implementation

Budget programming (million EUR)

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	Total
Financial programming	72.5	98.9	68.8	67.1	74.7	74.6	82.4	539.0
NextGenerationEU	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Decommitments made available again (*)	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Contributions from other countries and entities	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Total	72.5	98.9	68.8	67.1	74.7	74.6	82.4	539.0

(*) Only Article 15(3) of the Financial Regulation.

Cumulative budget implementation at the end of 2024 (million EUR)

	Implementation	Budget	Implementation rate
Commitments	307.3	539.0	57.0%
Payments	59.0		10.9%

Implementation and performance

Key performance indicators

	Baseline	Progress	Target	Results	Assessment
Very low radioactivity waste disposed of	0	39%	29 020 in 2030	11 361 in 2024 compared to a target of 29 020	On track
Low and intermediate radioactivity waste disposed of	0	22%	9 202 in 2030	2 065 in 2024 compared to a target of 9 202	On track
Metal dismantled	0	42%	4 341 in 2028	1 807 in 2024 compared to a target of 4 341	On track

In the 2020-2027 period, the decommissioning operator will remove all peripheral components from the reactor shafts. The transfer in 2022 of the last fuel assemblies from the reactor buildings into storage casks and then to the interim spent fuel storage facility opened the way to the dismantling of the reactor core systems, starting with zones R1 and R2 (upper and bottom part, ongoing) and proceeding with zone R3 (central part, not yet started). Dismantling is now proceeding at a good pace, with an average of 4 000 tonnes of metallic waste coming from the dismantling of structures, systems and components per year. About 75 000 out of 180 000 tonnes (estimated total amount of structure, systems and components) had been dismantled by the end of 2024. 67% of the total quantity of structures, systems and components

have already been dismantled at Unit 1 and 21% at Unit 2, for which VATESI (Lithuania’s State Nuclear Power Safety Inspectorate) issued the decommissioning licence in October 2024.

For the dismantling of the reactor shafts (‘R3D’ project), an optioneering study was delivered in July 2024 and the development of the conceptual design is currently ongoing.

Concerning radioactive waste management, the landfill repository was completed in 2021 and went into operation in 2022. Currently about 11 400 out of 15 000 cubic metres of class A waste have been disposed of. The low-level and intermediate-level waste produced so far is temporarily in storage buildings on site, waiting for the availability of the near-surface repository. The contract for the construction of the repository was signed in April 2024 and the repository is expected to begin operating in 2029.

In August 2024, the contract for the dismantling of steam drums separators entered into force.

The results of the R3D optioneering studies highlighted the need to revise the overall decommissioning baseline. The exercise is ongoing and will probably result in a shift of the decommissioning end date.

Contribution to horizontal priorities

Contribution to green budgeting priorities

This programme does not provide a specific contribution to the green budgeting priorities.

Contribution to gender equality (million EUR) (*)

Gender score	2021	2022	2023	2024	Total
2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
0*	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
0	72.5	98.9	68.8	67.1	307.3
Total:	72.5	98.9	68.8	67.1	307.3

(*) Based on the applied gender contribution methodology, the following scores are attributed at the most granular level of intervention possible:

- 2: interventions the principal objective of which is to improve gender equality;
- 1: interventions that have gender equality as an important and deliberate objective but not as the main reason for the intervention;
- 0: non-targeted interventions (interventions that are expected to have no significant bearing on gender equality);
- 0*: score to be assigned to interventions with a likely but not yet clear positive impact on gender equality.

The gender equality perspective was considered in developing Council Regulation (Euratom) 2021/101⁽⁶⁸⁾. Nonetheless, nuclear decommissioning is the primary and sole objective of the programme, which, as such, has no significant impact on gender equality and does not collect gender-disaggregated data.

Contribution to the digital transition

There is no specific contribution to digital transition provided by this programme.

Contribution to sustainable development goals

SDG	Does the programme contribute to the goal?	Example (only for the most relevant SDGs)
SDG12: Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns	yes	The programme aims at optimising waste management, following a waste hierarchy approach whereby disposal is the last resort, after having maximised opportunities for re-use and recycling. This involves increasing the circularity of materials in the economy, reducing the amount of waste ending up in landfills. Such an approach not only reduces environmental pressure but also provides economic and social benefits. Special efforts are put to remove any residual radioactive contamination from dismantled and removed materials (concrete, steel, metals in general), thorough verification of compliance with clearance levels in line with Euratom Basic Safety.

Support to reforms

There is no specific contribution to reforms provided by this programme

Contribution to strategic technologies (STEP)

There is no specific contribution to strategic technologies provided by this programme

⁽⁶⁸⁾ Council Regulation (EU) 2021/101 of 25 January 2021 establishing the nuclear decommissioning assistance programme of the Ignalina nuclear power plant in Lithuania and repealing Regulation (EU) No 1369/2013 (OJ L 34, 1.2.2021, p. 18, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2021/101/oj>).

NUCLEAR DECOMMISSIONING

FINANCIAL PROGRAMME FOR THE DECOMMISSIONING OF NUCLEAR FACILITIES AND THE MANAGEMENT OF RADIOACTIVE WASTE (BULGARIA, SLOVAKIA AND THE JOINT RESEARCH CENTRE)

Concrete examples of achievements

24	110	2	95%
main coolant pumps were dismantled at Kozloduy units 1–4 by the end of 2024.	is the average factor of radioactive waste volume reduction achieved by the plasma melting facility during the campaigns of 2023–2024.	reactors and all associated circuits were completely dismantled at the Bohunice (Czechia) V1 nuclear power plant.	of metals from the dismantled Bohunice plant were decontaminated, verified and recycled as non-radioactive material between 2019 and 2023.
14	782	50%	43
steam generators were dismantled from the Kozloduy (Bulgaria) units 1–4 by the end of 2024.	tonnes of radioactive waste and materials were processed at the Joint Research Centre's (JRC) Ispra site between 2021 and 2024.	of all radioactive waste was managed and removed at the JRC Geel site between 2021 and 2023.	decommissioning knowledge products were produced between 2021 and 2024.

Budget programming and implementation

Budget programming (million EUR)

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	Total
Financial programming	69.2	43.9	56.5	60.5	70.5	77.7	89.8	468.1
NextGenerationEU	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Decommitments made available again (*)	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

Contributions from other countries and entities	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Total	69.2	43.9	56.5	60.5	70.5	77.7	89.8	468.1

(*) Only Article 15(3) of the Financial Regulation.

Cumulative budget implementation at the end of 2024 (million EUR)

	Implementation	Budget	Implementation rate
Commitments	226.9	468.1	48.5%
Payments	95.5		20.4%

Implementation and performance

Key performance indicators

	Baseline	Progress	Target	Results	Assessment
Kozloduy – radioactive waste stored or disposed of	0	14%	10 240 in 2030	1 439 in 2024 compared to a target of 10 240	Deserves attention
Kozloduy – metal dismantled	0	43%	10 868 in 2030	4 684 in 2024 compared to a target of 10 868	On track
Bohunice – low-level radioactive waste disposed of	0	54%	1 943 in 2027	1 041 in 2024 compared to a target of 1 943	On track

Bohunice – metal dismantled from reactor buildings and components	0	21%	31 792 in 2027	6 753 in 2024 compared to a target of 31 792	Moderate progress
JRC Ispra – radioactive waste processed	0	17%	3 725 in 2027	641 in 2023 compared to a target of 3 725	On track
JRC Geel – fraction of materials and radioactive waste removed	0	30%	100% in 2027	30% in 2023 compared to a target of 100%	On track
JRC Karlsruhe – materials/waste managed and removed	0	47%	80% in 2027	38% compared to a target of 80%	On track
JRC Petten – materials and radioactive waste removed	0	2%	100% in 2027	2% in 2023 compared to a target of 100%	On track
Number of knowledge products disseminated	0	19%	57 in 2027	11 in 2023 compared to a target of 57	On track

Kozloduy programme:

- Despite some delays at the start of its implementation, the Kozloduy programme is making good progress with dismantling and radioactive waste management. Improvements in sorting and processing materials allowed the planned fraction of free-released materials to be exceeded. This partly explains the significantly lower amount of radioactive waste stored or disposed of.
- Dismantling activities inside the reactor buildings have started and are progressing according to the detailed decommissioning plan. The activity had started at a slower pace than planned in the 2014-2020 period but is now recovering steadily. It still remains too slow, however, and the timely achievement of the objectives for 2021-2027 are still at risk.
- The programme has also made progress in dismantling the auxiliary buildings. The plasma melting facility has now been in industrial operation for several years and the construction

works for the national disposal facility are finalised, and the start of hot commissioning is due in early 2025.

- The similar designs of the Kozloduy and Bohunice reactors provide an opportunity to share experiences, methods and tools, thus reducing risks and costs. In practice, it has allowed the decontamination of the primary circuits of Kozloduy nuclear power plant units 1–4 to be completed below budget and faster than planned, following on from experience at the Bohunice V1 nuclear power plant, by reusing the decontamination equipment transported from the Bohunice site. Unfortunately, it has not been possible to also transfer the technology for the fragmentation of the steam generators.

- In accordance with the performance baseline, the completion date for the Kozloduy programme remains 2030. However, the operator is currently preparing a proposal for an update of the programme baseline, likely extending the date of completion to the end of 2032.

Bohunice programme.

- The dismantling of the large components in the Bohunice V1 reactor building has been completed.

- Significant unforeseen additional radioactive contamination of the concrete of the reactor shafts and the spent fuel pools resulted in higher amounts of very-low-level radioactive waste, which is partially being disposed of in the Mochovce (Slovakia) disposal facility and partially on site as material for backfilling.

- Concerning the other indicators for Bohunice, namely the low-level radioactive waste disposed of, and the metal dismantled from the reactor building, the results were on track in relation to the planned values for 2024.

- Due to the late signing of the contract for the remaining demolition work, the programme end date had to be postponed to 2029. The contract was signed at the end of 2024, clearing the programme's last main issue.

As for the JRC's decommissioning and waste management programme in 2024, progress in Ispra on the three main work streams (nuclear material and waste management, and decommissioning) included:

the completion of the retrieval facility for the recovery of buried bituminised drums waste stream and the launch of the call for tender for the construction of the grouting station;

the completion of the design phase and the launch of the licensing phase for the alienation of fresh nuclear material;

the approval of the licensing documentation for the treatment of radioactive metals by metal melting;

the completion of preparatory works for the decommissioning of the 'LCSR' hot cell laboratory, with the actual dismantling activities planned to start at the beginning of 2025; and

the signature of a framework contract for the provision of services in nuclear decommissioning knowledge management.

In Karlsruhe, glove boxes have been dismantled, and a mid-term planning of the decommissioning of the facilities to be phased out after transfer to the new experimental Wing M has begun.

In Petten, the implementation of concrete projects within the framework contract with the Dutch operator (Nuclear Research and Consultancy Group) to remove and dispose of the historical waste still present on site, continued with establishing four specific contracts covering the evacuation of about 30% of the remaining historical liabilities. One contract was fully completed by the end of 2024 (transfer to the COVRA facility in the Netherlands).

In Geel, some natural, depleted and low enriched uranium was returned to the United States. Four total shipments were executed, reducing the fissile materials inventory of the Geel site.

Contribution to horizontal priorities

Contribution to green budgeting priorities (EUR million):

	Implementation				Estimates			Total	% of the total envelope
	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027		
Climate mainstreaming	0.3	0.2	0.7	3.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	4.5	1.0%

This programme provides no specific contribution to the green budgeting priorities.

Contribution to gender equality (million EUR) (*)

Gender score	2021	2022	2023	2024	Total
2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
0*	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
0	69.2	43.9	56.5	60.5	230.2
Total:	69.2	43.9	56.5	60.5	230.2

(*) Based on the applied gender contribution methodology, the following scores are attributed at the most granular level of intervention possible:

2: interventions the principal objective of which is to improve gender equality;

1: interventions that have gender equality as an important and deliberate objective but not as the main reason for the intervention;

0: non-targeted interventions (interventions that are expected to have no significant bearing on gender equality);

0*: score to be assigned to interventions with a likely but not yet clear positive impact on gender equality.

The gender equality perspective was considered in developing Council Regulation (Euratom) 2021/100⁽⁶⁹⁾. Nonetheless, nuclear decommissioning is the sole objective of the programme, which, as such, has no significant impact on gender equality

Contribution to the digital transition

This programme provides no specific contribution to the digital transition.

Contribution to sustainable development goals

SDG	Does the programme contribute to the goal?	Example (only for the most relevant SDGs)
SDG7: Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all	x	One of the objectives of the programme is to demonstrate the feasibility of decommissioning nuclear power reactors and other nuclear facilities. As such, the programme has a direct impact on the sustainability of the nuclear production of energy in the EU (25%) and on the public acceptability of nuclear energy within Europe, hence contributing integrally to the SDG on Affordable and clean energy
SDG9: Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation	x	Part of the programme is oriented to developing radioactive waste treatment and management routes in the beneficiary MS, including the construction or the improvement of radioactive waste disposal facilities. Examples that illustrate the contribution of the programme to SD9 (Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure) include the installation of a Plasma Melting Facility for volume reduction of the radioactive waste, construction of disposal facilities for very low level, low level and intermediate level radioactive waste, etc. ...

Support for reforms

This programme provides no specific contribution to reforms in MS.

Contribution to strategic technologies (STEP)

This programme is not part of the 11 Union funded programmes covered by STEP.

⁽⁶⁹⁾ Council Regulation (Euratom) 2021/100 of 25 January 2021 establishing a dedicated financial programme for the decommissioning of nuclear facilities and the management of radioactive waste, and repealing Regulation (Euratom) No 1368/2013 (OJ L 34, 1.2.2021, p. 3, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2021/100/oj>).

EUROPEAN DEFENCE FUND

Concrete examples of achievements

> EUR 3.1 billion	26	44%	EUR 590 million
was allocated to the European Defence Fund (EDF) in 2021-2023 to support collaborative defence research and development projects for technologies and products, answering Member State needs in line with commonly agreed priorities.	Member States and Norway are the places of establishment of the 1 366 unique legal entities participating in the awarded EDF projects during the 2021-2023 period.	is the share of self-declared small and medium-sized enterprises among the unique legal entities participating in the 162 EDF-funded projects in 2021, 2022 and 2023.	was allocated to support collaborative research and development under the EDF precursor programmes from 2017 to 2020: the preparatory action on defence research and the European defence industrial development programme.

Budget programming and implementation

Budget programming (million EUR)

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	Total
Financial programming	945.7	940.4	945.7	1 023.8	1 434.0	999.6	997.0	7 286.2
NextGenerationEU	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Decommitments made available again (*)	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Contributions from other countries and entities	23.7	22.0	25.9	34.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	105.8
Total	969.4	962.4	971.6	1 058.0	1 434.0	999.6	997.0	7 392.0

(*) Only Article 15(3) of the Financial Regulation.

Cumulative budget implementation at the end of 2024 (million EUR)

	Implementation	Budget	Implementation rate
Commitments	3 966.8	7 392.0	53.7%
Payments	1 749.2	0.0	23.7%

Implementation and performance

Key performance indicators

	Baseline	Progress	Target	Results	Assessment
Collaborative research: number of funded actions	0	NA	NA	92 in 2023	NA
Collaborative research: share of recipients that did not carry out research activities with defence applications before the entry into force of the fund	0	NA	NA	78% in 2023	NA

Collaborative capability development: share of number of funded actions that address the capability shortfalls identified in the capability development plan	0	NA	NA	100% in 2023	NA
Job creation/support: defence research and development employees supported in funded actions	0	NA	NA	22 500 in 2023	NA

The EDF fosters the competitiveness and innovation capacity of the European defence technological and industrial base by **supporting collaborative defence research and development actions**. Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine has clearly shown the pertinence of strengthening this base and the EU's defence capabilities, where the EDF plays an important role. Considering the geopolitical and security developments, the EDF's original rationale and its objectives and challenges are of **growing relevance** in light of the Commission's new political priorities.

The industry sector from 26 EU Member States and Norway showed significant interest in participating in the EDF calls in 2021, 2022 and 2023. A total of 514 proposals were received in the 2021-2023 period, covering 17 categories of action in domains such as air, ground, naval combat, cyber, space, etc. The total budget allocated to these calls is over EUR 3.1 billion.

The European Commission is currently implementing 133 projects under direct management, out of a total of 162 EDF projects. Moreover, the Commission signed contribution agreements to delegate the implementation of 29 projects, under indirect management, to the European Defence Agency and the Organisation for Joint Armament Cooperation.

The EDF 2024 work programme was published on 15 March 2024, allocating to the initiative an additional EUR 1.1 billion to support collaborative research, development projects and innovation in Europe's defence sector.

The relevance of the programme is shown by the sustained interest and increasing number of applications, which culminated in a record-high number of 298 proposals competing for EUR 1.1 billion in funding in the 2024 calls (representing a 25% increase from 2023). The competition also highlighted the **EDF's success in attracting interest from both large and small players**, including a record number of proposals from small and medium-sized enterprises and research organisations (including research and technology organisations).

To foster innovation, particularly among small and medium-sized enterprises, and to promote inclusiveness in the defence sector, the EDF 2024 call includes dedicated support through the European Defence Innovation Scheme, which has a funding allocation of EUR 225 million under the 2024 work programme. EDF has also contributed to the InvestEU Programme through blending with the EU guarantee, which contributed to the mobilisation of additional investments. In particular, EDF contributed EUR 60 million via an InvestEU top-up to the equity instrument, which is under indirect management by the European Investment Fund for the target area of defence. In addition, **new instruments to support innovation will be developed in 2025**, such as the European Defence Innovation Scheme business accelerator, to support start-ups and scale-ups (focusing on single entities), and matchmaking services.

According to a recently conducted macroeconomic study on the benefits of EDF, carried out in 2024 as part of the EDF interim evaluation, significant long-term impacts are expected on the defence industry (including the job market). It is estimated that every EUR 1 spent under the EDF will result in an increase in gross domestic product of EUR 4.5 by 2040 (not counting positive spillover effects on the civil sector), along with the **creation of over 35 000 jobs across the EU by 2030**. These projections are further supported by the EDF's current contributions to reducing financial and technical risks for the defence industry and enhancing cross-border collaboration within supply chains.

The EDF has maintained **good practices to support performance** that were introduced by its precursor programmes, the European defence industrial development programme and the preparatory action on defence research. These include close cooperation with Member States in drafting the annual work programmes and related calls for proposals, awarding a bonus to projects developed in the context of the permanent structured cooperation to improve the coherence of the EU's defence initiatives, and awarding any increase in the EU funding rate to projects investing in cross-border cooperation with small and medium-sized enterprises and mid-caps.

In line with its long-term life cycle, the EDF will **continue to gradually generate results** that foster the better exploitation of research and development defence industrial potential, along with ensuring project continuity from its precursor programmes.

Contribution to horizontal priorities

Contribution to green budgeting priorities (EUR million):

	Implementation				Estimates			Total	% of the total envelope
	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027		
Climate mainstreaming	86.8	32.2	31.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	150.3	2.1%

The overall budget for EDF implementation was not intended to target climate and biodiversity mainstreaming and clean air directly. However, it may have some indirect positive climate effects, since capability development projects and defence research take into consideration the importance of sustainability in defence activities.

Currently, 10 EDF projects are contributing to energy efficiency and environmental transition, with a total value of around **EUR 150 million**, as shown below.

Indy – energy independent and efficient deployable military camps

The Indy project will develop a strategic roadmap towards future energy independent and efficient deployable military camps.

EU funding: EUR 14.2 million.

Nomad – novel energy storage technologies usable at military deployments in forward operating bases

The Nomad project will develop next generation electrical energy storage for military forward operating bases.

EU funding: EUR 19.7 million.

Neumann – novel energy and propulsion systems for air dominance

The Neumann project will study energy aircraft domains, with a focus on energy-efficient propulsion, electrical and thermal systems and management.

EU funding: EUR 48.9 million.

Hegaps – hybrid energy grid and propulsion system

The Hegaps project will work on a cyber-physical system to coordinate multiple assets.

EU funding: EUR 4 million.

Minefield – energy autonomous smart clothing to enhance soldier safety and connectivity in the battleground

The Minefield project will develop e-textiles which will be able to generate (and store) power through movement and crucially cater for the power need initially for low-power consumption devices and sensors in soldier systems.

EU funding: EUR 3.2 million.

Archytas – architectures based on unconventional accelerators for dependable / energy-efficient AI systems

The Archytas project aims to investigate non-conventional artificial intelligence accelerators for defence applications, using novel technologies at the device and package levels. The project

distinctly addresses the challenges encountered in the defence use cases by proposing optimised solutions for efficient energy consumption, speed and cost.

EU funding: EUR 20 million.

Calipso – innovative propulsion solutions for land and naval defence applications

The Calipso project aims to provide guidelines and roadmaps for systematically addressing technological and other challenges in terms of innovative emission-reducing propulsion solutions.

EU funding: EUR 25 million

Immune – advanced FILAVA-based materials for a new generation of ultralight, more resistant, eco-designed, morpho- and REACH-compliant personal protection equipment's hard components for EU military

The Immune project aims to develop a personal protection system that will be 25% lighter, provide better protection performances and be 10% cheaper over its life cycle than current vests on the market.

EU funding: EUR 3.8 million.

Zerowaste – zero emissions in a circular military economy: from military individual equipment waste to food and energy

The Zerowaste project aims to demonstrate that, using advanced biotechnologies, it is possible to auto-produce part of the energy and food required to sustain the life of military personnel.

EU funding: EUR 2.5 million.

S.W.I.F.T. – sustainable water innovations for fielded troops

The S.W.I.F.T. project aims to explore the potential of emerging water reuse concepts and technologies, including graphene-based treatment technologies and advanced photocatalytic processes, to provide clean and safe water for military personnel in various operational environments.

EU funding: EUR 4 million.

Contribution to gender equality (million EUR) (*)

Gender score	2021	2022	2023	2024	Total
2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
0*	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
0	945.7	940.4	945.7	1 023.8	3 855.6
Total	945.7	940.4	945.7	1 023.8	3 855.6

(*) Based on the applied gender contribution methodology, the following scores are attributed at the most granular level of intervention possible:

2: interventions the principal objective of which is to improve gender equality;

1: interventions that have gender equality as an important and deliberate objective but not as the main reason for the intervention;

0: non-targeted interventions (interventions that are expected to have no significant bearing on gender equality);

0*: score to be assigned to interventions with a likely but not yet clear positive impact on gender equality.

Gender-disaggregated information:

DG Defence Industry and Space does not collect gender-disaggregated information regarding the gender of beneficiaries. In line with the Regulation, the Commission seeks to achieve a balanced composition within the independent expert groups, including on gender balance.

Efforts are continuously made to seize all relevant opportunities identified by the equality coordinator and other staff of DG Defence Industry and Space. For example, the directorate-general organises side events and workshops or includes gender equality aspects in communication activities and events.

Contribution to the digital transition (EUR million):

	2021 implementation	2022 implementation	2023 implementation	2024 implementation	Total	% of the 2021-2024 envelope
Digital contribution	109.0	118.0	104.0	0.0	353.6	37.0%

The EDF mainly supports digital transformation through calls for proposals under many EDF action categories, for example cyber and digital transformation, but also air, ground and naval combat, where the collaborative combat technologies and products are being developed.

Contribution to sustainable development goals

SDG	Does the programme contribute to the goal?	Example (only for the most relevant SDGs)
SDG7: Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all	x	Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all The EDF supports research and development projects focused on increasing the energy efficiency of military equipment and facilities, and energy-saving technologies for defence applications. 10 EDF projects (INDY, NOMAD, NEUMANN, HEGAPS, MINEFIELD, ARCHYTAS, CALIPSO, IMMUNE, ZEROWASTE and S.W.I.F.T.) are contributing to energy efficiency and the environmental transition by focusing on advancements in the defence sector. These projects explore energy-efficient propulsion systems, waste management solutions, optimised electrical and thermal systems, and innovative energy storage technologies.
SDG8: Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all	x	Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all The EDF investments in defence research and development stimulate economic growth by supporting and creating highly qualified jobs and fostering innovation in the defence industry throughout the EU and Norway.

SDG9: resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation	Build	x	Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation The EDF supports projects aimed at fostering innovation in defence technology and infrastructure. This includes research into advanced materials, cybersecurity solutions, autonomous systems, and other cutting-edge technologies relevant to defence applications. By investing in these areas, the EDF helps strengthen Europe's industrial base and improve its technological capabilities.

Contribution to strategic technologies (STEP)

The STEP Regulation identified the EDF as one of the existing instruments to underpin STEP, particularly related to support actions in the field of ‘deep tech’ and digital technologies.

In accordance with the STEP Regulation, a technology must meet at least one of the two following conditions to be ‘critical’ and thus considered under STEP: (1) Bring to the internal market an innovative, emerging, and cutting-edge element with significant economic potential or (2) Contribute to reducing or preventing EU’s strategic dependencies.

Currently, 44 EDF projects are considered under STEP.

In line with the STEP Regulation, the **EDF** is one of the directly managed EU programmes mobilised under **STEP** to strengthen the competitiveness and resilience of the European economy. In accordance with **Article 4 of the STEP Regulation**, the EDF is also one of the programmes authorised to award the **STEP (Sovereignty) Seal** under some of its calls for proposals.

By **December 31, 2024**, the EDF has launched and closed **five calls for proposals** covering all the **three STEP areas of investment** (clean and resource-efficient technologies, deep and digital technologies and biotechnologies) for a total of 15 STEP-relevant topics, covering both research and development activities. In this way, the EDF has earmarked a total budget of EUR 382 million in 2024 to contribute to STEP objectives. The split is as follows:

12 topics in the area of digital and deep-tech, with a total budget of EUR 317 million

1 topic in the area of clean and resource efficient technologies, with a budget of EUR 40 million

2 topics in the area of biotechnologies, with a total budget of EUR 25 million

All of these topics contribute to the STEP objective of supporting **the development of critical technologies** across the Union and safeguarding and strengthening their value chain. Two topics in particular aim to develop specific defence products that will help alleviate **the shortage of labour and skills** critical to the technologies they target. All STEP-related topics aim to introduce **cutting-edge innovations** with strong economic potential, while **reducing or preventing strategic dependencies** within the EU. These funds, together with the STEP Seals, will be awarded in the course of 2025.

ACT IN SUPPORT OF AMMUNITION PRODUCTION (ASAP)

THE EU PROGRAMME TO SUPPORT THE EU INDUSTRY IN RAMPING UP ITS PRODUCTION CAPACITIES IN AMMUNITION AND MISSILES

Concrete examples of achievements

31	16	More than EUR 1.5 billion
projects were launched in 2024 under the Act in Support of Ammunition Production programme.	EU Member States, and Norway, are participating in the programme during the 2024-2027 period.	in total investment is expected to be leveraged by the end of 2027 through EU funding, combined with contributions from the European defence industry, Member States and Norway.

Budget programming and implementation

Budget programming (million EUR):

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	Total
Financial programming	0.0	0.0	157.0	343.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	500.0
NextGenerationEU	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Decommitments made available again (*)	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Contributions from other countries and entities	0.0	0.0	0.0	15.9	0.0	0.0	0.0	15.9
Total	0.0	0.0	157.0	358.9	0.0	0.0	0.0	515.9

(*) Only Article 15(3) of the Financial Regulation.

Cumulative budget implementation at the end of 2024 (million EUR):

	Implementation	Budget	Implementation rate
Commitments	515.9	515.9	100.0%
Payments	173.2		33.6%

Implementation and performance

Key performance indicators

	Baseline	Progress	Target	Results	Assessment
Number of single entities in the selected projects	0	N/A	N/A	31 unique participants at the end of 2024	Moderate progress
Number of Member States in which these entities are established	0	N/A	N/A	16 Member States and Norway at the end of 2024	Moderate progress
Number of submitted proposals.	0	100%	82 proposals in 2027	82 proposals submitted at the end of 2024	Achieved
Number of funded projects	0	N/A	N/A	31 projects funded at the end of 2024	On track
Value and share of contracts awarded to small and medium-sized enterprises and mid-caps	0	N/A	N/A	€ 182.709.508 or 35.66% of the overall budget at the end of 2024	Moderate progress

Regulation (EU) 2023/1525⁽⁷⁰⁾ on supporting ammunition production (ASAP (the “ASAP Regulation”)) aims at fostering the efficiency and competitiveness of the EU’s defence technological and industrial base by supporting the ramp-up of production capacity for and timely delivery of relevant defence products through industrial reinforcement.

The ASAP work programme was adopted on 18 October 2023, with a total budget of EUR 500 million, supplemented by an additional contribution of approximately EUR 16 million from Norway.

⁽⁷⁰⁾ Regulation (EU) 2023/1525 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 July 2023 on supporting ammunition production (ASAP) (OJ L 185, 24.7.2023, p. 7, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2023/1525/oj>).

Five calls for proposals were launched on 18 October 2023. The European defence industry demonstrated significant interest, submitting 82 proposals across all calls. After the evaluation of 82 proposals, 31 projects were selected for funding with a budget in excess of EUR 500 million to stimulate the production of ammunition. The award decision for ASAP projects was announced in June 2024, with all grant agreements being signed by the end of the year.

The programme is currently supporting the implementation of projects in the following areas:

explosives – seven projects, with a portfolio budget of around EUR 124 million;

powder – 11 projects, with a portfolio budget of around EUR 248 million;

shells – seven projects, with a portfolio budget of around EUR 90 million;

missiles – five projects, with a portfolio budget of around EUR 50 million;

testing and reconditioning – one project, with a portfolio budget of around EUR 2 million.

The chosen projects will address bottlenecks throughout the ammunition and missile supply chains in the EU and Norway, by supporting the industry in rapidly adjusting to new market trends and reducing dependencies. For instance, ASAP will support extending or modernising existing lines, creating new lines, plans to repurpose old ammunition, securing value chains and addressing skills gaps.

All projects are expected to be **completed within a maximum of 36 months** after grant signature. To avoid potential delays to industrial initiatives contributing to ensuring the effective supply and timely availability of ammunitions and missiles, ASAP provides for a retroactivity clause so that initiatives that began after 20 March 2023 may be eligible for EU support.

An [evaluation report](#), as provided for in the ASAP Regulation was published on 8 July 2024. ASAP's implementation has demonstrated the effectiveness of an emergency instrument in the defence industry, one of its key achievements being the contribution to reaching the target of a production capacity of more than 2 million artillery shells per year – a milestone that is expected to be achieved by the European defence industry by the end of 2025.

The main challenges in ASAP implementation include potential delays caused by supply chain disruptions, logistical difficulties and environmental permitting requirements for new industrial production facilities.

Contribution to horizontal priorities

Contribution to green budgeting priorities

The overall budget for ASAP implementation was not specifically intended to target climate or biodiversity mainstreaming directly. However, it may have indirect positive effects on the climate area by benefiting certain industrial entities participating in the programme.

Contribution to gender equality (million EUR) (*)

Gender score	2021	2022	2023	2024	Total
2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
0*	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
0	0.0	0.0	157.0	343.0	500.0
Total	0.0	0.0	157.0	343.0	500.0

(*) Based on the applied gender contribution methodology, the following scores are attributed at the most granular level of intervention possible:

2: interventions the principal objective of which is to improve gender equality;

1: interventions that have gender equality as an important and deliberate objective but not as the main reason for the intervention;

0: non-targeted interventions (interventions that are expected to have no significant bearing on gender equality);

0*: score to be assigned to interventions with a likely but not yet clear positive impact on gender equality.

ASAP is not directly targeted at gender equality initiatives. However, it continues to make indirect contributions by gradually raising awareness of the related aspects within the EU's defence technological and industrial base.

Gender-disaggregated information

Gender-disaggregated information regarding the implementation of ASAP is not collected.

Contribution to the digital transition

The overall ASAP budget was not specifically intended to directly target the digital transition, but it takes related aspects into account, considering new technological developments within the EU's defence technological and industrial base. This includes, for example, technological advancements relating to the modernisation of production lines and the establishment of new ones.

Contribution to sustainable development goals

SDG	Does the programme contribute to the goal?	Example (only for the most relevant SDGs)
SDG9: Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation	x	ASAP will support the extension and modernisation of existing production lines and the establishment of new ones.

Contribution to strategic technologies (STEP)

n/a

EU DEFENCE INDUSTRY REINFORCEMENT THROUGH COMMON PROCUREMENT ACT (Edirpa)

PROGRAMME TO ADDRESS THE EU'S MOST URGENT AND CRITICAL DEFENCE CAPABILITY GAPS AND INCENTIVISE THE EU MEMBER STATES TO PROCURE DEFENCE PRODUCTS JOINTLY

Concrete examples of achievements

5	EUR 11 billion	20
cross-border projects were chosen in 2024 to support more coordinated and efficient defence procurement among EU Member States.	is the procurement value of defence products for the armed forces of Member States supported by the programme, illustrating its significant leverage.	Member States were involved in projects under the EU Defence Industry Reinforcement through Common Procurement Act, some of which are engaging in common defence procurement for the first time in 2024-2025.

Budget programming and implementation

Budget programming (million EUR):

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	Total
Financial programming	0.0	0.0	0.0	250.2	40.0	0.0	0.0	290.2
NextGenerationEU	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Decommitments made available again (*)	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Contributions from other countries and entities	0.0	0.0	0.0	8.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	8.8
Total	0.0	0.0	0.0	258.9	40.0	0.0	0.0	299.0

(*) Only Article 15(3) of the Financial Regulation.

Cumulative budget implementation at the end of 2024 (million EUR):

	Implementation	Budget	Implementation rate
Commitments	258.9	299.0	86.6%
Payments	0.0		0.0%

Implementation and performance

Key performance indicators

	Baseline	Progress	Target	Results	Assessment
Number of proposals submitted by applicants	N/A	N/A	N/A	12 at the end of 2024	No data
Number of projects selected for funding.	N/A	N/A	N/A	5 at the end of 2024	No data
Average of the number of Member States involved in a consortium / associated countries involved in a consortium concerning the projects selected for funding	N/A	N/A	N/A	6 at the end of 2024	No data
Average estimated value of the common procurement contract per consortium of Member States and associated countries	N/A	N/A	N/A	EUR 11 billion at the end of 2024	No data
Actual financial contribution of the EU to each action	N/A	N/A	N/A	EUR 60 million per action at the end of 2024	No data

Regulation (EU) 2023/2418⁽⁷¹⁾ (the “EDIRPA Regulation”) was adopted by the co-legislators on 18 October 2023. EDIRPA is implemented through a multiannual work programme, pursuant to Article 110 of the Financial Regulation, which was adopted by the Commission on 15 March 2024.

The EDIRPA instrument facilitates access for all Member States to defence products that are urgently needed. By rewarding defence procurement cooperation among Member States, Edirpa aims to offset the complexity often associated with common procurement.

On 14 November 2024, the European Commission approved funding for five cross-border projects relating to the common procurement of air and missile defence systems, ammunition and platforms to support more coordinated and efficient defence procurement among EU Member States, as follows.

Procurement of air and missile defence systems. Two projects will bolster joint air and missile defence capabilities. The Mistral project supports the common procurement of Mistral very short-range air defence systems by nine Member States (Belgium, Denmark, Estonia, Spain, France, Cyprus, Hungary, Romania and Slovenia). Another project, ‘joint air missile defence initiative in Europe’, will support the common procurement of IRIS-T surface-launched medium-range air defence systems by six Member States (Bulgaria, Germany, Estonia, Latvia, Austria and Slovenia). These are systems for protection against air threats such as combat aircraft, attack helicopters and unmanned air systems.

Procurement of modern armoured vehicles. Edirpa will also support the procurement of the Common Armoured Vehicle System, a modern armoured carrier for protected troop transport, by four Member States (Germany, Latvia, Finland and Sweden). The modern armoured vehicles offer high performance and unprecedented mobility.

Procurement of ammunition. In two further projects, Edirpa will support the common procurement of different types of 155 mm artillery ammunition, namely the ‘CPoA 155mm’ project involving six Member States (Denmark, Croatia, Italy, Lithuania, the Netherlands and Poland) and the ‘HE 155mm’ project involving four Member States (Germany, Denmark, Estonia and the Netherlands).

Aggregating EU demand on a wider scale will provide the EU defence industry with stronger and more long-term signals to ramp up its manufacturing capacities and make the defence market ready to face a changed security environment. Buying more, together and European will also improve the interoperability of EU defence systems and capabilities.

The main challenges in implementing Edirpa stem from the complexity of common defence procurement and the need for effective coordination between Member States within the contractual framework.

⁷¹ Regulation (EU) 2023/2418 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 October 2023 on establishing an instrument for the reinforcement of the European defence industry through common procurement (EDIRPA) (OJ L, 2023/2418, 26.10.2023, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2023/2418/oj>).

Contribution to horizontal priorities

Contribution to green budgeting priorities:

The overall budget for Edirpa implementation was not intended to target climate and biodiversity mainstreaming directly.

Contribution to gender equality (million EUR) (*)

Gender score	2021	2022	2023	2024	Total
2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
0*	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
0	0.0	0.0	0.0	250.2	250.2
Total	0.0	0.0	0.0	250.2	250.2

(*) Based on the applied gender contribution methodology, the following scores are attributed at the most granular level of intervention possible:

2: interventions the principal objective of which is to improve gender equality;

1: interventions that have gender equality as an important and deliberate objective but not as the main reason for the intervention;

0: non-targeted interventions (interventions that are expected to have no significant bearing on gender equality);

0*: score to be assigned to interventions with a likely but not yet clear positive impact on gender equality.

On equality, diversity and inclusion, Edirpa is not directly targeted at gender equality initiatives. Nevertheless, indirect contributions supporting the gradual raising of awareness about this horizontal Commission priority are continually being made as opportunities arise. DG Defence Industry and Space does not collect gender disaggregated data in the implementation of Edirpa.

Gender-disaggregated information

n/a

Contribution to the digital transition

Edirpa is not directly targeted at the digital transition but takes it into account in the light of new technological developments in the EU's defence technological and industrial base. For example, the award criteria list measures relating to the competitiveness of the EU's defence technological and industrial base and its adaptation to structural changes, including technological changes.

Contribution to sustainable development goals

EDIRPA indirectly supports and contributes to some SDGs, but the programme was not created directly to deliver on all 17 SDGs.

Contribution to strategic technologies (STEP)

n/a

NEIGHBOURHOOD, DEVELOPMENT AND INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION INSTRUMENT – GLOBAL EUROPE

Concrete examples of achievements

136 552	1 798 123	50 161 713	1.6 million
victims of human right violations were provided with assistance between 2021 and 2024 under of NDICI – Global Europe.	people were given access to clean water and/or sanitation between 2021 and 2024 with the support of NDICI – Global Europe.	people benefited from support for civilian post-conflict, peacebuilding or conflict prevention between 2021 and 2024 under NDICI – Global Europe.	refugees in Türkiye have received cash transfers as beneficiaries of the emergency social safety net ⁽⁷²⁾ , since 2022 jointly funded by NDICI – Global Europe and IPA III.
43 084 km ²	67 000	More than 3 000	22
of marine, terrestrial and freshwater ecosystems were protected and/or sustainably managed between 2021 and 2024 thanks to NDICI – Global Europe support.	small and medium-sized enterprises in the Eastern Neighbourhood were supported in 2023-2024 through the EU4business initiative funded by NDICI – Global Europe, leading to the creation of almost 80 000 new jobs.	internship opportunities were provided for technical and vocational education and training students in the private sector in Egypt from 2013 to 2022 under NDICI – Global Europe. Due to the success of these internships, a new programme is starting in 2025.	electoral processes were supported through the implementation of 26 missions in 2024.

⁽⁷²⁾ The social safety net programme is jointly funded under the NDICI and IPA instruments.

Budget programming and implementation

Budget programming (million EUR):

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	Total
Financial programming	12 259.0	12 424.0	12 016.8	11 364.5	10 755.9	9 905.2	10 169.2	78 894.5
NextGeneration EU	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Decommitments made available again (*)	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Contributions from other countries and entities	6.0	33.1	1 037.8	77.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	1 154.7
Total	12 265.0	12 457.1	13 054.6	11 442.2	10 755.9	9 905.2	10 169.2	80 049.2

(*) Only Article 15(3) of the Financial Regulation.

Cumulative budget implementation at the end of 2024 (million EUR):

	Implementation	Budget	Implementation rate
Commitments	50 198.2	80 049.2	62.7%
Payments	20 810.7		26.0%

Implementation and performance

Key performance indicators

	Baseline	Progress	Target	Results	Assessment
Proportion of population below the international poverty line	10%	12%	3.9% in 2030	9% in 2022	Moderate progress
Number of individuals with access to improved drinking water sources and/or sanitation facilitation with EU support	0	7%	25.6 million in 2030	1.8 million compared to a target of 25.6 million in 2024	On track
Number of students enrolled in education: primary education, secondary education, and number of people who have benefited from institution- or workplace-based vocational education and training / skills-development interventions, supported by the EU	0	1%	116.7 million in 2030	1 million in 2024 compared to a target of 116.7 million	Moderate progress

Number of migrants, refugees and internally displaced people or individuals from host communities protected or assisted with EU support	0	8%	25.1 million in 2030	1.9 million in 2024 compared to a target of 25.1 million	On track
Number of countries and cities with climate-change and/or disaster-risk-reduction strategies with EU support	0	2%	730 in 2030	16 in 2024 compared to a target of 730	On track
Greenhouse gas emissions avoided with EU support	0	0%	62.8 million in 2030	0 in 2024	No data
Leverage of investments and multiplier effect achieved	12	0%	10 in 2030	0 in 2024	No data
Number of individuals directly benefiting from EU-supported interventions that specifically aim to support civilian post-conflict, peacebuilding or conflict prevention	0	> 100%	49.6 million in 2033	50.2 million in 2024 compared to a target of 49.6 million in 2033	Achieved

The Global Gateway, financed by the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument – Global Europe (NDICI – Global Europe), continued to provide a coherent strategic policy framework for the EU's geopolitical priorities and international partnerships and was recognised as the EU's external brand by all Team Europe actors. Throughout 2024, the Commission promoted the Global Gateway strategy in all multilateral forums as an EU contribution to the implementation of the United Nations 2030 Agenda and its sustainable development goals.

In the course of the year, two significant exercises were completed: the midterm evaluation of the EU's external financing instruments assessing their fitness for purpose, including the final evaluation of external financing instruments under the previous multiannual financial framework; and a midterm review of the NDICI–Global Europe programmes on sub-Saharan Africa, Asia and the Pacific, the Americas and the Caribbean, Erasmus+ (external dimension), CSOs, human rights and democracy, global challenges, and peace, stability and conflict prevention. The midterm review for neighbourhood programmes is ongoing and should be finalised in the spring 2025.

A more results-oriented and policy-first approach to the planning of initiatives under NDICI – Global Europe has been implemented in the neighbourhood region through performance-based strategic and comprehensive partnerships integrating the full EU toolbox (grants, loans, provisioning of guarantees and blending) to underpin ambitious partnership agendas.

The European Fund for Sustainable Development Plus performed its central role in delivering on the Global Gateway, including by covering a share of the risks of the development finance partners when they mobilises their own resources, thereby attracting additional investors, notably from the private sector. In particular, in the 2021-2024 period, the Commission made available EUR 12.6 billion of guarantee cover for European Investment Bank loans and more than EUR 700 million of guarantee cover for the Eastern and Southern Neighbourhoods under the open architecture part of the European Fund for Sustainable Development Plus. In the rest of the world, the EU budget extended guarantee cover for European Investment Bank loans of approximately EUR 4 billion, expected to leverage EUR 25 billion in total investment, and open architecture guarantees for EUR 2.5 billion, with an estimated total investment of EUR 4 billion. European Fund for Sustainable Development Plus blending operations in the same period amounted to an EU contribution of EUR 1.5 billion, and are projected to leverage EUR 23 billion in investment.

Regarding climate-related projects in 2021-2024, the European Investment Bank reported that 57% of their outside EU sovereign guarantee covered operations supported climate action and environmental sustainability, with contributions of 37% towards climate-change mitigation and 19% towards climate-change adaptation. Outside of the neighbourhood regions, it is anticipated that roughly one third of the funding for open architecture guarantees will support climate-related initiatives, though the exact numbers are pending, and finally EUR 1.3 billion in EU contributions to blending was directed towards projects focusing on climate adaptation and mitigation, leveraging around EUR 21 billion.

The figures provided on the leverage of European Fund for Sustainable Development Plus operations represent estimated values at the time of contracting.

Also in 2024, the Commission took further steps to enhance its strategic policy approach on migration and asylum. A key deliverable was the adoption of the EU pact on migration and asylum in May 2024. The external dimension of the pact tasks the EU to engage with partner countries on the basis of a comprehensive approach addressing all areas of concern for the EU

and for them, on both migration and forced displacement, with a strong focus on the migratory routes towards the EU.

Within the Global Gateway strategy, the Commission intensified engagement efforts focusing on mutually beneficial investments and strengthening the EU approach in fragile countries. This included addressing fragility, conflict and migration through a mixture of resilience and humanitarian–development–peace nexus approaches and the use of tools such as conflict sensitivity screenings, the conflict early warning system and risk management frameworks.

Below are some examples of achievements financed by NDICI – Global Europe in the course of 2024.

Significant progress was reported through the Global Gateway Africa–Europe Investment Package, with sub-Saharan Africa hosting 116 of the 225 Global Gateway flagship projects across key sectors such as education, health, energy and economic integration.

Since 2021, the implementation of the economic and investment plan in the Southern Neighbourhood has led to the commitment of EUR 5.7 billion of grants funded by NDICI – Global Europe, triggering the mobilisation of an estimated EUR 26.6 billion in investment through blending grants to concessional loans in the clean energy, water and sanitation, education and digital sectors.

A strategic and comprehensive partnership was signed with Egypt, attracting up to EUR 5 billion European investment supported by guarantees under the European Fund for Sustainable Development and economic investment plan.

In the neighbourhood area, several key operations supported the implementation of the Global Gateway, particularly in sectors with high potential for accelerating growth and boosting competitiveness, such as transport, energy, water and digitalisation. Notable examples include:

the Medusa submarine optical fibre cable, which enhances digital interconnection across the Mediterranean, linking 500 universities and research centres in North Africa;

the solidarity lanes initiative, which supports the upgrading of transport infrastructure and border crossings between Moldova, Ukraine and EU Member States, facilitating trade.

The Commission progressed in the implementation of the green transition in key areas such as climate action, clean energy and environmental goals, while helping to close the financing gap, including through innovative financing and private-sector involvement. It contributed, inter alia, to partner countries' climate-change-adaptation and -mitigation measures, including by using Earth-observation programmes, and to renewable energy projects, cleaner transport initiatives, support for sustainable mobility in cities and investment in resilient water economies.

Supporting sustainable growth and jobs under the Global Gateway was a structural pillar of EU engagement in sub-Saharan Africa, Asia and the Pacific, and the Americas and the Caribbean. The focus was put on three main areas: the scaling-up of the sustainable finance agenda; the consolidation of investment agendas; and critical raw materials.

The Commission continued to play a leading role in ensuring human development for all, in particular for young people, women and girls. Out of the 225 Global Gateway flagship projects, 37 were focused primarily on human development sectors, though most also had a human development dimension anchored in human rights and democratic principles, tackling inequalities and considering the specificities of fragile contexts.

Nine additional initiatives with a budget of EUR 23.2 million were adopted in 2024 to strengthen partnerships with high-income countries (such as Canada, Japan, South Korea, Taiwan and the United States) in cover priority areas (e.g. the Green Deal, critical raw materials, the circular economy, transport and intellectual property).

The Commission increased its support for partner countries in advancing a global circular economy, benefiting over 100 countries through specific measures and through global and regional initiatives such as the Switch-Asia and AI-Invest Verde programmes.

The Commission continued to deliver on peace and stability through 85 new crisis response interventions under the rapid response pillar, with a budget of EUR 214.6 million. This included providing essential support for the response to Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine in areas such as demining, energy and accountability, but also initiatives in Israel and Palestine ⁽⁷³⁾, Lebanon and Syria addressing both the drivers and the consequences of instability and hostilities in the region, such as hate speech. Through the peace, stability and conflict-prevention programme, 67 thematic interventions were financed to address themes such as human security, confidence building and community engagement, mediation, dialogue and peace processes.

Thirty new contracts were signed under the global threats component of the programme, with a budget of EUR 68.4 million, while implementation continued for initiatives from previous years (145 ongoing, amounting to EUR 127 million), with a focus on those with the potential to have a direct impact on Europe's security and well-being. This included initiatives to mitigate chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear risks, enhance maritime security / cybersecurity and strengthen global efforts against terrorism and organised crime.

Through the rapid response pillar of NDICI – Global Europe, the EU supported its foreign policy needs priorities by covering challenges of global concern – such as climate change and environmental protection, the digital transition, energy, improving business and trade, and the fight against disinformation – through more than 120 interventions, including 19 new ones, with a total budget of EUR 52.5 million.

Contribution to horizontal priorities

Contribution to green budgeting priorities (EUR million):

	Implementation				Estimates			Total	% of the total envelope
	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027		
Climate mainstreaming	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	2 878.0	2 684.0	2 759.0	19 981.8	25.3%
Biodiversity mainstreaming	529.7	853.3	1 079.4	1 063.6	954.0	995.0	1 025.0	6 500.0	8.2%

⁽⁷³⁾ This designation shall not be construed as recognition of a State of Palestine and is without prejudice to the individual positions of the Member States on this issue.

Regulation (EU) 2021/947⁽⁷⁴⁾ (the “NDICI-GE Regulation”) provides that initiatives under NDICI – Global Europe are expected to contribute 30% of their overall financial envelope to climate objectives. According to preliminary estimates, the EU allocated approximately 24.3% of its NDICI – Global Europe funding to initiatives that contribute to addressing climate change during the 2021-2024 period. In that period, it was possible in some geographic areas – such as Latin America and sub-Saharan Africa – to exceed the planned target of 30%. However, in other parts of the world, the programme focused on supporting partner countries facing challenges linked to Russia’s war of aggression in Ukraine or to mitigating the migration crisis.

For the coming years, it is important to strengthen the climate change dimension in Global Gateway investments and other NDICI – Global Europe programmes to ensure that they continue contributing to the green transition in all relevant sectors – such as sustainable energy, urban mobility, transport, agriculture/value chains, digital, water infrastructure and management.

Robust processes and tools are already in place to ensure the effective mainstreaming of climate change, environment and disaster risk reduction considerations across the relevant programmes, including by checking and reviewing all programmes at an early stage. The European Commission has developed a comprehensive toolbox to better mainstream environment and climate change in the field of EU cooperation (the [greening EU cooperation toolbox](#)), which aligns with both the European Green Deal and the Global Gateway strategy. Capacity building of Commission staff in headquarters and delegations is being ensured through a series of training sessions and webinars.

Regarding the biodiversity objective more specifically, the programme contributed 8.3% in 2023. Preliminary estimates for 2024 are around 9.2%, confirming the positive trajectory year after year. Pending final verification, spending under NDICI – Global Europe is aligned to the 7.5% target for 2024 defined for the whole multiannual financial framework. These efforts must be sustained in the second part of the multiannual financial framework, with a view to meeting the Commission’s political ambitions for biodiversity and the 10% overall multiannual financial framework target for 2026 and 2027. Therefore, a comprehensive approach that combines the development of a substantial portfolio of biodiversity-related measures and the mainstreaming of biodiversity into relevant sectors and initiatives continues to be deployed.

In the Eastern Neighbourhood, the Commission supported partner countries through a number of flagship programmes engaging in the green transition. In 2024, the EU4climate resilience programme, with a budget of EUR 17 million, started to provide technical support to the EU’s eastern partners in meeting their Paris Agreement objectives and in aligning with EU legislation. Similarly, the EU4environment programme provides assistance to those partners in the fields of water management, the adoption of the EU environmental *acquis* and greening private-sector activity. Blending operations such as the Green for Growth Fund, the finance and technology transfer centre for climate change programme, the SME competitiveness programme and the Eastern Europe Energy Efficiency and Environment Partnership contribute to improving the sustainability and energy efficiency of business operations in the Eastern Partnership region, thus contributing to reducing greenhouse gas emissions and air and water pollution. In Moldova, the EU guaranteed a forest development programme that aims to raise

⁽⁷⁴⁾ Regulation (EU) 2021/947 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 9 June 2021 establishing the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument – Global Europe, amending and repealing Decision No 466/2014/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council and repealing Regulation (EU) 2017/1601 of the European Parliament and of the Council and Council Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 480/2009 (OJ L 209, 14.6.2021, p. 1, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2021/947/oj>).

EUR 435 million of investment in sustainable forestry, creating jobs and growth while also supporting biodiversity protection and resilience.

As the Mediterranean region has been identified as a climate change hotspot, the EU's cooperation on climate action seeks primarily to enhance the region's ability to adapt to climate impacts, thereby building long-term resilience. Two flagship programmes –the ongoing 'advancing climate adaptation in the southern Mediterranean' project and the Clima-Med project – support countries in improving climate change governance, financing and mainstreaming at the central and local levels and in raising the awareness of climate impacts among different stakeholders. New programmes have been developed to support the region's efforts to protect its biodiversity, such as Mediterranean forests genetic resources, which will build the capacity of countries to better preserve forest genetic resources, thus enhancing forest ecosystems' capacity for adaptation and contributing to the preservation of the region's forest biodiversity. The energy transition of economies in the Southern Neighbourhood remained a priority for country and regional cooperation in 2024. In June, the EU and its Member States mobilised EUR 334.6 million of EU grants to support a Global Gateway flagship project – the Italy–Tunisia electricity interconnection project, including EUR 15.4 million from NDICI – Global Europe – to help develop critical infrastructure in Tunisia to increase its renewable energy potential. Supporting the development of new energy value chains, the EU also supported the regional network of experts on renewable hydrogen to deliver a pilot certification for a renewable hydrogen project in Morocco, offering valuable insights and lessons learned.

Contribution to gender equality (million EUR) (*)

Gender score	2021	2022	2023	2024	Total
2	178.5	143.9	630.0	427.8	1 380.2
1	8 658.5	11 337.3	10 948.4	9 560.8	40 505.0
0*	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
0	3 422.0	942.8	438.4	1 375.9	6 179.1
Total:	12 259.0	12 424.0	12 016.8	11 364.5	48 064.3

(*) Based on the applied gender contribution methodology, the following scores are attributed at the most granular level of intervention possible:

2: interventions the principal objective of which is to improve gender equality;

1: interventions that have gender equality as an important and deliberate objective but not as the main reason for the intervention;

0: non-targeted interventions (interventions that are expected to have no significant bearing on gender equality);

0*: score to be assigned to interventions with a likely but not yet clear positive impact on gender equality.

The NDICI – Global Europe Regulation provides that a minimum of 85% of all new initiatives must have gender equality as a significant or principal objective, and that 5% of these initiatives must have gender equality as a principal objective. The Commission applies the gender-equality scoring system of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's

Development Assistance Committee. Significant (marked 1) means that gender equality is an important objective, but not the principal reason for undertaking the action, while principal (marked 2) means that gender equality is the main objective.

There has been a significant increase in initiatives marked G1 and G2 compared to the previous multiannual financial framework, with a positive trend observed in 2021 and 2022 that then strengthened even further in 2023. As a result, 85% of all initiatives adopted between 2021 and 2023 under NDICI – Global Europe had gender as a significant or principal objective, and 4.2% of those initiatives had gender equality as a principal objective.

EU external initiatives contributed to advancing gender equality and women's and girls' empowerment worldwide through political and policy dialogue; improved gender mainstreaming across all means of implementation, including the European Fund for Sustainable Development Plus; Team Europe initiatives; and ambitious new targeted measures.

Recently launched targeted initiatives promote, among other things, decent work and the fight against gender-based violence in Bangladesh; gender-responsive social protection in Malawi; gender equality, peace and social cohesion in conflict-affected regions in Cameroon; a women-led green transition in Viet Nam; and inclusion and social cohesion in the Americas and the Caribbean. Two new global measures support the spotlight initiative and regional and global networks of women's organisations in the fight against gender-based violence.

In the Southern Neighbourhood, the EU supports women's economic and social empowerment in Jordan through the 'women in innovation from home-based business to scalable business' initiative and in Egypt through the 'EU–Egypt for women's empowerment in Egypt (Tamkeen)' initiative. The EU supports an enabling environment for women and girls to assume leadership roles, improving their access to social and economic rights. In the Eastern Neighbourhood, the EU promotes efforts to combat gender-based violence in Azerbaijan by increasing the resilience of affected women and girls through improved social infrastructure and sustainable, gender-transformative financing frameworks.

Within the framework of the European Fund for Sustainable Development Plus, the EU is working closely with international and development financing institutions to promote women's access to finance and entrepreneurship, among other things. Some 72% of all reported operations under this fund in 2023 were gender mainstreamed.

In 2024, the EU also supported gender-sensitive conflict and resilience analyses to underpin responses to crises. Additionally, EU efforts influenced six bilateral, regional or multilateral processes to incorporate gender equality objectives. Through its support for women's organisations engaged in formal or informal peace structures, the EU strengthened women's role in conflict prevention and resolution, promoting more inclusive and sustainable peacebuilding.

Within the framework of the NDICI – Global Europe thematic programme on peace, stability and conflict prevention, the Commission approved a small project to support the role of women in counterterrorism. The initiative will support partner countries in including women in law enforcement, investigation and prosecution efforts and will help set up a network of practitioners to inform best practices and peer support. The Global Counter Terrorism Forum, co-chaired by the EU, will promote these among its partners.

Gender-disaggregated information

Global Europe results framework (GERF) indicator	Total for 2021-2024	Male	Female	Intersex
Number of people directly benefiting from legal aid interventions supported by the EU	18 004	10 217	5 163	4
Number of beneficiaries with access to financial services with EU support: (b) people (all financial services)	7 577	2 850	4 727	
Number of people benefiting from EU-funded programmes to counter sexual and gender-based violence	126 290	64 996	57 475	

Contribution to the digital transition (EUR million):

2021 implementation	2022 implementation	2023 implementation	2024 implementation	Total	% of the 2021-2024

						envelop e
Digital contribution	1 950.9	3 058.9	2 424.1	1 917.8	353.6	37.0%

In 2024, the EU followed a policy-first approach and continued to implement the Global Gateway digital priority by strengthening its partnerships and boosting secure and human-centric digital transformation with partner countries. The EU's support for the strengthening of digital partnerships increased substantially, with almost EUR 310 million invested, tackling all regions in various digital sectors. It was complemented by the Member States' contribution of EUR 170 million, with another EUR 10 million from their parallel projects. Indeed, the Commission increasingly worked with Member States to assemble investments, develop policy dialogues and strengthen capacity-building activities. All of this fostered digital transformation partnerships at the regional and national levels in line with EU values and interests.

One of the main achievements is the EU's Digital for Development Hub, which grew further into its role to strengthen the Team Europe approach. As of 2024, it consisted of 16 Member States, with another two joining as observers, and expanded with a new EU neighbouring countries branch. The other regional branches also developed their activities. The Knowledge Hub Digital continued to provide highly specialised expertise to EU delegations and partners with in-depth technical studies.

In Latin America and the Caribbean, the EU–Latin America and the Caribbean Digital Alliance expanded, with Belize and Guyana joining, and progress was made with the launch of the Digital Campus of the Copernicus Panama Centre. In Africa, the EU, along with Member States, worked towards the launch of the African–European Digital Innovation Bridge 2.0, and programmes in both regions worked towards a digital single market through initiatives such as the Global Gateway flagship Team Europe initiative on data governance in Africa. Digital was at the forefront of cooperation with some partner countries with the deployment of several digital economy packages, such as the one in the Philippines, which aims to become a digital hub in the region and an example in the Asia–Pacific region, covering connectivity, space and e-governance, especially cyber. In addition, a new programme to support the digital transition in the Southern Neighbourhood (with a traditional grant of EUR 14 million) was adopted in 2024.

In specific digital sectors, there was significant progress in terms of investment, notably in trusted and secure connectivity infrastructure, as 2024 saw the setting up of a data centre and submarine cable in Mauritania and the launch of a blending operation with the European Investment Bank for satellite connectivity in central Asia. In the Mediterranean region, the Hannibal project, approved in 2024, will support Tunisia with the financing of over EUR 200 million worth of investment in the country's network, including connection to the EU via the Medusa submarine cable, fibre roll-out and fibre backbone modernisation, the upgrading of mobile networks and investment in a new cybersecure 5G mobile core infrastructure, along with investment in an ambitious energy-efficiency plan. The EU supported the building of cyber capacity at the global level, to enhance resilience and prevent malicious cyber activities, through the mainstreaming of cybersecurity and through initiatives such as the Tallinn Summer School of Cyber Diplomacy and a partnership with Germany to enhance cybersecurity in the Economic Community of West African States countries. In the field of space data, technologies and services, the first part of the Africa–EU space partnership programme, a Global Gateway flagship project, was agreed, and the Copernicus mirror site in the Philippines became

operational and its regionalisation to the Association of Southeast Asian Nations was endorsed, scaling up this important EU–Asia space collaboration.

The EU continued to promote an integrated approach to the twin digital and green transitions through the Digital Energy Facility and the first phase of the multilateralism and digitalisation programme, both of which supported the promotion of the EU’s vision of digitalisation in the multilateral system through partnerships with several UN entities and CSOs working in various digital sectors.

The EU continued to support the digital transition in the Eastern Partnership region through various bilateral and regional initiatives. At the regional level, the EU4digital initiative continued to provide technical support to facilitate the integration of Moldova and Ukraine into the European roaming area, to accelerate the adoption of the telecom *acquis* and to support the transposition of the EU *acquis* into candidate countries’ domestic legislation. This will, in the future, allow Moldova and Ukraine to be integrated into the ‘roam like at home’ market area, bringing direct benefits due to reduced communication costs between the EU and these countries. The EaPconnect programme continued to supply high-speed internet access to research and academic centres across the region, to facilitate research collaboration and interaction between universities and research institutes.

The technical assistance and information exchange instrument (TAIEX) contributed to the general objective of a Europe fit for the digital age with dedicated events targeting neighbourhood and enlargement partners. Officials from the Eastern Partnership countries attended various regional workshops, and country specific TAIEX events, such as the Broadband Cost Reduction Regulation and the Gigabit Infrastructure Act.

Contribution to sustainable development goals

SDG	Does the programme contribute to the goal?	Example (only for the most relevant SDGs)

SDG1: End poverty in all its forms everywhere

Yes

The enhancing rural resilience in Yemen programme aims to reduce vulnerability and strengthen resilience of crisis-affected communities in Yemen through the creation of sustainable livelihoods, improved food security, economic recovery, access to basic services, climate risk reduction and community conflict mitigation. The programme is implemented by a consortium of United Nations agencies under the lead of UNDP and comprising WFP, ILO, and FAO. The main local partner for the implementation in Yemen is the Social Fund for Development, a local non-governmental organisation with public-sector competences in basic service delivery and small business support. The programme is in its third phase and the benefits for the target communities include the creation of sustainable livelihoods opportunities through improved farming practices, support for micro-, small and medium-sized enterprises to stimulate employment opportunities, community assets restoration (communal marketplaces, water infrastructure), agricultural value chains, supporting women's economic empowerment (targeted training and business skills support) as well as access to renewable energy (provision of solar power to public buildings and businesses). To date, the programme achieved significant results, such as the activation of 326 Village Cooperative Councils to define community needs; the creation of 50 sub-district Development Committees; the implementation of 407 self-help initiatives to empower communities; development of 5 accredited vocational curricula for highly demanded occupations and partnered with the Federation of Yemen Chambers of Commerce and Industry to develop an entrepreneurship training package.

The EU contribution to the third phase of this programme, which lasts from 2022 to 2025, is EUR 35 million, with an additional contribution of EUR 1 million from Sweden. The overall investment of the EU in all three phases of the enhancing rural resilience in Yemen programme amounts to EUR 105 million since 2016.

SDG2: End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture

Yes

Extreme poverty and hunger are predominantly rural, with smallholder farmers and their families making up a significant proportion of the poor and hungry. Understanding and acting on the interlinkages among supporting sustainable agriculture, empowering small farmers, promoting gender equality, ending rural poverty, ensuring healthy lifestyles, and tackling climate change is thus key to achieving SDG2. The degree of complexity requires investments in research and innovation and in technical services. For example, the Green Deal Knowledge Hub – Farm-to-Fork, developed in 2023 with a total multiannual allocation of EUR 32.5 million, allow the Commission to access technical services that by looking into national food systems, nutrition services, specific value chains, policies, and legislation help identify and put in place solutions to increase food security and nutrition and help the transformation of food systems as a way of contributing to a more equal, fair, and sustainable society.

In 2021, at the Nutrition for Growth (N4G) event in Tokyo, the EU pledged EUR 2.5 billion to support nutrition for 2021-2024. Since then, the Commission has been promoting integration of nutrition objectives in sectorial programmes and tracking nutrition-related investments in view of the next N4G in France in 2025 where the report on progress made will be presented. Nutrition objectives have been included in relevant initiatives in health, education, WASH, agriculture and social protection.

**SDG3:
Ensure
healthy
lives and
promote
well-being
for all at all
ages**

Yes

The Team Europe initiative on manufacturing and access to vaccines, medicines and health technologies (MAV+) collaborates with African partners to enhance local pharmaceutical systems and manufacturing capacity. This initiative adopts a comprehensive approach across supply, demand, and enabling environment, with six key work streams focusing on industrial development, market shaping, regulatory strengthening, technology transfer, access to finance, and research and development. Its goal is to facilitate access to quality, safe, effective, and affordable health products, aligning with the UN's SDG target 3.8.

With over EUR 1.3 billion mobilised, MAV+ operates through 89 projects and 23 implementing partners, ensuring coordination among stakeholders. It supports specific countries like Senegal, Rwanda, South Africa, Ghana, Egypt, and Nigeria in improving their pharmaceutical ecosystems and production capabilities. MAV+ aims for continent-wide benefits, leaving no one behind and fostering collaboration with the African Union and its health agencies.

At the regional level, MAV+ contributes to consolidating initiatives such as the Partnership for African Vaccine Manufacturing and the African Medicines Agency. It addresses financing gaps through partnerships and innovative financing mechanisms. Additionally, MAV+ supports regulatory strengthening, research and development, and market access to bolster Africa's self-reliance in pharmaceuticals, ultimately contributing to global health security and sustainable development.

Partner countries in the Neighbourhood East region still face significant needs in key areas such as healthcare workforce and mental health. The EU mobilised additional funding (EUR 4.9 million) which will be of paramount importance to strengthen resilience of partner countries to future health emergencies.

**SDG4:
Ensure
inclusive
and
equitable
quality
education
and
promote
lifelong
learning
opportuniti
es for all**

Yes

EU investments 2021-2023 through the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) have contributed to giving 3 513 450 girls and boys access to a primary education and 1 442 577 children to secondary education. GPE is the largest global fund solely dedicated to transforming education in lower-income countries, and a unique, multistakeholder partnership. GPE supports partner countries to develop their own pathway to transform their education system by identifying key challenges, implementing priority reforms and aligning all stakeholders to achieve results. The vision is to ensure that every girl and boy in all partner countries can get 12 years of quality education plus one year of preschool. The partnership includes currently around 68 partners countries, while most financial support goes to the lowest income and crisis-affected countries, making sure no child is left behind. This is directly contributing to SDG4 targets.

The ongoing Eastern Partnership regional education programme 'supporting education reforms and skills in the Eastern Partnership' (SER) has demonstrated significant progress and benefits within its first year of implementation on peer learning process and evidence-based policy making in the field of education. By addressing systemic challenges such as skills mismatches, outdated curricula, and inequitable access to quality education, the programme equips partner countries to better respond to the needs of their economies and societies. Key benefits include:

Improved workforce readiness: Enhancing skills and employability supports economic growth and resilience;

Social cohesion: Inclusive education reforms contribute to reducing inequalities and fostering stability;

Alignment with EU standards: Supporting policy reforms ensures alignment with EU and international benchmarks, facilitating closer integration with the EU.

**SDG5:
Achieve
gender
equality
and
empower
all women
and girls**

Yes

All projects and programmes marked as G1 (gender equality is a significant objective) or G2 (gender equality is the main objective) as per the gender equality policy marker of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's Development Assistance Committee contribute to SDG5. According to the NDICI – Global Europe Regulation, at least 85% of new initiatives implemented should have gender equality as a principal or a significant objective, as defined by the gender equality policy marker. At least 5% of these initiatives should have gender equality and women's and girls' rights and empowerment as a principal objective. The gender action plan III (2021-2025) was adopted with the same objective of 85% towards the total number of adopted initiatives, following the Development Assistance Committee's methodology. In 2023, the Gender Action Plan III was extended to 2027, but the target date for institutional and strategic targets such as the 85% target remains. In 2022, over 555 committed projects and programmes, 427 were marked G1 or G2.

In the Eastern Partnership, the EUR 9.7 million 2020-2023 EU4gender equality programme continues to aim to strengthen equal rights and opportunities for women and men in the Eastern Neighbourhood by challenging gender stereotypes, work on violence prevention and championing men's participation in care work. The programme also includes a Reform Helpdesk that supports governments' reform work towards equal opportunities for women and men and contributes to SDG5.

The Commission also contributed to the Global Survivors Fund (GSF) (EUR 2 million under the AAP 2022). In several countries around the world, GSF's work has led governments to take first steps in developing legislation and conceptualising reparation programmes. Thus far, more than 3000 survivors have received or started receiving comprehensive interim reparative measures through projects in Guinea, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Iraq, and Türkiye (with survivors from Syria). In 2024, projects have begun in South Sudan, Nigeria, and Timor Leste. Impact evaluations have pointed a significant improvement in the quality of life, psychological wellbeing, sense of justice and of dignity, as well as economic independence. Survivors also report significant impact on their children (many

of whom are now going to school for example) as well as family and community relationships.

In addition, the Commission continues to fund the UN Women project 'Promoting Women Peace and Security (WPS) with military actors in transition countries in Africa' in Central African Republic and Mozambique. The project works to enhance women's inclusion and integration among military actors, and to ensure that armed forces are better prepared to integrate a gender perspective in the planning and conduct of operations and activities.

**SDG6:
Ensure
availability
and
sustainable
manageme
nt of water
and
sanitation
for all**

Yes

To work on all dimensions of the SDG6, and notably target 6.5 to implement integrated water resources management at all levels, including through transboundary cooperation as appropriate, in 2024 the EU continued the implementation of the Team Europe initiative on transboundary water management for sustainable development and regional integration in Africa with the commitments of 3 new programmes around Lake Chad, the Senegal River and the Okavango. In addition, 2024 saw a rise in Global Gateway investments in the water sector through blending, such as the 'support to water and sanitation programme for small and intermediate cities' in Bolivia (EUR 85.38 million) or the validation of investments in waste water treatment and water access in Philippines, Mexico, Morocco, South Africa, Kenya or Sierra Leone through Climate Investor 2 equity fund.

In 2024, the Commission signed a contract for a EUR 5 million NIP investment grant, which will leverage EUR 40 million for water and sanitation infrastructure in Azerbaijan. The implementation of the EU4environment – water and data programme (EUR 12.75 million) began in 2022 and has already achieved its first results. The programme successfully initiated COVID-19 monitoring in urban wastewater in Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, and Moldova.

**SDG7:
Ensure
access to
affordable,
reliable,
sustainable
and modern
energy for
all**

Yes

In 2024, accelerating the global energy transition remained a top priority for the implementation of the Global Gateway, which made significant progress in several regions. The implementation of the Just Energy Transition Partnerships (JETPs) continued with concrete investment plans now in place for South Africa, Vietnam and Indonesia.

In sub-Saharan Africa, the Africa-EU Green Energy Initiative (AEGEI) saw notable advancements, with the commissioning of the 420 MW Nachtigal hydroelectric power plant and the launch of the 500 MW Kikot project in Cameroon. Additionally, progress was made on the Zambia-Tanzania-Kenya interconnector, a crucial project that will enhance regional energy connectivity. Furthermore, Team Europe Initiatives supporting renewable hydrogen were launched in Namibia and Mauritania, where the EU provided instrumental support in drafting the hydrogen code and setting up dedicated financial instruments to support renewable hydrogen investments. This support will be instrumental in helping these countries to develop their renewable energy sectors and reduce their dependence on fossil fuels.

In Central Asia, continuous progress has been made, namely with the Rogun Hydropower Plant Project which will serve as an anchor for a regional electricity market in the region, and the Kambar Ata Dam Project, which will ensure the region's sustainable water supply.

In South Asia, the implementation of the Regional Energy Connectivity Global Gateway Flagship, which aims to increase cross-border electricity trade, moved forward. This initiative will help to promote regional energy cooperation and reduce energy poverty in the region.

In the Americas and the Caribbean, the Global Gateway Investment Agenda, approved in 2024, continued to advance. At the OLADE's 2024 Energy Week in Paraguay, the EU proposed a regional initiative on electricity integration, focusing on key interconnection, transmission, and generation projects, including the Peru-Ecuador interconnection. The European Investment Bank also announced a EUR 1 billion financing facility for Central America.

Reducing energy dependency has been promoted, in particular in Moldova and Ukraine, through green finance, diversification of energy sources and routes,

post-synchronisation of electricity markets and securing supply by promoting energy efficiency and renewable energy deployment. Investments in infrastructure for energy and transport interconnectivity between Eastern Partnership countries and the EU also address infrastructure vulnerability to the impact of climate change, environmental challenges and hybrid threats contributing to SDG 7. The EU's energy agreement with Azerbaijan also contributes to this objective.

**SDG8:
Promote
sustained,
inclusive
and
sustainable
economic
growth, full
and
productive
employment
and
decent work
for all**

Yes

In line with Global Gateway and the need to focus on specific sectors to maximise our impact, the EU endeavours to keep on encouraging economic growth and job creation ; this is notably the case through the support it brings in the development of specific value chains, notably at regional level where the EU committed EUR 2 million in the identification of high-yield and promising sub-value chains in sub-Saharan Africa. In addition, the EU supports the development of sustainable critical raw materials value chains in its partner countries that will contribute to the socioeconomic situation of surrounding communities and the building up of local industries and jobs. Through the European Partnership for Responsible Minerals (EPRM) the EU is committed to improve the business environment, in particular for artisanal and small-scale miners through formalisation and certification activities and increased access to international markets. Vocational Education and Training programmes are only effective if aligned to concrete employment opportunities. In 2024, a EUR 75 million Team Europe initiative on opportunity-driven VET was launched that will support the skills dimension of jobs created through the Global Gateway in sub-Sahara Africa.

Additionally, the EU continues contributing towards the development of sustainable and equitable economic growth models in the Eastern Neighbourhood countries. The EU4business initiative reported an extra EUR 2.532 billion income for small and medium-sized enterprises, which received EU support in 2022. Around 78 000 companies in Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine received assistance and managed to create over 83 410 new jobs.

SDG9: Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation

Yes

The extension of the BELLA initiative, launched in 2021 with an allocated EU contribution of EUR 13 million, is part of the pillar 2 of the EU–Latin America and the Caribbean Digital Alliance. It has been designed to improve secure connectivity between Latin American and Caribbean research and education networks (14 in Latin America) and the European Union. Building upon the success of the previous phase, which included the construction of a new 6 000-km submarine cable connecting Europe directly to Latin America (BELLA-S) and a South American terrestrial fibre-optic backbone, connecting 9 cities across 6 countries (BELLA-T), the subsequent BELLA II phase will strengthen the Latin American and Caribbean digital ecosystem by extending the current digital backbone that connects Latin America and the Caribbean with the EU to, at least, five new countries (Peru, Costa Rica, Guatemala, El Salvador, and Honduras) and extending the cable to the Caribbean.

The BELLA infrastructure will connect both the Copernicus Panama and Chile Centres to foster the exchange of Earth Observation data between Europe and the Latin American and Caribbean region. In addition, it will also enable the secure sharing of Earth Observation data within the region, specifically among the research and education networks, promoting greater collaboration and knowledge-sharing.

In this second phase, the project goes beyond the connectivity, working to enhance the use of digital transformation technologies: Artificial Intelligence, Cybersecurity, Blockchain, Internet of Things, 5G, Machine Learning, and Augmented Reality to address regional challenges and drive economic growth through innovation and productivity. By improving the infrastructure and connectivity, the BELLA initiative is contributing to the achievement of SDG9, which aims to build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialisation and foster innovation. The project is expected to be completed in 2027.

The EU extended the EU4digital initiative for three more years (2022-2025; EUR 11 million), with the aim of facilitating the integration of the Eastern Partnership countries into the Digital Single Market. The programme builds on a very successful first phase (2019-2022). Via the EU4digital initiative, the EU launched the Eastern Partnership start-up ecosystem platform, which brings 2 500 digital start-

ups just one click away from the EU start-up ecosystem

**SDG10:
Reduce
inequalities
within and
among
countries**

Yes

The Gini coefficient, a measure of inequality, increased from 0.458 in 2010 to 0.499 in 2022 in Bangladesh, representing a trend toward income concentration. This rising inequality has called for improvements in the efficiency and effectiveness of its social protection system. In response, a EUR 44 million boost to a long-standing EU budget support programme is helping consolidate important reforms. This support prioritises the poor and vulnerable, through an efficient use of resources and leveraging advanced digital infrastructure for informed decision-making, digital data verification, timely disbursements, and robust monitoring. For example, in 2024, with EU support, the Government of Bangladesh established a Single Registry Management Information System (MIS), integrating data from over 30 million beneficiaries across 30 social protection programmes, enabling verification of beneficiaries' identities across MISs for improved targeting; and facilitating comprehensive data analysis for evidence-based policymaking. Moreover, the coverage of an improved version of a mother & child grant has expanded from 1.045 million beneficiaries in Fiscal Year (FY) 2022 to 1.63 million in FY 2024. This programme supports low-income mothers in providing balanced diets to their children during critical developmental stages while promoting equal opportunities for all. Complementary measures include establishing interoperability between the mother and child grant MIS and health sector IT systems to monitor access to maternal and child healthcare services. Moreover, for workers in the export-oriented sector, an unemployment scheme has been introduced and the digitisation of workers' data is ongoing to ensure smooth benefits delivery. A pilot employment injury scheme is also being rolled out in collaboration with the private sector. These initiatives are paving the way for advancing contributory social protection reforms, helping Bangladesh reduce fiscal pressure and extend coverage to the 'missing middle'. Given Bangladesh's vulnerability to natural disasters, the EU is also supporting the integration of anticipatory, shock-responsive approaches into social protection programmes, fostering a more flexible and resilient social protection system.

Contributing to SDG 10, the EU adopted a complementary initiative of EUR 26 million in 2024 to help Jordan enhance their social protection system, to assist Jordan's most vulnerable groups, namely

female and male persons with disabilities and parentless children.

**SDG11:
Make cities
and human
settlements
inclusive,
safe,
resilient
and
sustainable**

Yes

The action in support of the Secretariat of the Global Covenant of Mayors (GCoM) for Climate and Energy strives to develop, monitor and lead climate and sustainable energy action and diplomacy globally through the local level. It thereby supports the implementation of the Paris Agreement together with the 2030 Agenda and its SDGs and other UN initiatives focused on climate change and cities. The support aims to strengthen the coherence and the impact of the GCoM initiative by providing support to its Global Secretariat. The GCoM is the largest global alliance for cities united in climate action, spread across 6 continents and in more than 132 countries. According to the Aggregation report 2023, GCoM comprises 13 239 cities which, by becoming signatories of the initiative, voluntarily committed to reduce their CO2 emissions by at least 30% in 2030. 83% of GCoM signatory cities have a target to reduce greenhouse gas emissions more ambitious than their respective countries' Nationally Determined Contribution (NDCs). According to a recent evaluation, the Global Covenant of Mayors is possibly one of the highest-potential global EU initiatives, not just for the EU but for signatory cities, partners and stakeholders. Support consists of enhancing the international visibility and the communications related to the GCoM initiative in coordination with the Regional Covenants, improving the global coherence and supporting the work of the Regional Covenants, as well as providing ad hoc or on-demand support to specific regions and countries, particularly those not currently covered by EU-financed Regional Covenants.

The International Urban and Regional Cooperation (IURC) North America project fostered transatlantic collaboration among seven city pairings and one trio, connecting eight cities from the U.S. and Canada with nine European cities. These partnerships focused on developing and implementing best practices in nature-based solutions, sustainable urban mobility and transport, and inclusive urban planning, with a strong emphasis on social equity and the circular economy. Through study visits, city representatives observed innovative projects firsthand, while thematic webinars on topics like renewable energy and climate resilience facilitated knowledge exchange. Throughout 2024, the project actively forged new partnerships and laid the foundation for possible collaborations in key EU initiatives like Horizon Europe. It also positioned cities for the development of Urban Cooperation Action Plans (UCAPs), driving practical

solutions such as sustainable urban mobility, affordable housing, and nature-based infrastructure, all aligned with the objectives of SDG11.

Arctic regions face unique challenges when it comes to climate change. The Arctic Urban-Regional Cooperation (AURC), which brings together 15 Arctic towns and cities, has enabled the exchange of valuable best practices and methodologies for climate action such as wildfire prevention and mitigation, enhancing community resilience, preparedness and engagement. Furthermore, AURC is also dedicated to promoting sustainable Arctic tourism, recognising the importance of responsible tourism practices in preserving the region's fragile environment. To this end, AURC has launched a cooperation with the Swedish Lapland Visitors Board, leveraging the 'Care for the Arctic Toolbox' as a model to define joint action areas for sustainable Arctic tourism, ultimately contributing to the long-term conservation of the Arctic region.

**SDG12:
Ensure
sustainable
consumption
and
production
patterns**

Yes

NDICI – Global Europe finances a growing number of global, regional and country initiatives that support sustainable consumption and production and the transition to inclusive green and circular economies in partner countries, thereby also contributing to tackle the root causes of climate change and biodiversity loss. As part of the EU's Global Gateway strategy, the Commissioner for International Partnerships announced two new strategic circular economy initiatives at the World Circular Economy Forum: the EU Circular Economy Resource Centre and the Switch to Circular Economy in Eastern and Southern Africa. In 2024, the EU supported the circular economy transition in over 100 countries across the world, including through bilateral initiatives such as GREENTech4CE in Zambia, global and regional initiatives such as the United Nations Partnership for Action on Green Economy, the SWITCH-Asia and AI-Invest Verde programmes, through assistance to the circular economy alliances and coalitions in Africa and Latin America and the Caribbean, and through the SWITCH to Green Facility – especially through capacity building: for instance, the Green Growth Knowledge Partnership has improved the availability of adapted, evidence-based circular economy knowledge for policy makers through online tools, and the SWITCH to Circular Economy Value Chain programme developed a tailored capacity building programme reaching 500 stakeholders in 5 countries. The African Union developed and launched its Continental Action Plan on Circular Economy with the support of the European Commission. With EU support through the Switch to Green technical assistance facility, the African Union developed its first continental Action Plan on Circular Economy and Zambia established a pilot Extended Producer Responsibility scheme, with a 'learning by doing' approach, focusing on key aspects of EPR implementation such as raising public awareness about waste sorting, establishing a producer responsibility organisation, developing suitable management structures and exploring viable funding mechanisms. Implemented across three locations with 10 000 participants, the project explored waste sorting techniques, bin placement, and collection methodologies, revealing that simplified sorting and strategic bin placement could significantly increase plastic recovery rates.

The EU also supported cities to address the challenges posed by waste management, by enhancing circularity and recycling of waste materials, for example in

Luanda (Angola), to target the private sector through advancing recycling schemes.

The EUR 20.9 million **SWITCH to Circular Economy Value Chain (SWITCH2CE)** project, coordinated by UNIDO, has continued to work with EU multinational companies to support small and medium-sized enterprises (suppliers) within selected value chains (textiles, electronics and ICT, plastic and plastic packaging) to adopt circular economy practices. Since early 2024, SWITCH2CE has been implementing (among other things) a pilot action with H&M Group in Bangladesh to develop an integrated sorting and recycling system for blended textile waste using innovative technology to recycle it into usable fibres. The project tests industrial textile waste feedstock, producing recycled materials for spinning, fabric development, and garment production. It also establishes traceable PET waste collection at the rate of 12 tons/month, by engaging 500 households and 30 organisations. The pilot formalises plastic waste handling through a QR code-based traceability system, pioneering sustainable waste management practices.

The EU4environment programme is making a significant impact on sustainable consumption and production in the Eastern Neighbourhood. It has increased awareness and adoption of circular economy principles and practices among both public and private actors. As a result of the programme, legislation has been brought in line with the EU acquis in areas such as green procurement (in Georgia and Moldova), waste management (in Armenia, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova), and extended producer responsibility (in Ukraine). Moldova has been able to introduce its own eco-label and incorporate sustainability criteria into public procurement tenders. Pilot projects for mapping industrial waste have also been implemented in Azerbaijan, Georgia, and Ukraine. Enterprises in the region have received expert guidance to enhance resource and energy efficiency and embrace eco-innovative business strategies in key sectors. For example, the EU4environment programme has conducted assessments of Ukrainian companies using the Resource Efficient and Cleaner Production methodology. To date, nine companies have implemented approximately one-fifth of the

identified RECP measures, resulting in expected annual savings of around EUR 200 000.

**SDG13:
Take urgent
action to
combat
climate
change and
its impacts**

Yes

In 2024, the implementation of the Team Europe initiative on climate-change adaptation and resilience in Africa with a budget of over EUR 1 billion moved forward. The initiative provides a way forward to mobilise additional finance and find new modalities between European and African institutions to promote resilience and adaptation. It responds to disaster risks by focusing on a comprehensive four-pillar framework. This Team Europe initiative will support African partners by improving the understanding of risks, strengthening policy and governance, and leveraging public and private resources to that end. It also promotes Climate and Disaster Risk Finance and Insurance (CDRFI) mechanisms to protect vulnerable populations against residual risks. The Team Europe initiative made further progress in 2024 through support for the Global Shield against Climate Risks Initiative (EUR 30 million contribution), which implemented in 2024 its first risk transfer solution in Ghana against drought; the Africa-EU Space partnership programme; and the African Risk Capacity (EUR 10 million contribution) through whose drought insurance policies Zambia, Mozambique, Zimbabwe and Malawi received support to respond to the severe drought caused by El Nino. As part of this Team Europe initiative, the EU remained engaged in the Adaptation Fund (EUR 100 million contribution) and the newly operationalised Fund for responding to Loss and Damage (EUR 25 million pledged), where the EU has a shared seat with Ireland, and is expected to start providing support in the near term.

The Covenant of Mayors East is an EU-funded project aimed at introducing the EU climate and energy initiative to the Eastern Partnership countries. It supports local authorities in implementing sustainable energy policies, improving the security of energy supply, and facilitates their contribution to climate change mitigation and adaptation. The overall objective is to enable local authorities in Eastern Partnership countries to develop and implement sustainable energy and climate initiatives, therefore significantly contributing to the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions and energy consumption, increasing generation of renewable energy, and adaptation to climate change. The signatories to the Covenant of Mayors East, which joined the Covenant of Mayors before October 2016, undertook to reduce their CO₂ emissions by at least 20% by 2020. New signatories commit to reducing CO₂ emissions by 30%

by 2030. This programme, along with several others, was showcased at COP29 in Baku in November 2024.

**SDG14:
Conserve
and
sustainably
use the
oceans,
seas and
marine
resources
for
sustainable
developmen
t**

Yes

In 2024, the EU maintained a high level of commitment towards the achievement of SDG 14 targets. It adopted several new regional programmes focussing on ocean governance, sustainable use and conservation, through an integrated approach. For example, a EUR 40 million Global Ocean programme was adopted to support the involvement of partner countries in the conservation and sustainable use of the high seas, as well as several regional programme to strengthen ocean governance, sustainable blue economy and conservation in the Pacific (EUR 20 million), in the Western Indian Ocean (EUR 58 million), and in Central Africa (EUR 42 million), the latter also including a contribution to fighting against marine pollution.

The EU will also contribute to supporting ocean prediction capacities in sub-Saharan Africa (EUR 7 million), in alignment with target SDG 14.a on developing research capacity and transfer marine technology.

These programmes are also complemented by several bilateral programmes.

The EU works closely with its neighbours in the Black Sea in the context of the Common Maritime Agenda for the Black Sea. An environmental monitoring project (EU4EMBLAS) continued its activities. In 2022, the project worked to identify needs for improving laboratory capacity to monitor the marine environment in Georgia. Several awareness raising campaigns were carried out in Ukraine and support has been provided to children affected by Russia's war of aggression to recover through art and science, as part of an initiative called 'Black Sea diaries'.

**SDG15:
Protect,
restore and
promote
sustainable
use of
terrestrial
ecosystems
,
sustainably
manage
forests,
combat
desertificat
ion, and
halt and
reverse
land
degradation
and halt
biodiversity
loss**

Yes

In 2020, in its Biodiversity strategy 2030, the EU committed to launch **NaturAfrica**, a vast initiative to protect biodiversity and natural habitats in sub-Saharan Africa, through an integrated landscape approach. Under NaturAfrica, the EU expanded its support in 2024 to 117 000 km² of protected areas.

The EU also supports the development and testing of innovative models for the conservation and sustainable management and use of wild species. During the 2018-2024 period, the '**sustainable wildlife management**' programme (EUR 47 million) operated in 19 sites across 11 countries to establish participatory management mechanisms, resulting in 34 521 km² of territories under sustainable management. 28 sustainable wildlife management policies, strategies, laws, regulations and analyses were prepared to support partner countries improve their legal frameworks. The Sustainable Wildlife Management programme promotes integrated approaches focusing on the nexus between biodiversity, livelihoods and health, in parts of the world where wildlife plays an important role – as source of food, income or cultural identity – in the livelihoods of local communities. A new phase has been approved in 2022 to support the consolidation and scaling up of the results.

In order to support the mobilisation of financial resources to conserve biodiversity and ecosystems (in line with target 15.a of the Global Biodiversity Framework), the EU launched a new programme to strengthen partner countries' abilities to mobilise domestic and international finance for biodiversity, in collaboration with UNDP, as well as a pilot project in Peru to assess the potential and the challenges of biodiversity certification and nature credits.

The EU also launched a new programme (EUR 27 million) to support transnational and transcontinental collaboration to combat organised criminal networks and enhance global support for efforts to combat poaching and trafficking of wild species (target 15.c),

Through the 'Post-2020 Biodiversity Framework – EU Support project', the EU promotes a whole-of-society approach to implementing the Global Biodiversity Framework, and the integration of biodiversity across all sectors. This is achieved through technical guidance, dialogue facilitation, and direct assistance

to national authorities and stakeholders in ten countries. The project also enabled significant visibility of the EU's external action on biodiversity at COP16 of the Convention on Biological Diversity in Cali, Colombia, in October 2024.

Thanks to the support provided by the Commission, a number of Observatories in Africa, Pacific and Caribbean regions have been selected to become technical support centres of the CBD. These Observatories, now Centres of Excellence, will play a critical role in supporting countries to report against the targets of the CBD. Capitalising on the 15 years' experience in supporting the country to develop a commercial forestry sector, a new EUR 40 million 'Partnering for forests' programme has been approved for Uganda as part of the AAP 2022 under NDICI. The action aims at tackling the roots causes of deforestation in Uganda while promoting reforestation and sustainable economic development in an integrated and comprehensive manner. The programme is implementing the EU-Uganda Forest Partnership, signed at CoP27 by the President of the Commission Ursula von der Leyen. Moreover, it will contribute to several EU objectives and commitments such as the Paris Agreement on climate and the Global Biodiversity Framework by increasing forest cover by both decreasing deforestation & forest degradation and promoting forest restoration and community support for preservation efforts, the Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade Action Plan by improving forest governance and sustainable management and finally the EU Global Gateway by increasing inclusive investments and decent job opportunities for women and men in sustainable forestry and forest-based value chains. The different components of the programme have started to be contracted at the end of 2023 with a mix of modalities that allow to work with EU Member States, UN Agencies and the Government of Uganda.

**SDG16:
Promote
peaceful
and
inclusive
societies
for
sustainable
developmen
t, provide
access to
justice for
all and build
effective,
accountabl
e and
inclusive
institutions
at all levels**

Yes

Within the framework of the EuroMed justice programme (2020-2023), Southern Neighbourhood countries contributed to the preparation of action plans on judicial cooperation for countering trafficking in human beings and smuggling of migrants, and on confiscation of crime proceeds and asset recovery. The overall objective is to contribute to protecting the EU neighbouring countries' citizens against criminal activities, respecting the rule of law and fundamental human rights. The programme builds sustainable cross-regional mechanisms of cooperation, strengthens regional judicial training platforms, develops practical tools. Partner countries are Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Palestine and Tunisia.

Additional contribution to SDG16 is the programme 'Strengthening local governance and resilience in South Sudan' (launched in 2022) that has been enhancing effectiveness of subnational governance structures on inter-and-intra communal peace dialogues and in addressing discriminatory gender/social norms as well as enhanced effectiveness of local communities to address and improve food security and develop job opportunities for youth and women specifically. It has also contributed to improved efficiency and accessibility of basic services provided by subnational governance structures, in particularly addressing the needs of women and youth. The observation of 16 electoral processes contributed to the promotion of peaceful societies, access to justice and building of strong institutions, while providing accountability and transparency in the electoral processes of partner countries.

In the Central African Republic, Radio Ndeke Luka, supported by partners including the EU, also contributes to SDG16 by promoting peace, accountability, and reliable information. As an independent media outlet, it combats misinformation, fosters dialogue, and educates citizens on justice and human rights. Through EU backing, the station strengthens democratic institutions, supports reconciliation, and enhances social cohesion in a conflict-affected country.

**SDG17:
Strengthen
the means
of
implementa
tion and
revitalize
the Global
Partnership
for
Sustainable
Developme
nt**

Yes

In line with the SDG17, the EU maintained its support for policy coherence and coordination as well as dialogue with regional organisations, notably the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) as the main institutional interlocutor, but also with other actors, such as the Anna Lindh Foundation and the League of Arab States. The EU's support for the UfM Secretariat contributes to enhancing multistakeholder partnerships which mobilise and share expertise aiming to the achievement of the sustainable development goals (SDGs 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 12, 13, 14 and 15, among others) in the Euro-Med countries. In 2022, the UfM held several events and four Ministerial meetings (on Water, Research and Innovation, Employment, and Gender), thus confirming its convening power. The support for the Anna Lindh Foundation contributes to the promotion of more inclusive and pluralistic societies through its support for civil society and its focus on cultural diversity.

In addition, the EU continued to support civil society organisations and local authorities through its Framework Partnership Agreements with global civil society networks and associations of local authorities as well as through the Policy Forum on Development (PFD) established since 2013 as a space for multistakeholder dialogue on EU development policies. Partnering with these actors on agreed common objectives contributes to effective implementing policies and programmes that meet people's needs, reduce inequalities, and fulfil the central commitment of the 2030 Agenda to leave no one behind. It promotes multistakeholder partnerships which mobilise and share expertise aiming to the achievement across all the SDGs.

TAIEX and Twinning institution building tools strategically supported the implementation, throughout 2024, of the Commission priorities in partner countries notably through the organisation of high-level flagship TAIEX events.

513 events of the total events organised in 2024, were implemented for the Neighbourhood Partner countries. 120 Multicounty TAIEX events were organised in 2024. The Western Balkans benefited from 48% of TAIEX operations in 2024, Eastern Partnership countries from 41%, followed by the Neighbourhood South region with 11%. 82 Twinning

projects were ongoing, and 34 new ones were signed in 2024.

TAIEX and Twinning instrument are also available to EU partners in the rest of the world, in sub-Saharan Africa, the Americas and the Caribbean, Asia and the Pacific in wide ranging policy areas, such as e-governance, anti-corruption, sustainable finance and food safety. The two institution building instruments help strengthening their national development policies and achieving the SDGs since 2019. In 2024, 65 TAIEX events were organised in sub-Saharan Africa, the Americas and the Caribbean, Asia and the Pacific.

The focus on peer-to-peer exchanges in the public sector has the potential to create trust and build long-term institutional partnerships with the EU.

Support for reforms

In delivering on the Global Gateway through NDICI – Global Europe, the Commission promotes reforms at the core of investment climate, according to EU priorities in each country and with due complementarity with all Team Europe stakeholders. These are reforms which can pertain to economic governance at large in the country (e.g. public procurement, public investment management or debt management) or are considered enablers for successful Global Gateway flagship projects (e.g. upgrading the regulatory framework for the production/commercialisation of solar or wind power, or for operators in strategic transport corridors). Examples can be found in the [Communication JOIN\(2024\)25 – Building sustainable international partnerships as a Team Europe](#) or in the [Annual Report on EU External Action instruments](#).

This is part of the 360-degree approach applied by the Commission in its rollout of the Global Gateway. This approach entails the systematic application, tailored to the context, of the 6 key principles set out in the Global Gateway [Communication JOIN\(2021\)30](#), which guide the selection, implementation and monitoring of all Global Gateway investments: 1) democratic values and high standards; 2) good governance and transparency; 3) equal partnerships, 4) green and clean, 5) security-focused and 6) catalysing private sector investment. Several of these principles are linked to legal obligations, notably mainstreaming human rights, democracy, rule of law, gender equality, environmental protection and the fight against climate change, in line with the Treaty and the NDICI – Global Europe Regulation.

Incentives for reforms are provided by the favourable financing conditions offered through the European Fund for Sustainable Development Plus to back public or private investments, through budget support or thanks to technical assistance fostering domestic capacities for reforms. In Egypt, Armenia and soon Moldova, this effort to promote reforms is complemented by dedicated Comprehensive Partnerships or performance-based facility that condition the

disbursement of payments to the achievement of agreed reform steps. In the neighbourhood region, macro-financial assistance financed by NDICI – Global Europe plays an equally important role to promote reforms.

In the Neighbourhood region, twinning helped modernising public administrations through analysis and policy development, legal guidance, technical expertise, drafting laws and regulations, system and procedure design and development, as well as facilitating job shadowing, workshops, and study visits. Twinning is deployed to support the transition towards a green, digital and inclusive economy and covers all sectors of the EU body of legislation.

Several indicators of the Global Europe Results Framework measure reforms, please find below an overview with the current values under NDICI – Global Europe:

21 countries supported by the EU to strengthen revenue mobilisation, public financial management and/or budget transparency (GERF 2.19)

16 countries and cities with climate change and/or disaster risk reduction strategies: (a) developed or (b) under implementation (GERF 2.5)

5 countries supported by the EU to (a) develop and/or revise, (b) implement digital-related policies/strategies/laws/regulations (GERF 2.10) a) 4 and b) 1

3 countries supported by the EU to strengthen investment climate (GERF 2.16)

215 Number of government policies developed or revised with civil society organisation participation through EU support (GERF 2.29)

5 countries supported by the EU to conduct elections and/or improve their electoral process (GERF 2.26)

Since 2021, EU budget support supported reforms in many domains, and mostly in relation to governance (SDG 16), education (SDG 4), agriculture/nutrition (SDG 2), and energy transition/climate change (SDG 9 or SDG 13). Since 2021, budget support has accounted for an average of 8% of NDICI payments, excluding the neighbourhood component. Budget support is made of fixed tranches (1/3 roughly on average) and variable tranches (2/3 roughly on average). The latter are contingent on achieving specific targets in addition to budget support eligibility/general conditions, which are also used to promote reforms holistically. Against this background, while looking at variable tranches indicators provides only a very partial picture, estimations show that between 2021 and 2023 79 variable tranches' indicators were achieved in full, 9 partly achieved and 11 not achieved. In financial terms, variable tranches were disbursed at 83% on average.

EUROPEAN INSTRUMENT FOR INTERNATIONAL NUCLEAR SAFETY COOPERATION

Concrete examples of achievements

3 181	29	111	38
people participated in the training and tutoring programme between 2014 and 2024 with the support of the instrument.	countries benefited from EU assistance in relation to nuclear safety between 2014 and 2024 with the support of the instrument.	legal and regulatory documents were prepared, introduced and/or revised in the beneficiary countries with the support of EU expertise.	nuclear waste management and strategy documents were developed between 2014 and 2024 thanks to the support of the instrument.
3	3	61%	
nuclear master's courses were continued by the education programme financed by the instrument between 2022 and 2024.	out of 7 priority sites have been fully remediated in Central Asia, thanks to the instrument's contributions to the Environmental Remediation Account managed by the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development.	is the percentage of restored and replaced critical equipment destroyed or looted in key facilities in Ukraine, including in the Central Analytical Laboratory, mobile laboratory and Central Radioactive Waste Management Enterprise, within the Chornobyl exclusion zone.	

Budget programming and implementation

Budget programming (million EUR)

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	Total
Financial programming	37.6	38.6	39.9	41.8	44.1	47.2	50.9	300.0
NextGenerationEU	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Decommitments made available again (*)	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Contributions from other countries and entities	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Total	37.6	38.6	39.9	41.8	44.1	47.2	50.9	300.0

(*) Only Article 15(3) of the Financial Regulation.

Cumulative budget implementation at the end of 2024 (million EUR):

	Implementation	Budget	Implementation rate
Commitments	226.9	300.0	75.6%
Payments	95.5	0.0	31.8%

Implementation and performance

Key performance indicators

	Baseline	Progress	Target	Results	Assessment
Number of countries benefiting from EU support in developing a culture of safety for nuclear energy	0	85%	20 in 2027	17 in 2024 compared to a target of 20	On track

Number of regulatory documents produced in beneficiary countries with the support of EU expertise	0	> 100%	20 in 2027	87 in 2024 compared to a target of 20	On track
Number of nuclear safeguards authorities benefiting from Commission-funded projects	0	> 100%	3 in 2027	41 in 2024 compared to a target of 3	Achieved

The European Instrument for International Safety Cooperation (INSC) builds on the recognised and successful assistance and cooperation with partner countries that has been in place since 1991 within the scope of the Euratom treaty.

Improvements in the governmental, legal and regulatory frameworks that ensure the safe use of nuclear energy is based on the transfer of regulatory practices used in the Member States.

The reaction to Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine since February 2022 demonstrated that the instrument can meet the needs of partners under challenging and constantly evolving conditions. The provision of support to Ukraine to address the consequences of the unprovoked Russian full-scale invasion and continued aggression is a priority. This includes restoring stolen, looted and destroyed nuclear and radiation-protection-related infrastructure in Ukraine.

The INSC-funded programmes in Ukraine continued to be implemented without delays, despite the war-related hardship conditions such as insecurity and frequent electricity blackouts. These achievements were made possible by the determination and resilient efforts of the Ukrainian beneficiaries, the implementing partners and the coordination efforts of the EU through its support organisations in Ukraine.

The main implementation modalities used by the INSC include direct management (37%) with non-profit organisations and the private sector and indirect management (63%) via Member State's agencies, such as Enabel, Expertise France, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Finland and the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency, and international organisations such as the International Atomic Energy Agency.

The main achievements of the INSC are as follows.

The EU contribution to the International Chernobyl Cooperation Account, managed by the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development for the reconstruction of nuclear-safety-related infrastructure in Ukraine, allowed the bank to start its ambitious programme to support continued infrastructure development at the Chornobyl nuclear power plant and to procure firefighting equipment and vehicles for the safe management of radioactive waste in the Chornobyl exclusion zone.

The EU has contributed to the financing of the International Atomic Energy Agency, which facilitated permanent and other expert missions to Ukrainian nuclear facilities, including the permanent mission to the temporarily occupied Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant.

The EU delivered diesel generators which will ensure back-up power in case of a major event involving loss of the external electricity grid or station blackout, financed by the Instrument to Armenia as part of the implementation of the recommendations of the European Nuclear Safety Regulators Group's post-Fukushima stress tests of the nuclear power in Medzamor.

The environmental remediation in Central Asia, as implemented via the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development through the Environmental Remediation Account, addresses the legacy of former uranium mining and milling legacy sites. So far, three sites have been fully remediated: Min-Kush and Shekaftar in Kyrgyzstan and Charkesar in Uzbekistan. Yangiabad (Uzbekistan) is in the completion phase and Mailuu-Suu's (Kyrgyzstan) remediation is ongoing. INSC funding from both the previous and present multiannual financial frameworks has been used.

The instrument continues to fund the implementation of the EU's commitment under Annex III of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, the 'Iran nuclear deal', relating to civil nuclear cooperation with Iran.

The instrument supported the remediation of old radioactively contaminated laboratories in Vinca, Serbia.

INSC support for the development of a strategy on regulatory assessment in case of potential introduction of small modular reactors in Ghana was continued.

A new contract for EU support under the instrument was signed to support Jordan Energy and Minerals Regulatory Commission and Jordan Atomic Energy Commission.

Contribution to horizontal priorities

Contribution to green budgeting priorities:

The amount committed under climate mainstreaming relates to the environmental remediation programme in central Asia (Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan), aiming at cleaning up and restoring former uranium legacy sites. So far, three sites have been fully remediated: Min-Kush and Shekaftar in Kyrgyzstan and Charkesar in Uzbekistan. Yangiabad (Uzbekistan) is in the completion phase and Mailuu-Suu's (Kyrgyzstan) remediation is ongoing.

Contribution to gender equality (million EUR) (*)

Gender score	2021	2022	2023	2024	Total
2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
1	34.3	31.5	35.1	38.9	139.8
0*	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
0	3.3	7.0	4.8	2.9	18.0
Total:	37.6	38.5	39.9	41.8	157.8

(*) Based on the applied gender contribution methodology, the following scores are attributed at the most granular level of intervention possible:

2: interventions the principal objective of which is to improve gender equality;

1: interventions that have gender equality as an important and deliberate objective but not as the main reason for the intervention;

0: non-targeted interventions (interventions that are expected to have no significant bearing on gender equality);

0*: score to be assigned to interventions with a likely but not yet clear positive impact on gender equality.

The INSC continues to promote gender equality through its training, tutoring and education programme, where gender balance is encouraged in the selection of participants from partner countries.

Gender-disaggregated information:

In 2024, 20 students followed the master's course in European leadership for safety education financed by the INSC, six of whom were women, and 25 followed the master's course in nuclear safeguards, 12 of whom were women. The course started in 2022.

In the tutoring and training programme financed under INSC, 329 people were trained, 135 of whom were women (41%).

Contribution to the digital transition

N/A

Contribution to sustainable development goals

SDG	Does the programme contribute to the goal?	Example (only for the most relevant SDGs)
SDG5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls	Yes	Almost half of all students benefitting from training, tutoring and educational programmes are women. One of the main objectives of the instrument is sustainability, which includes training and capacity building. Those are taking gender balance into account by design.

SDG11: Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable	Yes	Environmental remediation of uranium mining legacy sites in Central Asia provides a safer environment to the local population.
SDG16: Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels	Yes	Under INSC, we have an ongoing contract with the nuclear safety regulator of Ukraine for alignment with the EU <i>acquis</i>. New contract to support Jordan Energy and Minerals Regulatory Commission and Jordan Atomic Energy Commission
SDG17: Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development	No	

Support for reforms

The Instrument for International Nuclear Safety Cooperation has among its the objectives to transfer the EU *Acquis*, which includes the nuclear safety directive with one of the main provisions to have an independent safety regulator. The engagement with third countries aims therefore to strengthen the independence of nuclear safety regulators in line with EU standards and best practices. The engagement is implemented by EU experts who support the alignment and the development of procedures, guidelines, directives, regulations, laws and strategic plans in countries like South Africa, Nigeria and Ghana. With candidate and accession countries, INSC engages to harmonise their nuclear legislative framework further with Euratom's *acquis*, as in Armenia, Serbia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Ukraine and Türkiye.

Contribution to strategic technologies (STEP)

N/A

HUMANITARIAN AID PROGRAMME

Concrete examples of achievements

EUR 2.4 billion of humanitarian aid was provided to the most vulnerable in 2024.	116 countries received humanitarian aid delivered from the EU in 2024.	2.3 million girls and boys benefited from the 'education in emergencies' initiative in 2024.	5 319 metric tonnes of humanitarian aid materiel were transported via 97 chartered flights, sea and land transportation through the EU Humanitarian Response Capacity in 2024.

Budget programming and implementation

Budget programming (million EUR)

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	Total
Financial programming	2 168.1	2 441.8	2 408.0	2 494.8	1 943.6	1 927.5	1 962.4	15 346.3
NextGenerationEU	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Decommitments made available again (*)	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Contributions from other countries and entities	9.9	5.7	11.9	11.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	38.5
Total	2 178.0	2 447.5	2 419.9	2 505.9	1 943.6	1 927.5	1 962.4	15 384.8

(*) Only Article 15(3) of the Financial Regulation.

Cumulative budget implementation at the end of 2024 (million EUR)

	Implementation	Budget	Implementation rate
Commitments	N/A	N/A	N/A
Payments	N/A	N/A	N/A

Implementation and performance

Key performance indicators

	Baseline	Progress	Target	Results	Assessment
Geographical coverage of the EU humanitarian aid: percentage of countries in need of humanitarian assistance benefiting from EU-supported operations	0	14%	100% annually from 2022 to 2027	Milestone achieved for 2021. Milestones not achieved for 2022, 2023 and 2024	Moderate progress
Percentage of humanitarian aid funding targeting actions in forgotten crises	0	57%	> 15% annually from 2021 to 2027	Milestones achieved for 2021 till 2024	On track

Number of interventions of humanitarian aid operations funded by DG European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations	0	57%	177 annually from 2021 to 2027	Milestones achieved for 2021 till 2024	On track
Percentage of the initial budget for humanitarian aid allocated to education in emergencies	0	57%	10% annually from 2021 to 2027	Milestones achieved for 2021 till 2024	On track
Number of children reached with EU 'education in emergencies' assistance	0	43%	1.86 million children annually from 2021 to 2027	Milestones achieved for 2021, 2022 and 2024. Milestone not achieved for 2023	On track

Percentage of humanitarian assistance grants including elements of disaster preparedness, resilience and disaster risk reduction	0	0%	75% from 2024 to 2027	Milestones not achieved in 2021 till 2024	Deserves attention

The EU humanitarian aid programme performed well in 2024 in providing emergency assistance to people worldwide, particularly the most vulnerable hit by human-induced disasters and the impact of natural hazards. Together, the EU and its Member States are one of the world's major humanitarian aid donors, providing around 27.4% of the global share of committed humanitarian aid contributions.

Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine, the conflict in and around Gaza and escalation of hostilities in the Middle East, along with the dramatic humanitarian consequences of ongoing conflict in Myanmar and Sudan, the complex crises in Afghanistan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Haiti and in the Horn of Africa, and protracted crises in the Sahel region, Venezuela and Yemen underscore the dire challenges faced by vulnerable populations worldwide. These conflicts and crises are further fuelled by challenges derived from climate change, fragility, failed governance, structural poverty, food insecurity and continued widespread violations of international humanitarian law.

Owing to the strong operational knowledge and technical expertise of its unique network of humanitarian field offices, in 2024 the EU was able to fund more than 259 million interventions. Through a range of humanitarian partners, EU humanitarian assistance has been delivered even in those areas most difficult to reach. In 2024, more than 22% of the EU initial humanitarian budget was spent on forgotten crises, 38% of operations included disaster preparedness and 10% of the budget was allocated to safe and quality education.

Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine had a devastating impact on more than 14.6 million Ukrainians ⁽⁷⁵⁾. In 2024, the EU Commission made EUR 165 million available to address immediate humanitarian needs. With the Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (DG ECHO) at the frontline, the EU and its Member states have raised more than 3.6 billion, mobilising all available tools, resources and capacities to deliver assistance to populations in record time. In the Gaza Strip, the humanitarian needs in all sectors are massive. The entire population of Gaza (2.1 million) is exposed to security and protection risks. DG ECHO has committed over EUR 237 million for 2024. In Sudan ⁽⁷⁶⁾, 24.8 million people, over half of the population, are acute food insecure with identified famine in at least five areas. The conflict has resulted in massive violations of international humanitarian law and

⁽⁷⁵⁾ <https://www.unocha.org/publications/report/ukraine/ukraine-humanitarian-needs-and-response-plan-2024-december-2023-enuk>.

⁽⁷⁶⁾ <https://reliefweb.int/report/sudan/sudan-humanitarian-needs-and-response-plan-2024-december-2023>.

likely crimes against humanity. In 2024, the EU allocated nearly EUR 260 million to the Sudan crisis.

In addition to humanitarian funding, the Commission deployed its in-house emergency humanitarian response tools, such as the European Humanitarian Response Capacity. In 2024, this initiative responded to 16 crises affecting 17 countries, deploying its range of transportation services including chartered flights, and a range of logistics services. The Commission also mobilised its emergency funding tool, the Emergency Toolbox, to provide additional financial response to sudden-onset disasters.

The Commission engaged in 2024 at all levels with development and peace actors, to jointly address the root causes of fragility. Through a new tool, the ‘Team Europe HDP Nexus Collaboration Framework’, the Commission aims to facilitate collaboration among EU external services at the country level. It was used to initiate nexus processes in Afghanistan, Ethiopia and Pakistan.

In delivering humanitarian aid, the following two main risks are recurrently considered in activities under the programme.

Access risk. This refers to the increasing number of countries where authorities are limiting access to populations needing assistance, for instance in Ethiopia, Myanmar, Palestine ⁽⁷⁷⁾, Ukraine, Venezuela or Yemen.

Physical security risk. This refers to the maintenance of security of Commission staff. The Commission ensures a constant monitoring of volatile situations and readapts its security as necessary.

Contribution to horizontal priorities

Contribution to green budgeting priorities (EUR million):

	Implementation				Estimates			Total	% of the total envelope
	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027		
Climate mainstreaming	840.5	1 017.7	965.7	1 010.6	N/A	N/A	N/A	3 834.6	25.0%

The figure for 2024 (EUR 1 010.6 million) is the result of the application of the methodology to track spending contributing to climate mainstreaming. The Commission is implementing central tracking at the commitment level, to improve the accuracy and reliability of data on climate action. The tracking is based on the EU’s climate-marker methodology, made up of three scores (0%, 40% and 100%). Generally, humanitarian aid projects have climate adaptation as a ‘significant objective’ (40% coefficient) with some exceptions (such as ECHO Flight, Epidemics or communications actions, which have a 0% contribution to climate), while preparedness actions within humanitarian aid have a 100% contribution to climate, as its

⁽⁷⁷⁾ This designation shall not be construed as recognition of a State of Palestine and is without prejudice to the individual positions of the Member States on this issue.

objective has climate adaptation objectives as fundamental in the design, or the motivation for the activity.

In order to reduce the carbon footprint and the environmental damage of humanitarian aid, minimum environmental requirements and associated guidance became mandatory in 2023 for all EU-funded humanitarian aid operations. A series of workshops and trainings for partners and DG ECHO staff was rolled out. DG ECHO also further financed trainings on the Nexus Environmental Assessment Tool, which directly supports the implementation of the requirement on conducting environmental screenings. DG ECHO continued to implement a series of innovation projects on greening humanitarian aid, through the Enhanced Response Capacity, and funded additional ones in 2024 for a total of EUR 1.2 million.

The EU /DG ECHO is also a financial supporter of the Secretariat to the Climate and Environment Charter for Humanitarian Organisations, providing financial support (EUR 200 000). The EU / DG ECHO also acts as Secretariat of the Humanitarian Aid Donors' Declaration on Climate and Environment, which in 2024 reached 29 Signatories, an increase of four (Canada, Greece, Switzerland and the United States).

In May 2024, the EU and the Latin America and the Caribbean region signed a memorandum of understanding to enhance cooperation on integrated disaster risk management, as agreed by the 2023 EU–CELAC Summit in Brussels. The signatories developed an action plan, which is currently being implemented and will contribute to strengthen the partnership between the two blocks on issues such as climate change adaptation, resilient infrastructure, early warning systems and private sector involvement.

Contribution to gender equality (million EUR) (*)

Gender score	2021	2022	2023	2024	Total
2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
1	2 168.1	2 441.8	2 408.0	2 494.8	9 512.7
0*	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Total:	2 168.1	2 441.8	2 408.0	2 494.8	9 512.7

(*) Based on the applied gender contribution methodology, the following scores are attributed at the most granular level of intervention possible:

- 2: interventions the principal objective of which is to improve gender equality;
- 1: interventions that have gender equality as an important and deliberate objective but not as the main reason for the intervention;
- 0: non-targeted interventions (interventions that are expected to have no significant bearing on gender equality);
- 0*: score to be assigned to interventions with a likely but not yet clear positive impact on gender equality.

The Commission is committed to ensuring that EU humanitarian aid considers the different needs and capacities of women and men of all ages. Through the Commission methodology for gender expenditure tracking, a gender score 1 has been assigned to the total voted humanitarian aid budget implementation for 2024 (EUR 2.494 billion). This is a Commission methodology for the whole EU budget and differs from other assessment methods used to track humanitarian funding, such as the Commission's humanitarian gender-age marker and the gender equality marker used by the Development Assistance Committee of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. The third assessment report on the gender-age marker for the years 2018-2021 (published in 2023) confirmed that in the 2018-2021 period, over 90% of humanitarian aid projects included gender and age considerations ⁽⁷⁸⁾, and this was the case for 87% in 2023. On that basis, it was decided to mark the total voted budget of humanitarian aid under gender score 1.

The EU continued mainstreaming gender and age across all sectors of intervention, along the approach to gender and gender-based violence in humanitarian crises outlined in the staff working document 'Gender: different needs, adapted assistance'.

In 2024, DG ECHO supported the Belgian Presidency in preparation of dedicated Council conclusions on protection. It also remained an active member of the call to action on protection from gender-based violence in emergencies.

Focus on conflict-related sexual and gender-based violence was increased in response to observations in several recent and ongoing crises and, as well as activities calling for reinforced child protection, including advocacy and addressing the specific needs of children in armed conflicts, in line with the *EU Guidelines on Children and Armed Conflict*, revised in June 2024.

Gender-disaggregated information:

Number of beneficiaries by age and sex reached by humanitarian aid operations available in EvA actions operational data (such data reflect information encoded in Fichops and in HOPE ⁽⁷⁹⁾). According to this database, the percentage of beneficiaries disaggregated by gender in 2024 is as follows: 48% female, 39% male, 13% unknown.

Contribution to the digital transition

The programme does not have contribution to the digital transition as an objective.

⁽⁷⁸⁾ European Commission (2023), *Gender-Age Marker: Assessment report 2018-2021*, https://ec.europa.eu/echo/files/policies/sectoral/gender-age_marker_2018-2021_web.pdf.

⁽⁷⁹⁾ Fichops are the forms containing the operational information of every humanitarian project. Data from fichops are consolidated in HOPE, a Commission internal platform.

Contribution to sustainable development goals

SDG	Does the programme contribute to the goal?	Example (only for the most relevant SDGs)
SDG1: End poverty in all its forms everywhere	Yes	
SDG2: End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture	Yes	In Yemen, EU humanitarian funding averted a serious food security crisis and none of the country's districts experienced famine (IPC 5) throughout 2024. EUR 30 million supported the resumption of WFP's emergency assistance in areas controlled by the de facto authorities after nearly one year of pause in general food distributions. In this context of limited resources, the Cash Consortium of Yemen remained a key EU partner. More than half a million people were able to meet their food and basic needs thanks to the multipurpose cash assistance provided by the consortium.

SDG3: Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages	Yes	On 14 August 2024, the outbreak of mpox in the DRC and other 12 African countries were declared a Public Health Emergency of International Concern. As part of the humanitarian response, DG ECHO activated the Epidemics Tool, releasing EUR 1 million for prevention, treatment, epidemiological surveillance and risk communication in Eastern DRC, and EUR 300,000 for coordination, laboratory capacity, case management and community engagement in Uganda. Following Rwanda's request for assistance to respond to the Marburg Virus Outbreak on 10 October 2024, the UCPM was activated for the donation of protective equipment, medical supplies and equipment, laboratory and technical expertise.
SDG4: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all	Yes	In Afghanistan, by mitigating the risk of Taliban repressive policies, girls' education is pursued through support to non-formal learning, hub schools and community supported school improvement and activity plans. Despite restrictions, Education in Emergencies remains a key policy for ECHO in Afghanistan, for which up to 15% of budgets are foreseen (EUR 15.5m in 2025), implemented through specialised partners (such as UNICEF, Save the Children, People in Need).
SDG5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls	Yes	
SDG6: Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all	Yes	To respond to the limited access to WASH in Northern Mozambique (Cabo Delgado), an EU-funded action implemented by ICRC has allowed for civilians, host communities and displaced people in Cabo Delgado to have access to improved drinking water supply and sanitation, by the construction/rehabilitation of water supply systems as well as capacity building for service providers. The EU contributed a total of EUR 2.5 million in 2024.

SDG7: Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all	Yes	
SDG13: Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts	Yes	
SDG15: Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss	Yes	DG ECHO continues to mainstream the protection of ecosystems and biodiversity, and to minimise the damage to the natural environment inadvertently caused by humanitarian response through the Minimum Environmental Requirements, which have been mandatory for partners since 2023. In Uganda, DG ECHO finances a programmatic partnership, contributing to the restoration of forests and woodlots, as well as facilitating access to clean cooking, among other actions (EUR 4.5 million over three years, 2023-2025). Such intervention, which includes actions to halt deforestation, and restoration of natural resources degraded by the humanitarian response, directly contributes to preserving local biodiversity.
SDG17: Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development	Yes	

Contribution to strategic technologies (STEP)

The programme does not have as objective the contribution to STEP.

COMMON FOREIGN AND SECURITY POLICY

Concrete examples of achievements

3 000	130	13 589	> EUR 5 million
patrols conducted by 70 ceasefire monitors of the European Union Mission in Armenia in 2024 to improve human security along the Armenia-Azerbaijan border financed under CFSP.	public hearings on serious crimes committed during and in the aftermath of the conflict in Kosovo* conducted in 2024 and streamed in the three languages of the court (Kosovo Specialist Chambers) financed under CFSP.	surplus or confiscated small arms and light weapons were destroyed worldwide under CFSP non-proliferation projects in 2024.	worth of equipment (information technology equipment, vehicles, medical equipment, radios etc.) provided in 2024 to Ukrainian civilian security sector authorities by the European Union Advisory Mission Ukraine and financed under CFSP.

* This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244 (1999) and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence.

Budget programming and implementation

Budget programming (million EUR):

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	Total
Financial programming	352.2	361.7	371.8	384.7	393.7	403.6	414.7	2 682.5
NextGenerationEU	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Decommitments made available again (*)	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Contributions from other countries and entities	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.7	0.0	0.0	0.7
Total	352.2	361.7	371.8	384.7	394.4	403.6	414.7	2 683.1

(*) Only Article 15(3) of the financial regulation.

Cumulative budget implementation at the end of 2024 (million EUR):

	Implementation	Budget	Implementation rate
Commitments	N/A	N/A	N/A
Payments	N/A	N/A	N/A

Implementation and performance

	Baseline	Progress	Target	Results	Assessment
Percentage of contribution agreements with EU special representatives and civilian CSDP missions signed within 4 weeks after the adoption of the Council decision	0	70%	100% in 2028	Average for 2021 to 2023: 70%, compared to a target of 100%.	On track

Percentage of civilian CSDP missions coordinating with interventions financed under other EU instruments	0	100%	100% annually between 2021 and 2027	Average for 2021 to 2023: 100%, compared to a target of 100%	On track
Percentage of relevant non-proliferation and disarmament actions that are complementary to actions funded under the peace, stability and conflict prevention programme of the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument – Global Europe	0	100%	100% annually between 2021 and 2027	Average for 2021 to 2023: 100%, compared to a target of 100%	On track

The common foreign and security policy (CFSP) pursues the objectives of the EU external action as defined by Article 21 of the Treaty on European Union (TEU), including safeguarding the EU's values, interests and security, preserving peace, preventing conflicts, strengthening international security, consolidating and supporting democracy, the rule of law, human rights and the principles of international law and promoting an international system based on stronger multilateral cooperation.

In 2024, the CFSP pursued these objectives by the following actions financed from the EU budget:

14 civilian Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) Missions, which supported partner countries by advising and capacity building on security sector reforms, rule of law or border management or by monitoring the situation on the ground (87% of 2024 CFSP budget commitments, including a commitment for the Kosovo Specialist Chambers under the EULEX Kosovo Mission).

11 EU Special Representatives (EUSRs), who contributed to peace, stability and security and promoted EU values and interests in various regions of the world by supporting mediation and conflict resolution initiatives, maintaining contacts with regional stakeholders, and representing the EU and communicating on the EU goals (5% of 2024 CFSP budget commitments);

30 ongoing non-proliferation and disarmament (NPD) actions, including eight new actions launched in 2024, which prevented the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, combatted the illicit spread of small arms and light weapons and promoted effective arms export controls by supporting the universalisation and effective implementation of relevant international treaties and conventions, as well as the role/work of responsible international organisations (8% of the 2024 CFSP budget commitments).

The above mentioned CFSP actions are implemented on the basis of Council Decisions under the relevant provisions of the TEU. The proposals for the CFSP Council Decisions are prepared by the European External Action Service (EEAS) and submitted by the EU High Representative for Foreign and Security Policy. The Decisions define the objectives and mandates of the actions. The civilian CSDP Missions, EUSRs, and NPD implementing organisations report on the progress on the objectives to the Council and to the EEAS. The Commission is responsible for ensuring the sound financial management of the funds entrusted to the entities under contribution or grant agreements concluded between them and the Commission.

The implementation of CFSP actions has been impacted by the volatile political and security situation in certain partner countries, including Ukraine, in the Middle East, and in the Sahel region. For example, in 2024, the EU CSDP Mission in Niger (EUCAP Sahel Niger) had to be withdrawn from the country and subsequently had its mandate not renewed, after the *de facto* Nigerien authorities revoked the Status of Mission Agreement and violated its terms on several occasions, putting the Mission's staff in danger.

Contribution to horizontal priorities

Contribution to green budgeting priorities:

CFSP actions are not designed to tackle the green priorities, as is the case with action documents under cooperation instruments.

Some entities have internal procedures favouring green procurement. However, as operations mainly focus on providing advice and developing capacities in the civilian security sector, their impact on the abovementioned horizontal issues remains very limited.

Contribution to gender equality (EUR million)*:

Gender score	2021	2022	2023	2024	Total
2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
1	291.9	281.7	264.0	298.0	1 135.6
0*	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
0	60.3	80.0	107.8	86.7	334.8
Total:	352.2	361.7	371.8	384.7	1 470.4

(*) Based on the applied gender contribution methodology, the following scores are attributed at the most granular level of intervention possible:

2: interventions the principal objective of which is to improve gender equality;

1: interventions that have gender equality as an important and deliberate objective but not as the main reason for the intervention;

0: non-targeted interventions (interventions that are expected to have no significant bearing on gender equality);

0*: score to be assigned to interventions with a likely but not yet clear positive impact on gender equality.

The European External Action Service (EEAS) assessed that civilian CSDP missions have gender equality as an important objective (Development Assistance Committee (DAC) Gender equality marker 1). This assessment is based on several elements. First, the Missions have full-time gender advisers and gender focal point networks. In addition, the missions implement guidelines on gender mainstreaming. The missions also collect sex-disaggregated data, they provide training courses on gender mainstreaming and on the Women, Peace and Security agenda, and they conduct operational activities to advance gender equality and/or implementation of the Women, Peace and Security agenda. Finally, the EEAS and Member States are committed to enhancing the share of female staff in the missions. The 2023 Civilian CSDP Compact sets a target of 40% women among international mission staff by end-2027. The selection procedures prioritise women over men in selection procedures.

Apart from the civilian CSDP Missions, a number of CFSP non-proliferation and disarmament actions contribute also to gender equality by implementing specific activities designed, for example, to increase the participation of women in nuclear security or non-proliferation.

Gender disaggregated information:

As of 31 December 2024, 70.8% of international staff of civilian CSDP Missions were male and 29.2% female.

Contribution to the digital transition

N/A

Contribution to sustainable development goals

SDG	Does the programme contribute to the goal?	Example (only for the most relevant SDGs)
SDG5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls	Yes	CFSP actions contribute to gender equality. CSDP Missions have full-time gender advisers and gender focal point networks. In addition, the missions implement guidelines on gender mainstreaming and provide training courses on gender mainstreaming and Women, Peace and Security, and they conduct operational activities to advance gender equality and/or implementation of the Women, Peace and Security agenda. Finally, the EEAS and Member States are committed to enhancing the share of female staff in the missions. Apart from the civilian CSDP Missions, a number of CFSP non-proliferation and disarmament actions contribute also to gender equality by implementing specific activities designed, for example, to increase the participation of women in nuclear security or non-proliferation efforts.
SDG16: Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels	Yes	CFSP actions contribute to the preservation of peace, conflict prevention, strengthening of international security, consolidating and supporting democracy, the rule of law and human rights by advising and building capacity on security sector reforms, rule of law or border management, by supporting mediation and conflict resolution initiatives or by supporting the universalisation and effective implementation of international treaties and conventions addressing the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction or conventional weapons.

Support to reforms

Advisory civilian CSDP Missions contribute to the security sector reforms in partner countries by providing advice on policies, strategies, and legislation.

Given the division of responsibilities between the Council, the EEAS, and the Commission with regard to the implementation of the CFSP, based on the provisions of the Treaty on European Union, the Commission is not in a position to assess the contribution of the Missions to the reforms, as the Missions report on the implementation of their mandates to the Council and the EEAS and not to the Commission.

Contribution to strategic technologies (STEP)

N/A

Overseas countries and territories – Decision on the Overseas Association, including Greenland (OCT-DOAG)

Concrete examples of achievements

2 (+ 1) risk exercises activating Saint Barthélemy's Operational Command Centre were conducted (Caribe tsunami warning exercise and inter-island cyclone risk exercise) in 2024. There was also one real-life application during Hurricane Ernesto in August 2024, made possible thanks to DOAG support.	More than 100 business-to-business and business-to-government meetings took place during the first EU–Greenland Business Mission in October 2024, organised by the EU and funded by the DOAG.	EUR 286 000 was provided in micro-grants in 2024 to 12 Greenlandic small-business owners to allow them to develop and grow through grants by Nalik, under the Capacity Facility funded by the Greenland Decision.	70% of the world's yellow-billed albatross population is protected thanks to the restoration of insular ecosystems of the Indian Ocean project, which was completed in December 2024 and was supported by the 2014-2020 European Development Fund.
A 33% increase has been seen in the number of municipalities distributing drinking water to their citizens in French Polynesia, with 12 municipalities in 2024 compared to 9 in 2022, thanks to DOAG support.	68% of workers in the field of out-of-school activities supported by the 2014-2020 European Development Fund in Bonaire were duly qualified as of August 2024 (senior secondary vocational education level 3 or higher).		

Budget programming and implementation

Budget programming (million EUR):

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	Total
Financial programming	67.0	69.0	70.0	71.4	72.9	74.3	75.4	500.0
NextGenerationEU	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Decommitments made available again (*)	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Contributions from other countries and entities(**)	0.0	0.0	35.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	35.0
Total	67.0	69.0	105.0	71.4	72.9	74.3	75.4	535.0

(*) Only Article 15(3) of the Financial Regulation.

(**) The EUR 35 million in 2023 is external assigned revenue originating from OCT Facility reflows. They should be seen separately from the programming table.

Cumulative budget implementation at the end of 2024 (million EUR):

	Implementation	Budget	Implementation rate
Commitments	277.9	535.0	51.9%
Payments	131.6	0.0	24.6%

Implementation and performance

Key performance indicators

	Baseline	Progress	Target	Results	Assessment
For OCTs except Greenland, exports of goods and services as a percentage of gross domestic product	19.2%	n/a	n/a	31.7% in 2023	Not applicable
For OCTs except Greenland, total government revenue as a percentage of gross domestic product	26.9%	n/a	n/a	24.8% in 2023	Not applicable
For Greenland, exports of goods and services as a percentage of gross domestic product	26.4%	n/a	n/a	24.9% in 2021	Not applicable
For Greenland, the percentage of the fisheries sector in	91.4%	n/a	n/a	94.4% in 2021	Not applicable

total exports					

By the end of 2024, the main achievements of the ongoing initiatives were the following.

Since 2023, the EU has been teaming up with Greenland in the domain of sustainable raw materials, which are critical for the clean-energy transition. Following the signature of a memorandum of understanding on establishing sustainable raw materials value chains between the EU and Greenland in November 2023, a first-ever and successful business mission took place in Greenland in June 2024.

In New Caledonia, the Decision on the Overseas Association, including Greenland (DOAG) territorial programme is supporting the territory's energy transition plan with EUR 30.9 million in budget support. Since the signature of the financing agreement in November 2023, New Caledonia has been able to give financial support to electric vehicles and the installation of charging stations, and has promoted innovative projects in biomass and green hydrogen energy.

In Saba, through the budget support programme, ongoing since 2023, the EU is providing EUR 4.1 million in support to Saba's 2020-2025 energy policy, which is set to increase the share of renewable energy to 60%. This will be achieved through, among other things, the construction of additional renewable energy infrastructure (including a new solar park). All necessary studies for the construction of the new solar park were finalised by the end of 2024. The launch of the call for tenders is expected in 2025.

The EU is assisting in the implementation of Saint Barthélemy's disaster risk reduction policy by providing EUR 2.5 million in budget support. Its implementation is very satisfactory. By the end of 2024, Saint Barthélemy had carried out a census of all geographic data to improve geophysical knowledge and conducted two training sessions for the island's firefighters and two simulation exercises for crisis management staff, plus a real-life application during Hurricane Ernesto in 2024.

In Sint Eustatius, there has been progress on the vision for sustainable agriculture, which the EU is supporting with EUR 2.9 million in budget support. Progress includes the implementation of the 2024 plan for the removal of all free-roaming animals, the finalisation of a wastewater study and submission of a draft wastewater project implementation plan, along with the kicking off of the blue circle project aimed at rerouting rainwater.

As for budget implementation, for the EU–OCTs (overseas countries and territories) partnership in 2024, the implementation of 2021-2027 cooperation continued to progress well. All 16 programming documents have been adopted (12 territorial, 3 regional and 1 intraregional), and as of the end of 2024 only two implementing decisions were pending, for Curacao and Sint Maarten. They are expected in 2026. For the intraregional envelope, several implementing decisions will be adopted between 2025 and 2027.

The total amount of actions adopted up to 2024 was EUR 352.45 million, i.e. almost 70% of the total DOAG envelope of EUR 500 million, with, in 2024, the adoption of one territorial implementation programme (for Wallis and Futuna) and of two regional programmes (for the Caribbean and for the Pacific region), for a total of EUR 77.4 million.

Contribution to horizontal priorities

Contribution to green budgeting priorities (EUR million):

	Implementation				Estimates			Total	% of the total envelope
	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027		
Climate mainstreaming	840.5	1 017.7	965.7	1 010.6	0.0	0.0	0.0	3 834.6	25.0%
Biodiversity mainstreaming	0.0	12.9	29.1	7.0	5.5	7.5	7.5	69.5	13.9%

The Green Deal is pivotal to the new EU–OCT cooperation. DOAG, with its EUR 500 million envelope for 2021–2027, sets specific targets on priority areas of mutual interest, such as climate change and biodiversity. Spending targets for climate action (25%) and biodiversity (7.5% in 2024, 10% in 2026–2027) are therefore included.

Given the vulnerabilities of the OCTs as islands, the Green Deal is considered a key priority of EU–OCT cooperation for 2021–2027. Most (10 out of 12) bilateral multiannual indicative programmes have a strong Green Deal focus (Bonaire, Curaçao, French Polynesia, Greenland, New Caledonia, Saba, Saint Barthélemy, Sint Eustatius, Sint Maarten, Wallis and Futuna), along with the three regional multiannual indicative programmes (Indian Ocean–French Southern and Antarctic Lands, Pacific and Caribbean). Around 40% of the overall resources will be mobilised for Green Deal cooperation, such as renewable energy, water, disaster risk reduction, sustainable agriculture and green growth, including sustainable tourism.

Contribution to gender equality (million EUR) (*)

Gender score	2021	2022	2023	2024	Total
2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
1	60.0	2.4	64.7	69.5	196.6
0*	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
0	7.0	66.6	5.3	1.9	80.8
Total:	67.0	69.0	70.0	71.4	277.4

(*) Based on the applied gender contribution methodology, the following scores are attributed at the most granular level of intervention possible:

2: interventions the principal objective of which is to improve gender equality;

1: interventions that have gender equality as an important and deliberate objective but not as the main reason for the intervention;

0: non-targeted interventions (interventions that are expected to have no significant bearing on gender equality);

0*: score to be assigned to interventions with a likely but not yet clear positive impact on gender equality.

While no specific target was set for 2021–2027 EU–OCT cooperation concerning gender equality, the DOAG programme explicitly states that this horizontal priority should be mainstreamed into all initiatives as a key contribution to the successful achievement of the sustainable development goals. Consequently, all new initiatives aim to ensure that gender

aspects are considered to the best extent possible, notably through sex-disaggregated data. All new 2024 cooperation initiatives have gender equality as a significant objective, while there are no initiatives that focus specifically on gender equality. A score of 0 represents support measures and measures relating to the French Southern and Antarctic Lands, where there are no inhabitants.

Gender-disaggregated data

2024 marks just the start of implementation. Gender-disaggregated data will become available as the projects progress further.

Contribution to the digital transition (EUR million):

	2021 implementati on	2022 implementati on	2023 implementati on	2024 implementati on	Total	% of the 2021- 2024 envelop e
Digital contribution	0.0	11.8	15.7	19.5	9 351. 6	19.5%

The Caribbean OCTs were involved in the Global Gateway initiative EU–Latin America and Caribbean Digital Alliance, with Curaçao and Sint Maarten attending the high-level dialogue on connectivity and, together with Aruba, the e-governance high-level dialogue. Furthermore, consensus was reached in the last two tripartite meetings of 2024 – attended by all OCTs, the Commission and the Member States linked to the OCTs – to use the Caribbean OCTs’ intraregional envelope under the DOAG support for digital connectivity and cybersecurity, the first step being a feasibility study covering the Greater Caribbean to start in 2025.

For 2024, the EUR 19.4 million allocation supports the Aruba e-government project and the Greenland education project, which includes a significant digital component. Both projects are ongoing and are being implemented through budget support for the EU’s partners.

Contribution to sustainable development goals

SDG	Does the programme contribute to the goal?	Example (only for the most relevant SDGs)
SDG 2 End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture	x	The OCTs share vulnerabilities, resulting in a complex set of food security and nutrition challenges. For 2021-2027, the EU is supporting sustainable agriculture, food security and nutrition in the Pacific region (regional multiannual indicative programme, EUR 36 million), the Caribbean OCTs (regional multiannual indicative programme, EUR 21 million) and in Sint Eustatius (EUR 2.9 million).
SDG 4 Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all	x	Access to quality education fosters equality and is an essential pre-condition for achieving sustainable growth and jobs. This is the rationale of one of the two priority areas of the EU cooperation with Greenland in 2021-2027. EUR 202.5 million is earmarked for education cooperation in Greenland, to increase the quality, the access, and the efficiency of the territory's education system, which is facing a number of complex challenges (lack of skilled staff, geography, social issues). For instance, the rate of students staying in education, and the completion rates have recently shown a positive trend, and several institutional and policy changes are making progress. Through the Erasmus+ programme, the EU also supports the OCTs in facilitating mobility of individuals and reinforcing intercultural dialogue and understanding.

SDG 6	x	In French Polynesia, the programme (EUR 31.1 million) is contributing to the achievement of sustainable development objectives aiming at guaranteeing access to drinking water and sanitation while ensuring an integrated management of water resources in the face of climate change constraints.
Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all		In Bonaire (EUR 4.6 million) and Curaçao (EUR 18.6 million), the population and economic growth (notably linked to the tourism sector) led to increased production of wastewater and solid waste and more pressure on ecosystems. The programmes are therefore aiming to improve water management and increase access to sustainable sanitation.
SDG 7	x	In New Caledonia, the sustainable energy transition programme (EUR 30.9 million) is contributing to the decarbonisation of the mining industry, which is the lungs of the economy and responsible for 77% of the territory's total energy consumption. Furthermore, New Caledonia aims at energy autonomy for the territory, based on reliable, decarbonised, resilient and affordable energy.
Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all		The programme in Saba (EUR 4.1 million) is accelerating the transition to a low carbon economy building on in the previous 11th European Development Fund action which substantially improved the energy mix of Saba with 40% of renewable energy produced. More action is needed to increase the share of renewable energy in the global energy mix (objective of 60% production by 2025) and energy efficiency (with the launch of a programme to promote the use of LED technologies and solar water heaters).
		In Greenland, the cooperation aims at increasing the percentage of renewable energy in the public electricity provision to 90%, and there are initiatives to reduce the carbon footprint of current and future economic developments.

SDG8

x

Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all

In Saint Pierre and Miquelon, the programme on sustainable tourism (EUR 27 million) is contributing to the sustainable economic diversification of the territory, relying on the potential and multiplier effect for sustainable growth of the tourism sector. It reinforces the attractiveness of the territory bringing decent jobs and new opportunities, including for local youth and women.

In 2021-2027 the EU teams up with Aruba to implement its e-government-strategy (EUR 14.2 million). This entails the building of an e-government organisation, an e-ID development and implementation, national cyber security development and the creation and implementation of the national digital payment infrastructure. Aruba's digital transformation is contributing to secure the digital access to government services and unlocking new economic opportunities for all, including women and youth.

In Greenland, within the green growth programme (EUR 22.5 million) the EU is supporting initiatives to make the territory's natural riches more accessible to foreign tourists in a manner that is sustainable and respectful of the unique environment, while supporting local populations.

SDG10

x

Reduce inequalities within and among countries

In Greenland, inequality is tackled with the improved access of all children to pre-school education, which lays the ground for future economic security independent of starting conditions.

SDG12

x

**Ensure sustainable
consumption and
production patterns**

The EU's 2021-2027 support for Bonaire and Curaçao on water management and sanitation aims to expand the application of the circular economy in water resources management, as a mechanism to achieve greater environmental and health protection (via increased sanitation coverage and greater wastewater treatment capacities as well as reuse of wastewater resources).

SDG13

x

Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts

The OCTs are especially vulnerable to climate change and environmental degradation due to their geographical locations and characteristics. The ongoing all-OCT thematic programme Green Overseas and the Caribbean, Indian Ocean, and Pacific regional programmes (for a total of EUR 97.8 million) from the 11th European Development Fund are all dedicated to ensuring the sustainable use of natural resources, protecting biodiversity, and supporting climate initiatives and resilience, showing the vital importance of these areas to all OCTs. The regional initiatives under DOAG (EUR 36 million for the Pacific OCTs, EUR 21 million for the Caribbean OCTs and EUR 4 million for the French Southern and Antarctic Lands) will build on these achievements.

EU support to protect biodiversity will continue to be the priority area for cooperation with the French Southern and Antarctic Lands in 2021-2027 (EUR 4 million). This will build on the Indian Ocean regional programme (EUR 4 million) from the 11th European Development Fund and aims at improving the surveillance and observation of terrestrial and marine ecosystems in the French Southern and Antarctic Lands, restoring ecosystems, and reinforcing impact prevention mechanisms. The programme for Saint Barthélemy (EUR 2.5 million) in 2021-2027 supports disaster risk management and climate adaptation.

In addition, the on-going BEST Initiative has helped OCTs to promote the EU's environmental standards and provided an incentive for local actors to engage in environmental initiatives. The new LIFE programme 2021-2027 will continue to scale up the initiatives in OCTs on biodiversity and nature conservation. All these programmes focus therefore on translating Sustainable Development Goals 13, 14 and 15 into effective results on the ground and will prepare the work for the future.

SDG14

x

Same as SDG 13

**Conserve and
sustainably use the
oceans, seas and
marine resources for
sustainable
development**

SDG15

x

Same as SDG 13

**Protect,
restore
and
promote
sustainable use of
terrestrial
ecosystems,
sustainably manage
forests,
combat
desertification, and
halt and
reverse
land
degradation and halt
biodiversity loss**

SDG16	x	EU-funded initiatives in the OCTs intend to reinforce the capacity, the accountability and inclusiveness of their institutions. Budget support is generally a preferred implementation modality for OCTs' territorial allocations. It is an efficient way of addressing long-term and structural challenges, of improving the performance and accountability of administrations while focusing on the effective achievement of results of territorial policies and of maintaining a constructive policy dialogue. Practice confirms that this modality provides satisfactory results in OCTs through a high level of appropriation from local authorities. This is also supported via a specific instrument, the Technical Cooperation Facility, that OCTs have access to.
SDG17 Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development	x	The special relationship between the EU and the OCTs is based on the association of the OCTs with the EU, which constitutes a partnership. This principle of partnership is embedded in DOAG, which is the framework for political and policy dialogue and cooperation on issues of common interest. Recently, the partnership has been further reinforced by including dedicated cooperation on youth engagement. A new initiative of over EUR 560 000 funded by the OCT Technical Facility, the OCT Youth Network, was launched in July 2022 by the EU with the aim of increasing the ties between young people living in the OCTs and the EU, and of enhancing the knowledge and involvement of young people in the EU–OCT partnership. A third youth network was launched in July 2024.

Support for reforms

In Aruba, under the EUR 14.2 million budget support programme on e-governance, an analysis of the island's legal framework is currently being executed and will finish in Q1 2025. The analysis will identify which laws have to be adapted or whether new laws are required to allow transition from paper-based services to digital services. Once finished, it should lead to concrete reforms.

Saba's 2020-2025 energy policy, to which the EU is providing EUR 4.1 million in support, envisages the development of an energy efficiency programme. The recently published 2024-2026 energy efficiency policy is becoming a significant part of this strategic cycle and was inaugurated in 2024 with an awareness and educational campaign.

EU budget support of EUR 2.9 million has contributed to the development of a plan for the restructuring and development of the Agriculture, Animal Husbandry and Fisheries Department of Sint Eustatius, to create government capacity that can deliver support for improving agriculture, livestock and fishery. The plan has been finalised and is pending formal adoption by the City Council.

In New Caledonia, the adoption of the New Caledonia energy transition plan was a precondition for the signature of the financing agreement for the DOAG territorial programme on energy transition. The plan was adopted in August 2023, allowing for the signature of the Financing Agreement in November 2023.

Finally, the engagement of the EU in the education sector in Greenland is considered an important engine for the development and implementation of Greenland's education strategy, the latest reiteration was issued in 2024.

Contribution to strategic technologies (STEP)

Not applicable

FINANCIAL STATEMENT FOR MACRO-FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Concrete examples of achievements

EUR 26.59 billion was provided in loans and grants since 2021 to support European Neighbourhood countries cope with urgent financing needs following the repercussions of global shocks and increased geopolitical tensions.	EUR 1.145 billion was disbursed in the form of loans to support the financial stability of Egypt, Moldova and North Macedonia in 2024.	EUR 27.5 million was disbursed to Moldova in 2024, in the context of the energy crisis, in the form of grants totalling EUR 75 million during the 2022-2024 period.	EUR 30.2 billion in loans has been disbursed to Ukraine since 2014, under the Macro-Financial Assistance Plus instrument in 2023, three emergency operations in 2022 and four regular macrofinancial assistance operations.

Budget programming and implementation

Budget programming (million EUR)

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	Total
Financial programming-grants	0.2	30.1	45.4	0.6	59.3	61.5	64.5	261.6
Decommitments made available again	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Contributions from other countries and entities	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
MFA loans provisioning	152.5	205.9	196.7	187.7	278.4	210.9	398.9	1 631.0
Total	152.7	236.0	242.1	188.3	337.7	272.4	463.4	1 892.6

(*) Only Article 15(3) of the Financial Regulation.

(**) MFA loans that are officially part of the budget lines of NDICI – Global Europe and IPA are excluded for reporting in NDICI – Global Europe and IPA and relinked to the MFA PPS.

Cumulative budget implementation at the end of 2024 (million EUR)

	Implementation	Budget	Implementation rate
Commitments	786.6	1 892.6	41.6%
Payments	587.0		31.0%

Implementation and performance

Key performance indicators

No indicators

Macrofinancial assistance (MFA) is a form of EU financial aid for partner countries experiencing a balance-of-payments crisis, helping to restore their external stability and to bring their economies back to a sustainable path. By relieving the partner country of some financial stress, the MFA operation increases its fiscal space, improves its debt sustainability and allows it to focus on driving necessary reforms.

MFA is predominantly provided in the form of loans, backed by provisioning from the EU budget (except for the EUR 18 billion MFA+ to Ukraine, which is backed by the headroom) for a total of EUR 1 631.0 million through the multiannual financial framework programming period, and a smaller share of EUR 261.6 million is dedicated to grants through the multiannual financial framework programming period. In 2024, EUR 1 145 million in MFA funds was disbursed in loans, while EUR 27.5 million was disbursed in grants.

In 2024, a total of EUR 122.5 million in loans and grants was disbursed to aid Moldova in the context of the repercussions of Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine and the energy crisis, successfully concluding the MFA operation amended in 2022. In December 2024, a loan of EUR 1 billion was disbursed to Egypt to urgently support the country's challenging economic situation, aggravated by the turmoil in the region. A regular MFA to Egypt of up to EUR 4 billion is currently under consideration by both the European Parliament and the Council for adoption, with disbursements envisaged for 2025-2027. This is part of a EUR 7.4 billion financing package underpinning the EU and Egypt strategic and comprehensive partnership. In March 2024, the first instalment of EUR 50 million in loans was released to North Macedonia against the backdrop of tight global financial conditions and high energy prices, following the fulfilment of the conditions attached to the memorandum of understanding. The second and last instalment of EUR 50 million is available until 2026.

In light of Russia's intensified war of aggression, the G7 leaders agreed in June 2024 to provide financial assistance to Ukraine through extraordinary revenue acceleration loans of up to EUR 45 billion, leveraging the extraordinary revenues generated from immobilised Russian sovereign assets. On 28 October 2024, the regulation establishing the Ukraine Loan Cooperation Mechanism and a new MFA to Ukraine came into force. The mechanism collects the windfall profits to support Ukraine in repaying the loans of up to EUR 45 billion to be provided by G7 partners. The new MFA loans of an amount of EUR 18.1 billion represent the

EU's contribution to the extraordinary revenue acceleration initiative. The MFA was released through a single instalment, to be disbursed in several tranches before the end of 2025.

In October 2023, the Jordanian authorities submitted a request for a follow-up MFA referring to challenging global economic prospects, restrictive credit conditions, inflationary pressures and the burden of the Syrian refugee crisis. The call for further assistance came in a situation of increased uncertainty and regional instability. An MFA proposal to Jordan of up to EUR 500 million in loans was adopted by the European Commission on 8 April 2024 and it is currently under consideration by co-legislators. In view of the escalating turmoil in Jordan's immediate neighbourhood, the Jordanian authorities submitted a request for an additional MFA in January 2025. On 29 January, the Commission president announced an additional MFA proposal of EUR 500 million in loans, to be proposed in spring 2025, which would augment the MFA to a total of EUR 1 billion.

Contribution to horizontal priorities

MFA funds are not allocated to specific projects or spending categories and their final destination, unless otherwise specified, is left to the national authorities to decide.

Contribution to green budgeting priorities

N/A

Contribution to gender equality (million EUR) (*)

Gender score	2021	2022	2023	2024	Total
2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
0*	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
0	152.7	236.0	242.1	188.3	819.1
Total:	152.7	236.0	242.1	188.3	819.1

(*) Based on the applied gender contribution methodology, the following scores are attributed at the most granular level of intervention possible:

2: interventions the principal objective of which is to improve gender equality;

1: interventions that have gender equality as an important and deliberate objective but not as the main reason for the intervention;

0: non-targeted interventions (interventions that are expected to have no significant bearing on gender equality);

0*: score to be assigned to interventions with a likely but not yet clear positive impact on gender equality.

Score 0, as MFA operations are non-targeted interventions (interventions that are expected to have no significant bearing on gender equality).

MFA funds are not allocated to specific projects or spending categories and their destination, unless otherwise specified (in the memorandum of understanding signed with partner

countries), is left to the national authorities to decide. Disaggregated data of any type do not exist and thus cannot be collected.

Gender disaggregated information:

N/A

Contribution to the digital transition

N/A

Contribution to sustainable development goals

SDG	Does the programme contribute to the goal?	Example (only for the most relevant SDGs)
SDGs	NA	

Support for reforms

MFA helped the EU to entrenching macroeconomic stability in its neighbourhood by promoting crucial structural reforms and sound macro-fiscal policies.

The ex-post evaluations of MFA operations carried out so far, have concluded that MFA operations do contribute to achieving structural reforms through conditionality, and to improving external sustainability and macroeconomic stability in the recipient country albeit sometimes modestly and indirectly.

In most cases, MFA operations had a positive effect on the balance of payments of the beneficiary countries and contributed to relaxing their budgetary constraints. They also helped maintain or regain market access and led to slightly higher economic growth. Ex post evaluations concluded that the standard availability period of 2.5 years for MFA support create an overall framework that incentivises reforms and their implementation. Besides, the setting of policy conditions, determined as a package of reforms, was assessed as ensuring a comprehensive reform effort. The chosen policy areas, their degree of ambition and impact on long-term sustainability, as well as the sequencing of reforms was found to be appropriate and important ingredients for successful operations.

An important attribute of the EU’s MFA compared to alternative sources of financing is its highly concessional terms, i.e. relatively low interest rates, long maturity and a long grace period. This generates fiscal space and contributes to public debt sustainability in the beneficiary countries.

The ex post evaluations also confirm that previous MFA programmes were implemented efficiently, and were well coordinated with other EU programmes and with the programmes of other donors (notably the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank). MFA policy conditionality is separate from International Monetary Fund conditionality, but is complementary to and reinforces it.

MFA funds are not allocated to specific projects or spending categories and their final destination, unless otherwise specified, is left to the national authorities to decide.

Contribution to strategic technologies (STEP)

MFA funds are not allocated to specific projects or spending categories and their final destination, unless otherwise specified, is left to the national authorities to decide.

INSTRUMENT FOR PRE-ACCESSION ASSISTANCE (IPA) III

Concrete examples of achievements

174 000 tonnes of CO₂ avoided annually in Eastern Serbia through the installation of 66 MW wind farm capacity on the site of depleted open-cast mines and financed by IPA III, meeting energy demands of 30 000 households.	50 000 Albanian citizens of which 30 000 youth have access to modernised and improved municipal services in 2024 thanks to IPA III support.	5 217 trees of 22 different species planted with the support of IPA III in Skopje, Bitola, Kumanovo and Tetovo (North Macedonia) in 2024, to improve air quality and capture CO₂.	6 million primary healthcare consultations were provided annually for refugees in Türkiye under health care programme SIHHAT financed under IPA III and NDICI
8 000 jobs are being maintained in Bosnia and Herzegovina with the support of “Go Digital in Bosnia and Hezergovina” project financed by IPA II in 2023 and 2024.	4 700 000 Is the size in m² of the area in Kosovo that was cleared of suspected or confirmed cluster munitions as of September 2024 with the support of IPA III.		

Budget programming and implementation

Budget programming (million EUR):

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	Total
Financial programming	1 883.7	1 984.8	2 529.6	2 110.7	2 169.7	2 201.7	2 110.1	14 990.2
NextGenerationEU	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Decommitments made available again (*)	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Contributions from other countries and entities	31.3	3.8	4.2	4.9	0.0	0.0	0.0	44.1
Total	1 914.9	1 988.6	2 533.8	2 115.6	2 169.7	2 201.7	2 110.1	15 034.3

(*) Only Article 15(3) of the Financial Regulation.

Cumulative budget implementation at the end of 2024 (million EUR):

	Implementation	Budget	Implementation rate
Commitments	8 495.5	15 034.3	56.5%
Payments	3 017.6		20.1%

Implementation and performance

Key performance indicators

	Baseline	Progress	Target	Results	Assessment
Composite indicator on political criteria – western Balkans	2.5	82%	2.8 in 2027	2.3 in 2024 compared to a target of 2.7	On track
Composite indicator on political criteria – Türkiye	2.9	95%	3.1 in 2027	2.94 in 2024 compared to a target of 3.10	Deserves attention
Readiness of enlargement countries on public administration reform – western Balkans	2.5	86%	3.0 in 2027	2.6 in 2024 compared to a target of 3.0	On track
Readiness of enlargement countries on public administration reform – Türkiye	2.5	83%	3.0 in 2027	2.5 in 2024 compared to a target of 3.0	Deserves attention
Composite indicator on EU acquis alignment – western Balkans	2.5	98%	2.7 in 2027	2.65 in 2024 compared to a target of 2.7	On track
Composite indicator on EU acquis alignment – Türkiye	2.9	95%	3.1 in 2027	2.9 in 2024 compared to a target of 3.1	On track

Composite indicator on economic criteria – western Balkans	2.3	90%	3.0 in 2027	2.7 in 2024 compared to a target of 3.0	On track
Composite indicator on economic criteria – Türkiye	4.5	90%	5.0 in 2027	4.5 in 2024 compared to a target of 5.0	On track
Number of cross-border partnerships established, formalised and implemented	249	> 100%	387 in 2027	459 in 2024 compared to a target of 387	Achieved

The implementation of bilateral and multi-country assistance under the IPA III programme adheres to key criteria established by the IPA III programming framework. These criteria include a policy-driven approach, the relevance of proposed interventions, the maturity of proposals, and the progress of beneficiaries on their enlargement agenda. The programming process takes into account the performance of each beneficiary and adheres to the fair share principle, ensuring that assistance is tailored to the specific needs of each beneficiary.

The implementation of IPA III has been significantly influenced by external factors, most notably the Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine. In response, the Commission swiftly adjusted the IPA III programming to address emerging needs. The Western Balkans energy support package, of EUR 1 billion in grants, committed in 2023, which aimed at addressing the immediate consequences of the energy crisis and build resilience in the short to medium term, supporting vulnerable households and businesses amidst rising energy prices, has been successfully implemented in 2024. Additionally, the Commission has scaled up support for the energy transition, focusing on renewable energy, energy efficiency, and the connectivity of gas and electricity networks.

In 2024, the Commission made several notable commitments, including bilateral and multi-country annual action plans, the EU Civil Society Facility and Media Programme, and measures for migration-related actions in the Western Balkans. The Erasmus+ programme and IPA rural development programmes continued to receive support, along with cross-border cooperation initiatives between IPA III beneficiaries and Member States. Provisioning was also ensured for the External Action and EFSD+ guarantees to support projects in Türkiye. Concerning Kosovo, the EU has been implementing gradual, temporary and fully reversible measures, following EU's 2023 statements, such as the decision to put on hold IPA 2024 programming and the approval of Western Balkans Investment Framework projects. In line with the December 2024 Council Conclusions, the EU will gradually lift these measures in parallel with Kosovo's further steps to de-escalate tensions in the north.

Following the devastating floods in Bosnia and Herzegovina during the winter of 2024, the European Commission promptly mobilized aid to support those affected. Furthermore,

operational programmes, summing up to almost EUR 800 million, were agreed upon with Albania, Montenegro, North Macedonia, and Serbia, focusing on areas such as employment, energy, infrastructure, and the environment, with continuous disbursements foreseen until 2027.

A substantial proportion of IPA III funding has been allocated to the key enlargement policy priority: the Economic and Investment Plan for the Western Balkans. In 2024, the the Western Balkans Investment Framework, which aim at promoting sustainable investment and comprise blending operations and budgetary guarantees channelled via International Financial Institutions (IFIs), committed €463.7 million in 10 blending and guarantee operations, expected to mobilize €1.273.6 billion in investments, with a focus on transport (74%) and water and sanitation (16%).

The assistance to Türkiye reflects the state of EU relations with the country and focuses on strategic sectors of cooperation, such as the green and connectivity agendas. The Turkey Investment Platform, established in 2022 by the EU, supports investment proposals in decarbonization, digitalization, access to finance, innovation, and green investments, leveraging more than €2.4 billion of investments through EU budget guarantees. Continued support to Syrian refugees and host communities in Türkiye under IPA III in 2024 focuses on inclusive quality education and healthcare.

Additionally, in 2024 the evaluation of the European Union's External Financing Instruments took place (2014-2020 and 2021-2027)⁸⁰, considering IPA III and IPA II. Overall, IPA II improved strategic relevance by emphasizing structural reforms crucial for the EU accession. Its sector approach enhanced strategic focus, although implementation varied among beneficiaries. IPA II demonstrated flexibility and responsiveness, addressing pressing needs like the 2014 Western Balkans floods, the 2015 refugee crisis, and the COVID-19 pandemic. However, it faced challenges in reporting results, with weaknesses in monitoring and evaluation systems at the national level.

IPA III builds on these insights, aligning with the new enlargement methodology and prioritizing EU accession fundamentals and policy priorities like green, digital, and economic initiatives. It effectively promotes socio-economic development and leverages investments under the Economic and Investment Plan. However, it requires strong ownership and strategic planning from beneficiaries. The performance-based nature of IPA III aims to incentivize reforms, but balancing performance assessment with fair share principles has limited financial rewards for well-performing beneficiaries. IPA III introduced a unified monitoring and reporting system, expected to improve programming, monitoring, reporting, and evaluation compared to IPA II. The instrument has proven flexible in responding to exceptional external events, despite the lack of pre-set country financial envelopes. This flexibility allows for programming assistance according to urgent and evolving needs.

⁸⁰ [Evaluation of the European Union's External Financing Instruments](#)

Contribution to horizontal priorities

Contribution to green budgeting priorities (EUR million):

	Implementation				Estimates				
	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	Total	% of the total envelope
Climate mainstreaming	624.5	579.5	516.4	512.0	566.0	568.0	568.0	3 934.3	26.2%
Biodiversity mainstreaming	33.1	64.9	91.7	74.8	96.0	97.0	102.0	559.5	3.7%

IPA III supports the EU's climate objectives, with its regulation stipulating that at least 18% of its financial envelope should contribute to climate goals, set to increase to 20% by 2027. In 2024, 29% of IPA III funding was allocated to climate financing. Preliminary results for 2021-2024 indicate that IPA III is on track to exceed its climate spending targets, with climate financing accounting for 26% of the spending during this period, totaling EUR 2.23 billion. Overall, IPA III is expected to contribute EUR 4 billion to climate objectives from 2021 to 2027, representing 26% of the programme's total envelope.

For biodiversity, it is estimated that IPA III measures will contribute EUR 587 million to biodiversity actions in the period 2021-2027. According to the completed quality review covering until 2024, IPA III contributed EUR 264.5 million to biodiversity in 2021-2024, representing 45.1% of EUR 587 million estimated for 2021-2027 period. This means that so far biodiversity-relevant actions represent 3% of the total IPA III instrument, below the target. The Commission is committed to continue its efforts to achieve the biodiversity target by the end of the multiannual financial framework.

IPA III supports the beneficiaries in their efforts to align themselves with the EU environmental and climate acquis and in the implementation of the external dimension of the European Green Deal. Under thematic window 3 (16 and sustainable connectivity) of the IPA III programming framework, financing goes towards the implementation of the Green Agenda for the western Balkans, where biodiversity, ecosystem protection and restoration are priorities. In Serbia, actions under “EU Green Agenda for Serbia” platform launched in 2022 have already allowed for 173 hectares of land afforested as well as 200 endangered species and 216 endangered habitats to be positively affected from conservation activities. In 2024, the Commission provided a grant of more than EUR 17 million that will lead to renovation and investments worth EUR 43 million in water and sanitation facilities of 16 municipalities of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Measures under other thematic windows of the IPA III programming framework, such as the ‘competitiveness and inclusive growth’ window supports enterprises and industries to reducing pollution, decarbonise, protect biodiversity, be resource efficient and build a circular economy. Most support is channelled via the Western Balkans Investment Framework, the European Fund for Sustainable Development Plus and the Green for Growth Fund. In 2024, the EU supported with a EUR 18.6 million grant the launch of an “Innovation and green transformation facility” that supports innovative small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and Mid-Caps and their

green investments in the Western Balkans. The Facility will be dedicated to innovative products and processes, as well as climate change mitigation and other green projects and aims to leverage a total of EUR 319 million of investments.

Contribution to gender equality (EUR million)*:

Gender score	2021	2022	2023	2024	Total
2	0.0	11.0	4.0	41.7	56.7
1	525.8	1 142.3	1 252.3	796.5	3 716.9
0*	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
0	1 357.9	831.5	1 273.3	1 272.5	4 735.2
Total:	1 883.7	1 984.8	2 529.6	2 110.7	8 508.8

(*) Based on the applied gender contribution methodology, the following scores are attributed at the most granular level of intervention possible:

2: interventions the principal objective of which is to improve gender equality;

1: interventions that have gender equality as an important and deliberate objective but not as the main reason for the intervention;

0: non-targeted interventions (interventions that are expected to have no significant bearing on gender equality);

0*: score to be assigned to interventions with a likely but not yet clear positive impact on gender equality.

The Gender Action Plan III stipulates that a minimum of 85% of all new actions shall have gender equality as a significant or the principal objective and that there should be at least one action with gender equality as a principal objective supported in each country and region. The approach and objectives set out by the GAP III are referenced in the IPA III Regulation and Programming Framework.

The Commission applies the OECD-DAC gender equality scoring system. Significant (marked 1) means that gender equality is an important objective, but not the principal reason for undertaking the action, while principal (marked 2) means that gender equality is the main objective.

There has been a significant increase in actions marked G1 and G2 compared to the previous MFF, with a positive trend observed since 2021, strengthening even further in 2024. As a result, almost 40% of all actions adopted between 2021-2024 under IPA III have gender as a significant or principal objective and an increasing number of country and regional actions have gender equality as a principal objective.

EU external actions contributed to advancing gender equality and women's and girls' empowerment worldwide through political and policy dialogue, improved gender mainstreaming across all implementing modalities, including EFSD+, through Team Europe Initiatives, and new, ambitious targeted actions.

Recently launched targeted actions promote, amongst others, the fight against gender-based violence in North Macedonia through the "WE CARE: United We Stand to Fight Against Sexual and Gender-Based Violence" action, which empowers civil society organisations to effect positive behavioural change across society for the effective protection of women. In Albania, the EU supports equal participation and leadership through the "EU for Gender Equality II - Gender Equality Facility in Albania", which seeks to promote the consistent application of gender-responsive governance by national authorities, to overall strengthen equality, combat discrimination, and enhance women's empowerment and human rights, in line with the EU Acquis on Gender Equality.

Gender disaggregated information:

IPA III initiatives have been implemented to contribute to gender equality. The progress reports submitted through contractual agreements, either from direct or indirect implementation partners, provide the gender disaggregated information available.

Notable examples include the EU Regional Action for Roma Education programme, which aims to increase educational support and opportunities for Roma students in the Western Balkans and Türkiye. With an EU contribution of EUR 4.5 million, this programme has successfully engaged with Civil Society, yielding a meaningful impact in the region. Another example is the EU Support to REDI, a programme that advances Roma entrepreneurship in the region, with an EUR 0.7 million IPA III funding. Despite the challenging context, the results are promising, with women making up 38.8% of the total 5 084 individuals supported (1974 women), and men accounting for 61.2%.

Overall, when compiling the available results, under IPA III, we obtain the following values:

IPA III Results Framework indicators	Total for 2021-2024	Female	Male
Number of people directly benefiting from EU supported interventions that aim to reduce social and economic inequality	628 418	202 532	191 068
Number of migrants, refugees, and internally displaced people or individuals from host communities protected or	90 998	2 379	77 298

assisted with EU support			
Number of people reached with EU-funded awareness raising campaigns (disaggregated by sex and age)	249 966	91 534	96 567

Contribution to the digital transition (EUR million):

	2021 implementation	2022 implementation	2023 implementation	2024 implementation	Total	% of the 2021- 2024 envelope
Digital contribution	75.6	92.0	1.8	155.8	325.2	3.8%

Digitalisation and the digital transition are fundamental to the common regional market action plan⁸¹ supported by IPA III, which aims to establish a regional digital area in the Western Balkans. This plan focuses on the four pillars of the Digital Compass: (1) digital skills, (2) secure and sustainable digital infrastructures (including roaming), (3) digital transformation of businesses, and (4) digitalisation of public services. These efforts have been an important part of IPA III's digital contribution between 2021-2024. Digital has also been recognised as an enabler and has been integrated as a component in measures across different sectors.

In 2024, a quality review was launched on the period 2021-2024 to assess the application of the OECD methodology to monitor digital-related projects supported. Thanks to this review, it was possible to correct past reported numbers. Since 2021, the IPA III has contributed around EUR 325.2 million to digital transition, including EUR 155.7 million allocated in 2024. This represents 26.2% of IPA III committed financing.

To accelerate the digital transition in the Western Balkans, the Commission adopted the EU4Digital programme in 2024, with EUR 15 million in funding from IPA III. This programme focuses on three out of four main strands of the Digital Compass, aiming at: (1) secure and sustainable digital and telecom infrastructure across the region; (2) interoperability and e-Governance of public services; and (3) support the digitalising businesses.

Projects supported by IPA III also include digital skills and connectivity initiatives. Through grants under the Western Balkans Investment Framework, IPA III supports since 2022 the "Rural Broadband Rollout Phase 2" in Serbia to connect the existing fibre backbone to an additional 815 settlements, 305 schools and at least 128,000 households in rural areas without

⁸¹ [Common Regional Market Action Plan 2025-2028](#)

access . In Albania, the EU supports the establishment of 684 Smart ICT Labs in 627 schools, increasing the availability of computer labs for students in their pre-university cycles and enhancing computer programming skills.

Overall, digital projects under IPA III also include cybersecurity initiatives. For instance, the CyberSEE Project, with EUR 4,950M in funding from IPA III, launched in January 2024 by the EU Commission and the Council of Europe, aims to enhance cybercrime and electronic evidence actions in the Western Balkans and Türkiye. Additionally, the Cyber Balkans initiative seeks to bolster the cyber resilience of the Western Balkans in compliance with EU standards.

Contribution to sustainable development goals

SDG	Does the programme contribute to the goal?	Example (only for the most relevant SDGs)
SDG3: Ensure health y lives and promo te well-being for all at all ages	Yes	The regional project ‘Strengthening health systems resilience in the western Balkans’ supports progress towards SDG 3 targets, by strengthening all-hazard emergency response capacities, helping to reform health financing systems to ensure universal health coverage, and increasing vaccination levels. In 2023 and 2024, the project contributed to support the preparation of risk and capacity assessments, the implementation of information management systems, and supported the preparation of national plans on health security; produced reports and publications on financial protection based on data collection and analysis, and launched an online platform to track progress on affordable health care, which is very relevant for policymakers in the health sector. The project helped to recover routine immunisations disrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic through catch-up vaccination, development of national action plans and normative guidance for national immunisation programs, and improvement of information systems. The project is ongoing (end date 06.2025) on all-hazard preparedness and response capacities across the region, and strengthening health systems financing subcomponents. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, 16 Sports halls in primary schools were reconstructed throughout BiH under “EU4Sports” project in 2024 by promoting sports and physical activity and hence contributing to the values of tolerance, solidarity, inclusiveness, and other key European Union principles.

**SDG4:
Ensure
inclusi
ve and
equita
ble
qualit
y
educat
ion
and
promo
te
lifelon
g
learn
ing
opport
unities
for all**

Yes

The economic and investment plan for the western Balkans highlights the need to invest in human capital particularly in education and skills. The Western Balkans school exchange scheme is a regional initiative that contributes to increasing skills and knowledge of young people in the western Balkans. It enhances education systems and promotes cooperation by building capacities of schools to develop and implement quality school exchange projects. In total, 2265 students directly took part to the exchange activities while 1950 students participated to the action's local outreach activities. 77 schools partnerships, involving 154 schools, have also been established. A new phase of the scheme has been launched in 2024.

In Kosovo, the EU constructed 2 new schools, refurbished completely 6 schools and supported the construction of the Faculty of Mathematics and Natural Sciences of the University of Pristina along with enhancing the teachers self-evaluation process, review of textbooks in Albanian and Mathematics and enlarging the learning opportunities for children from non-majority groups and children with special needs.

In Albania, assistance under the post-earthquake recovery package continued through EU4Schools I and II (overall budget of €75 million), supporting the recovery in the education sector in 11 municipalities. By the end of 2024, it has delivered 59 out of 63 schools, with the remaining ones to be completed in 2025. These schools are not only built according to EU standards, but are now earthquake resistant, environmentally friendly, accessible for persons with disabilities and include facilities for medical and psychological care.

**SDG5:
Achieve
gender
equality and
empower all
women and
girls**

Yes

The Commission is preparing, together with EIGE, a new initiative at Regional level on gender, whose negotiation is currently ongoing. The signature of the Action is foreseen by the end of 2025. The Commission has also supported the empowerment of women with minority backgrounds. Specific projects such as 'Romani women power of change in the western Balkans and Türkiye (EU contribution EUR 1 million) and 'EU regional action for Roma education: increased education support and opportunities for Roma students in the Western Balkans and Türkiye' (EUR 4 million) aimed to increase the participation of Roma women in the local decision-making and in education.

In Kosovo, the Gender Country profile was published with the support of the Gender Equality Facility, implemented together with UN Women. It provides an overview of gender-related issues, the situation of women, trends and dynamics of inequalities in Kosovo, and is intended to support all reforms in the country.

**SDG6:
Ensure
availability
and
sustainable
management
of
water
and
sanitation
for all**

Yes

The EU is financing (EUR 22.9 million since 2009) the construction of a wastewater treatment plant in Podgorica, Montenegro, as well as a sludge incineration plant, and extension of the sewerage network. The investments will make possible the collection and treatment of the wastewater generated by the city in line with EU standards, increasing thus the hygienic and health conditions, as well as the quality of life of all people connected to the new system. Improved infrastructure will also create jobs, stimulate economic growth, and attract more investors to the region. The project will ensure responsible and sustainable use of natural resources for generations to come.

**SDG7:
Ensure
access
to
afford
able,
reliabl
e,
sustai
nable
and
moder
n
energy
for all**

Yes

Since 2023, the regional energy efficiency programme has blended policy support with loans, technical assistance and incentives to support energy efficiency and renewable energy investments in the public and private sectors in the western Balkans. Since its inception, the integrated package offered through the regional energy efficiency programme has reached over 1 000 small and medium-sized enterprises, 16 000 households and 400 public buildings across 700 cities and towns. Related investments translate into 964 000 MWh/year energy saved and 540 000 tCO₂/year emissions avoided, which is equivalent to removing 135 000 cars from the road.

Vau i Dejës Floating Solar: Photovoltaic Power Plant. This investment project will install a 12.9 MW floating solar photovoltaic power plant at Vau i Dejës, a reservoir that hosts one of the largest hydropower plants in Albania. This will be the first medium-size hybrid floating solar and hydropower plant and the first application of pure floats technology in the western Balkans. The investments are expected to have a significant demonstration effect and be easily replicated on other hydro reservoirs in Albania and the region. The plant is expected to produce over 18 GWh of electricity and displace 8 700 tonnes of CO₂ annually. Procurement has been completed and a Design Build and Operate Contract was signed in September 2024 and commenced in November 2024. Work on the Detailed Design started.

The gas interconnector between Serbia (Niš) and Bulgaria (Sofija), which was completed in December 2023, enhances energy source diversification, reduces dependency on Russia, and increases security of supply. With a capacity of 1.8 billion cubic meters annually, and at a total cost of EUR 93.25 million, the project received EUR 49.6 million from the EU as a Pre-Accession grant, EUR 25 million from the EIB as a loan, and the remaining funds from Serbia. In January 2025, the final Usage Permit for the interconnector was granted; however, third party access is pending.

SDG8: Promote sustainable, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all	Yes	In North Macedonia, in the area of employment and social inclusion, in 2024, 21 300 persons (out of which 10 870 were women) participated in the Youth Guarantee. 8 152 people had a successful and timely result, e.g., out of which 6,672 were employed within 4 months upon entry, and 1 480 participated in one of the active programmes and measures, thus bringing the success of the Youth Guarantee in 2024 to 38.2%. The Operational Plan for Active Employment Programmes and Measures and Labour Market Services, and the Youth Guarantee were implemented, covering 11 194 people, especially youth. 47.4% of beneficiaries of active employment measures were women, 1.5% were persons with disabilities, 67.7% were young people, and 4.4% were Roma. In Türkiye, the EU-funded Facility for Refugees has facilitated over 20,500 jobs. In Kosovo, the Start-up Acceleration Support Project (STAR UP!) supported 28 start-ups, facilitated over 1,000 connections through B2B events, and enabled access to global start-up platforms, laying strong foundation for Kosovo's start-up ecosystem to thrive.
SDG9: Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation	Yes	In Kosovo, the EU4Innovation in Kosovo project achieved a major milestone in 2024 with the development of Kosovo's electronic identification system, which includes digital wallet and is expected to be launched during the first quarter of 2025. In North Macedonia and in the area of transport, the Gradsko-Drenovo road, which is part of road Corridor X branch X-d, was finalised in December 2024. The new 15.5 km expressway section was constructed under the IPA II Operational Programme for Transport and Environment (EU grant of EUR 35.4 million) and provides quicker and safer transport of goods and passengers between the towns of Gradsko and Prilep.

SDG10 : Reduc e inequa lities within and among countr ies	Yes	In North Macedonia, the EU has supported the establishment of 20 community-based social services; made accessible 15 primary and secondary schools and university faculties to people with disabilities; improved access to education for 450 students with disabilities; benefitted more than 1 500 persons from non-institutional (alternative) community-based social services; created 696 additional spaces in pre-school institutions for children 0-6 years; and involved in educational process 553 children of Roma families and families living in deep poverty. In Kosovo, 17 bylaws were adopted in 2024, enabling authorities to implement the Law on Child Protection and ensure effective protection for children with disabilities, those in street situations, without parental care, or in conflict with the law. Additionally, 9 public buildings across Kosovo were reconstructed with ramps, height-access equipment, entry adaptations, and renovated toilets with baby changing facilities to ensure accessibility for people with disabilities and enhanced comfort for mothers and babies.
SDG11 : Make cities and human settle ments inclusi ve, safe, resilie nt and sustai nable	Yes	In 2023 in Serbia, 127 families with 361 family members (171 male and 190 female) moved to the new constructed social housing flats and 819 beneficiaries received income generating support. In Kosovo, 34 vulnerable families were hosted in new apartments across two building blocks, benefiting of outdoor recreational areas and a community centre with learning and business facilities, in Gračanica/Graçanicë municipality. In Türkiye, the EU-funded Facility for Refugees supported the completion of 23 recreational facilities. These community, sports, and cultural activity centres aim to enhance the integration and well-being of refugees within the country.

SDG12

Yes

Text

:

**Ensure
sustai
nable
consu
mptio
n and
produc
tion
patter
ns**

**SDG13
: Take
urgent
action
to
comba
t
climat
e
chang
e and
its
impact
s**

Yes

Under the EU4 Energy Transition project (EUR 8 million), the EU has been supporting cities and towns in the western Balkans and Türkiye in delivering on their pledges under the Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy initiative. From 2021 to 2025, among other measures, the programme is supporting 20 cities and towns in developing and implementing energy and climate action measures focusing on local solutions for energy efficiency and renewable energy.

In Bosnia and Herzegovina, the ‘Technical Assistance for preparation of the Flood Risk Management Plan in Bosnia and Herzegovina’ project increases country’s adaptation to the climate changes by increasing capacities of key stakeholders to manage flood risks, including their prevention, protection and preparedness to respond to potential hazards.

In Kosovo, the EU in partnership with the World Bank and Kosovo Energy Efficiency Fund, ensured the energy efficiency of 84 public buildings throughout the country, including schools, municipal administrative buildings and sports buildings.

EU support significantly advanced Serbia's capacity and active role in regional disaster response through a €14.1 million project “Strengthening Civil Protection and Disaster Resilience in the Republic of Serbia”. Key achievements include new firefighting trucks, disaster risk reduction assessments, improved hazard mapping, a new disaster risk reduction strategy, specialized trainings, and community engagement grants to Civil Society Organisation. Serbia also participated in 14 EU’s Union Civil Protection Mechanism disaster response missions, providing critical support inter alia to North Macedonia, Greece, and Bosnia and Herzegovina. In addition the EU funded the reconstruction of two flood-damaged bridges in Vrnjačka Banja and Rača. Overall flooding events in 2024 decreased compared to previous years, showing the effectiveness of preparatory work by authorities with EU support.

SDG15
:
Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss

Yes

In Kosovo, 5 Regional Offices of the Kosovo Food and Veterinary Agency (KFVA) were inaugurated in 2024 enhancing the efficient implementation of food safety, public health protection, and animal welfare responsibilities.

SDG16
:
Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels

Yes

The EU, through its partnership with the Council of Europe, supported the first ever training of police officers from Brčko District of Bosnia and Herzegovina on hate crime and hate speech towards the LGBTI community. In Türkiye, it supported the launching of a grant scheme for legal aid services to vulnerable women, as well as the training of 586 lawyers on women's access to justice. In North Macedonia, the new Law on Whistleblower protection was finalised and published for public opinion. In Serbia, IT equipment was provided to the National Anti-trafficking Co-ordination Office (NATCO), the National Rapporteur on trafficking in human beings, the Centre for Human Trafficking Victims' Protection and the NGO ASTRA, in order to strengthen their capacities in monitoring and reporting human trafficking and in protecting victims.

In Kosovo, the National Centralised Criminal Record (NCCR), established with EU funding, supports successfully the reform of the way the courts work and provides a quick, secure, centralized and modern service to citizens.

In Albania, the EU4Municipalities programme, which ended in July 2024, supported 19 municipalities with investments grants worth EUR1.7 million, in line with the needs of local citizens. The results have been transformative, enhancing municipal staff capacities and providing improved infrastructure and services in education, social inclusion, culture, environmental protection, youth empowerment, and local economic development. 24 public buildings were reconstructed, 68 public services created or enhanced, benefitting over 49,332 citizens, including 32,993 youths.

**SDG17
:
Strengthen
the
means
of
imple-
menta-
tion
and
revital-
ize the
Global
Partne-
rship
for
Sustain-
able
Develo-
pment**

x

The regional programme supporting to the Central European Free Trade Area Secretariat (EUR 4 million, started in 2022) facilitates trade negotiations, trade flows and strengthens trade surveillance in western Balkans and Moldova. Various rounds of trade negotiations took place in 2024 in relation to trade in goods and services and progress was observed at technical and policy level. In October 2024, CEFTA adopted nine new agreements to boost trade, jobs and consumer rights across the region.

The twinning project "Enhancement of Capacities of the Agency for Audio and Audiovisual Media Services and the Public Service Broadcaster" (IPA/2023/444-253) worth EUR 788 000.00, aimed at Enhancing Media Capacities in North Macedonia and implemented by the German Foundation for International Legal Cooperation (IRZ), with a budget of EUR 0.8 million, has made important strides in aligning North Macedonia's media practices with the European standards.

Support to reforms

IPA III is designed as a performance-based instrument, differentiating assistance in scope and intensity according to the performance of the beneficiaries. This focus on performance is particularly aimed at incentivizing beneficiaries to commit to fundamental reforms. The programme adjusts the scope of IPA support based on the progress of each beneficiary, thereby encouraging continued reform efforts.

This performance-based approach aligns with the 2020 Communication on the revised enlargement methodology, which proposed increased funding and investments for countries that make progress on their agreed reform priorities. The performance-based approach is embedded in the annual bilateral programming process. The assessment of performance is done as a global assessment, taking into consideration, among others, the Commission annual enlargement reports, external expert assessments, track record in implementing ongoing actions, and the reporting against the indicators set under the IPA III Results Framework.

The Western Balkans region has shown reform improvements in political criteria, including advancements in the judiciary, political stability, and the absence of violence and terrorism. Progress has also been made in good governance and public administration reform. Cross-border partnerships, which account for around 5% funds committed under the IPA III, have increased, contributing to good neighbourly relations and reconciliation efforts in the region. By 2024, over 2 100 organizations, including local and national government entities, civil society groups, and businesses, had participated in cross-border networks and partnerships. This collaboration has led to the creation of 1 185 new jobs and the establishment of 459 new businesses.

In contrast, Türkiye has experienced stabilisation in its degree of readiness and efforts against corruption, but there has been a continued backsliding on fundamental issues. This has impacted the level of IPA III assistance provided to the country. Areas such as the functioning of the judiciary, the fight against organized crime, and freedom of expression have seen no progress.

Both the Western Balkans and Türkiye have made good progress in administrative capacity and acquis alignment, with 47% of IPA support allocated for this priority since 2021. Employment, social protection, and inequality indicators from 2022 show signs of recovery after the COVID-19 pandemic. However, there is a concerning decreasing trend in digital skills. Both regions have demonstrated a positive decreasing trend in energy intensity. Türkiye has seen a positive trend in the share of renewable energy in gross final energy consumption, while the Western Balkans have experienced a slight decrease.

EUROPEAN GLOBALISATION ADJUSTMENT FUND FOR DISPLACED WORKERS

Concrete examples of achievements

72 applications were received between 2014 and 2024, including 18 between 2021 and 2024, excluding those that were withdrawn or rejected.	64 263 workers were offered assistance between 2014 and 2024, including 10 825 workers targeted in applications received between 2021 and 2024.	3 369 young people not in employment, education or training were offered assistance between 2014 and 2020.	EUR 228 932 932 in contributions from the programme was requested by 12 Member States between 2014 and 2024, including about EUR 60 million requested through the 2021-2024 applications.
59% is the average rate of beneficiaries who found employment following a programme intervention between 2014 and 2024.			

Budget programming and implementation

Budget programming (million EUR)

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	Total
Financial programming	181.3	201.3	205.4	33.8	34.5	35.1	35.9	727.2
NextGenerationEU	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Decommitments made available again (*)	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Contributions from other countries and entities	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Total	181.3	201.3	205.4	33.8	34.5	35.1	35.9	727.2

(*) Only Article 15(3) of the Financial Regulation.

Cumulative budget implementation at the end of 2024 (million EUR)

	Implementation	Budget	Implementation rate
Commitments	N/A	N/A	N/A
Payments	N/A		N/A

Implementation and performance

Key performance indicators

	Baseline	Progress	Target	Results	Assessment

Total EGF beneficiaries in a given case	NA	NA	NA	1 526 in 2024	NA
Percentage of EGF beneficiaries who gained a qualification	NA	NA	NA	54% in 2024	NA
Percentage of EGF beneficiaries in education or training	NA	NA	NA	0.7% in 2024	NA
Share of workers reintegrated into employment as dependent workers	NA	NA	NA	90% in 2024	NA
Share of workers reintegrated into employment as self-employed	NA	NA	NA	10% in 2024	NA

The main sources of information on the EGF's results are (i) the final reports submitted by the Member States, seven months after the end of implementation, and (ii) the beneficiary surveys, which are conducted six months after the implementation of the case.

Even though the EGF's main aim is the sustainable reintegration into quality employment, the mere comparison of reintegration rates across different regions is not sufficient to measure the performance of the EGF. This is due, among other reasons, to differences in the characteristics of the beneficiaries of the assistance and in the socioeconomic situations of the regions affected. Therefore, beneficiary surveys were introduced as a new tool in the 2021-2027 period. Beneficiary surveys help assess the extent to which the assistance offered had an impact on the perceived change in the employability of beneficiaries or, for those who have already found employment, on the quality of the employment found (e.g. in terms of changes in working hours).

Considering the delayed start of the 2021-2027 programming period and taking into account that the implementation of an EGF case takes 24 months from the date of the decision on the

mobilisation of the fund, the information necessary to assess the EGF's performance started to be available only from mid-2024 for the 2021 cases.

Displacements occurred in sectors that employ a high proportion of men (metalworking, car industry, aircraft industry, machinery and equipment, logistics, etc.), between 2021 and 2024. Hence 77% of those offered EGF assistance are men and 23% are women.

There is also an age bias regarding participation in the measures. The number of beneficiaries in the 30–54 age group is five percentage points higher than the share of this age group in the targeted workers, while the share of workers over 54 years of age is five percentage points higher in the group of targeted workers than in the beneficiaries' group. Being close to retirement age might discourage people from searching for new jobs or participating in measures supporting job transitions.

Over the 2021-2024 period, more than 82% of beneficiaries have upper secondary education or more. About one in four beneficiaries has tertiary education and 60% have upper secondary or post-secondary education. Most beneficiaries (54%) consider the EGF helped them to gain new skills or qualification. Ten beneficiaries (0.7% of the total) continued in education or training after the 24-month implementation period of the EGF support.

Results vary widely from case to case, with the reintegration rate ranging from 81.3% to 16.1%. The average rate of reintegration into the labour market for the 2014-2024 period remains at 60% (51% for 2021-2024, six cases). Most beneficiaries (90%) found a job as dependent workers, while 10% of beneficiaries opted for self-employment and started a new business.

Around 40% of beneficiaries, who have not yet completed the labour transition and remain unemployed, consider that they are better qualified for work after their participation in the measures co-financed by the EGF, and that the support received helped them to gain more confidence in their abilities.

As for the quality of the job found, most of the workers who returned to work as dependent workers did so in full-time jobs (89%) and two out of three with permanent contracts. The working conditions at the new job are better or the same for most people (56%) and worse for one out of four workers. The salary in the new job is better or the same for 46% of workers and worse for 41%. The number of unpaid overtime hours are the same or less for three in four workers.

Three out of four people who returned into employment as self-employed did so full-time. Nearly half of businesses have been operating for two years or more and one in three for between 12 and 24 months. One in five businesses employs people other than the owner.

Unlike the situation of dependent workers, the earnings of most self-employed workers (78%) are lower than those of their previous job and earnings are better for 11% of the self-employed only. However, one positive aspect is that more than half of the self-employed workers who declare lower earnings consider that their working conditions have improved.

Regarding the role that support measures co-financed by the EGF have played in their own job transition, half of dependent workers consider that the support received helped them to get their current job and the other half considers that it did not, while 71% of self-employed workers consider that the support received helped them to become self-employed.

Contribution to horizontal priorities

Contribution to green budgeting priorities:

N/A

Contribution to gender equality (million EUR) (*)

Gender score	2021	2022	2023	2024	Total
2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
0*	181.3	201.3	205.4	33.8	621.8
0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Total:	181.3	201.3	205.4	33.8	621.8

(*) Based on the applied gender contribution methodology, the following scores are attributed at the most granular level of intervention possible:

2: interventions the principal objective of which is to improve gender equality;

1: interventions that have gender equality as an important and deliberate objective but not as the main reason for the intervention;

0: non-targeted interventions (interventions that are expected to have no significant bearing on gender equality);

0*: score to be assigned to interventions with a likely but not yet clear positive impact on gender equality.

The EGF Regulation provides for the Commission and the Member States to ensure that equality between men and women and the integration of the gender perspective are integral parts of and promoted during all stages of the implementation of the financial contribution from the EGF. To that end, the Member States formally confirm the respect of this principle at the time of application, when they provide gender-disaggregated information on the workers expected to make use of the programme's assistance. In case of doubt, the Commission requests that Member States provide further information on the gender aspect during its assessment of an application. This is, however, a general principle applied across the implementation and final reporting of the EGF cases, and estimating budget contributions is not relevant. EGF evaluations always include an analysis of both genders' disaggregated data and qualitative information (beneficiary surveys, interviews with implementers, etc.) regarding possible gender discrimination. During EGF evaluations, external contractors conduct case studies on each EGF case, and they are also asked to take the gender perspective into account. Past evaluations did not detect gender discrimination in either the delivery of measures or the targeting of beneficiaries. Moreover, in many cases, authorities aim to help participants overcome gender stereotypes when looking for a new job. About 40% of the beneficiaries consider that the EGF co-financed support encouraged them to overcome gender stereotypes in job selection or made them more aware of gender discrimination.

Between 2014 and 2016, the greatest number of redundant workers benefiting from EGF support came from sectors that traditionally employ more men than women (automotive,

computing, electronics, machinery and building construction). Therefore, most workers made redundant and then offered EGF assistance were male (75% men versus 25% women). However, from 2017, a significant number of redundancies took place in sectors that employ high numbers of women (retail trade, call centres, clothing, financial services and tourism-related activities). Therefore, 57% of those offered EGF assistance between 2017 and 2020 were men and 43% were women. In 31% of EGF cases, women represent at least 40% of workers offered assistance, and in 20% of cases they represent more than 50%.

Between 2021 and 2024, many redundancies occurred in sectors that employ a high proportion of men (metalworking, manufacture of motor vehicles, transport equipment, machinery and equipment, electrical equipment, logistics, etc.), hence 77% of those offered EGF assistance were men and 23% were women. However, women represent 36% of the beneficiaries, that is of those who received EGF support and participated in the measures.

Gender-disaggregated information:

77% of those offered EGF assistance are men and 23% are women.

Women account for 36% of the participants in the measures.

Contribution to the digital transition

The EGF does not have any indicators that specifically measure the contribution to the digital transition. The indicators are general result indicators. However, the dissemination of digital skills is a horizontal element for the design of coordinated packages of measures. The need for and level of training is adapted to the qualifications and skills of each beneficiary. Every beneficiary is thus expected to have received some sort of digital skills training.

Contribution to sustainable development goals

SDG	Does the programme contribute to the goal?	Example (only for the most relevant SDGs)
SDG4: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all	YES	In the 2019 'Goodyear' EGF case in Germany, 60% of the workers offered the assistance had no suitable qualification and used to hold elementary occupations (including a high number of people with migrant background). Backed by EGF with EUR 2 165 231, one third of 622 beneficiaries upskilled and improved their employment level. Overall, 58% of the workers had found a new job while the other 5% were participating in upskilling measures for a longer duration (e.g., getting a vocational qualification), by the reporting date.
SDG5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls	YES	The EGF is helping to achieve gender equality by providing support to all dismissed workers. Since 2017, a significant number of redundancies took place in sectors with high numbers of employed women (retail trade, call centre, wearing apparel, financial services, and tourism-related activities). For example, in the 2017 'Retail' case in Finland 1 173 women (representing 80% of total beneficiaries) were helped by EGF. EUR 2.5 million were mobilised from the EGF to support the ICT and language training, job and career coaching and job-seeking training. Overall, 84% of the beneficiaries had found a new job at the end of the implementation period.
SDG8: Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all	YES	In NUTS 2 level regions where youth unemployment rates are at least 20%, the EGF may provide personalised services to young people not in employment, education, or training. For example, in cases implemented between 2017 and 2019 in Belgium ('Caterpillar' case, 1 931 beneficiaries and EUR 1.6 million of EGF funding mobilised), and in Spain (Castilla y León mining of coal case, 396 beneficiaries and EUR 1 million of EGF funding mobilised), the support offered to the young people provided them with the assistance that they would not have received through national mainstream services.

SDG10: Reduce inequalities within and among countries

YES

The EGF is an emergency fund and is only mobilised in redundancy events that have a significant impact on the regional economy. By offering upskilling measures to workers made redundant, the EGF helps regions to offer measures to make their workers ready for future labour market needs, thereby fostering economic growth.

Some EGF cases include measures that improve labour mobility of displaced workers. For instance, in the 'Microsoft 2' case in Finland (883 beneficiaries and EUR 3.5 million of EGF funding mobilised) implemented between 2017 and 2019 the measures offered to the dismissed workers supported labour mobility in cooperation with the European Job Mobility Portal (EURES) services (i.e., foreign job advertisements and the exchange of experiences in online meetings)

EUROPEAN UNION SOLIDARITY FUND

The European Union Solidarity Fund (EUSF) provides financial assistance to Member States and countries negotiating their accession to the EU, in the event of major or regional natural disasters (such as earthquakes, floods, droughts, forest fires or storms) or major public health emergencies. The EUSF can only be activated at the request of an eligible state. Support from the EUSF may cover part of the emergency and recovery operations financed by public authorities.

Concrete examples of achievements

Over EUR 1 145 million of EUSF assistance was approved (mobilised) in 2024 to assist with disasters that occurred in 2023 and 2024.	8 EUSF applications were assessed in 2024.	Over EUR 1 234 million(*) was paid out to five Member States and Türkiye in 2024 to support the recovery and reconstruction of the regions affected by the natural disasters of 2023 and 2024.	12 new natural-disaster-related EUSF applications were received in 2024. The assessments of six applications were concluded in 2024 and the assessments of the others will continue in 2025.

(*) The amount includes payment credits carried over from 2023 (the EUSF assistance payment to Türkiye executed in 2024) and the advance payments to Greece and France made in 2024.

Budget programming and implementation

Budget programming (million EUR)

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	Total
Financial programming	844.2	718.5	649.5	1 234.0	1 167.0	1 190.0	1 214.0	7 017.2
NextGenerationEU	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Decommitments made available again (*)	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Contributions from other countries and entities	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Total	844.2	718.5	649.5	1 234.0	1 167.0	1 190.0	1 214.0	7 017.2

(*) Only Article 15(3) of the Financial Regulation.

Cumulative budget implementation at the end of 2024 (million EUR)

	Implementation	Budget	Implementation rate
Commitments	N/A	N/A	N/A
Payments	N/A	N/A	N/A

Implementation and performance

Key performance indicators

The EUSF is a special instrument. The total annual budgetary allocation to the fund laid down in the multiannual financial framework is a ceiling rather than a spending target. Financial assistance from the EUSF is mobilised by the European Parliament and the Council over and above the normal EU budget appropriations. This ensures that, in each case, the aid comes as an expression of solidarity with the full backing of the Parliament and the Council, not just as an administrative act by the Commission. Disbursements from the fund are therefore not programmable, as they entirely depend on the unpredictable occurrence, nature and magnitude of the disasters.

Once the appropriations become available in the EU budget, the Commission adopts a decision awarding aid to the affected state, which receives it immediately and in a single instalment. Once paid out, the affected state is responsible for implementation, including the selection of operations and their audit and control. Emergency and recovery operations may be financed retroactively from the first day of the disaster.

Council Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2024/765 increased the annual allocation for the Solidarity and Emergency Aid Reserve **for the years 2024-2027**. This reserve is constituted of two instruments, the EUSF (funded from the European Solidarity Reserve budget line) and the Emergency Aid Reserve. There is **a specific maximum annual allocation per instrument**. The maximum annual allocation of the EUSF between 2024-2027 is EUR 1 016 million (in 2018 prices).

	Base line	Progr ess	Tar get	Results	Assess ment
Popula tion of EUSF-supported countri es and region s	0	N/A	No targ ets	167.220 million	N/A
Numb er of countri es suppor ted by the EUSF	0	N/A	No targ ets	6	N/A

In 2024, the Commission finalised the **assessment of eight applications** relating to natural disasters that occurred in 2023 and 2024, of which:

three ‘major natural disaster’ applications relating to:

- floods in Slovenia in August 2023,
- floods in Greece in September 2023,
- floods in Germany in May 2024;

four ‘regional natural disaster’ applications relating to:

- floods in the Tuscany region, Italy in October 2023,
- floods in the north of France in November 2023,
- drought in the Andalusia region, Spain in 2024,
- floods in the Valle d’Aosta region, Italy in June 2024;

one ‘neighbouring country natural disaster’ relating to:

- floods in Austria in August 2023.

The Spanish application regarding the draught was rejected.

The Commission made **two EUSF mobilisation proposals** to the European Parliament and the Council based on these applications. Based on the Commission’s first proposal, over **EUR 1 028 million** was awarded to Greece, France, Italy, Austria and Slovenia (all for floods). Based on the Commission’s second proposal, EUR 116 million was mobilised for Germany and Italy (both for floods).

In terms of **payments**, over **EUR 1 234 million** was paid out in 2024 to one accession country and five Member States: Austria (floods in 2023) was paid EUR 5.2 million in December 2024. France (floods in 2023) was paid EUR 46.8 million in December 2024. Greece (floods in 2023) received EUR 101 million in December 2024. Italy (Emilia-Romagna and Tuscany region floods in 2023) received EUR 447 million in December 2024. Slovenia (floods in 2023) received EUR 428 million in December 2024. Türkiye (earthquakes in 2023) received EUR 400 million in April 2024.

In total, the Commission received **12 natural disaster applications** in 2024, of which:

three ‘major natural disaster’ application relating to:

- floods in Germany in May 2024,
- floods in Czechia in September 2024,
- floods in Bosnia and Herzegovina in October 2024;

six ‘regional natural disasters’ applications relating to:

- floods in the Tuscany, Italy region in October 2023,
- floods in the north of France in November 2023,
- drought in the Andalusia, Spain region in 2024,
- floods in the Valle d’Aosta, Italy region in June 2024,
- floods in Moldova in September 2024,

- floods in Poland in September 2024;

three ‘neighbouring country natural disaster’ applications relating to:

- floods in Austria in September 2024,
- floods in Romania in September 2024,
- floods in Slovakia in September 2024.

The assessment of the French, Spanish, German and Italian applications were concluded in 2024. The assessment of the applications from Austria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Czechia, Moldova, Poland and Slovakia began at the end of 2024 and are continuing in 2025.

Contribution to horizontal priorities

Contribution to green budgeting priorities:

N/A

Contribution to gender equality (million EUR) (*)

Gender score	2021	2022	2023	2024	Total
2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
0*	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
0	844.2	718.5	649.5	1 234.0	3 446.2
Total:	844.2	718.5	649.5	1 234.0	3 446.2

(*) Based on the applied gender contribution methodology, the following scores are attributed at the most granular level of intervention possible:

2: interventions the principal objective of which is to improve gender equality;

1: interventions that have gender equality as an important and deliberate objective but not as the main reason for the intervention;

0: non-targeted interventions (interventions that are expected to have no significant bearing on gender equality);

0*: score to be assigned to interventions with a likely but not yet clear positive impact on gender equality.

Due to the nature of the special instrument, the EUSF has no significant bearing on gender equality.

Contribution to the digital transition

Due to the nature of the special instrument, the EUSF has no significant bearing on the digital transition.

Contribution to sustainable development goals

SDG	Does the programme contribute to the goal?	Example (only for the most relevant SDGs)
SDG3: Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages	yes	As part of the Coronavirus Response Investment Initiative, Regulation (EU) 2020/461 of the European Parliament and of the Council of March 2020 amended the EUSF regulation by including major public health emergencies within the scope of the EUSF. Since April 2020, EU Member States and accession countries were able to apply for support from the EUSF for public health emergency reasons, to alleviate the burden from the first-response measures
SDG10: Reduce inequalities within and among countries	yes	Solidarity is one of the core values of the European Union and a guiding principle of the European integration process. The EUSF is an instrument designed to provide financial means expressing EU solidarity by contributing to post-disaster relief in Member States and accession countries confronted with devastating natural disasters and major public health emergencies.

**SDG13:
Take
urgent
action to
combat
climate
change
and its
impacts**

yes

The EUSF contributes to post-disaster emergency relief in Member States and accession countries confronted with devastating natural disasters, which often can be seen as manifestations of climate change.

Support for reforms

N/A

Contribution to strategic technologies (STEP)

N/A

INNOVATION FUND

Concrete examples of achievements

Around EUR 7.1 billion had been committed in grants for innovative clean-tech projects by the end of 2024. Together with the projects selected under the IF23 Call, the commitments would become around EUR 12bn.	Around 120 large- and small-scale projects were under implementation at the end of 2024.	Around EUR 38.7 billion worth of investments have been mobilised through projects that were under implementation at the end of 2024.	Around 452 million tonnes of reduction in carbon-dioxide-equivalent greenhouse gases was planned over the first 10 years of operation by ongoing projects at the end of 2024.
70 proposals had been awarded project development assistance by the European Investment Bank by the end of 2024.	36 projects reached financial close by the end of 2024.		

Budget programming and implementation

Budget programming (million EUR)

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	Total
Financial programming	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
NextGenerationEU	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Decommitments made available again (*)	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Contributions from other countries and entities	3 816.2	2 897.4	1 633.6	2 069.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	10 416.2
Total	3 816.2	2 897.4	1 633.6	2 069.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	10 416.2

(*) Only Article 15(3) of the Financial Regulation.

Cumulative budget implementation at the end of 2024 (million EUR)

	Implementation	Budget	Implementation rate
Commitments	7 327.8	10 416.2	70.3%
Payments	493.2		4.7%

Implementation and performance

Key performance indicators

	Baseline	Progress	Target	Results	Assessment
Absolute greenhouse gas emissions avoidance planned	0	N/A	N/A	452 million tonnes in 2024	N/A
Absolute greenhouse gas emissions avoidance achieved	0	N/A	N/A	14 693 tonnes in 2024	N/A
Participants in knowledge events on clean-tech solutions	0	66%	2 000	1 309 in 2024 compared to a target of 2 000	On track
Number of projects supported through grants	0	N/A	N/A	120 in 2024	N/A
Investment mobilised by the Innovation Fund grants: planned	0	N/A	N/A	EUR 38.7 billion in 2024	N/A
Investment mobilised by the Innovation Fund grants: achieved	0	N/A	N/A	7.1 billion in 2024	N/A
Investment mobilised via financial instruments	0	N/A	N/A	EUR 286.8 million	N/A

Technology sectors covered	0	86%	22	19 in 2024 compared to a target of 22	On track
Geographically balanced locations	0	83%	29	24 compared to a target of 29	On track

Through the combination of regular grants and auctions, the Innovation Fund responds to its objectives to support both projects that demonstrate highly innovative technologies, processes or products, that are sufficiently mature and that have a significant potential to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and projects that are aimed at scaling up innovative technologies.

In all, 85 projects were pre-selected for regular grants from the 2023 call, with overall Innovation Fund support of [EUR 4.8 billion](#). With these projects, the Innovation Fund portfolio would increase to around 200 projects under implementation and around EUR 12 billion in grants. This year's call had a record budget of EUR 4 billion and received 337 applications. Following up on the previous year, this call also had a dedicated topic for clean-tech manufacturing, with a total budget of EUR 1.7 billion. In line with the [Net-Zero Industry Act](#), the clean-tech projects selected will build manufacturing plants for key components in wind and solar energy and for heat pumps, as well as components for electrolyzers, fuel cells, energy storage technologies and the batteries value chain. Selected projects will contribute to 3 gigawatts of solar photovoltaic manufacturing capacity in the EU and 9.3 gigawatts of electrolyser manufacturing capacity in the EU, further strengthening the EU's clean energy industry.

The first-ever Innovation Fund auction in 2023 was designed to contribute towards building a market for renewable hydrogen, stimulate investment in the production capacity, and bring production to scale – in practical terms, to achieve broad commercial roll-out across the EU. It attracted 132 bids from 17 countries across Europe, requesting funds that were 15 times greater than the available budget. The grant agreements were signed in October 2024 by six projects for total Innovation Fund support of almost EUR 700 million.

The Innovation Fund has been responding to urgent policy priorities and offers financial support tailored to market needs and risk profiles of eligible projects, while attracting additional public and private resources. The grants provided have a leverage effect of approximately five times, with EUR 7 billion of Innovation Fund support enabling around EUR 38 billion in investments mobilised. The Innovation Fund has also contributed to the InvestEU Programme through blending with the EU guarantee, which contributed to the mobilisation of additional investments. For example, Innovation Fund's participation in blending operations with InvestEU has also materialised in an additional EUR 286 million of investments mobilised through the breakthrough energy

catalyst programme. In particular, Innovation Fund also provided additional €200m top-up via InvestEU for EIB investments into European battery manufacturing companies.

Nevertheless, Innovation Fund projects are also affected by adverse market conditions, disruptions of supply chains in certain sectors or delays in entering into operation due to necessary changes of the technical solutions or permitting. By the end of 2024, 120 projects were under implementation, out of which 36 have reached financial close, while 11 additional projects terminated their grant agreement. More information on the portfolio of ongoing projects can be found in the interactive Innovation Fund [dashboard](#).

In December 2024, DG Climate Action and the European Climate, Infrastructure and Environment Executive Agency launched three new calls for proposals under the Innovation Fund, with a total budget of EUR 4.6 billion distributed as follows: EUR 2.4 billion for net-zero technologies, EUR 1 billion for electric vehicle batteries and EUR 1.2 billion for the second auction for RFNBO (renewable fuel of non-biological origin) hydrogen in the context of the European Hydrogen Bank. Responding to urgent policy priorities, the call launched to support projects on electric vehicle battery cells aims to enhance Europe’s industrial capacity and leadership in this net-zero technology. This support aims to ensure that battery production capacity in the EU / European Economic Area is ready to respond to increased demand for electric vehicles, in line with the mandatory standards on carbon dioxide emission performance of light- and heavy-duty vehicles. Additionally, EUR 200 million are made available to the European Investment Bank for blending operations with the InvestEU ‘green transition’ product. This support should lead to financing battery value chain projects – and will allow the bank to make investments, which would otherwise be considered too risky.

Lastly, the fund’s revenues are managed in accordance with the objectives of the EU emissions trading system of cost-effectively reducing greenhouse gas emissions and combating climate change. An additional EUR 3.363 billion were provided to REPowerEU in 2024 as part of the total contribution of EUR 12 billion by 2026, amounting to around EUR 4.9 billion in total so far.

Contribution to horizontal priorities

Contribution to green budgeting priorities (EUR million):

	Implementation				Estimates			Total	% of the total envelope
	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027		
Climate mainstreaming	146.2	2 944.8	3 520.8	478.4	0.0	0.0	0.0	7 090.2	68.1%

The entire Innovation Fund contributes to green budgeting priorities, with a specific focus on climate-mitigation investments.

In terms of taxonomy-relevant expenditure, the Innovation Fund only finances the most innovative decarbonisation projects on the basis of their potential for greenhouse gas emission reduction. Since the revision of the Emissions Trading System Directive in 2023, projects are also assessed on the basis of their contribution to environmental and circularity objectives.

From 2025, only projects that meet the ‘do no significant harm’ criteria contained in the EU taxonomy will be eligible for support from the Innovation Fund.

It is important to note that the fund is not part of the multiannual financial framework and does not count towards the achievement of the 30% climate target.

Contribution to gender equality (million EUR) (*)

Gender score	2021	2022	2023	2024	Total
2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
0*	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
0	146.2	2 944.8	3 520.8	478.4	7 090.2
Total:	146.2	2 944.8	3 520.8	478.4	7 090.2

Gender-disaggregated information:

Gender balance is not relevant for the programme, as it does not target gender policies. The programme may have a likely positive impact on gender equality, however no specific data is collected under the programme to analyse this matter.

Contribution to the digital transition

The Innovation Fund does not target the digital transition.

Contribution to sustainable development goals

SDG	Does the programme contribute to the goal?	Example (only for the most relevant SDGs)
SDG7: Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all	x	The Innovation Fund contributes to ensuring access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all through funding renewable energy or energy storage projects, such as Waga 4 World (W4W) project aims at producing cost competitive and grid-compliant biomethane from landfill gas; CarBatteryReFactory - Assembly plant in Germany for serial production of industrial energy storage systems based on second-life car batteries and disruptive full-pack technology.
SDG9: Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation	x	The Innovation Fund supports energy intensive industries to foster innovation, such as these projects: H2GreenSteel – integrated steel plant in Boden, Northern Sweden, for the large-scale production of renewable hydrogen, green iron and green steel; Volta project - Hybrid mid-sized pilot furnace for flat glass in Czechia, with the objective to design and build a novel hybrid glass furnace combining electric melting with oxy-gas combustion.

SDG13: Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts	x	The entire Innovation Fund is designed to answer this goal and take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts. All the projects funded contribute to this. Some of the best examples of supported projects include the following: Grey2Green-II - Sines Refinery Transformation from Grey to Green Hydrogen – Phase II will install a 200 MW electrolyser for the production of renewable hydrogen and will receive support from the Innovation Fund following the first pilot auction for RFNBO hydrogen; eMETHANOLxWSolution - Next Generation tanker vessel powered by e-methanol and wind assisted propulsion aims to contribute to the decarbonisation of the maritime industry by demonstrating an innovative combination of foldable suction sails and a dual-fuel engine for a new hybrid tanker vessel, enabling the use of e-methanol and wind propulsion.

Support for reforms

- N/A

Contribution to strategic technologies (STEP)

- In line the STEP Regulation, **the Innovation Fund** is one of the EU programmes in direct management contributing to strengthen the competitiveness and resilience of the European economy. As stipulated in **Article 4 of the STEP Regulation**, the Innovation Fund is also among the programmes authorized to award the **STEP (Sovereignty) Seal** under its calls for proposals.
- The Innovation Fund objectives contribute fully to STEP priorities and its regular grant calls are the biggest contributor towards them in 2024, with €4.8 billion expected to be awarded under the 2023 Innovation Fund call and an additional €3.4 billion earmarked in the Innovation Fund 2024 calls launched in December 2024.
- In October 2024, the Innovation Fund awarded the STEP Seal to 149 projects which scored above all thresholds for the award criteria following the 2023 Innovation Fund call. Beyond the recognition of the STEP Seal, 85 out of the 149 projects were also invited for grant agreement preparation, with grants expected to be signed in the first quarter of 2025.

- The European Commission has been working with Member States to raise awareness of the importance of the STEP projects and to identify additional funding mechanisms at EU or national level.
- Looking forward, eligible proposals that exceed the evaluation thresholds will be awarded the STEP Seal for two currently open calls for proposals for regular grants - “net-zero technologies” and “electric vehicle battery manufacturing”, which were published in December 2024 (grant agreements expected in Q4 2025).

BREXIT ADJUSTMENT RESERVE

In July 2020, the European Council agreed to establish a new special instrument with an allocation of EUR 5.5 billion (in current prices). Regulation (EU) 2021/1755⁸² establishing the Brexit Adjustment Reserve (BAR) was adopted in October 2021. The BAR is a temporary, targeted instrument aiming to provide swift support to Member States to address their specific Brexit-related challenges. Support from the BAR can be used for national measures specifically taken between January 2020 and December 2023.

The BAR supports those regions, areas and local communities most adversely affected by the United Kingdom’s withdrawal from the European Union, and thus mitigates the related impact on economic, social and territorial cohesion.

It aims to provide swift support to Member States, allowing them to address their specific Brexit-related challenges while minimising the administrative burden. For this reason, it does not ask for advance programming or planning of measures and provides for flexibility in implementation in line with the subsidiarity principle.

Concrete examples of achievements

EUR 7.1 million	17		
was distributed as 2024 pre-financing tranches to one Member State (Finland).	Member States submitted their final applications for financial contributions in September 2024.		

⁸² Regulation (EU) 2021/1755 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 6 October 2021 establishing the Brexit Adjustment Reserve (OJ L 357, 8.10.2021, p. 1, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2021/1755/oj>).

Budget programming and implementation

Budget programming (million EUR):

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	Total
Financial programming	1 574.9	964.0	257.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	2 796.7
NextGenerationEU	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Decommitments made available again (*)	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Contributions from other countries and entities	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Total	1 574.9	964.0	257.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	2 796.7

(*) Only Article 15(3) of the Financial Regulation.

Cumulative budget implementation at the end of 2024 (million EUR):

	Implementation	Budget	Implementation rate
Commitments	2 796.7	2 796.7	100.0%
Payments	2 796.7		100.0%

Implementation and performance

Key performance indicators

	Baseline	Progress	Target	Results	Assessment
No indicators					

Following the submission by **17 Member States** of their applications by 30 September 2024, the Commission is currently conducting an assessment determining the eligibility of measures carried out by Member States with BAR support. The assessment is planned to be concluded by autumn 2025.

Indicators to measure performance will become available as output indicators through the reports.

Performance assessment in a nutshell

The BAR was conceived and designed at a moment of uncertainty about the scale and speed of Brexit and its gravity for Member States. With the benefit of hindsight, several findings should be noted, such as the following.

- (1) Even though Brexit formally took effect five years ago, the economic and political consequences are still unfolding beyond the reference period of the BAR.
- (2) Evidence suggests that despite its high level of flexibility (neither programming nor national co-financing requirements; large pre-financing), numerous Member States have been struggling with setting up national measures with a clear direct link to Brexit.
- (3) New challenges stemming from multiple parallel crises called for immediate action by Member States and further hampered the smooth implementation of the BAR. This included the programming and implementation of much bigger funding sources (such as the Recovery and Resilience Facility) crowding out the implementation of the rather small contribution by the BAR. As a result, large transfers by Member States from the BAR to REPowerEU were requested in 2023 (23 Member States, 10 of which transferred the total of their BAR allocation). The remaining overall BAR allocation was thus reduced to EUR 3.4 billion, of which EUR 584 million was envisaged to be paid in 2025 upon receipt of documentation attesting to the eligibility of the expenditure. Following the MFF mid-term revision and the amendments introduced by Council Regulation (EU) 2024/765, the remaining 2025 funds of the BAR envelope (EUR 584 million) will be redeployed for other purposes, thus bringing the total resources available under the BAR to **EUR 2.8 billion**.

The Commission will carry out an evaluation of the BAR by June 2027. In addition, the Commission will submit an implementation report to the European Parliament and the Council of the European Union by June 2028.

Contribution to horizontal priorities

Contribution to green budgeting priorities:

Given the very specific and targeted purpose of the BAR, there is no pre-established requirement for Member States regarding the level of contributions to achieve climate objectives.

Contribution to gender equality (million EUR) (*)

Gender score	2021	2022	2023	2024	Total
2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
0*	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
0	1 574.9	964.0	257.8	0.0	2 796.7
Total:	1 574.9	964.0	257.8	0.0	2 796.7

(*) Based on the applied gender contribution methodology, the following scores are attributed at the most granular level of intervention possible:

- 2: interventions the principal objective of which is to improve gender equality;
- 1: interventions that have gender equality as an important and deliberate objective but not as the main reason for the intervention;
- 0: non-targeted interventions (interventions that are expected to have no significant bearing on gender equality);
- 0*: score to be assigned to interventions with a likely but not yet clear positive impact on gender equality.

Due to its specific nature, the BAR does not contribute to gender equality. However, the objectives of the BAR should be pursued in line with the principles set out in the European Pillar of Social Rights, including the inherent contribution to the elimination of inequalities and to the promotion of gender equality and gender mainstreaming, while ensuring respect for fundamental rights.

Contribution to the digital transition

Due to its specific nature, the BAR does not contribute to the digital transition.

Contribution to sustainable development goals: n/a

Support for reforms

n/a

Contribution to strategic technologies (STEP)

n/a

SOCIAL CLIMATE FUND

PROGRAMME FOR FINANCIALLY SUPPORTING PEOPLE AND BUSINESSES MOST IMPACTED BY THE INTRODUCTION OF A NEW EMISSIONS TRADING SYSTEM

Concrete examples of achievements

The Social Climate Fund is in its early stages. It will disburse funds in the 2026-2032 period, based on targets and milestones contained in social climate plans submitted by Member States and assessed by the Commission. Member States are expected to submit their respective plans by June 2025. Therefore, there are no achievements to report with regard to the year 2024.

Budget programming and implementation

Budget programming (million EUR):

N/A

Cumulative budget implementation at the end of 2024 (million EUR):

N/A

Implementation and performance

Key performance indicators

No data are yet available since the implementation of the Social Climate Fund will only begin in 2026.

Contribution to horizontal priorities

Contribution to green budgeting priorities:

No data are yet available since the implementation of the Social Climate Fund will only begin in 2026.

Contribution to gender equality

No data are yet available since the implementation of the Social Climate Fund will only begin in 2026.

Gender-disaggregated information:

- N/A

Contribution to the digital transition

No data are yet available since the implementation of the Social Climate Fund will only begin in 2026.

Contribution to sustainable development goals

No data are yet available since the implementation of the Social Climate Fund will only begin in 2026.

Contribution to strategic technologies (STEP)

N/A

UKRAINE FACILITY

Concrete examples of achievements

EUR 940 million in guarantee coverage by the Ukraine Guarantee, coupled with EUR 400 million in blended finance grants, were mobilised under the Ukraine Investment Framework – with the aim to unlock EUR 6 billion in investments benefiting private companies, municipalities, and state-owned enterprises in Ukraine		23 reform steps set out in the Ukraine Plan were successfully met, triggering the release of EUR 16.1 billion in grants and loans. 5 steps were met in the area of fight against corruption and money laundering; 4 steps in public financial management; 3 steps in energy and 3 in business environment; 2 steps in agri-food and 2 in green transition; 1 step each in decentralisation and regional policy; human capital; management of state-owned assets; judicial system.	13 000 claims were received by the Register of Damage caused by the aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine. The Register is a key building block of the international community's effort in ensuring Russia's accountability for the vast damage it has inflicted on Ukraine and its people, and is financed by the Facility.

Budget programming and implementation

Budget programming and loans (million EUR):

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	Total
Financial programming	0.0	0.0	0.0	4 767.5	4 320.4	3 895.2	4 016.9	17 000.0
Loans	0.0	0.0	0.0	13 111.5	10 953.2	6 697.0	2 238.3	33 000.0
Decommitments made available again (*)	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Contributions from other countries and entities	0.0	0.0	0.0	156.9	0.0	0.0	0.0	156.9
Total	0.0	0.0	0.0	18 035.9	15 273.6	10 592.2	6 255.2	50 156.9

(*) Only Article 15(3) of the financial regulation.

Cumulative budget implementation at the end of 2024 (million EUR):

	Implementation	Budget	Implementation rate
Commitments	4 887.4	17 156.9	28.5%
Payments	3 637.4		21.2%

Implementation and performance

Key performance indicators: n/a

- Regulation (EU) 2024/792⁸³ (the “Ukraine Facility Regulation”) was adopted at the end of February 2024, as an innovative single-instrument combination of non-repayable support and highly concessional loans aimed to support Ukraine’s macro-financial stability, mobilize investments for recovery and reconstruction, and leverage key reforms in line with

⁸³ Regulation (EU) 2024/792 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 29 February 2024 establishing the Ukraine Facility (OJ L, 2024/792, 29.2.2024, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2024/792/oj>).

Ukraine's path towards EU membership. In 2024, the Facility went through a very intense roll-out phase – both on the EU and Ukraine side.

- The first result was the release of **exceptional bridge financing** (Article 25 of the Ukraine Facility Regulation) to provide much needed liquidity to Ukraine to help finance the functioning of the State – which means ensuring, for example, public wages, pensions, and the provision of basic public services. EUR 6 billion of loans were released between March and April against policy conditions (“steps”) set out in a dedicated Memorandum of Understanding and linked to important reforms – including sound financial management, the fight against corruption and money laundering, among others.
- In parallel, in March, Ukraine submitted its official **Ukraine Plan** (Article 14 of the Ukraine Facility Regulation), that paves the way for regular payments conditioned to the fulfilment of reform and investment “steps” by Ukraine until 2027. The Plan is meant as an overall strategic document, fully owned by Ukraine and anchored in Ukraine's enlargement path, to which all donors and partners can contribute. In April, the Commission submitted a proposal for Council implementing decision on the approval of the assessment of the Ukraine Plan, leading to [Council Implementing Decision \(EU\) 2024/1447⁸⁴](#).
- The full legal framework for disbursements against a pre-defined set of steps of the Plan and agreed timeline was completed by July 2024. It includes a **Framework Agreement** with Ukraine dedicated to the implementation of the Ukraine Facility (Article 9 of the Ukraine Facility Regulation), and the establishment of an independent **Audit Board** (Article 36 of the Ukraine Facility Regulation).
- By end-year, EUR 16.1 billion in grants and loans were disbursed against positive assessment of the **fulfilment of 23 steps** of the Ukraine Plan (including via bridge financing). Reforms Ukraine accomplished in 2024 range across several areas: fight against corruption and money laundering (5 steps); public financial management (4 steps); energy (3 steps); business environment (3 steps); agri-food (2 steps); green transition and environmental protection (2 steps); decentralisation and regional policy; human capital; management of state-owned assets; judicial system (1 step each).
- The new **Ukraine Investment Framework** (UIF) was established in April, endowed with a dedicated **Ukraine Guarantee** of EUR 7.8 billion. A first set of 5 agreements were signed within four months of the entry into force of the Ukraine Facility Regulation (Article 31(8) of the Ukraine Facility Regulation), to increase by EUR 940 million the amounts of the guarantee provided through External Action Guarantee agreements concluded under EFSD+ for investments solely focused on Ukraine. The guarantees are designed to facilitate access to finance for Ukraine's micro, small and medium-sized enterprises. In some cases, operations focus specifically on war-affected companies to help them to restore their business, including in de-occupied and frontline regions, and to invest in green technologies. Another key deliverable is to accelerate and scale-up investments in renewable energy, transport, digital sector, and industrial investments, and to accelerate the net zero transition in the energy sector.

⁸⁴ Council Implementing Decision (EU) 2024/1447 of 14 May 2024 on the approval of the assessment of the Ukraine Plan (OJ L, 2024/1447, 24.5.2024, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/dec_impl/2024/1447/oj).

- Coupled with a first set of blended finance operations (about EUR 400 million), this package aims to unlock EUR 6 billion in investments benefiting private companies, municipalities, and state-owned enterprises in Ukraine. By end-2024, 8 such operations were already active.
- A new **Technical Cooperation Facility** (TCF) was set up to channel project-based assistance to support Ukraine's progressive alignment to the EU acquis with a view to future EU membership, as well as the implementation of the Ukraine Plan, while strengthening the country's resilience and capacity to respond to the impacts generated by Russia's war of aggression – including with urgent repairs of energy infrastructure. As of 2024, the Ukraine Facility finances the EU contribution to the Enlarged Partial Agreement on the Register of Damage Caused by the Aggression of the Russian Federation Against Ukraine. The Register is a key building block of the international community's effort in ensuring Russia's accountability for the vast damage it has inflicted on Ukraine and its people.
- The Facility financed the subsidy for the interest rate charges due by Ukraine in 2024 in relation to the loans of the exceptional macro-financial assistance of 2022. This created a fiscal space of around EUR 195 million in Ukraine's State budget.
- By its own nature, the Facility incorporates the intrinsic **challenges and risks** of delivering high volumes of performance-based financial assistance in a situation of active war. To cope with this risk, the Commission entertains an intense policy and technical dialogue with Ukraine on each step of the Ukraine Plan, and complementary project-based advice is mobilized whenever necessary – including for the preparation of important milestones for accession negotiations. In addition, the [Ukraine Donor Platform](#) boosted and streamlined donor coordination to help the Government build a better overview of needs and priorities to underpin strategic orientation of available resources. The evolution of the war, however, may easily compromise the sustainability of concrete results, such as those linked to infrastructure repairs – including in energy and transport.

Contribution to horizontal priorities

Contribution to green budgeting priorities (EUR million):

	Implementation				Estimates			Total	% of the total envelope
	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027		
Climate mainstreaming	0.0	0.0	0.0	92.4	510.7	510.7	510.7	1 624.4	9.6%

- The Facility should, to the extent possible, contribute to climate change mitigation and adaptation, environmental protection, including biodiversity conservation, and to the green transition. That contribution should, to the extent possible in a war-torn country, account

for **at least 20 % of the overall amount corresponding to support under the Ukraine Investment Framework and to investments under the Ukraine Plan.**

- The estimated contribution to climate mainstreaming is based on the above-mentioned target. For the Ukraine Plan, it considers that at least 80 % of all investments in transport infrastructure and at least 60 % of all those in energy infrastructure. For the Ukraine Investment Framework, it is expected that half of the overall contributions to climate change mitigation and adaptation, environmental protection, including biodiversity conservation, and to the green transition will target climate change. Additional contributions might be possible, but there is no sufficient information yet to quantify them.
- The Ukraine Facility is focused primarily on Ukraine's recovery, reconstruction and modernisation needs in the context of a war-torn country. The Commission has not yet performed a thorough assessment as to whether actions under the Facility will contribute positively to biodiversity. In the absence of such an assessment, the Commission prefers to provide a prudent estimate of zero contribution, which we may update once further information is available.
- The Ukraine Plan contains a chapter on **green transition and environmental protection** and other chapters also refer to **green priorities**. In order to meet the steps of the Plan, for example, in 2024 Ukraine adopted a new law on prevention, reduction and control of industrial pollution; an integrated national energy and climate plan; and a new strategy for thermal modernisation of buildings until 2050. They also developed a concept note defining the scope of the derogations from the Environmental Impact Assessment and Strategic Environmental Assessment.
- The Strategic Orientations endorsed by the Steering Board of the UIF contain both a dedicated section on "Green transition and environmental protection" as a key area for investment and a section on "Do no harm: environment, climate and biodiversity" as a horizontal principle applying to all investments supported by the UIF.

Contribution to gender equality (EUR million*):

Gender Score	2021	2022	2023	2024	Total
2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
1	0.0	0.0	0.0	246.2	246.2
0*	0.0	0.0	0.0	17 521.3	17 521.3
0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Total:	0.0	0.0	0.0	17 767.5	17 767.5

(*) Based on the applied gender contribution methodology, the following scores are attributed at the most granular level of intervention possible:

- 2: interventions the principal objective of which is to improve gender equality;
- 1: interventions that have gender equality as an important and deliberate objective but not as the main reason for the intervention;
- 0: non-targeted interventions (interventions that are expected to have no significant bearing on gender equality);
- 0*: score to be assigned to interventions with a likely but not yet clear positive impact on gender equality.

- The Ukraine Plan sets the principles of inclusivity, gender equality and social cohesion as important cross-cutting areas of attention, and a special focus on issues linked to human capital and business environment. In order to meet the steps of the Plan, for example, in 2024 Ukraine adopted the new demographic development strategy up to 2040. The new law on the corporate governance of state-owned enterprises, and the national strategy for mine action up to 2033 also include measures that encourage gender equality. However, due to the financial setup, a direct link between disbursements and actions towards gender equality cannot yet be established, thus commitments under this pillar have been assigned a gender score 0*.
- The UIF is implemented through partnerships with financial institutions aligned with international and EU commitments to GEWE. Commitments made in 2024 are top-ups to existing guarantee agreements with partner IFIs which were assigned a gender score 0* as this level of information was not yet available. However, gender equality and women's empowerment are targets in the strategic orientations of the UIF and will be assessed for future agreements.
- Project-based assistance is channelled through a single action called Technical Cooperation Facility (TCF). The project EU Integration for Ukraine (UA2EU) has been assigned a gender score 1 as it integrates gender equality in its support to reforms and capacity building in the context of Ukraine's accession to the EU.

Gender disaggregated information: n/a

Contribution to the digital transition (EUR million*): n/a

- The Ukraine Plan contains a chapter on **digital transformation**, which appears also as a crosscutting area. In order to meet the steps of the Plan, for example, in 2024 Ukraine adopted a strategic plan for the digitalisation of the State Customs Service. Digitalisation measures are included also in the new action plan on deregulation, and in the revised state strategy for regional development for 2021-2027.
- The strategic orientations endorsed by the Steering Board of the UIF contain a dedicated chapter on digital transformation.
- Project-based assistance is channelled through a single action called Technical Cooperation Facility (TCF).

Contribution to sustainable development goals

SDG	Does the programme contribute to the goal?	Example (only for the most relevant SDGs)

SDG2 End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture	Yes	
SDG3 Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages by 2030	Yes	
SDG5 To achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls	Yes	In 2024, Ukraine adopted the new demographic development strategy up to 2040. The new law on the corporate governance of state-owned enterprises, and the national strategy for mine action up to 2033 also include measures that encourage gender equality.
SDG6 Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all by 2030	Yes	
SDG7 Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all by 2030	Yes	
SDG8 Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth	Yes	
SDG9 Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation by 2030	Yes	The Ukraine Investment Framework contributed to the creation of a leading integrated operator in Ukraine with a robust investment plan for telecommunication infrastructure and improvement of digital connectivity. The investment aims to modernise and expand Ukraine's telecom infrastructure, enhancing network resilience and connectivity across the country, including in liberated territories.

SDG11 Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable	Yes	
SDG13 Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts	Yes	In 2024, Ukraine adopted a new law on prevention, reduction and control of industrial pollution; an integrated national energy and climate plan; and a new strategy for thermal modernisation of buildings until 2050.
SDG15 Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, combat desertification and halt biodiversity loss	Yes	
SDG16 Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development; provide access to justice for all	Yes	
SDG17 Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development	Yes	

Support to reforms

- The **Ukraine Plan** represents the overarching reference framework for the entire Ukraine Facility. More particularly, the Council implementing decision on the approval of the assessment of the Plan sets out a detailed roadmap of conditions, in the form of qualitative and quantitative steps linked to reforms and investments, with a specific timetable for monitoring and implementation. Fulfilment of these conditions can trigger direct EU support to Ukraine's budget (Pillar I of the Ukraine Facility).
- The Plan includes 151 steps organized around 15 sectoral chapters (public administration reform; public financial management; judiciary; fight against corruption and money-laundering; financial markets; management of public assets; human capital; business environment; decentralisation and regional policy; energy; transport; agri-food;

management of critical raw materials; digital transformation; green transition and environmental protection) and 3 horizontal chapters (reconstruction and modernisation processes across all levels of the government; mechanisms and arrangements to protect the financial interests of the Union; stakeholders' consultation during the preparation of the Plan).

- Ukraine fulfilled a total of **23 steps** due during 2024 across several chapters of the Plan, triggering the disbursement of EUR 16.1 billion in grants and loans (including the exceptional bridge financing). Reforms Ukraine accomplished in 2024 range across several areas: fight against corruption and money laundering (5 steps); public financial management (4 steps); energy (3 steps); business environment (3 steps); agri-food (2 steps); green transition and environmental protection (2 steps); decentralisation and regional policy; human capital; management of state-owned assets; judicial system (1 step each).
- For example, in the area of fight against corruption Ukraine increased the staff of the Specialised Anti-Corruption Prosecutor's Office (SAPO) and passed important amendments to the Criminal Code and the Criminal Procedure Code; in particular, the legal framework of plea bargaining improved significantly. Another key step in this area was the legislation to reform the Economic Security Bureau of Ukraine, in view of transforming it into a modern, professional and effective supervisory authority to combat tax evasion and economic crimes. In the area of public financial management, for example, Ukraine adopted a key strategy setting clear benchmarks and implementation principles for Ukraine's integration of customs IT infrastructure with EU standards. On the economic side, the new law on corporate governance of state-owned enterprises has the potential to improve the functioning and transparency of the Ukrainian market economy. At the same time, the new law on integrated prevention and control of industrial pollution is essential for Ukraine's EU accession process (chapter 27 on environment), as well as enabling future investments in green reconstruction.

REFORM AND GROWTH FACILITY FOR THE WESTERN BALKANS

Concrete examples of achievements: n/a

Budget programming and implementation

Budget programming (million EUR):

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	Total
Non repayable support	0.0	0.0	0.0	501.0	499.0	500.0	500.0	2 000.0
<i>Of which provisioning of the loans</i>	<i>0.0</i>	<i>0.0</i>	<i>0.0</i>	<i>90.0</i>	<i>90.0</i>	<i>90.0</i>	<i>90.0</i>	<i>360.0</i>
<i>Of which administrative support</i>	<i>0.0</i>	<i>0.0</i>	<i>0.0</i>	<i>7.5</i>	<i>7.5</i>	<i>7.5</i>	<i>7.5</i>	<i>30.0</i>

Loans (million EUR):

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	Total
Loans	0.0	0.0	0.0	1 000.0	1 000.0	1 000.0	1 000.0	4 000.0

Cumulative budget implementation at the end of 2024 (million EUR):

	Implementation	Budget	Implementation rate
Commitments	399.7	2 000.0	20.0%
Payments	0.7		0.0%

Implementation and performance

Key performance indicators: n/a

Regulation (EU) 2024/1449⁸⁵ establishing the Reform and Growth Facility for the Western Balkans entered into force in May 2024. In October 2024, the European Commission endorsed the Reform Agendas submitted by Albania, Kosovo⁸⁶, Montenegro, North Macedonia and Serbia. The Commission is actively engaged with the authorities of Bosnia and Herzegovina to support them in the submission of their Reform Agenda.

As of 31 December 2024, the beneficiaries are finalising legal procedures to sign and ratify their respective facility and loan agreements. It is important to note that the implementation phase for each beneficiary will start after entry into force of these agreements.

Contribution to horizontal priorities

Contribution to green budgeting priorities (EUR million):

	Implementation				Estimates				
	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	Total	% of the total envelope
Climate mainstreaming	0.0	0.0	0.0	120.4	177.5	148.9	148.9	595.7	29.8%

⁸⁵ Regulation (EU) 2024/1449 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 14 May 2024 on establishing the Reform and Growth Facility for the Western Balkans (OJ L, 2024/1449, 24.5.2024, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2024/1449/oj>).

⁸⁶ This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244/1999 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence.

Activities under the Facility aim to help advance progress towards EU social, climate and environmental standards, as well as the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, the Paris Agreement adopted under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity and the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification. These activities will not contribute to environmental degradation or cause harm to the environment or climate.

The Facility aims to meet the target of 30% of Union budget expenditure supporting climate objectives and 7,5 % in 2024 and 10 % in 2026 and 2027 supporting biodiversity objectives. In the absence of specific requirements on biodiversity in the regulation of this facility, the Commission has not yet had the time to perform a thorough assessment as to whether actions under the Western Balkans Facility will contribute positively to biodiversity. In the absence of such an assessment, the Commission prefers to provide a prudent estimate of zero contribution, which we may update once further information is available.

At least 37 % of non-repayable financial support through the Western Balkan Investment Framework (WBIF) will be dedicated to climate objectives, calculated using the Rio markers and reported according to the EU international climate finance obligations to the OECD, as well as other international agreements or frameworks. The Facility will align with the approach of other Heading 6 instruments, including the Instrument for Pre-Accession assistance (IPA III), once they start applying EU climate coefficients, set out in the Commission Staff Working Document entitled 'Climate Mainstreaming Architecture in the 2021-2027 Multiannual Financial Framework' (SWD(2022) 225), in order to ensure consistent climate reporting in the region.

The Facility supports activities that fully respect EU climate and environmental standards and priorities of the Union and the principle of 'do no significant harm' within the meaning of Article 17 of the Taxonomy Regulation.

The Reform Agendas align with beneficiaries' accession priorities and relevant documents, such as the Stabilisation and Association Agreement, the National Energy and Climate Plan, the Nationally Determined Contribution under the Paris Agreement and the ambition to reach climate neutrality by 2050. Each Reform Agenda explains the expected contributions to climate and environmental objectives and their compatibility with the "do no significant harm" principle. For example, Montenegro's Reform Agenda promotes decarbonization and the implementation of just transition actions in the coal mining and coal power production region of Pljevlja. It also aims to foster the deployment of renewable energy and work towards carbon pricing, with the goal of having an EU-aligned Emission Trading System in place by 2030. The country commits to ensuring that the rules governing the fundamental building blocks of MRVA are in place by 2025. This will allow monitoring of emissions to start in 2026, in line with its obligations as a contracting party to the Energy Community.

Implementation of the facility will start upon the signing of the facility and loan agreements with the beneficiaries. Currently, only the financial climate contribution is available. The other horizontal priorities will be quantified once implementation begins. In the case of the Bosnia and Herzegovina, a reform agenda has not yet been adopted and implementation is therefore delayed to 2025, including also possible climate contribution for 2024.

Contribution to gender equality (EUR million*):

Gender Score	2021	2022	2023	2024	Total
2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
0*	0.0	0.0	0.0	1 501.0	1 501.0
0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Total:	0.0	0.0	0.0	1 501.0	1 501.0

(*) Based on the applied gender contribution methodology, the following scores are attributed at the most granular level of intervention possible:

- 2: interventions the principal objective of which is to improve gender equality;
- 1: interventions that have gender equality as an important and deliberate objective but not as the main reason for the intervention;
- 0: non-targeted interventions (interventions that are expected to have no significant bearing on gender equality);
- 0*: score to be assigned to interventions with a likely but not yet clear positive impact on gender equality.

- In accordance with Regulation (EU) 2024/1449, beneficiaries and the Commission must ensure that gender equality and the integration of a gender perspective as indicated in the Reform Agendas are taken into account and promoted throughout the implementation of the Facility. They must take appropriate steps to prevent any discrimination based upon gender, but also racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation. The Commission will report on these measures in the context of its regular reporting under the Gender Action Plans. For the moment, it can only be assigned a gender score once the implementation starts. This explains the temporary score 0* Each Reform Agenda includes an explanation of the extent to which the measures are expected to contribute to gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, and the promotion of women and girls' rights. For example, Albania's Reform Agenda aims to ensure fair representation of females among graduates from VET schools who subsequently get employed in sectors relevant to their studies. To achieve this, authorities are required to report disaggregated data on this target. On Kosovo's Reform Agenda, a dedicated reform is foreseen to 'Strengthen implementation of the legislative and strategic framework on the protection against domestic and gender-based '.

Gender disaggregated information: n/a

Contribution to the digital transition (EUR million): n/a

- Digitalisation is one of the key components of the Facility. It represents both one of the key areas for reforms, as identified under the Reform Agendas, and one of the key priority areas for investments under Western Balkan Investment Framework. Additionally, the digital transition features in the specific objectives of the Facility, in particular the promotion of digital transformation and digital skills as an enabler of sustainable

development and inclusive growth, as well as boosting of innovation, research, and cooperation between academic institutions and industry in support of the green and digital transitions.

- The Facility supports investment and reforms that promote the beneficiaries' path to the digital transformation of the economy and society in line with the EU vision for 2030 presented in the Commission communication '2030 Digital Compass'.
- Each Reform Agenda contains an explanation of the extent to which the measures are expected to contribute to digital transformation. For example, the Serbia Reform Agenda outlines steps to increase the digital literacy of its adult and rural populations by establishing permanent digital corners in more than 50 municipalities, which will provide training in basic digital skills.

Contribution to sustainable development goals: n/a

Support to reforms

- Actions undertaken through the programme will be based on Reform Agendas of each beneficiary. These agendas outline a comprehensive, coherent and prioritised set of targeted reforms and priority investment areas for each beneficiary. Those include payment conditions that indicate satisfactory progress or completion of related measures, along with an indicative timetable for implementation. The reforms focus on key socio-economic reforms areas, as well as fundamentals of the enlargement process. Upon fulfilment of a given payment condition, a pre-defined amount will be disbursed. directly to the beneficiary's Treasury, or to the Western Balkans Investment Framework Operation Board for consideration of eligible projects.
- The current financial assistance to the Western Balkans and Türkiye under the Instrument for Pre-Accession (IPA III) will continue in its current form, targeting the increasing alignment of national legislation and public administration to the EU acquis and EU standards in view of future Union membership. The new Facility will complement the IPA III approach by focussing on the specific determinants for social and economic growth. In addition, this new Facility will have a payment mechanism based on ex-ante conditionality, innovatively combining grants and loans to create a stronger incentive for beneficiaries to implement key structural reforms. Such a delivery mechanism and the setting of ex-ante conditionality are not possible under IPA III.
- The reforms are broadly clustered into the following policy areas: Rule of Law and fundamentals, Governance and Public administration reform, Private sector development and business environment, Energy and green transition, Digitalisation and Human Capital.

Contribution to strategic technologies (STEP)

N/A



Strasbourg, 17.6.2025
COM(2025) 824 final

ANNEXES 5 to 11

ANNEXES

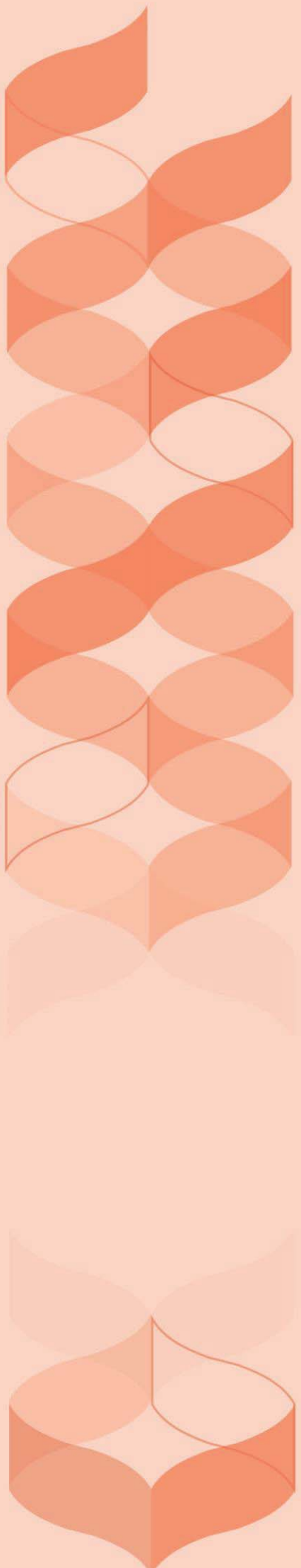
to the

REPORT FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, THE COUNCIL AND THE COURT OF AUDITORS

Annual Management and Performance Report for the EU Budget - 2024 financial year

Contents

CONTENTS	3
ANNEX 5 – MULTIANNUAL CONTROL CYCLE AND CONTROL RESULTS	7
ANNEX 6 – ASSURANCE PROVIDED BY THE INTERNAL AUDIT SERVICE.....	33
ANNEX 7 – SUMMARY OF THE WORK AND CONCLUSIONS OF THE AUDIT PROGRESS COMMITTEE	43
ANNEX 8 – COMPLIANCE WITH PAYMENT TIME LIMITS	47
ANNEX 9 – SUMMARY OF WAIVERS OF RECOVERIES OF ESTABLISHED AMOUNTS RECEIVABLE	53
ANNEX 10 – REPORT ON NEGOTIATED PROCEDURES.....	59
ANNEX 11 – EU TRUST FUNDS.....	79



Annex 5 – Multiannual control cycle and control results

Annex 5 – Multiannual control cycle and control results

This annex describes the preventive and corrective measures taken by the European Commission and the EU Member States for expenditure under shared management, to protect the EU budget from illegal or irregular expenditure. More specifically, the annex presents:

- **Section 5.1:** the preventive and corrective measures to protect the EU budget and related concepts;
- **Section 5.2:** the risk at payment/closure reported in the 2024 annual activity reports, which measure the effectiveness of the controls;
- **Section 5.3:** the reservations qualifying the assurance provided by the authorising officers by delegation;
- **Section 5.4:** the quantification of the preventive and corrective measures implemented in 2024.

5.1. Preventive and corrective measures to protect the EU budget and related concepts

The Commission has put in place multiannual control strategies to ensure the sound financial management of EU funds (see figure below). These control strategies aim to prevent errors before payments are made and, when errors cannot be avoided, to correct them after the payments and until the closure of the programmes. Therefore, for cost-based expenditure, the control results are reported at two points in the programme cycle through the estimated **risk at payment** and the estimated **risk at closure**.

For performance-based expenditure in shared management (i.e. expenditure under the new common agricultural policy strategic plans), the control strategies have the same aim, with a focus on the proper functioning of the systems put in place in the Member States. It is no longer possible to determine a risk at payment and at closure; instead the Commission will group the expenditure in three categories of risk – low, medium and high – as a result of its qualitative assessment of the systems in place, based on its own system audits and those carried out by the national audit authorities. The share of low-risk expenditure will be used as the indicator for the level of protection of the EU budget. Systems audits are neither *ex ante* nor *ex post* controls but they may result in both preventive measures and corrective measures. These types of audits are not new but, for performance-based expenditure, the Commission is focusing on them.

Main features of the Commission's control strategies



CONTROLS

 Preventive measures <i>Ex ante controls / systems audits</i>	 Corrective measures <i>Ex post controls / systems audits</i>
Simplification of programmes (based on lessons learnt from previous programmes)	Ex post verifications (e.g. audits of cost statements, system and compliance audits, on-the-spot checks)
Prevention of double funding (e.g. each beneficiary cannot receive more than one grant for the same expenditure)	Fraud investigations (e.g. fraud cases pursued by the European Anti-Fraud Office)
Ex ante assessments and checks (e.g. desk reviews, compliance checks, authorisation of payments)	Financial recoveries and corrections
Funding suspensions and corrections (e.g. recovery of unused pre-financing, rejection of costs claimed, financial corrections and deductions made by Member States)	
Fraud proofing (e.g. European Anti-Fraud Office review of programmes)	
Awareness-raising measures	
Measures taken to address systems deficiencies	

Source: European Commission.

5.1.1. Preventive measures

Preventive measures take place before the Commission makes payments. They result from *ex ante* controls (mostly desk reviews) carried out by the Member States and entrusted entities before submitting expenditure/annual accounts to the Commission, and by the Commission itself before accepting and reimbursing expenditure, clearing pre-financing (i.e. transferring its ownership to the beneficiary) and making interim/final payments. In accordance with Article 74(5) of the Financial Regulation, all financial operations are subject to controls before payment, under all management modes ⁽¹⁾.

In shared management, the amounts corrected at the Member State level may be reused under certain circumstances, which serves as an incentive for Member States to carry out the necessary verifications and audits and correct irregular expenditure before submitting their cost claims to the Commission.

⁽¹⁾ Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2024/2509 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 September 2024 on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union, OJ L, 2024/2509, 26.9.2024, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2024/2509/oj> (Financial Regulation).

Regarding measures to address systems deficiencies in the Member States, they will mostly result from systems audits that are neither *ex ante* nor *ex post* controls. It is expected that they will have an incidence before future payments take place; therefore they are considered as preventive measures.

5.1.2. Corrective measures

Corrective measures take place after the Commission has made the payment or accepted the expenditure. In accordance with Article 74(6) of the Financial Regulation, they result from *ex post* controls typically performed on-site, on a sample basis, and are either statistically representative or based on a risk assessment. The errors found may lead to financial corrections ⁽²⁾ implemented by the Commission during the same or subsequent years, by way of recoveries or offsetting from final recipients under direct and indirect management, or from the Member States under shared management.

In shared management, the Commission also performs system audits of Member States' systems and/or the work of their audit bodies. Deficiencies identified in the systems put in place at the national level will lead to net financial corrections. This will also be the case for the new common agricultural policy delivery model (see Section 5.4).

The Commission improves its processes and internal control systems on a continual basis by addressing detected weaknesses. For shared and indirect management, the Member States and implementing partners are mainly responsible for improving their management and control systems. The root causes of errors are taken into account when preparing future (simplified) legislation and when (re)designing controls to further reduce the level of error in the next generation of funding programmes.

The **quantification** of the preventive and corrective measures implemented as a result of Member States' and EU controls during the 2024 reporting year is presented in Section 5.4 of this annex.

5.1.3. Concepts used for compliance / cost-based assurance model

Risk at payment

The risk at payment quantifies the errors that remain after applying preventive controls and processing payments ⁽³⁾ but before applying corrective measures. These errors are typically detected by Commission departments through *ex post* audits and assessments of the results of audits carried out by Member State authorities for shared management. Measurement at this stage enables the Commission to correct the errors, to take additional preventive measures (e.g. additional guidance for Member States, entrusted entities or beneficiaries) and to assess the effectiveness of the *ex ante* controls and adapt them, if necessary. For segments of expenditure that are performance-based – like a share of the common agricultural policy – the detected error rate / risk at payment is replaced by output and result indicators that visually materialise in the level of risk identified as low, medium and high.

Each Commission department – except DG Agriculture and Rural Development, and DG Economic and Financial Affairs for the Recovery and Resilience Facility – estimates its **detected error rates** per programme or other payment segment. Some departments may use different terminology in their annual activity reports to reflect

⁽²⁾ Such corrections are not sanctions and do not include penalties and fines.

⁽³⁾ Or equivalent, such as after the expenditure is accepted (i.e. registered in the Commission's accounting system) or after the pre-financing is cleared.

the specificity of their internal control system ⁽⁴⁾. Nevertheless, the departments use a consistent methodology to assess the risk of error in their financial operations, based on an institutional framework.

For low-risk expenditure, where there are indications that the error rate might be close to zero (e.g. administrative expenditure or operating subsidies for agencies), some Commission departments use a conservative error rate of 0.5%.

The Commission calculates the actual financial impact of the errors on the EU budget. This is obtained by aggregating the financial impact of errors determined per programme or segment of expenditure at the level of the department, the policy area and the Commission. This results in the overall risk at payment as a value, which is the sum of all the amounts of risk at payment, and as a percentage, which is the overall weighted average of the risk at payment.

Estimated future corrections

A detected error is corrected either via a recovery or by offsetting against future payments. As both detection and remedy may not be immediate, corrections resulting from *ex post* controls rarely take place within the same financial year as the payment. As a result, the risk at payment may provide an incomplete picture, as errors can still be corrected during subsequent years, up to the closure of the programme.

Therefore, Commission departments estimate the percentage of future corrections for the compliance-based assurance model expenditure that could still be implemented until the closure of the programme. These are conservative and forward-looking estimates of the corrections that will be implemented in subsequent years. They are based on the average of corrections implemented during the last seven years, adjusted to exclude exceptional recoveries, taking into account the incidence of the implementation of new programmes (simpler rules leading to fewer corrections) and possible trends (decrease or increase in the last few years).

For programmes with no set closure point (e.g. the European Agricultural Guarantee Fund) and for some multiannual programmes for which corrections are still possible after the end of the programmes (e.g. the European structural and investment funds, including the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development), all possible corrections are considered for this estimate.

The future corrections can never be fully equal to the risk at payment, because some errors, although deserving of attention, do not always result from undue payments and, therefore, do not always give rise to financial corrections or recovery orders: when the risk at payment is based on a statistical estimation, it cannot lead to corrections (no flat-rate correction may be applied to all beneficiaries, only a correction where an error has been found). In addition, for the cohesion policy funds, only programmes with residual total error rates above 2% are subject to corrections to reach at least the 2% threshold, and not all the cases used to determine the upper value of the range of the risk at payment (i.e. the worst-case scenario) materialise after the contradictory procedure of the audit/control is finalised.

Estimated future corrections must not be confused with the actual corrective measures implemented during 2024 (detailed in Section 5.4). The estimated future corrections relate to the corrections that will happen in the future until the closure, whereas the corrections implemented correspond to the recovery orders, withdrawals by Member States and net financial corrections implemented in 2024.

⁽⁴⁾ For example, 'adjusted error rates' is used by DG Agriculture and Rural Development and 'residual total error rates' is used by DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion, DG Maritime Affairs and Fisheries and DG Regional and Urban Policy.

Risk at closure

This risk is estimated at programme closure, meaning when all *ex post* controls are completed, all corrections are applied and no further action may legally be taken ⁽⁵⁾ ⁽⁶⁾. The risk at closure is obtained by deducting the estimated future corrections from the risk at payment, as a value and as a percentage. These amounts and percentages represent the most up-to-date estimations of the outcome expected by the closure of each programme. As such, the risk at closure is more representative of the real risk to the expenditure than the risk at payment.

Similar to the risk at payment, the results per programme or segment are aggregated to provide – at the level of the department, the policy area and the Commission – the overall risk at closure as a value, which is the sum of all the amounts of risk at closure, and as a percentage, which is the overall weighted average of the risk at closure.

5.1.4. A bottom-up approach that fits the Commission's management context for all assurance models

To be able to provide bottom-up management assurance and to identify and address issues in specific areas, **the Commission calculates the error rates for cost-based expenditure (per programme or other relevant segment of expenditure) and groups performance-based expenditure in three categories of risk – low, medium and high – down to the level of paying agencies** and within the paying agencies, to the level of interventions they are managing. Moreover, with the risk at closure, the Commission's methodology takes into account the multiannual nature of the spending programmes. In this sense, the Commission's approach differs from that of the European Court of Auditors, as it comes from a management perspective and provides more detailed information. Even if these approaches can lead to differences between the Court of Auditors' error rate and the Commission's risk at payment, there is a convergence regarding key concepts and the riskiest areas or types of expenditure (i.e. cohesion, research, some types of interventions in natural resources and environment). Efforts were initiated in 2024, with common workshops organised for the beginning of 2025, to further enhance the mutual understanding of the respective institutions' approaches and methodologies.

The risk at payment, used under the cost-based assurance model, is conceptually closer to the Court of Auditors' 'estimated level of error' ⁽⁷⁾. In the last two years (2022 and 2023), the main differences in the error rates determined by the Court of Auditors and the risk at payment determined by the Commission concern the cohesion policy programmes. For the programmes related to international relations, the Court did not determine a specific error rate until 2023, but it considers that this expenditure is high risk. The Court of Auditors will determine an error rate for this policy area starting with the 2024 expenditure.

In general, the main differences with the Court of Auditors may be explained by: differences in approach and methodology; divergences in interpreting rules and regulations, including national rules; timing differences between the Commission's checks and the Court of Auditors' audits (in particular in the external relations area); and differences in the error rates applied for procedural errors in procurements.

⁽⁵⁾ In the case of the common agricultural policy, the term 'estimated final amount at risk' is used instead, to better reflect the fact that there is no set closure point for European Agricultural Guarantee Fund measures.

⁽⁶⁾ For cohesion policy funds, after the final assessment of legality and regularity of the programmes.

⁽⁷⁾ European Court of Auditors, Annual report on the implementation of the EU budget for the 2023 financial year, Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg, 2024, paragraph 1.31, https://www.eca.europa.eu/ECAPublications/AR-2023/AR-2023_EN.pdf.

The ‘materiality threshold’ set, in most cases, at 2% of the relevant expenditure ⁽⁸⁾ is also in line with the Court of Auditors’ methodology ⁽⁹⁾.

A recent study commissioned by the Committee on Budgetary Control of the European Parliament presents a comparison of the Commission’s risk at payment and closure and the Court of Auditors’ estimated level of error, focusing on cohesion funds ⁽¹⁰⁾. The study makes a balanced and factual assessment of respective methodologies, and the reasons why they lead to different outcomes in the reporting of error rates reported by both institutions, notably for cohesion. It reflects the work performed by both institutions fairly but also the respective expectations their roles entail and the usefulness of the two approaches. It states that both the Commission and the Court of Auditors use state-of-the-art methodologies, based on international audit standards, which means that each methodology satisfies each institution’s needs and expectations. The study concludes that the error rate and risk at payment are not directly comparable.

5.2. Risk at payment/closure reported in the 2024 annual activity reports

The risk at payment and risk at closure – the compliance-based delivery model – are determined against the **relevant expenditure** of the year, in line with the approach of the Court of Auditors.

5.2.1. Relevant expenditure

The amount of the Commission’s relevant expenditure is established in line with the Court of Auditors’ scope of transactions reviewed ⁽¹¹⁾. It corresponds to the payments made, minus new pre-financing paid (still owned by the Commission) and retentions made, plus pre-financing cleared (ownership transferred to the beneficiaries) and retention released, during the financial year under reporting. In this approach, pre-financing and retentions ⁽¹²⁾ are only taken into account when the final recipient of EU funds has provided evidence of their use and the Commission (or another body managing EU funds) has accepted the final use of the funds (by clearing the pre-financing or releasing the amount retained), because this is where errors of legality or regularity may occur. Therefore, the risks at payment and at closure are determined against this amount.

In addition to the funds managed under the budget of the EU, for which the Commission is responsible ⁽¹³⁾, expenditure made under the **European Development Fund** and that related to the **four EU trust funds is added, since the Commission manages them as well**.

- **European Development Fund.** Until 2020, this budget was separate from the EU budget, and it is currently co-managed by five departments. In Table A, the corresponding European Development Fund expenditure is included in the policy areas and the departments concerned (DG Education, Youth, Sport

⁽⁸⁾ The only exceptions are: (i) 1% for revenue, which is stricter than the Court of Auditors, in view of the very large amounts; and (ii) the range of 2–5% for the Horizon 2020 programme (see details in Volume II, Annex II, Section 2.1.2 of this report).

⁽⁹⁾ European Court of Auditors, Annual report on the implementation of the EU budget for the 2023 financial year, Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg, 2024, Annex 1.1, paragraph 36, https://www.eca.europa.eu/ECAPublications/AR-2023/AR-2023_EN.pdf.

⁽¹⁰⁾ European Parliament: Directorate-General for Budgetary Affairs, Rampton, J. and Stedtnitz, C., *Error Rates Compared – Methodologies underpinning the European Commission’s risk at payment/closure and the European Court of Auditors’ estimated level of error*, 2025, <https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2861/2664152>.

⁽¹¹⁾ European Court of Auditors, Annual report on the implementation of the EU budget for the 2023 financial year, Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg, 2024, Annex 1.1, paragraph 19, https://www.eca.europa.eu/ECAPublications/AR-2023/AR-2023_EN.pdf.

⁽¹²⁾ For cohesion funds.

⁽¹³⁾ Since the funds under the Resilience and Recovery Facility do not come from the EU budget, the corresponding payments are presented separately in Volume II, Annex 3.

and Culture, DG International Partnerships, DG European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations and the European Education and Culture Executive Agency).

- **EU trust funds.** These are the EU Trust Fund for the Central African Republic, the EU Regional Trust Fund in Response to the Syrian Crisis, the EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa and the EU Trust Fund for Colombia (see Volume III, Annex 11). In Table A, this expenditure is included in the external relations policy area. A transparent and complete coverage of the relevant trust fund(s) is provided in the annual activity reports of DG Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations, and DG International Partnerships, based on the reports from the trust fund managers. They make a distinction between their accountability (i) for the contributions from the EU budget and/or the European Development Fund paid into the trust funds and (ii) for the transactions made from the trust funds, i.e. with the funds collected from the EU budget, the European Development Fund and other donors, as a trust fund manager.

For the 2024 relevant expenditure per policy area of the EU budget, please see Table A below.

5.2.2. Overview of the Commission's risk at payment and at closure

Table A presents an overview of the Commission's risk at payment/closure by policy area. The splitting of the budget into these headings does not fully correspond to the budget as allocated to the 51 managing Commission departments, and thus as accounted for in their annual activity reports. For the purpose of this report, each department is allocated entirely to only one of the seven policy areas, except for DG Defence Industry and Space.

Table A – Risk at payment/closure by policy area for the whole Commission in 2024 (million EUR)

Policy area	2024				2023			
	Relevant Expenditure (million EUR) (*)	Estimated risk at payment (in percent)	Estimated future corrections (in percent)	Estimated risk at closure (in percent)	Relevant Expenditure (million EUR) (**)	Estimated risk at payment (in percent) (***)	Estimated future corrections (in percent)	Estimated risk at closure (in percent)
1. Single market, innovation and digital	24 240.3	1.6%	0.4%	1.2%	19 082.7	1.4%	0.4%	1.0%
2. Cohesion, resilience and values	61 973.7	2.9%	1.2%	1.7%	67 291.7	2.6%	1.4%	1.2%
3. Natural resources and environment	57 373.0	N/A	N/A	N/A	58 306.0	1.8%	1.3%	0.5%
4. Migration and border management	3 507.5	1.3%	0.1%	1.2%	3 045.9	1.1%	0.1%	1.0%
5. Security and defence	318.7	0.5%	0.0%	0.5%	136.7	0.5%	0.0%	0.5%

Policy area	2024				2023			
	Relevant Expenditure (million EUR) (*)	Estimated risk at payment (in percent)	Estimated future corrections (in percent)	Estimated risk at closure (in percent)	Relevant Expenditure (million EUR) (**)	Estimated risk at payment (in percent) (***)	Estimated future corrections (in percent)	Estimated risk at closure (in percent)
6. Neighbourhood and the world	19 999.4	0.8%	0.1%	0.7%	14 243.9	0.8%	0.1%	0.7%
7. European public administration	11 625.3	0.5%	0.0%	0.5%	8 860.7	0.5%	0.0%	0.5%
Grand total (****)	179 037.8	N/A	N/A	N/A	170 967.7	1.9%	1.1%	0.9%

NB: Due to the rounding of figures to the nearest million EUR, some financial data in the table above may appear not to add up.

Source: European Commission annual activity reports.

(*) For the heading natural resources and environment, the amount includes the performance-based expenditure.

(**) For the heading natural resources and environment and the Commission grand total, the amount includes the performance-based expenditure, EUR 200 million.

(***) For the heading natural resources and environment and for the whole Commission, the calculation of the risk at payment does not include performance-based expenditure.

(****) For 2024, not risk at payment and risk at closure are determined for the heading natural resources and environment and for the whole Commission.

Cohesion

The two cohesion-related departments determine a range of values:

- the lower value corresponds to the departments' risk at payment for the 2024 relevant expenditure based on their confirmed residual total error rate for the 2022/2023 accounting year;
- the upper value corresponds to a worst-case scenario (i.e. maximum risk), taking into account possible additional risks in parts of expenditure not reviewed under EU audits that indicate the possibility for higher error rates for some programmes.

Table B – Risk at payment for cohesion policy funds in 2024

		Relevant expenditure (EUR million)	Lower value	Upper value
DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion	Entire directorate-general	18 955.57	2.16%	2.82%
	European Social Fund, youth employment initiative, Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived – 2014-2020	15 697.97	2.23%	3.02%
	European Social Fund, youth employment initiative, Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived – other periods (2000-2006, 2007-2013, 2021-2027)	2 940.90	2.00%	2.01%
	European Social Fund, youth employment initiative, Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived – Total	18 638.87	2.20%	2.86%
DG Regional and Urban Policy	Entire directorate-general	37 603.46	2.30%	3.29%
	European Regional Development Fund and Cohesion Fund – 2014-2020	30 289.49	2.49%	3.58%
	European Regional Development Fund and Cohesion Fund – Other periods (2000-2006, 2007-2013, 2021-2027)	5 885.32	1.91%	2.62%
	European Regional Development Fund and Cohesion Fund – Total	36 174.81	2.39%	3.42%
Total	Two directorates-general cumulated	56 559.03	2.26%	3.13%
	Cohesion policy funds altogether	54 813.68	2.33%	3.23%

Source: European Commission annual activity reports.

5.3. Reservations reported in the 2024 annual activity reports

Each authorising officer by delegation signs a declaration of assurance in the annual activity report. If necessary, the declaration of assurance may be qualified by one or more reservations, which ensure transparency concerning any challenges or weaknesses encountered and their potential financial impact. Reservations preserve the principle of sound financial management by being a tool to address weaknesses and prevent them in future through the development of action plans to mitigate risks and to strengthen control systems.

To conclude on their assurance, at the end of each financial year, the authorising officers by delegation perform a detailed analysis for each segment of expenditure of their portfolio and determine the **residual error rate** for each programme. This residual error rate is based on the detected error rate but takes into account any corrections made until the end of the reporting year. It is a snapshot of the level of error still affecting the 2024 expenditure at year-end. Where this residual error rate is above the materiality threshold of 2%, the authorising officers duly qualify their declarations of assurance with a reservation. This is in line with the materiality threshold used by the Court of Auditors to form their opinion ⁽¹⁴⁾. A reservation may or may not have a quantifiable financial impact ⁽¹⁵⁾. The authorising officers may also issue a reservation in

⁽¹⁴⁾ European Court of Auditors, Annual report on the implementation of the EU budget for the 2023 financial year, Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg, 2024, Chapter 1, Annex 1.1, paragraph 36, https://www.eca.europa.eu/ECAPublications/AR-2023/AR-2023_EN.pdf.

⁽¹⁵⁾ Reservations are non-quantified when the financial impact is zero, when it is not possible to assess the financial impact accurately or when the consequences are only reputational.

other situations, such as significant weaknesses in the management of funds or an event creating reputational damage to their department and/or the entire Commission.

5.3.1. 2024 reservations

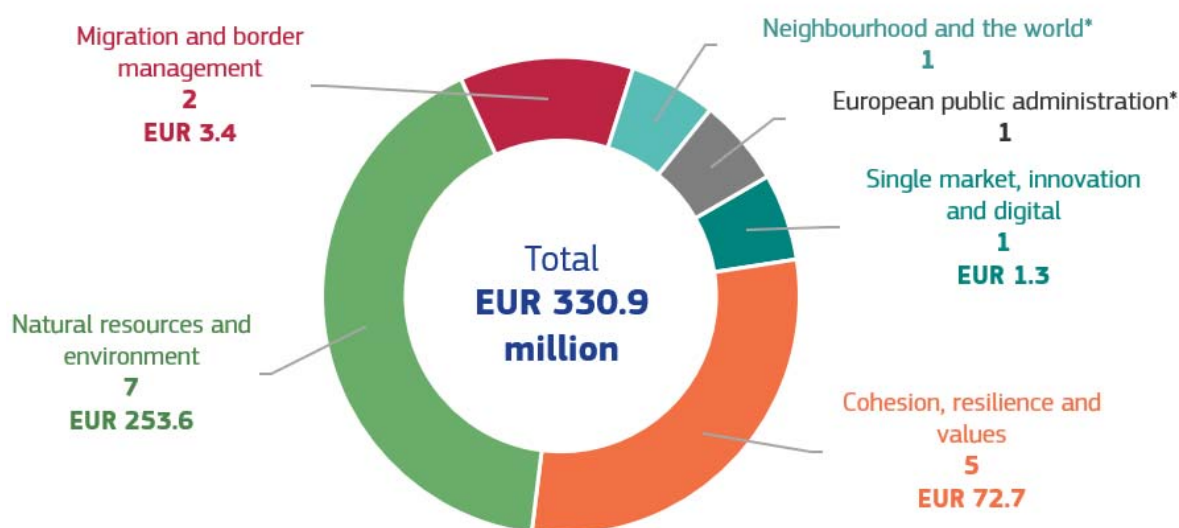
For the 2024 reporting year, all 51 authorising officers by delegation declared in their annual activity reports that they had reasonable assurance ⁽¹⁶⁾. The majority of the 40 authorising officers by delegation, issued unqualified declarations of assurance, while 11 qualified their declarations with a total of 18 reservations. These reservations concerned the expenditure side of the budget and related to a programme or a specific segment of expenditure affected by a weakness (see figure below). In all these cases, the authorising officers by delegation adopted action plans to address the underlying weaknesses and mitigate the resulting risks. The situation regarding reservations can be summarised as follows.

- **Fourteen reservations are recurrent** from previous year(s), of which six are entirely or partially non-quantified. Most of the recurrent reservations concern programmes under shared management, with weaknesses identified at the level of individual Member State, paying agency or programme, that vary every year and rarely persist due to the action plans in place. The root causes of the material level of error can be partially mitigated but not fully eradicated.
- **Three reservations are new** but not quantified, concerning programmes of the 2021-2027 multiannual financial framework. One reservation is related to the European Social Fund Plus, with deficiencies identified at the level of the key elements of the management and control systems of one Member State. The other two relate to the new assurance model of the common agricultural policy, where the Commission has identified potential serious deficiencies in the functioning of the governance systems of certain Member States.
- **One more reservation is new** concerning the Recovery and Resilience Facility. It was issued after identifying cases of conflict of interest in one Member State. Since the Member State has not ensured yet proper compliance with the applicable Union and national law, the corresponding expenditure is considered high risk and a reservation has been issued.

In accordance with the *de minimis* rule, a financial quantified reservation is deemed not to be substantial and will not be issued ⁽¹⁷⁾ for residual error rates above 2% if the financial impact is less than EUR 5 million and the related segment represents less than 5% of the department's total payments. In 2024, nine cases with a residual error rate above 2% were found not to exceed the two thresholds of the *de minimis* rule, and therefore were deemed as not substantial for issuing a financial quantified reservation. The total financial impact amounted to EUR 8.6 million, a slight increase compared with 2023 at EUR 6.4 million.

⁽¹⁶⁾ European Commission: Directorate-General for Communication, 'Annual activity reports', European Commission website, https://commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/strategy-documents/annual-activity-reports_en.

⁽¹⁷⁾ Without prejudice to issuing a reservation for reputational reasons, if applicable.

Number of reservations and financial impact by policy area in 2024 ⁽¹⁸⁾ (million EUR)

(*) Non-quantified reservation.

Source: European Commission annual activity reports.

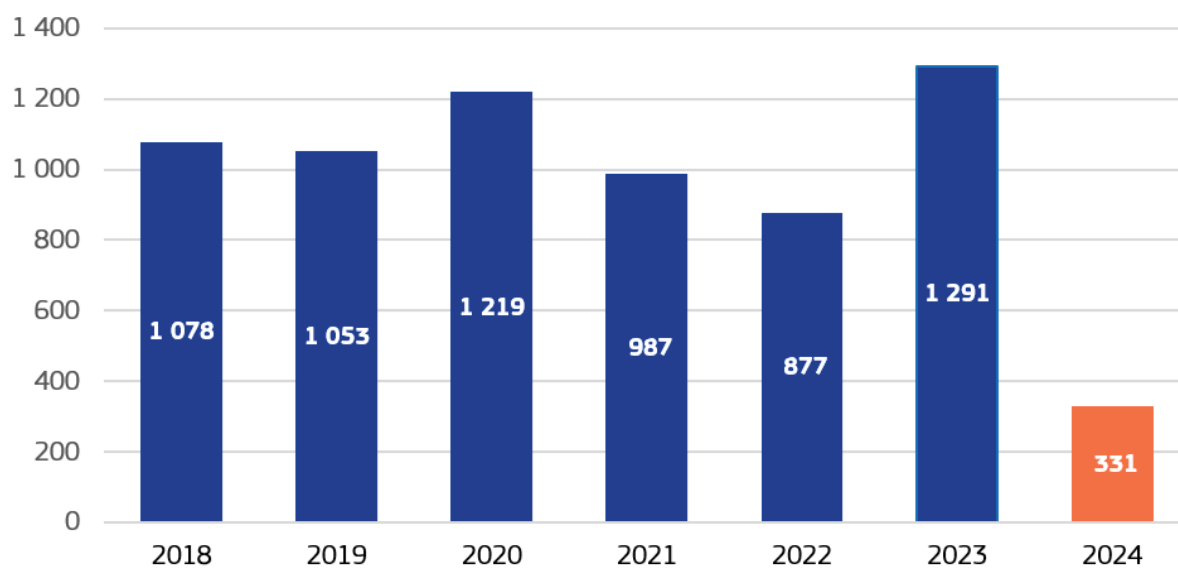
5.3.2. Financial impact of reservations

The financial impact of reservations is obtained by multiplying the relevant programme or segment expenditure by the residual error rate. The total financial impact from all reservations was EUR 330.9 million for 2024, representing 0.2% of the total expenditure. This is much lower compared with 2023 (EUR 1 290.6 million) and is attributed to the lower financial impact in two policy areas.

- Cohesion, resilience and values: fewer programmes are under reservation due to the limited number of assurance packages received. This is because Member States were granted an additional year to submit the final assurance packages for the 2014-2020 programming period. In addition, very few assurance packages have been received for the 2021-2027 programming period, as the implementation cycle is still at the beginning.
- Natural resources and environment: no quantification for reservations under the new assurance model.

The composition and evolution of the financial impact over the years are presented in the following figure and Table C. The financial impact of the reservation for the Recovery and Resilience Facility is not included as the Facility is not part of the EU Budget.

⁽¹⁸⁾ Excluding the reservation issued for the Recovery and Resilience Facility.

Financial impact of quantified reservations for 2018-2024 ⁽¹⁹⁾ (million EUR)

Source: European Commission annual activity reports.

⁽¹⁹⁾ Excluding the reservation issued for the Recovery and Resilience Facility.

Table C – Financial impact of the quantified reservations in 2024 by heading ⁽²⁰⁾ (million EUR)

Policy area	Payments in 2024	Relevant expenditure in 2024	Financial impact of the reservations	
			in 2024	in 2023
Single market, innovation and digital	29 488.5	24 240.3	1.3	0
Cohesion, resilience and values	64 137.7	61 973.7	72.7	584.5
Natural resources and environment (*)	57 621.2	57 373.0	253.6	705.3
Migration and border management	3 809.0	3 507.5	3.4	0.8
Security and defence	993.8	318.7	0	0
Neighbourhood and the world	19 573.1	19 999.4	0	0
European public administration	11 626.0	11 625.3	0	0
Total	187 249.3	179 037.8	330.9	1 290.6
2021-2027 programmes			6.0	0.6
2014-2020 programmes			324.9	1 290.0

(*) With segments of expenditure that are performance-based.

Source: European Commission annual activity reports.

The tables below present the details concerning the reservations for 2024:

- Table D presents the 17 reservations for 2024 affecting the expenditure, divided according to the 2021-2027 and 2014-2020 programme periods;
- Table E presents the reservation for 2024 affecting the Recovery and Resilience Facility;
- Table F presents all the cases where the *de minimis* rule applied.

⁽²⁰⁾ Excluding the reservation issued for the Recovery and Resilience Facility.

5.3.3. Full list of reservations

Table D – 2024 list of reservations (million EUR)

Policy areas	Description of reservation	Department	Impact on legality and regularity	Financial impact
Programmes of the 2021-2027 multiannual financial framework				
Cohesion, resilience and values	European Regional Development Fund / Cohesion Fund / Just Transition Fund (1 programme in 1 Member State)	DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion	Reservation issued in 2024 Non-quantified	—
	European Regional Development Fund / Cohesion Fund / Just Transition Fund (7 programmes in 5 Member States)	DG Regional and Urban Policy	Quantified	3.1
Natural resources and environment	Common agricultural policy strategic plans – European Agricultural Guarantee Fund and the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (expenditure under the integrated administration and control system) (10 reservations for 9 Member States)	DG Agriculture and Rural Development	Reservation issued in 2024 Non-quantified	—
	Common agricultural policy strategic plans – European Agricultural Guarantee Fund and the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (expenditure without the integrated administration and control system) (6 reservations for 5 Member States)	DG Agriculture and Rural Development	Reservation issued in 2024 Non-quantified	—
Migration and border management	Management and control systems for the Border Management and Visa Policy Instrument (1 Member State) Management and control systems for the Border	DG Migration and Home Affairs	Non-quantified	

	Management and Visa Policy Instrument, Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund and Internal Security Fund (2 Member States)		Quantified	3.0
European public administration	Reputational reservation for the issues encountered when implementing the new selection procedures and competitions for EU staff	European Personnel Selection Office	Non-quantified	—
Total	6 reservations	5 departments		6.0
Programmes of the 2014-2020 multiannual financial framework				
Single market, innovation and digital	Promotion of agricultural products programme – direct management: multi-beneficiary grants scheme ⁽²¹⁾	European Research Executive Agency	Quantified	1.3
Cohesion, resilience and values	European Social Fund / Youth Employment Initiative / Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived (8 programmes in 7 Member States)	DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion	Quantified	26.3
	Citizens, equality, rights and values programme / justice programme – direct grants	DG Justice and Consumers	Quantified	2.1
	European Regional Development Fund / Cohesion Fund (21 programmes in 9 Member States and the United Kingdom)	DG Regional and Urban Policy	Quantified	41.3
Natural resources and environment	European Agricultural Guarantee Fund – market measures (6 reservations for 4 Member States)	DG Agriculture and Rural Development	Quantified	14.9
	European Agricultural Guarantee Fund – direct payments (1 reservation for 1 Member State)	DG Agriculture and Rural Development	Quantified	28.8

⁽²¹⁾ The concerned programme is funded by EAGF, which is currently under Budget Heading 3 – Natural resources and environment. However, it is reported under Heading 1 – Single market, innovation and digital, for consistency with previous reports.

	European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (12 reservations for 10 Member States)	DG Agriculture and Rural Development	Quantified	209.8
	EU emissions trading system registry – security weakness	DG Climate Action	Non-quantified	—
	European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (1 Member State)	DG Maritime Affairs and Fisheries	Non-quantified	—
Migration and border management	Management and control systems for the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (4 Member States)	DG Migration and Home Affairs	Non-quantified (6 Member States)	0.4
	Management and control systems for the Internal Security Fund (7 Member States and 1 Schengen-associated Country)		Quantified (1 Member State and 1 Schengen-associated country)	
Neighbourhood and the world	External restrictions to control financial programmes in Libya, Syria and Ukraine	DG Neighbourhood and Enlargement negotiations	Non-quantified	—
Total	11 reservations	9 departments	—	324.9
Total for 2024	17 reservations	10 departments	—	330.9

Source: European Commission annual activity reports.

Table E – 2024 list of reservations for the Recovery and Resilience Facility (million EUR)

Policy areas	Description of reservation	Department	Impact on legality and regularity	Financial impact
Recovery and Resilience Facility	Cases of conflict of interest (1 reservation for 1 Member State)	DG Economic and Financial Affairs	Reservation issued in 2024 Quantified	17.5
Total for 2024	1 reservation	1 department	—	17.5

Source: European Commission annual activity reports.

Table F – Application of the *de minimis* rule – reservations not issued during 2024 (million EUR)

Policy area	Description of reservation	Department	Impact on legality and regularity	Financial impact in 2024
Single market, innovation and digital	Pilot projects and preparatory actions	DG Communications Networks, Content and Technology	Quantified	0.68
	Seventh framework programme	DG Communications Networks, Content and Technology	Quantified	0.00 ⁽²²⁾
	Programme for the competitiveness of small and medium-sized enterprises, 2014-2020 grants segment	European Innovation Council and SMEs Executive Agency	Quantified	0.71
	Consumer programme, 2014-2020 grants segment	European Innovation Council and SMEs Executive Agency	Quantified	0.01
	Connecting Europe Facility, telecom sector – digital service infrastructure	European Health and Digital Executive Agency	Quantified	1.44
	Third health programme	European Health and Digital Executive Agency	Quantified	1.09
	Indirect management with partner countries – programme estimates	DG for International Partnerships	Quantified	1.44
	Seventh framework programme	European Research Executive Agency	Quantified	0.03
Natural resources and environment	Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance Rural Development Programmes – indirect management	DG Agriculture and Rural Development	Quantified	3.24
Total for 2024	9 reservations	6 departments	—	8.6

Source: European Commission annual activity reports.

⁽²²⁾ The financial impact amounts to EUR 998.85.

5.4. Preventive and corrective measures implemented in 2024

This subsection presents the preventive and corrective measures implemented in 2024, which mainly relate to expenditure from previous years. They result from both the Commission and the Member States' audits and controls.

Under shared management, the Member States are primarily responsible for identifying any amounts unduly paid and recovering them from beneficiaries. Controls carried out by Member States represent an essential layer of control in the activities to protect the EU budget. These controls lead to corrections implemented by the Member States before and after they submit their payment claims or annual accounts to the Commission. As such, they are a key component of the preventive and corrective mechanisms. The Commission can apply preventive measures and/or financial corrections due to: irregularities or serious deficiencies identified but not corrected by Member State authorities; its own verifications and audits; investigations by the European Anti-Fraud Office; and audits by the Court of Auditors.

Table G provides a complete overview of all the preventive and corrective measures implemented in 2024 by the Commission and the Member States to protect the EU budget, irrespective of the year in which the initial expenditure was made ⁽²³⁾.

⁽²³⁾ In general, for corrective measures, corrections implemented are used as booked in the accounting system of the Commission.

For agriculture this includes financial corrections applied by the Commission and Member States' recoveries reported to and booked into the Commission's accounting system – a financial correction is implemented when: (i) it is recorded in the Commission's accounts; (ii) it is deducted from the amounts declared by the Member State in an interim, final payment claim or annual accounts; and (iii) the commitment appropriations corresponding to the financial correction amount have been cancelled.

For the Member States' recoveries, corrections are implemented when the Member States have issued the recovery orders (or equivalent) to the final beneficiaries and reported them accordingly to the Commission (DG Agriculture and Rural Development) in the updated 'debtors ledger' of year n (usually in February $n + 1$).

For cohesion, the situation differs depending on the programming periods in question and not all data come from the Commission's accounting system.

- **Pre-2014 programmes.** In case no financial transaction will take place at the closure of the programme, a correction is implemented by the Commission when it has been applied and included in the pre-closure/closure letter accepted by the Member State.
- **Post-2014 programmes.** All corrections are implemented by Member States. The amounts are obtained from the assurance packages submitted to the Commission.

Table G – Overview of the preventive and corrective measures resulting from the controls of the Commission and of the Member States, amounts implemented in 2024 (million EUR)

Multiannual financial framework heading	Preventive			Relevant expenditure	Corrective			% of relevant expenditure	Preventive and corrective total
	Member State controls	EU controls	Total		Member State controls	EU controls	Total		
	(a)	(b)	(c) = (a) + (b)		(c)	(f)	(g) = (c) + (f)		
1. Single market, innovation and digital	—	244.7	244.7	24 240.3	—	103.8	103.8	0.43%	348.5
2. Cohesion, resilience and values	564.9	15.0	579.9	61 973.7	220.4	228.3	448.7	0.72%	1 028.6
3. Natural resources and environment	176.8	1.6	178.4	57 373.0	419.5	472.0	891.4	1.55%	1 069.8
4. Migration and border management	27.3	17.2	44.4	3 507.5	—	1.1	1.1	0.03%	45.5
5. Security and defence	—	7.2	7.2	318.7	—	0.3	0.3	0.09%	7.5
6. Neighbourhood and the world	—	125.5	125.5	19 999.4	—	27.6	27.6	0.14%	153.1
7. European public administration	—	4.3	4.3	11 625.3	—	1.6	1.6	0.01%	5.9
Total	768.9	415.5	1 184.4	179 037.8	639.9	834.7	1 474.5	0.82% ⁽²⁴⁾	2 658.9

(a) For shared management, details for each Member State are provided in the annual activity reports of DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion, DG Agriculture and Rural Development, DG Maritime Affairs and Fisheries, DG Regional and Urban Policy and DG Migration and Home Affairs.

(d) Relevant expenditure including performance-based expenditure for natural resources and environment.

(f) The total of **EUR 834.7 million** of corrective EU controls is composed of: (i) the amounts booked in the Commission's accounting system, including recovery orders issued by the Commission in **all headings** and the financial corrections in the **agriculture sector**; and (ii) for **cohesion**, amounts decided and agreed following the Commission's audits (and the follow-up of European Anti-Fraud Office investigations and Court of Auditors audits) implemented directly by the Member States (**EUR 70 million**), with the remainder of the cohesion corrections, relating to the previous programming period, implemented by the Commission (**EUR 158.3 million**).

An overview of amounts recommended for recovery and prevention from undue spending following the European Anti-Fraud Office's investigative activities can be found in Section 1.5 of Volume II.

NB: Due to the rounding of figures to the nearest million EUR, some financial data in the table above may appear not to add up.

Source: European Commission annual activity reports.

5.4.1. Cohesion, resilience and values

Under this heading, the **preventive measures** (EUR 580 million) implemented in 2024 mostly relate to the cohesion policy funds for the 2021-2027 programming period; they are lower than in 2023 (EUR 1 644 million) because the preventive measures for the last year of the 2014-2020 programming period were very limited and reported as corrective measures ⁽²⁵⁾ and because there is still a limited amount of payments that has been made, and thus preventive measures taken, for the 2021-2027 programming period.

The corrective measures implemented in 2024 (**EUR 449 million**) **decreased** compared to 2023 (EUR 727 million), which is explained by the limited number of final assurance packages for 2014-2020 submitted by the Member States to the Commission by 1 March 2025, following the 'strategic technologies

⁽²⁴⁾ This is in line with the overall estimated future corrections for 2023, in the range of 0.7% to 1.1%.

⁽²⁵⁾ For the last accounting year, the corrections cannot be classified as preventive or corrective, as this distinction cannot be made in the final accounts (no further action is possible after the submission of the final accounts in the next payment applications or subsequent accounts).

for Europe platform' amendments to the [Common Provisions Regulation](#), which extended the submission period until 15 February 2026. A significant part of this amount, **EUR 281 million**, is related to the **2014-2020 programming period cohesion policy funds** and corresponds to withdrawals and recoveries deducted in the 2022-2023 annual accounts, out of which **EUR 211 million** ⁽²⁶⁾ is attributed to Member State audits and controls **and EUR 70 million corresponds to the results of the audits of the Commission**, along with the follow-up of European Anti-Fraud Office investigations and Court of Auditors audits. Other corrections might be linked to the Commission's work, such as additional extrapolated corrections to bring the residual error rate below the materiality threshold following Commission and Court of Auditors audit work. However, as most of these corrections overlap with the ones implemented following the audits of the Court of Auditors, Commission, and Member States, the Commission conservatively only reports this minimum amount. Furthermore, a total of EUR 8 million corrective measures were implemented in relation to the 2021-2027 programming period.

In addition to systematic controls of all operations by management authorities, there is also a wide coverage of the expenditure through the audit operations carried out by the national audit authorities, around 14% of the expenditure declared in 2024. The Commission relies on all this work and takes it into account to plan its own risk-based audits.

For 2007-2013 and previous programming periods, the Commission applied **corrective measures of EUR 154 million**, which is comparable to EUR 126 million in 2023.

So far, the Commission has not implemented net financial corrections for cases where Member States have not appropriately addressed serious deficiencies before submitting their annual accounts due to restrictive conditions set by the co-legislators, which were not met. This limits in practice the application of net financial corrections. The regulation for the 2021-2027 programming period brought simplifications in this area.

5.4.2. Natural resources and environment

The **corrective measures** applied in 2024 amounted to **EUR 891 million**, which is an increase compared to 2023 at EUR 667 million. Most of these corrections, **EUR 860 million, concerned agriculture and rural development**. In this area, **Member States' controls** resulted in **EUR 412 million** in corrective measures ⁽²⁷⁾, whereas the **Commission's net financial corrections implemented amounted to EUR 448 million**. This is an increase compared to 2023 (EUR 235 million) but is **in line with the previous three years' annual net financial corrections average** (EUR 429 million). Net financial corrections are characteristic of the European Agricultural Guarantee Fund and the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development, as they are applied after a procedure in which the duration may vary, creating the variation in the amounts between years. The net financial corrections implemented (and decided) in 2024 still fully correspond to expenditure under the 2014-2022 common agricultural policy legal basis, as **no conformity procedure related to the 2023-2027 common agricultural policy expenditure was finalised in 2024**.

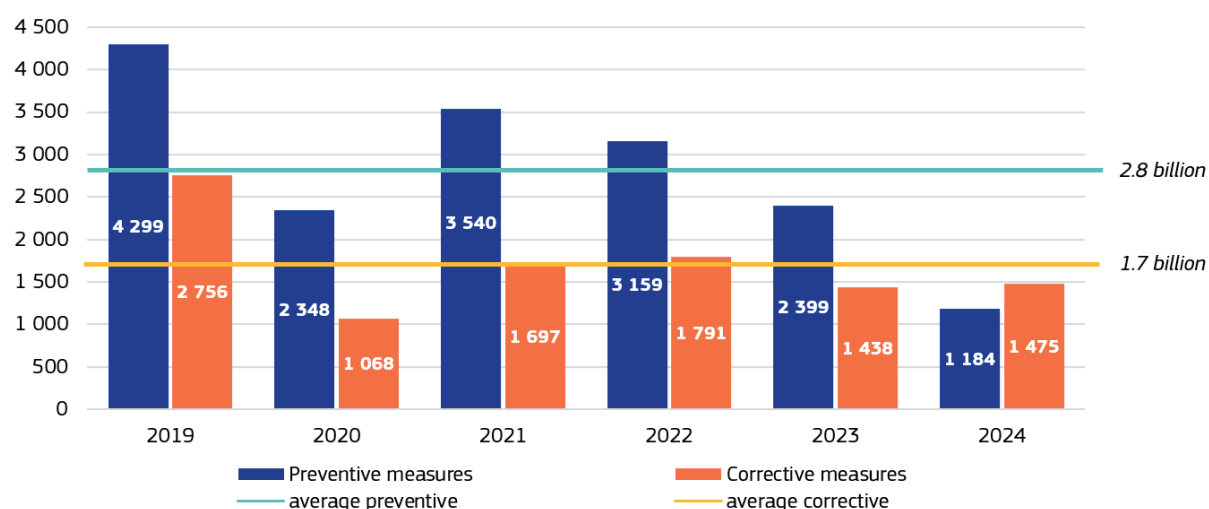
⁽²⁶⁾ This amount includes the corrections made to ensure a risk at closure below 2% for all programmes.

⁽²⁷⁾ Out of the EUR 412 million: EUR 235 million was penalties/reductions imposed on final beneficiaries by the Member States, recovered and reimbursed to the EU budget, and EUR 177 million was penalties/reductions applied by the Member States, recovered and reused as regular expenditure to other final beneficiaries without reimbursement to the EU budget.

The remaining EUR 31 million of the correction measures applied in 2024 concerned maritime affairs and fisheries, where Member States' controls resulted in EUR 7 million in corrective measures, whereas the Commission's net financial corrections amounted to EUR 24 million ⁽²⁸⁾.

5.4.4. Multiannual overview

Preventive and corrective measures implemented for 2019-2024 (million EUR)



Source: European Commission 2019-2024 annual activity reports and annual management and performance reports.

For 2019-2024, the preventive and corrective measures amounted to EUR 27.2 billion. The highest amounts of preventive and corrective measures are under heading 2 (cohesion, resilience, and values) and heading 3 (natural resources and environment), which is consistent with the high level of expenditure under these headings.

Preventive measures amounted to EUR 16.9 billion for the period, which substantiates the important role of the Member States in protecting the EU budget through their controls before the Commission accepts and reimburses expenditure. The decrease between 2023 and 2024 is mainly explained by the situation in cohesion, see Section 5.4.1.

Corrective measures amounted to EUR 10.2 billion for the period. The evolution over time of corrective measures in shared management is to be interpreted, considering the significant backlog in their implementation, in accordance with the applicable legislation. Especially for cohesion policy funds, significant corrective measures were applied during the first years analysed. These corrections still referred mostly to expenditure declared in previous programming periods (for which the risk at payment determined at the Commission level was significantly higher), while corrective measures applied for the 2014-2020 programming period have increased, in line with the maturity of the expenditure implementation.

⁽²⁸⁾ Net financial corrections and recoveries related to the European Fisheries Fund 2007-2013 amounting to EUR 30.5 million were implemented by DG Maritime Affairs and Fisheries in 2024 regarding six Member States, out of which EUR 23.8 million were implemented by recovery orders (EUR 0.3 million resulting from Member States' work), EUR 0.2 million by decommitment and EUR 6.5 million by recoveries at closure resulting from Member States' work.

5.4.5. Net financial corrections implemented by the Commission in 2024

The following table presents the types of net financial corrections applied by the Commission as corrective measures in shared management in 2024.

Table H – 2024 net financial corrections implemented by the Commission (corrective measures in shared management) (million EUR)

Multiannual financial framework heading/fund	Net financial corrections						
	2014-2020 multiannual financial framework and previous frameworks			2021-2027 multiannual financial framework			Total net financial corrections
	Recovery order	Decommitment	Total	Recovery order	Decommitment	Total	
	(a)	(b)	(c) = (a) + (b)	(d)	(c)	(f) = (d) + (c)	
2. Cohesion, resilience and values (*)	25.5	36.4	61.9	—	—	—	61.9
European Regional Development Fund and Cohesion Fund	25.5	22.7	48.2	—	—	—	48.2
European Social Fund / youth employment initiative and Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived	—	13.7	13.7	—	—	—	13.7
3. Natural resources and environment	252.2	0.2	252.4	219.0	-	219.0	471.5
European Agricultural Guarantee Fund	138.8	—	138.8	170.4	—	170.4	309.3
European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development	89.8	—	89.8	48.6	—	48.6	138.5
European Maritime and Fisheries Fund / European Fisheries Fund / Financial Instrument for Fisheries Guidance	23.5	0.2	23.8	—	—	—	23.8
4. Migration and border management	0.3	—	0.3	—	—	—	0.3
Total	278.0	36.7	314.7	219.0	—	219.0	533.7
European Globalisation Fund (special instruments)	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Total, including special instruments	278.0	36.7	314.7	219.0	—	219.0	533.7

(*) For cohesion funds, all the amounts presented in the table above concern **net financial corrections applied in respect of pre-2014 programmes**.

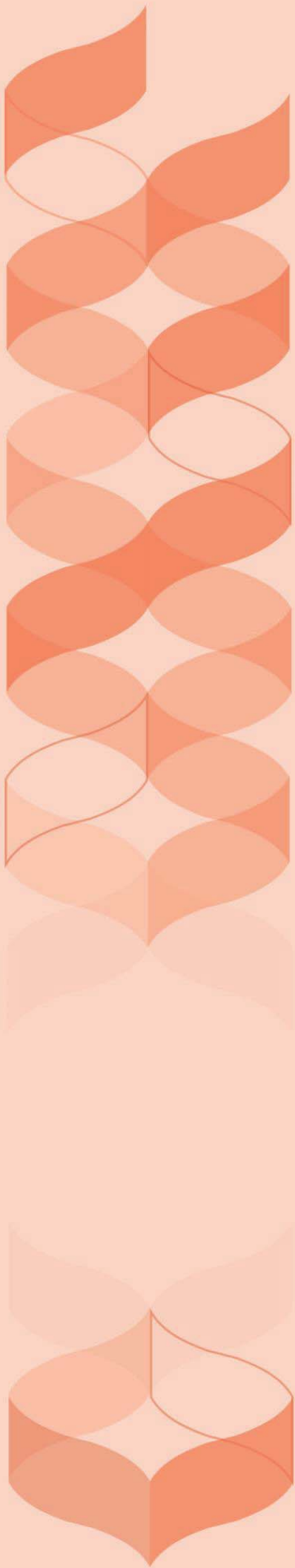
During the 2000-2006 and 2007-2013 programming periods, the applicable legislation allowed Member States to replace irregular expenditure with new expenditure if they took the necessary corrective action and applied the related financial corrections (confirmed financial corrections). However, if the Member States did not have such additional expenditure to declare, the financial corrections became (at least in part) net corrections.

Net financial corrections also originate from Commission decisions ('decided' financial corrections), which always had a direct and net impact on the Member State, as it was not possible to reuse the corrected amount for other eligible operations and the Member States had to return the financial corrections amounts to the EU budget.

In both cases of net financial corrections, the operational programmes' envelopes were reduced and the Member States had to pay the amounts back to the EU budget (**implementation by recovery order issued by the Commission** – column a) and/or at closure they received a lower overall funding envelope (**implementation by decommitment** – column b).

NB: Due to the rounding of figures to the nearest million EUR, some financial data in the table above may appear not to add up.

Source: European Commission.



Annex 6 – Assurance provided by the Internal Audit Service

Annex 6 – Assurance provided by the Internal Audit Service

The work of the Internal Audit Service, its audit findings and recommendations, and the results of the oversight provided by the Audit Progress Committee contribute to the overall assurance-building process at the European Commission level. For the 2024 reporting year, the Internal Audit Service produced an annual internal audit report, in line with Article 118(4) of the Financial Regulation ⁽²⁹⁾, which (1) summarised the performance audits completed in 2023; (2) presented the overall conclusion on financial management for the year 2024; (3) recalled the contribution of the Internal Audit Service to the annual activity reporting of the Commission's directorates-general and the executive agencies; and (4) reported on progress in implementing its audit recommendations.

6.1. Financial management: internal auditor's overall conclusion

Based on:

- the work done by the Internal Audit Service covering the years 2022-2024, the principal findings and recommendations of which are summarised in its reports and annexes submitted under Article 118(4) of the Financial Regulation issued in parallel to the annual overall conclusion,
- reviews of the related accountability reports provided by management and the assurances given by management in their annual activity reports and annexed declarations of assurance,
- information presented in the draft Annual Management and Performance Report for the EU Budget – financial year 2024 (Volume II, Annexes 2 and 3, and Volume III, Annex 5), the Annual Management and Performance Report for the EU Budget – financial year 2023 (Volume II, Annexes 2 and 3, and Volume III, Annex 5), and the Annual Management and Performance Report for the EU Budget – financial year 2022 (Annexes 2 and 3 in Volume II, and Annex 5 in Volume III), as part of the integrated set of financial and accountability reports (Article 253 of the Financial Regulation ⁽³⁰⁾),
- information from other sources, the European Court of Auditors' reports,

and taking into account that:

- management has adopted plans which the Internal Audit Service considers are adequate to address the residual risks identified by auditors, and to implement the accepted recommendations made by the Internal Audit Service, and
- the implementation of these plans is monitored through reports by management and through follow-up audits by the Internal Audit Service.

the internal auditor considers that in 2024 the Commission put into place governance, risk management and internal control procedures which, taken as a whole, are adequate to give reasonable assurance over the achievement of its financial objectives, with the exception of

⁽²⁹⁾ Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2024/2509 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 September 2024 on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union (recast), OJ L, 2024/2509, 26.9.2024, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2024/2509/oj>.

⁽³⁰⁾ Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2024/2509 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 September 2024 on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union (recast), OJ L, 2024/2509, 26.9.2024, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2024/2509/oj>.

those areas of financial management over which authorising officers by delegation have expressed reservations in their declaration of assurance.

Without further qualifying the overall conclusion for 2024, the internal auditor draws the attention of the Commission to the need to respond to the high cross-cutting risks for the institution and the EU budget by building on the lessons learned from managing its financial resources in a challenging context.

This is linked in particular to the complexity of (innovative) funding mechanisms and related challenges for their implementation. The Commission, being ultimately responsible for ensuring the legality and regularity of expenditure and sound financial management, will therefore need to continue taking actions to mitigate the new high risks identified.

As the Commission is embarking on an ambitious reshape of the EU budget, aimed at making it simpler, more focused and more impactful, **the traditional governance, control and assurance framework needs to be adapted** to remain relevant for innovative, complex funding and new delivery models, including performance-based approaches.

To remain effective, the assurance and control framework in the next multi-annual financial framework must be **proportional** to the associated risks. The level and intensity of controls should be adjusted to the delivery model of the future instrument(s), to avoid duplication of controls and audits, and to reduce the administrative burden.

The assurance and control strategy should be **embedded from the onset**, developed in parallel with policy design and implementation planning, thus ensuring both the effective and efficient delivery of programmes, as well as supporting broader financial management and governance objectives.

It is essential to **retain the appropriate level of controls** throughout the programme lifecycle, especially if late implementation of funds creates pressure. To ensure the continuous and reliable implementation of the new control and assurance strategies, the necessary human resources should be defined and allocated from the onset until the closure, in both capacity and skills.

6.2. Performance: results of audits by the Internal Audit Service

Through its audit work, the Internal Audit Service adds value to the effective and efficient implementation of risk management, control and governance processes, EU policies, programmes and actions, efficient and economical management of resources, legal and regular spending of the EU budget and compliance with the legal frameworks by the audited entities. In this way, the Internal Audit Service contributes to providing value for money for citizens and thus to increasing public confidence in the European Union and enhancing its image.

6.2.1. Financial processes

Providing reassurance to the College and the directorates-general and services on the efficient and effective implementation of the internal controls as regards financial management remains one of the priorities of the Internal Audit Service.

Four audits did not reveal critical or very important weaknesses in the control systems, namely: (1) the audit on anti-fraud strategies in the external action family; (2) the audit on Horizon 2020 grant management phase IV in the European Research Council Executive Agency; (3) the audit on the performance of the management of experts for proposal evaluation in the Education and Culture Executive Agency; and (4) the audit on procurement in DG Interpretation.

DG Agriculture and Rural Development had made progress in its preparedness to design the assurance building model under the new Common Agricultural Policy strategic plans. However, some elements still needed to be developed to ensure that the control framework put in place is sufficiently robust to provide assurance that the Common Agricultural Policy expenditure under the new delivery model is implemented in line with the Common Agricultural Policy legal framework..

Overall, DG Regional and Urban Policy, DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion and DG Maritime Affairs and Fisheries have designed adequate assurance building processes for the funds implemented under shared management to mitigate the key risks and address the main new elements introduced by the 2021-2027 programming period legislation. Nevertheless, the DGs' single audit strategy will need to be updated as certain elements were not sufficiently clear or have not been sufficiently developed at this stage of the programming period. DG Regional and Urban Policy also implements the EU Solidarity Fund under shared and indirect management. The DG has put in place control processes for managing the Fund but there is a need for further improvement concerning its design and effective management.

DG Economic and Financial Affairs adequately designed and efficiently and effectively implemented governance processes for the preparation phase of macrofinancial assistance operations. However, further improvement is needed in the design and efficient and effective implementation of the risk management and control processes as well as in marking and protecting sensitive non-classified information.

In indirect management, the audit on controls over the financial management of the civilian Common Security and Defence Policy missions, implemented by the Service for Foreign Policy Instruments, found that while the Service has designed and implemented a control framework tailored to the specificities of the missions, further improvement is needed regarding its design which affect its effective implementation.

Although DG International Partnerships has put in place a control system encompassing guidance, templates, checklists and training to support the implementation of the grant and procurement award processes under indirect management with partner countries, and the performance of the related *ex ante* controls by the EU Delegations, their design needs to be further improved to ensure compliance with the rules and their effective and efficient implementation.

Although DG Research and Innovation has made huge investments to design an adequate and innovative Horizon Europe control strategy to ensure the legal and regular implementation, as well as the sound financial management of the programme, further improvement is needed to key components of the control strategy to fully achieve the long-term objective of having a level of error below the materiality threshold of 2% for Horizon Europe.

Although the Climate, Infrastructure and Environment Executive Agency has designed and put in place adequate controls for the Horizon Europe grant management processes, there is a need for further improvement related to the management of conflicts of interest and of the evaluation processes which may impair the effectiveness and efficiency of implementation.

The audit on assurance building for expenditure under direct management in DG Maritime Affairs and Fisheries found that although the DG had adequately designed and implemented its assurance building processes as regards expenditure under direct management, there is a need for further improvement in the design and financial implementation of the sustainable fisheries partnership agreements.

6.2.2. Support processes

Furthermore, the Internal Audit Service continued to provide reassurance to the College and the directorates-general and services on the efficient and effective implementation of the internal controls for the administrative processes that support the functioning of the Commission (human resources, IT, etc.).

Furthermore, the Internal Audit Service continued to provide reassurance to the College and the directorates-general and services on the efficient and effective implementation of the internal controls for the administrative processes that support the functioning of the Commission (human resources, IT, etc.).

Human resource management

The Internal Audit Service performed three audits to assess various aspects of human resource management in the Commission.

The audit on the assessment of human resources needs in the Commission at corporate level concluded that the existing processes for assessing human resource needs in the legislative and budgetary contexts have made progress, but requires key improvements. Two key issues have been identified on: (1) the support from the central services for the assessment of human resource needs at local/department level; and (2) the quality checks on human resource needs by the central services.

The multi-entity audit on human resource allocation in EU Delegations concluded that the Commission's process for allocating human resources in EU Delegations complied with the rules, but there is a need to improve its design and effective and efficient implementation to achieve the objective of providing a global view of EU Delegation's workload.

An audit on human resource management in DG Financial Stability, Financial Services and Capital Markets Union concluded that although the department has put in place an adequate internal system to manage its human resources, there is a need for further improvement as regards the design of the department's human resource strategic framework that may affect its effective and efficient implementation.

IT management

The multi-DG audit on IT security risk management covering both the corporate and local levels, found that although the Commission has designed an adequate IT security risk management framework and processes, in compliance with the Commission's IT security framework, there is a need to further improve the effective and efficient implementation of processes in the following areas: (1) the IT security risk management methodology and related tools; (2) the risk acceptance criteria; (3) the monitoring and reporting of the risk assessment results; and (4) the completeness and accuracy of IT security information. Areas for improvements were identified both at the level of the Commission and at the decentralised level.

A limited review of SUMMA, in preparation of 'going live' focused on the controls put in place by DG Budget to mitigate the main risks regarding the transition of the Commission's central accounting, budget and treasury system. Very important areas for further improvement remained at the time of the limited review. Furthermore, additional areas for improvement, potentially having an impact on the subsequent efficient and effective use of the system in practice, were identified.

Other support processes

The audit on the IT financing framework concluded that the DG Digital Services has made efforts to design and implement an adequate control framework for the management of the baseline IT services and of the charge-back processes. However, despite the fact that the current IT financing framework has brought some positive elements, there is a need for further improvement in its design regarding the concept of baseline IT services and the adequacy of the current IT financing framework to deliver sustainable corporate IT services going forward.

The Internal Audit Service audit on the protection of personal data in the Paymaster Office concluded that the control system put in place by the Office for the key business processes handling personal data is not adequately designed and effectively implemented to ensure compliance with the relevant legal base. While the Internal Audit Service takes note of important steps taken by the Office in 2024 (after the end of the audit fieldwork) to address key shortcomings, significant progress still needs to be made in (1) accountability, roles and responsibilities; (2) arrangements in case of joint processing, international transfers of personal data and service level agreements, (3) compliance with data protection principles and (4) IT controls to ensure the integrity, confidentiality and availability of personal data.

6.2.3. Operational and policy processes

Financial and support processes are usually drivers for operational and policy processes. The audit on the Single Market Programme yielded positive results, with no critical or very important weaknesses identified.

In the audit on the EU emission trading system, the processes for the management of the EU emission trading system auctions are functioning well, but there is a need for further improvement in the design and effective implementation of DG Climate Action's other processes for the implementation and monitoring of the EU emission trading system. For the nuclear decommissioning and waste management programme, there is a need for further improvement in the governance, management and control systems to ensure the sustainable, efficient and effective implementation of the programme across all the nuclear sites of the Joint Research Centre.

6.2.4. Information security and technology

In view of increased information security concerns, legal obligations, Member States' expectations, new user requirements and a corporate approach to information management, the Commission adopted (i) in 2018, a digital strategy aiming to bring new innovative digital solutions to support its policies and activities, and (ii) in 2022, a proposal for a regulation on information security, which proposes common information security rules for all EU institutions and agencies.

The Commission is exposed to high inherent information security risks, including the risk to the confidentiality of information. In this context, the audit on the protection of confidentiality of information was conducted on the three key stakeholders responsible for information security at the corporate level – the Secretariat-General, DG Human Resources and Security and DG Digital Services. The Commission has progressed in establishing an adequate corporate framework and effective corporate controls, including effective risk management, for protecting the confidentiality of information. However, significant measures are still required at the corporate level, to more effectively support the Commission services in their responsibility to protect the confidentiality of information. These relate to external service providers, information technology controls and the process for managing information security incidents.

The 'Case management rationalisation' project is the flagship of the Commission's information systems rationalisation exercise in the case management area. Based on its audit work, the Internal Audit Service concluded that, although DG Competition has made progress in designing and implementing governance and internal control processes for the project, there is a need for further improvement as regards the way in which certain information technology security controls have been designed, applied or documented.

The EU emissions trading system is a cornerstone of the EU's policy to combat climate change as a key tool for reducing greenhouse gas emissions cost-effectively. The Internal Audit Service conducted a limited review of the security plan and associated security measures of the system, which is managed by the DG Climate Action. While the security processes of the system have gradually become more mature, further improvement is required in the design of the 2022 information technology security plan for the system and the governance framework for its implementation.

Internal Audit Service limited conclusions

The Internal Audit Service issued limited conclusions on the state of internal control to all directorates-general and services ⁽³¹⁾ in February 2024. These limited conclusions contributed to the 2023 annual activity reports of the directorates-general and services concerned. They drew on the audit work carried out in the last five years and covered all open recommendations issued by the Internal Audit Service. The Internal Audit Service's conclusions on the state of internal control in the directorates-general are limited to the management and control systems that were audited in the past five years.

⁽³¹⁾ No audits were carried out for the advisory service IDEA – Inspire, Debate, Engage and Accelerate Action during the 2019-2023 period, as no high risks were identified, and therefore no limited conclusion was provided.

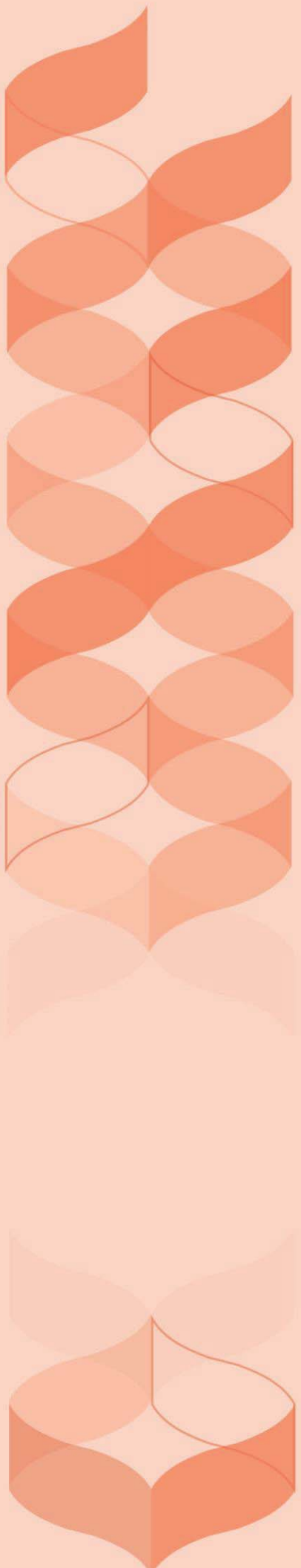
Follow-up of previous Internal Audit Service recommendations

The Internal Audit Service's follow-up work on its previous recommendations confirmed that, overall, these are being implemented satisfactorily by the Commission's directorates-general, services and executive agencies and that the control systems in the audited departments are improving.

Over the 2020-2024 period, 65% (i.e. 544 out of 831) of the (partially) accepted recommendations ⁽³²⁾ made by the Internal Audit Service to the Commission departments were assessed by the auditees as implemented, while 35% (287 recommendations) were still in progress (stemming notably from recently completed audits for which the action plans are ongoing) at the cut-off date of 31 January 2025. Out of these 287 recommendations in progress, none are rated as critical and 99 are rated as very important. A further 71 recommendations that are still in progress are overdue and only 6 (very important) are long overdue (i.e. still open more than six months after the original implementation date), representing 0.7% of the total number of (partially) accepted recommendations of the past five years. There are no very important long overdue recommendations issued before 2020.

Once management reports that the recommendations have been completed, the Internal Audit Service will conduct follow-up audits to assess the effectiveness of their implementation. The Internal Audit Service concluded that 95% of the recommendations followed up in 2020-2024 had been adequately and effectively implemented by the auditees.

⁽³²⁾ Out of 795 recommendations issued in 2019-2023, 789 recommendations were fully accepted, 2 were partially accepted and 4 were rejected.



Annex 7 – Summary of the work and conclusions of the Audit Progress Committee

Annex 7 – Summary of the work and conclusions of the Audit Progress Committee

The Audit Progress Committee held four ⁽³³⁾ rounds of meetings between June 2024 and May 2025, despite the time required for the appointment of new internal members to the Audit Progress Committee following the transition period between the two Commission mandates. The committee's work was structured around the four key objectives set out in the 2024 and 2025 work programmes. During this reporting period, the committee also considered a number of other issues.

The reporting period continued to be affected by the consequences of the **succession of unprecedented challenges** impacting the EU since 2020. At various occasions, the Audit Progress Committee took stock of the potential impact of these events on the internal audit work and capacity, and was informed about the risks on performance, control, audit and assurance-building aspects of the implementation of the EU budget. This occurred especially when considering the internal and external audit planning for 2024 and 2025, the list of critical risks identified by management for 2025 and the Internal Auditor's overall conclusion on financial management for 2024.

The majority of the committee's work between June 2024 and May 2025 related to the four main objectives of its annual work programme: (i) considering the **audit planning**; (ii) analysing **audit reports** and other relevant communications to identify potentially significant risks, including where appropriate in a thematic manner; (iii) monitoring the **follow-up to significant residual risks** identified by internal or external audit work including where appropriate in a thematic manner; and (iv) Ensuring the **independence** of the Internal Auditor and monitoring the **quality** of internal audit work.

The Audit Progress Committee took note of the update from the Internal Auditor on the content of the upcoming **Audit Strategy 2025-2029** and welcomed the results of the risk assessment performed by the Internal Audit Service in the last quarter of 2024 as well as its new approach. It further welcomed the **audit plan for 2025** and the important reassurances provided by the Internal Auditor that this audit plan will provide **sufficient coverage for delivering the overall conclusion** on the Commission's financial management as well as the limited conclusions on internal control. The committee also welcomed the **broad convergence between the results of the risk assessments** performed by management and by the Internal Audit Service.

The committee took note of the **draft annual internal audit report and the draft overall conclusion for 2024**, which was only qualified by the reservations set out by the Directors-General in their annual activity reports. It welcomed the reassurance provided by the Internal Auditor that the risks identified through the audit work were properly reported by the Commission services and, where appropriate, the subject of reservations. The committee took note of the emphasis of matter raised by the Internal Auditor, which does not qualify the overall opinion, but require the attention of the College and the authorising officers by delegation. This concerned the need to respond to the high cross-cutting risks for the institution and the EU budget, which have emerged due to the increasingly complex environment in which the Commission operates, by building on the lessons learned from managing its financial resources in a challenging context. The Committee took note of the state of play of the preparation of the 2024 annual management and performance report as presented by the Secretariat-General and the Directorate-General for Budget,

⁽³³⁾ 115th, 116th, 117th and 118th rounds of the Audit Progress Committee between June 2024 and May 2025. Each round comprised up to three meetings of the Preparatory Group to prepare the committee meeting.

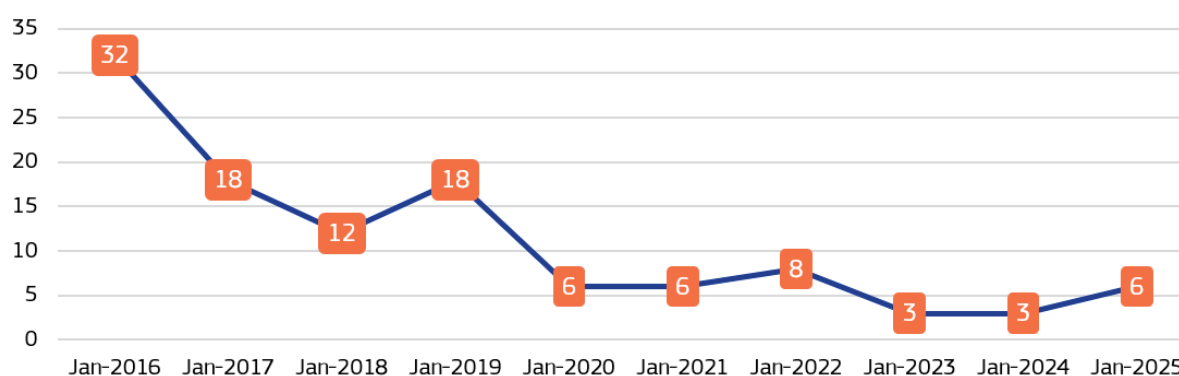
highlighting the key challenges faced by the Commission and welcomed the reassuring messages from the central services on the reported achievements in internal control and financial management.

During the reporting period, the committee examined audit reports on an individual or thematic basis according to the seriousness or significance of the findings. It examined 17 final audit reports from the Internal Audit Service in the presence of the auditees. The committee held discussions on important topics such as data protection, HR and IT security, especially relevant in the current cybersecurity environment.

During the reporting period, the committee monitored the effective implementation of internal audit recommendations by reviewing and discussing the quarterly reports on long-overdue recommendations. Almost all 'very important' recommendations ⁽³⁴⁾ issued by the Internal Audit Service and discussed during the reporting period were accepted by the auditees and management established action plans to address the risks identified. Overall, **the situation for the implementation of the recommendations was very satisfactory.**

The rate of the Internal Auditor's recommendations issued between 2020 and 2024 that were found to have been effectively implemented in an Internal Audit Service follow-up audit was 95%. Based on the information provided by the Internal Audit Service, overall, the number of 'very important' audit recommendations that are more than six months overdue has fallen considerably over recent years, as shown in the chart below.

Number of critical and very important Internal Audit Service recommendations overdue for more than six months

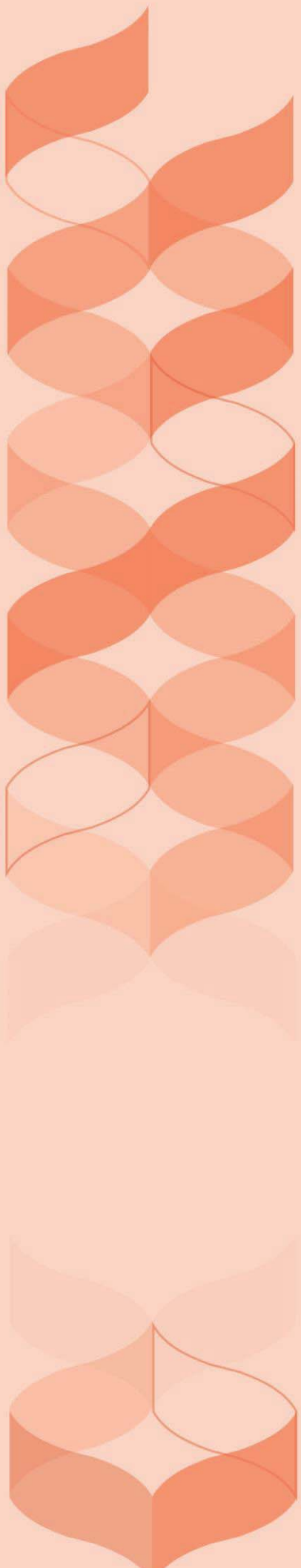


Source: European Commission.

During the reporting period, the Audit Progress Committee also continued its exchanges with the Court of Auditors and held discussion with the court on its 2025 annual work programme. It also continued to scrutinise the state of play of implementation of the Court's recommendations, which remained high and therefore satisfactory along with the Commission's follow-up to the Court's 17th consecutive clean opinion on the reliability of the consolidated EU accounts.

The Audit Progress Committee remains an effective player in the Commission's governance structures and continues to play an important role in enhancing governance, organisational performance and accountability across the entire organisation.

⁽³⁴⁾ Two 'very important' recommendations were partially accepted by the relevant services.



Annex 8 – Compliance with payment time limits

Annex 8 – Compliance with payment time limits

The **statutory time limits** for payments are laid down in the Financial Regulation on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the EU ⁽³⁵⁾. There are also some exceptionally applied time limits, which are detailed in sector-specific regulations.

Article 116 of the Financial Regulation provides that payments to creditors must be made within the deadlines of 30, 60 or 90 days, depending on how demanding and complex it is to test the deliverables against the contractual obligations. Most of the payments have to be executed within 30 days; this represents a global average of 86% of the total annual payments in the last five years (2020 to 2024) and a global average of 85% of the total annual payments under the current multiannual financial framework (2021 to 2024). For contracts and grant agreements for which payment depends on the approval of a report or a certificate, the time limit for the purposes of the payment periods is no longer automatically suspended until the report or certificate in question has been approved.

The period of two months remains valid for payments under Article 93 of the Common Provisions Regulation ⁽³⁶⁾ laying down the general provisions on the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund and the Cohesion Fund.

Compliance with payment time limits has been reported by the services in their annual activity reports since 2007. In accordance with the applicable rules, the payment times reported in this annex have been calculated based on the data available in the Commission's corporate accounting system, ABAC, as follows.

For payments relating to contracts and grant agreements signed before 2013, the time limits specified in the 2007 Financial Regulation are applied:

- where the payment is contingent upon the approval of a report, the time from approval of the report until payment;
- where no report is required, the time from reception of the payment request until payment.

For payments relating to contracts and grant agreements signed as from 2013, the time limits specified in the 2018 Financial Regulation are applied:

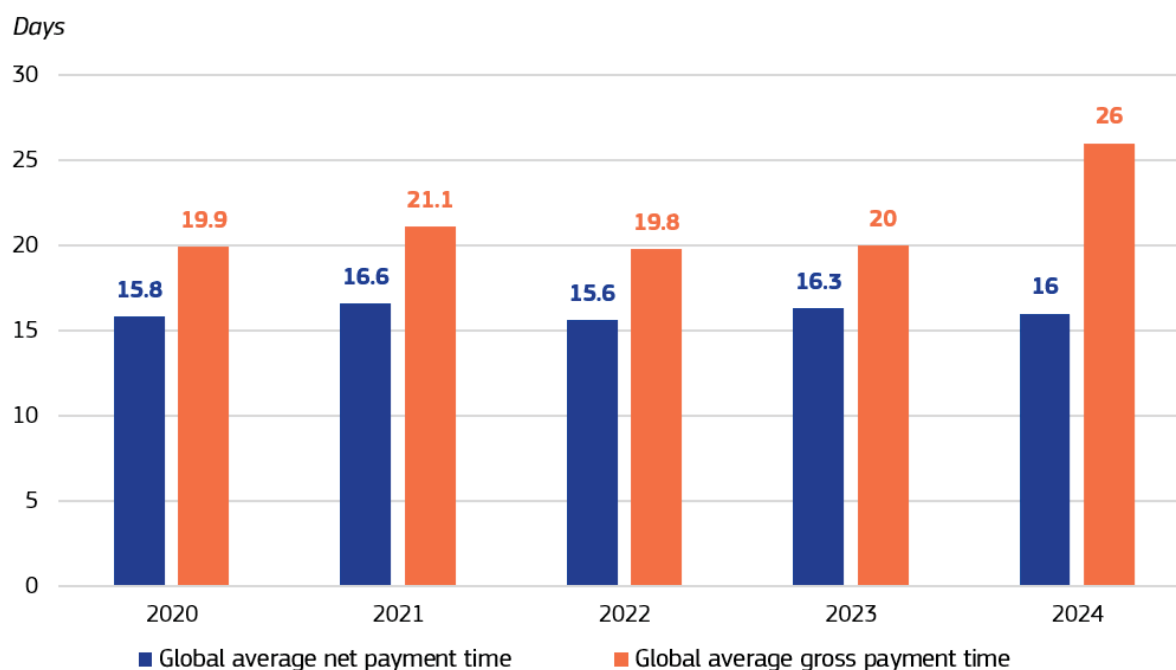
- where no report is required and where the payment is contingent upon the approval of a report, the time from reception of the payment request until payment.

⁽³⁵⁾ Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2024/2509 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 September 2024 on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union, OJ L, 2024/2509, 26.9.2024, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2024/2509/oj>.

⁽³⁶⁾ Regulation (EU) 2021/1060 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 June 2021 laying down common provisions on the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund Plus, the Cohesion Fund, the Just Transition Fund and the European Maritime, Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund and financial rules for those and for the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund, the Internal Security Fund and the Instrument for Financial Support for Border Management and Visa Policy, OJ L 231, 30.6.2021, p. 159, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2021/1060/oj>.

The Commission's global average payment time is monitored by the Accounting Officer. It evolved as follows in the last five monitored years.

Global average payment time in days

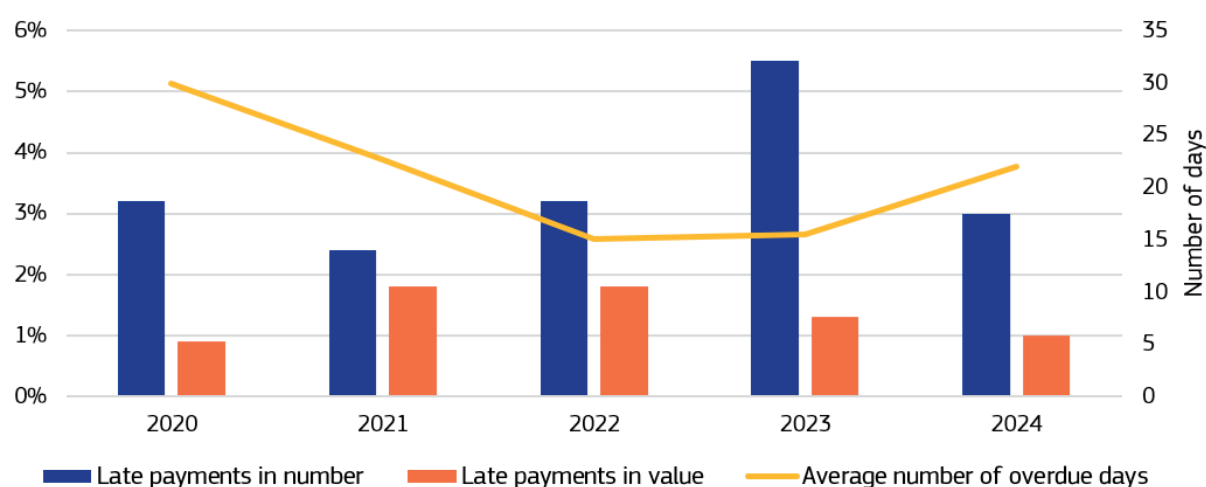


Source: European Commission.

The data shows that the global average net payment time of the Commission services, i.e. including the time of suspensions, and the global average gross payment time, i.e. excluding the time of suspensions, was below 30 days in the last five years for all time limits combined. The average payment time with and without suspensions improved in comparison with the previous year. Services are encouraged to continue their efforts in this regard and to implement follow-up measures whenever payment time challenges are identified.

The table below illustrates the evolution of '**late payments**', i.e. payments made after expiry of the statutory time limit in recent years for all payments combined.

Evolution of late payments (2020-2024)



Source: European Commission.

Even though the share of late payments in numbers increased compared to the previous year, it decreased when looking at the values. An overall improvement in late payment results, taking 2019 as a basis year, is believed to be linked to the more stringent requirements associated with the Financial Regulation and regular monitoring. Another reason is the sufficient availability of payment appropriations.

Concerning the **interest paid for late payments** ⁽³⁷⁾, the **total amount paid by the Commission in 2024 increased compared to the previous four years**.

	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Interest paid for late payments (in EUR)	341 495	235 456	164 535	327 473	480 924

Source: European Commission.

In general, the **causes of late payments** include the complexities of evaluating the supporting documents that are a prerequisite for all payments. This is particularly onerous when the supporting documents are reports of a technical nature that sometimes have to be assessed by external experts. Other causes are associated with difficulties in coordinating the financial and operational checks of payment requests, issues with the management of payment suspensions and a temporary lack of payment appropriations.

The 2009 communication establishing Commission internal payment targets provided a clear incentive to services to reduce their payment times. Despite the results achieved, there is scope for decreasing payment times even more. When setting up action plans in this area, services should focus on further reducing late payments from their current levels of 5.5% of payments in terms of their number and 1.3% in terms of their value. **The aim is to meet the statutory payment time for every payment.**

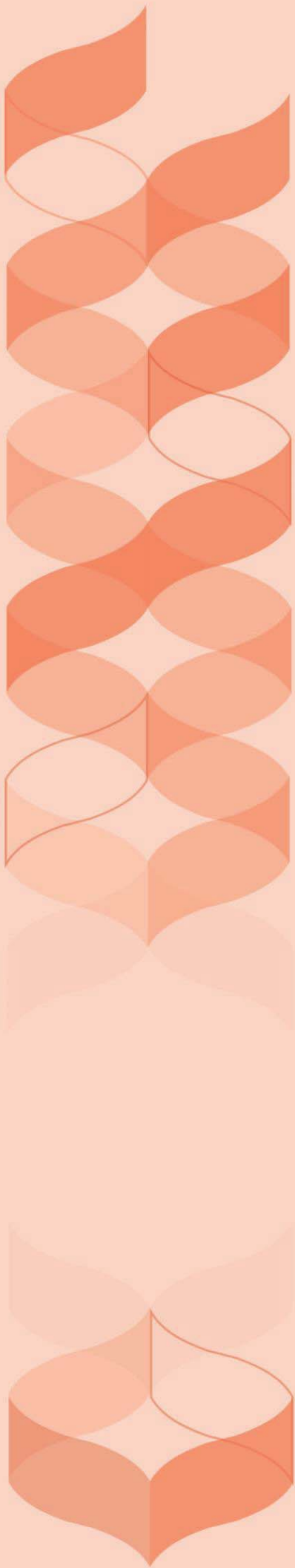
The table below shows the number of suspensions of payments over the last five years.

	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Total number of suspensions	22 095	20 552	23 856	23 015	21 908

Source: European Commission.

Suspensions are a tool that allows the responsible authorising officer to withhold the execution of a payment temporarily because the amount is not due, because of the absence of appropriate supporting documentation or because there are doubts about the eligibility of the expenditure concerned. It is a basic tool that helps the authorising officer in the payment process avoid irregular or erroneous payments, and is fundamental in ensuring sound financial management and protecting the EU's financial interest.

⁽³⁷⁾ In other words, no longer conditional upon the presentation of a request for payment (with the exception of amounts below EUR 200).



Annex 9 – Summary of waivers of recoveries of established amounts receivable

Annex 9 – Summary of waivers of recoveries of established amounts receivable

In accordance with Article 101(5) of the Financial Regulation ⁽³⁸⁾, the Commission reports to the budgetary authority each year on the waivers it has granted in an annex to the summary of the annual activity reports. The table below shows the total value and the number of waivers above and below EUR 60 000 in 2024. The individual annual activity reports of the Commission's departments provide more details on the individual waivers above EUR 60 000.

EU budget area	Total value of waivers	Waivers above EUR 60 000		Waivers below EUR 60 000	
		in number	in value (EUR)	in number	in value (EUR)
Legal Service	34 704			1	34 704
DG Communication	76			1	76
DG Human Resources and Security	14 702			3	14 702
DG Digital Services	25 082			1	25 082
DG Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs	57 747			1	57 747
DG Competition	18 023 383	5	18 023 383		
DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion	97 021	1	97 021		
DG Mobility and Transport	394 968	2	354 516	3	40 452
DG Energy	4 454 613	4	4 454 613		
DG Environment	8 241			1	8 241
DG Research and Innovation	3 722 242	7	3 543 087	9	179 155
DG Communications Networks, Content and Technology	130 301	1	87 549	4	42 752
Joint Research Centre	729			1	729

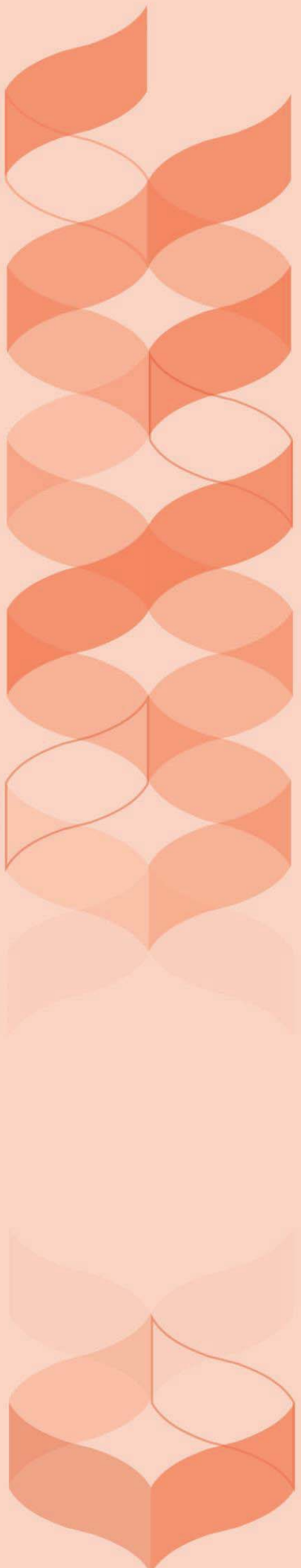
⁽³⁸⁾ Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2024/2509 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 September 2024 on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union, OJ L, 2024/2509, 26.9.2024, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2024/2509/oj>.

EU budget area	Total value of waivers	Waivers above EUR 60 000		Waivers below EUR 60 000	
		in number	in value (EUR)	in number	in value (EUR)
DG Maritime Affairs and Fisheries	1 067			1	1 067
DG Education, Youth, Sport and Culture	18 667			1	18 667
DG Migration and Home Affairs	810			1	810
DG Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations	3 040 441	14	2 539 700	14	500 741
DG International Partnerships	5 832 286	18	5 335 770	20	496 516
Service for Foreign Policy Instruments	51 339			2	51 339
Office for the Administration and Payment of Individual Entitlements	1 850			3	1 850
Office for Infrastructure and Logistics in Brussels	217			1	217
European Innovation Council and SMEs Executive Agency	2 581 751	5	2 563 611	1	18 140
European Education and Culture Executive Agency	2 398 082	6	2 132 259	10	265 823
European Climate, Infrastructure and Environment Executive Agency	7 890 428	8	7 852 563	2	37 866
European Research Council Executive Agency	1 592			1	1 592
European Research Executive Agency	1 475 961	4	1 204 401	10	271 560
European Commission total	50 258 300	75	48 188 474	92	2 069 826
European Development Fund	3 742 027	7	3 540 545	8	201 482
Mutual Insurance Mechanism	30 924 176	101	29 661 360	45	1 262 817

EU budget area	Total value of waivers	Waivers above EUR 60 000		Waivers below EUR 60 000	
		in number	in value (EUR)	in number	in value (EUR)
Total	84 924 503	183	81 390 378	145	3 534 124

Source: European Commission.

The increase in the total value of waivers issued by the European Commission from EUR 21.6 million in 2023 to EUR 50.3 million at the end 2024 is mainly due to an enhanced corporate strategy for the management of the Commission's debtors, which offers the possibility of adopting one waiver decision for a number of cases (known as a 'combined waiver decision'), enabling the time needed to adopt individual decisions for single files to be reduced and streamlining the respective administrative procedures by combining them into a single action.



Annex 10 – Report on negotiated procedures

Annex 10 – Report on negotiated procedures

This annex presents the overall results of negotiated procedures recorded during the year under reporting, together with the analysis of the justifications and corrective measures taken to reduce the use of negotiated procedures when alternatives could be available.

10.1. Legal basis

Article 74(10) of the Financial Regulation ⁽³⁹⁾ requires authorising officers by delegation to record contracts concluded under negotiated procedures. Furthermore, the European Commission is required to annex a report on negotiated procedures to the summary of the annual activity reports referred to in Article 74(9) of the Financial Regulation.

10.2. Methodology

A distinction is made between the 48 departments ⁽⁴⁰⁾ that normally do not provide external aid and those three departments (DG International Partnerships, DG Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations ⁽⁴¹⁾ and the Service for Foreign Policy Instruments – ‘external relations’ departments) that conclude procurement contracts in the area of external relations or award contracts on their own account but outside of the European Union ⁽⁴²⁾.

These three departments have special characteristics as regards data collection (decentralised services, etc.), the total number of contracts concluded and the thresholds to be applied for the recording of negotiated procedures (EUR 20 000), along with the possibility of having recourse to negotiated procedures within the framework of the Rapid Reaction Mechanism (extreme urgency). For these reasons, a separate approach has been used for procurement contracts awarded by these three departments, and the number of their negotiated procedures is compared to each other instead of being compared with the other 48 departments.

⁽³⁹⁾ Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2024/2509 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 September 2024 on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union, OJ L, 2024/2509, 26.9.2024, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2024/2509/oj>.

⁽⁴⁰⁾ Directorate-General or Executive Agency

⁽⁴¹⁾ Now split into the Directorate-General Middle East, North Africa and Gulf and the Directorate-General Enlargement and Eastern Neighbourhood

⁽⁴²⁾ They have a different legal basis; see Articles 179 and 181 of the Financial Regulation.

10.3. Overall results of negotiated procedures recorded

10.3.1. The 48 departments, excluding ‘external relations’

Concerning the 48 departments, excluding ‘external relations’ departments, there were 85 negotiated procedures with a total value of EUR 458.2 million processed out of a total of 613 procurement procedures (negotiated, restricted or open) for contracts over EUR 60 000, with a total value of EUR 6.4 billion.

For the Commission, the average proportion of negotiated procedures in 2024 in relation to all procedures amounted to **13.9%** in number (13.4% in 2023) and **7.1%** in value (6.4% in 2023). There were slight increases compared to 2023, of 0.5 and 0.7 percentage points respectively.

An authorising department shall report to the institution if the proportion of negotiated procedures awarded in relation to the number of the contracts increases significantly in relation to earlier years or if that proportion is ‘distinctly higher’ than the average recorded for the institution ⁽⁴³⁾. Thus, the reference threshold for 2024 was calculated at **20.8%** (20.1% in 2023).

In total for the reporting year, 24 departments did not use negotiated procedures. For those that did, the above proportion was considered ‘distinctly higher’ for 11 departments: four departments exceeded only the reference threshold, three departments only increased their number of negotiated procedures by more than 10 percentage points in proportion when compared to last year and four departments exceeded both thresholds. It should be noted that, among these 11 departments, six concluded between one and three negotiated procedures, and the low total number of procedures conducted (below or equal to nine) makes their average high. Consequently, their respective results are not considered to be significant.

10.3.2. The ‘external relations’ departments

Concerning the ‘external relations’ departments, there were 108 negotiated procedures for a total value of contracts of EUR 243.9 million processed out of a total of 280 procedures for contracts over EUR 20 000, with a total value of about EUR 624.9 million.

For the three ‘external relations’ departments, the average proportion of negotiated procedures in relation to all procedures amounted to **38.6%** in number (35.4% in 2023) and **39.0%** in value (15.1% in 2023). Compared with the previous year, these departments registered an increase of 3.2 percentage points in terms of the number of negotiated procedures in relation to all procedures and 23.9 percentage points in terms of relative value.

An authorising service shall report to the institution if the proportion of negotiated procedures awarded in relation to the number of the contracts increases significantly in relation to earlier years or if that proportion is ‘distinctly higher’ than the average recorded for the Institution ⁽⁴⁴⁾. Thus, the reference threshold for 2024 was calculated at **57.9%** (53.1% in 2023). None of the three departments exceeded it.

⁽⁴³⁾ The average proportion for the Commission of the number of negotiated procedures in relation to the total number of contracts they awarded in 2024 was 13.9% for all departments (excluding the three ‘external relations’ departments). The proportion of a department is considered ‘distinctly higher’ when it deviates by more than 50% upwards from the Commission’s average. In relation to earlier years, it is considered significant an increase of at least 10 percentage points in the proportion of negotiated procedures compared to the proportion of the previous year.

⁽⁴⁴⁾ The average proportion for the three ‘external relations’ departments of the number of negotiated procedures in relation to the total number of contracts they awarded in 2024 was 39.4%. The proportion of a department is

10.4. Analysis of the justifications and corrective measures

The total number of negotiated procedures (including 'external relations' departments) in 2024 compared to 2023 decreased slightly at 193 (from 200 in 2023); The total number of procurement procedures decreased even more at 893 from 960 in 2023.

The following categories of justifications for the use of a negotiated procedure were presented by the departments exceeding the thresholds.

- **Short-notice requests or unforeseen events beyond the Commission's control.** This occurs when the Commission may not have sufficient expertise and resources to address detailed technical questions in-house at short notice.
- **Similar services/works as provided for in the initial tender specifications.** Some services in charge of large interinstitutional procurement procedures realised during the implementation of the contract (most likely during framework contract procedures) that the needs initially envisaged did not often match the consumption trend during the execution of the contract. Faster consumption of the contract, often coupled with the unusually high inflation prices observed due to the energy crisis following Russia's unjustified war of aggression against Ukraine, rendered necessary an increase in the amount awarded. Therefore, the leading service needed to start a negotiated procedure on behalf of all institutions to increase the ceiling of the framework contract in question.
- **Objective situations of the economic activity sector.** This occurs when the number of operators may be very limited or in a monopoly situation (due to specific technical expertise/reasons; exclusivity rights; highly specialised markets, where competition is limited to very few economic operators or is even completely absent; limited choice of financial software for trading systems and of rating agencies; etc.). Monopoly situations may relate to the technical compatibility requirements of previous purchases of scientific equipment, for example maintenance and upgrades that the Commission cannot give to any organisation other than the original equipment contractor, which holds the intellectual property rights. Situations of technical captivity may also arise, especially in the information technology domain (absence of competition for technical reasons and/or because of the protection of exclusive rights related to the purchase of proprietary licences or the maintenance and continuity of existing applications, i.e. upgrades).
- **Unsuccessful open or restricted procedures.** These led to a negotiated procedure, as described by several services.
- **Additional services.** These were not included in the initial contract but became necessary due to extreme urgency brought about by unforeseen circumstances.

Regularly available measures were proposed or implemented by the budget department and other departments concerned to reduce the use of negotiated procedures when other alternatives were available, including the following.

- **Improved programming** of procurement procedures.
- **Improving the system of needs evaluation.** The Commission's central services will continue their active communication and consultation policy with the other Commission departments, institutions, agencies and other bodies along the following axes:
 - permanent exchange of information via regular meetings with user services and agencies in appropriate forums;

considered 'distinctly higher' when it deviates by more than 50% upwards from the Commission's average. In relation to earlier years, it is considered significant an increase of at least 10 percentage points in the proportion of negotiated procedures compared to the proportion of the previous year.

- ad hoc detailed surveys prior to the initiation of (interinstitutional) procurement procedures for the evaluation of needs;
- better estimation of the needs of interinstitutional framework contracts and better monitoring with semester consumption reports from user services or agencies;
- **Training and improved interservice communication.** The Commission's central services provide regular practical training sessions on procurement and community of practice sessions.
- **Presenting alternative approaches such as open-source solutions.**
- **Ex post analysis and review** of launched exceptional negotiated procedures by public procurement advisory groups of the services, before the signature of the contract.
- Regular updating of **standard corporate model documents and guidance documents** on procurement.
- Rolling out the **corporate eProcurement solution** process from end to end for all Commission departments.
- **Encoding the budgetary ceiling of the framework contracts** to ensure closer monitoring and to help prevent the depletion of the budgetary ceiling too quickly after the signature of the contract and the need to resort to negotiated procedures for ceiling increases.

10.5. Lists of procedures by department

The tables below present the negotiated procedures and the summary of procedures by department and legal basis (relevant section of the former Financial Regulation (Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2018/1046)), as recorded in the corporate financial and accounting information systems of the Commission.

- Table I presents the negotiated procedures (internal > EUR 60 000) of the 48 departments, excluding 'external relations'.
- Table J presents the negotiated procedures > EUR 20 000 of the 'external relations' departments.
- Table K presents the summary of procedures (internal > EUR 60 000 and external > EUR 20 000).

Table I – Negotiated procedures (internal > EUR 60 000) of the 48 departments, excluding 'external relations'

By department and legal basis	In number	In value (EUR)
Secretariat-General	0	—
No procedure awarded	0	—
Legal Service	0	—
No procedure awarded	0	—
DG Communication	11	96 180 311.3
Annex 1 – 11.1(c) – Extreme urgency caused by unforeseeable events not attributable to the contracting authority	1	70 000.0
Annex 1 – 11.1(e) – New services/works consisting in the repetition of similar services/works	3	90 400 000.0
Annex 1 – 11.1(a) – Follow-up of an open/restricted procedure where no (or no suitable) tenders / requests to participate have been submitted	1	124 011.3
Annex 1 – 11.1(b) – Artistic/technical reasons or exclusive rights or technical monopoly / captive market	6	5 586 300.0
IDEA – Inspire, Debate, Engage and Accelerate Action	0	—
No procedure awarded	0	—
DG Budget	1	525 000.0
Annex 1 – 11.1(e) – New services/works consisting in the repetition of similar services/works	1	525 000.0
DG Human Resources and Security	6	61 445 400.0
Annex 1 – 11.1(c) – Extreme urgency caused by unforeseeable events not attributable to the contracting authority	2	50 564 000.0
Annex 1 – 11.1(a) – Follow-up of an open/restricted procedure where no (or no suitable) tenders / requests to participate have been submitted	1	101 400.0
Annex 1 – 11.1(a) – Follow-up open/restricted/competitive procedure with negotiation where contract notice is published and no (or no suitable) tenders / requests were submitted	2	10 630 000.0
Annex 1 – 11.1(b) – Artistic/technical reasons or exclusive rights or technical monopoly / captive market	1	150 000.0
DG Digital Services	1	94 296 500.0
Annex 1 – 11.1(c) – Extreme urgency caused by unforeseeable events not attributable to the contracting authority	1	94 296 500.0
Internal Audit Service	0	—
No procedure awarded	0	—
European Anti-Fraud Office	0	—
No procedure awarded	0	—
DG Economic and Financial Affairs	0	—
No procedure awarded	0	—

By department and legal basis	In number	In value (EUR)
DG Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs	1	191 000.0
Annex 1 – 11.1(e) – New services/works consisting in the repetition of similar services/works	1	191 000.0
DG Defence Industry and Space	0	—
No procedure awarded	0	—
DG Competition	2	12 322 465.0
Annex 1 – 11.1(a) – Follow-up of an open/restricted procedure where no (or no suitable) tenders / requests to participate have been submitted	1	12 000 000.0
Annex 1 – 11.1(b) – Artistic/technical reasons or exclusive rights or technical monopoly / captive market	1	322 465.0
DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion	1	10 000 000.0
Annex 1 – 11.1(b) – Artistic/technical reasons or exclusive rights or technical monopoly / captive market	1	10 000 000.0
DG Agriculture and Rural Development	0	—
No procedure awarded	0	—
DG Mobility and Transport	3	11 949 900.0
Annex 1 – 11.1(e) – New services/works consisting in the repetition of similar services/works	2	11 250 000.0
Annex 1 – 11.1(b) – Artistic/technical reasons or exclusive rights or technical monopoly / captive market	1	699 900.0
DG Energy	4	13 200 000.0
Annex 1 – 11.1(c) – Extreme urgency caused by unforeseeable events not attributable to the contracting authority	1	300 000.0
Annex 1 – 11.1(e) – New services/works consisting in the repetition of similar services/works	2	8 900 000.0
Annex 1 – 11.1(b) – Artistic/technical reasons or exclusive rights or technical monopoly / captive market	1	4 000 000.0
DG Environment	2	4 000 000.0
Annex 1 – 11.1(b) – Artistic/technical reasons or exclusive rights or technical monopoly / captive market	2	4 000 000.0
DG Climate Action	3	2 514 355.1
Annex 1 – 11.1(c) – Extreme urgency caused by unforeseeable events not attributable to the contracting authority	1	200 000.0
Annex 1 – 11.1(b) – Artistic/technical reasons or exclusive rights or technical monopoly / captive market	2	2 314 355.1
DG Research and Innovation	1	500 000.0
Annex 1 – 11.1(e) – New services/works consisting in the repetition of similar services/works	1	500 000.0
DG Communications Networks, Content and Technology	2	370 000.0

By department and legal basis	In number	In value (EUR)
Annex 1 – 11.1(c) – Extreme urgency caused by unforeseeable events not attributable to the contracting authority	1	100 000.0
Annex 1 – 11.1(b) – Artistic/technical reasons or exclusive rights or technical monopoly / captive market	1	270 000.0
Joint Research Centre	25	16 643 743.8
Annex 1 – 11.1(a) – Follow-up of an open/restricted procedure where no (or no suitable) tenders / requests to participate have been submitted	1	400 000.0
Annex 1 – 11.1(a) – Follow-up open/restricted/competitive procedure with negotiation where contract notice is published and no (or no suitable) tenders / requests were submitted	2	659 782.7
Annex 1 – 11.1(b) – Artistic/technical reasons or exclusive rights or technical monopoly / captive market	22	15 583 961.1
DG Maritime Affairs and Fisheries	0	—
No procedure awarded	0	—
DG Financial Stability, Financial Services and Capital Markets Union	0	—
No procedure awarded	0	—
DG Regional and Urban Policy	2	382 393.4
Annex 1 – 11.1(e) – New services/works consisting in the repetition of similar services/works	2	382 393.4
DG Structural Reform Support	3	5 343 800.0
Annex 1 – 11.1(e) – New services/works consisting in the repetition of similar services/works	2	3 968 800.0
Annex 1 – 11.1(b) – Artistic/technical reasons or exclusive rights or technical monopoly / captive market	1	1 375 000.0
DG Taxation and Customs Union	1	17 124 750.0
Annex 1 – 11.1(c) – Extreme urgency caused by unforeseeable events not attributable to the contracting authority	1	17 124 750.0
DG Education, Youth, Sport and Culture	0	—
No procedure awarded	0	—
DG Health and Food Safety	2	11 379 477.3
Annex 1 – 11.1(e) – New services/works consisting in the repetition of similar services/works	1	10 000 000.0
Annex 1 – 11.1(a) – Follow-up of an open/restricted procedure where no (or no suitable) tenders / requests to participate have been submitted	1	1 379 477.3
Health Emergency Preparedness and Response Authority	0	—
No procedure awarded	0	—
DG Migration and Home Affairs	0	—
No procedure awarded	0	—

By department and legal basis	In number	In value (EUR)
DG Justice and Consumers	0	—
No procedure awarded	0	—
DG Trade and Economic Security	0	—
No procedure awarded	0	—
DG European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO)	1	600 000.0
Annex 1 – 11.1(a) – Follow-up open/restricted/competitive procedure with negotiation where contract notice is published and no (or no suitable) tenders / requests were submitted	1	600 000.0
Eurostat	1	407 385.0
Annex 1 – 11.1(b) – Artistic/technical reasons or exclusive rights or technical monopoly / captive market	1	407 385.0
DG Interpretation	0	—
No procedure awarded	0	—
DG Translation	0	—
No procedure awarded	0	—
Publications Office	1	6 000 000.0
Annex 1 – 11.1(a) – Follow-up of an open/restricted procedure where no (or no suitable) tenders / requests to participate have been submitted	1	6 000 000.0
Office for the Administration and Payment of Individual Entitlements	0	—
No procedure awarded	0	—
Office for Infrastructure and Logistics in Brussels	5	11 792 955.0
Annex 1 – 11.1(c) – Extreme urgency caused by unforeseeable events not attributable to the contracting authority	1	760 955.0
Annex 1 – 11.1(a) – Follow-up of an open/restricted procedure where no (or no suitable) tenders / requests to participate have been submitted	1	650 000.0
Annex 1 – 11.1(a) – Follow-up open/restricted/competitive procedure with negotiation where contract notice is published and no (or no suitable) tenders / requests were submitted	2	10 252 000.0
Annex 1 – 11.1(b) – Artistic/technical reasons or exclusive rights or technical monopoly / captive market	1	130 000.0
Office for Infrastructure and Logistics in Luxembourg	4	998 200.0
Annex 1 – 11.1(a) – Follow-up open/restricted/competitive procedure with negotiation where contract notice is published and no (or no suitable) tenders / requests were submitted	2	725 000.0
Annex 1 – 11.1(b) – Artistic/technical reasons or exclusive rights or technical monopoly / captive market	2	273 200.0
European Personnel Selection Office	0	—
No procedure awarded	0	—

By department and legal basis	In number	In value (EUR)
European Innovation Council and SMEs Executive Agency	0	—
No procedure awarded	0	—
European Education and Culture Executive Agency	0	—
No procedure awarded	0	—
European Climate, Infrastructure and Environment Executive Agency	0	—
No procedure awarded	0	—
European Research Council Executive Agency	0	—
No procedure awarded	0	—
European Research Executive Agency	0	—
No procedure awarded	0	—
European Health and Digital Executive Agency	2	80 000 000.0
Annex 1 – 11.1(b) – Artistic/technical reasons or exclusive rights or technical monopoly / captive market	2	80 000 000.0
Total	85	458 167 635.8

Source: European Commission.

Table J – Negotiated procedures > EUR 20 000 of the ‘external relations’ departments

By department and legal basis	In number	In value (EUR)
DG Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations	47	113 860 951.5
External procedures > EUR 20 000	47	113 860 951.5
Annex 1 – 11.1(c) – Extreme urgency caused by unforeseeable events not attributable to the contracting authority	11	12 191 446.0
Annex 1 – 11.1(e) – New services/works consisting in the repetition of similar services/works	17	49 269 006.1
Annex 1 – 11.1(b) – Artistic/technical reasons or exclusive rights or technical monopoly / captive market	6	27 021 069.1
Annex 1 – 11.1(f) (i) – Supplies of additional deliveries	1	300 000.0
Annex 1 – 39.1(a) – Services entrusted to public-sector bodies or non-profit institutions or organisations	5	6 823 138.0
Annex 1 – 39.1(b) – Tender procedure unsuccessful	7	18 256 292.3
DG International Partnerships	46	84 636 034.5
External procedures > EUR 20 000	45	84 436 034.5
Annex 1 – 11.1(c) – Extreme urgency caused by unforeseeable events not attributable to the contracting authority	6	6 223 668.1
Annex 1 – 11.1(e) – New services/works consisting in the repetition of similar services/works	12	54 703 812.6
Annex 1 – 11.1(b) – Artistic/technical reasons or exclusive rights or technical monopoly / captive market	8	7 125 416.4
Annex 1 – 39.1(c) – Early termination of existing contract	1	180 000.0
Annex 1 – 39.1(a) – Services entrusted to public-sector bodies or non-profit institutions or organisations	13	12 359 649.4
Annex 1 – 39.1(b) – Tender procedure unsuccessful	5	3 843 488.1
Internal procedures > EUR 60 000	1	200 000.0
Annex 1 – 11.1(c) – Extreme urgency caused by unforeseeable events not attributable to the contracting authority	1	200 000.0
Service for Foreign Policy Instruments	15	45 419 767.0
Internal procedures > EUR 60 000	15	45 419 767.0
Annex 1 – 11.1(c) – Extreme urgency caused by unforeseeable events not attributable to the contracting authority	2	2 310 000.0
Annex 1 – 11.1(e) – New services/works consisting in the repetition of similar services/works	6	17 360 947.0
Annex 1 – 11.1(b) – Artistic/technical reasons or exclusive rights or technical monopoly / captive market	2	7 158 820.0
Annex 1 – 39.1(a) – Services entrusted to public-sector bodies or non-profit institutions or organisations	5	18 590 000.0
Total	108	243 916 753.1

Source: European Commission.

Table K – Summary of procedures (internal > EUR 60 000 and external > EUR 20 000)

By department and legal basis	In number	In value (EUR)
Secretariat-General	0	—
No procedure awarded	0	—
Legal Service	2	2 842 390.4
Internal procedures > EUR 60 000	2	2 842 390.4
Negotiated procedure without prior publication (Annex 1 – 11.1)	2	2 842 390.4
DG Communication	73	684 514 125.6
Internal procedures > EUR 60 000	73	684 514 125.6
Negotiated procedure middle-value contract (Annex 1 – 14.2)	29	3 841 638.4
Negotiated procedure without prior publication (Annex 1 – 11.1)	13	105 715 327.2
Open procedure (Article 164(1)(a))	24	561 597 160.0
Restricted procedure based on a call for expressions of interest – Preselection of candidates (Annex 1 – 13.3(a))	1	120 000.0
Restricted procedure with dynamic purchasing system (Article 164(1)(b))	3	10 140 000.0
Restricted procedure without dynamic purchasing system (Article 164(1)(b))	3	3 100 000.0
IDEA – Inspire, Debate, Engage and Accelerate Action	0	—
No procedure awarded	0	—
DG Budget	5	32 762 000.0
Internal procedures > EUR 60 000	5	32 762 000.0
Negotiated procedure without prior publication (Annex 1 – 11.1)	3	2 525 000.0
Open procedure (Article 164(1)(a))	2	30 237 000.0
DG Human Resources and Security	19	390 463 832.0
Internal procedures > EUR 60 000	19	390 463 832.0
Negotiated procedure middle-value contract (Annex 1 – 14.2)	4	338 000.0
Negotiated procedure without prior publication (Annex 1 – 11.1)	6	61 445 400.0
Open procedure (Article 164(1)(a))	8	304 923 432.0
Restricted procedure without dynamic purchasing system (Article 164(1)(b))	1	23 757 000.0
DG Digital Services	18	1 692 846 255.3
Internal procedures > EUR 60 000	18	1 692 846 255.3
Negotiated procedure without prior publication (Annex 1 – 11.1)	1	94 296 500.0
Open procedure (Article 164(1)(a))	2	73 352 533.8
Restricted procedure with dynamic purchasing system (Article 164(1)(b))	15	1 525 197 221.6
Internal Audit Service	0	—

By department and legal basis	In number	In value (EUR)
No procedure awarded	0	—
European Anti-Fraud Office	3	27 480 000.0
Internal procedures > EUR 60 000	3	27 480 000.0
Open procedure (Article 164(1)(a))	3	27 480 000.0
DG Economic and Financial Affairs	4	1 515 580.0
Internal procedures > EUR 60 000	4	1 515 580.0
Negotiated procedure middle-value contract (Annex 1 – 14.2)	2	165 580.0
Open procedure (Article 164(1)(a))	2	1 350 000.0
DG Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs	15	21 692 200.0
Internal procedures > EUR 60 000	15	21 692 200.0
Negotiated procedure middle-value contract (Annex 1 – 14.2)	6	704 000.0
Negotiated procedure without prior publication (Annex 1 – 11.1)	1	191 000.0
Open procedure (Article 164(1)(a))	8	20 797 200.0
DG Defence Industry and Space	10	1 446 591 104.0
Internal procedures > EUR 60 000	10	1 446 591 104.0
Competitive dialogue – Concession contract (Annex 1 – 12.1(c))	1	1 385 000 000.0
Open procedure (Article 164(1)(a))	9	61 591 104.0
DG Competition	5	19 072 465.0
Internal procedures > EUR 60 000	5	19 072 465.0
Negotiated procedure without prior publication (Annex 1 – 11.1)	2	12 322 465.0
Open procedure (Article 164(1)(a))	3	6 750 000.0
DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion	14	16 221 473.6
Internal procedures > EUR 60 000	14	16 221 473.6
Negotiated procedure middle-value contract (Annex 1 – 14.2)	4	387 596.0
Negotiated procedure without prior publication (Annex 1 – 11.1)	1	10 000 000.0
Open procedure (Article 164(1)(a))	9	5 833 877.6
DG Agriculture and Rural Development	3	25 050 000.0
Internal procedures > EUR 60 000	3	25 050 000.0
Open procedure (Article 164(1)(a))	3	25 050 000.0
DG Mobility and Transport	13	18 779 701.0
Internal procedures > EUR 60 000	13	18 779 701.0
Competitive procedure with negotiation (Annex 1 – 12.1)	1	148 000.0
Negotiated procedure middle-value contract (Annex 1 – 14.2)	3	358 175.0

By department and legal basis	In number	In value (EUR)
Negotiated procedure without prior publication (Annex 1 – 11.1)	4	14 749 900.0
Open procedure (Article 164(1)(a))	5	3 523 626.0
DG Energy	17	59 993 243.5
Internal procedures > EUR 60 000	17	59 993 243.5
Negotiated procedure middle-value contract (Annex 1 – 14.2)	2	200 138.5
Negotiated procedure without prior publication (Annex 1 – 11.1)	4	13 200 000.0
Open procedure (Article 164(1)(a))	11	46 593 105.0
DG Environment	24	38 899 360.8
Internal procedures > EUR 60 000	24	38 899 360.8
Negotiated procedure middle-value contract (Annex 1 – 14.2)	1	140 000.0
Negotiated procedure without prior publication (Annex 1 – 11.1)	2	4 000 000.0
Open procedure (Article 164(1)(a))	20	33 766 134.0
Restricted procedure with dynamic purchasing system (Article 164(1)(b))	1	993 226.8
DG Climate Action	15	33 285 494.6
External procedures > EUR 20 000	1	1 999 999.0
Restricted procedure – As provided for in Article 164(1)(b) – Services/supplies as from EUR 300 000 – Works as from EUR 5 000 000 – publication (Annex 1 – 38.1(a))	1	1 999 999.0
Internal procedures > EUR 60 000	14	31 285 495.6
Negotiated procedure without prior publication (Annex 1 – 11.1)	3	2 514 355.1
Open procedure (Article 164(1)(a))	11	28 771 140.5
DG Research and Innovation	8	239 530 034.0
Internal procedures > EUR 60 000	8	239 530 034.0
Negotiated procedure without prior publication (Annex 1 – 11.1)	1	500 000.0
Open procedure (Article 164(1)(a))	7	239 030 034.0
DG Communications Networks, Content and Technology	17	18 956 783.0
Internal procedures > EUR 60 000	17	18 956 783.0
Negotiated procedure middle-value contract (Annex 1 – 14.2)	3	418 239.0
Negotiated procedure without prior publication (Annex 1 – 11.1)	2	370 000.0
Open procedure (Article 164(1)(a))	12	18 168 544.0
Joint Research Centre	135	124 488 284.7
Internal procedures > EUR 60 000	135	124 488 284.7
Competitive procedure with negotiation (Annex 1 – 12.1)	6	4 057 699.0
Negotiated procedure middle-value contract (Annex 1 – 14.2)	37	5 057 988.0
Negotiated procedure without prior publication (Annex 1 – 11.1)	25	16 643 743.8

By department and legal basis	In number	In value (EUR)
Open procedure (Article 164(1)(a))	60	78 335 209.9
Restricted procedure without dynamic purchasing system (Article 164(1)(b))	7	20 393 644.0
DG Maritime Affairs and Fisheries	1	1 130 000.0
Internal procedures > EUR 60 000	1	1 130 000.0
Open procedure (Article 164(1)(a))	1	1 130 000.0
DG Financial Stability, Financial Services and Capital Markets Union	4	1 705 175.0
Internal procedures > EUR 60 000	4	1 705 175.0
Open procedure (Article 164(1)(a))	4	1 705 175.0
DG Regional and Urban Policy	20	15 058 918.9
External procedures > EUR 20 000	2	1 565 773.3
Open procedure – As provided for in Article 164(1)(a) – Services/supplies as from EUR 300 000 – Works as from EUR 5 000 000 – publication (Annex 1 – 38.1(b))	2	1 565 773.3
Internal procedures > EUR 60 000	18	13 493 145.6
Negotiated procedure middle-value contract (Annex 1 – 14.2)	5	519 150.0
Negotiated procedure without prior publication (Annex 1 – 11.1)	2	382 393.4
Open procedure (164(1)(a))	11	12 591 602.3
DG Structural Reform Support	9	8 330 835.3
External procedures > EUR 20 000	8	8 150 835.3
Negotiated procedure without prior publication (Annex 1 – 11.1)	3	5 343 800.0
Open procedure – As provided for in Article 164(1)(a) – Services/supplies as from EUR 300 000 – Works as from EUR 5 000 000 – publication (Annex 1 – 38.1(b))	3	2 322 869.3
Restricted procedure – As provided for in Article 164(1)(b) – Services/supplies as from EUR 300 000 – Works as from EUR 5 000 000 – publication (Annex 1 – 38.1(a))	1	398 400.0
Simplified procedure – Services/works < EUR 300 000 – Supplies < EUR 100 000. Legal services as in Annex 1 – 38.6. (Annex 1 – 38.1(d))	1	85 766.0
Internal procedures > EUR 60 000	1	180 000.0
Open procedure (Article 164(1)(a))	1	180 000.0
DG Taxation and Customs Union	3	48 079 500.0
Internal procedures > EUR 60 000	3	48 079 500.0
Negotiated procedure without prior publication (Annex 1 – 11.1)	1	17 124 750.0
Open procedure (Article 164(1)(a))	2	30 954 750.0
DG Education, Youth, Sport and Culture	5	5 147 757.5

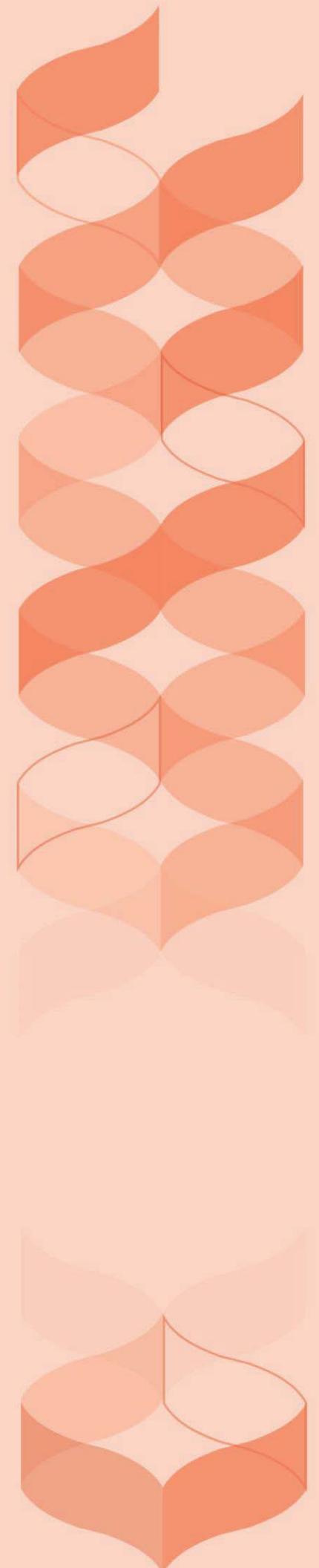
By department and legal basis	In number	In value (EUR)
Internal procedures > EUR 60 000	5	5 147 757.5
Open procedure (Article 164 ((1)(a))	5	5 147 757.5
DG Health and Food Safety	7	17 116 021.2
Internal procedures > EUR 60 000	7	17 116 021.2
Negotiated procedure middle-value contract (Annex 1 – 14.2)	2	186 000.0
Negotiated procedure without prior publication (Annex 1 – 11.1)	2	11 379 477.3
Open procedure (Article 164(1)(a))	3	5 550 543.9
Health Emergency Preparedness and Response Authority	0	—
No procedure awarded	0	—
DG Migration and Home Affairs	7	134 400 000.0
Internal procedures > EUR 60 000	7	134 400 000.0
Open procedure (Article 164(1)(a))	7	134 400 000.0
DG Justice and Consumers	4	63 739 968.0
Internal procedures > EUR 60 000	4	63 739 968.0
Open procedure (Article 164(1)(a))	4	63 739 968.0
DG Trade and Economic Security	3	3 219 240.0
Internal procedures > EUR 60 000	3	3 219 240.0
Negotiated procedure middle-value contract (Annex 1 – 14.2)	1	99 700.0
Open procedure (Article 164(1)(a))	2	3 119 540.0
DG Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations	121	246 925 009.9
External procedures > EUR 20 000	121	246 925 009.9
Competitive dialogue – Requires adaptation of a readily available solution (Annex 1 – 12.1(b)(i))	1	2 635 570.5
Local open procedure – Supplies between EUR 100 000 and 300 000 – Works between EUR 300 000 and 5 000 000 – (local) publication (Annex 1 – 38.1(c))	5	3 293 484.7
Negotiated procedure with single tender (Annex 1 – 39.1)	12	25 079 430.3
Negotiated procedure without prior publication (Annex 1 – 11.1)	35	88 781 521.3
Open procedure – As provided for in Article 164(1)(a) – Services/supplies as from EUR 300 000 – Works as from EUR 5 000 000 – publication (Annex 1 – 38.1(b))	15	31 240 381.8
Restricted procedure – As provided for in Article 164(1)(b) – Services/supplies as from EUR 300 000 – Works as from EUR 5 000 000 – publication (Annex 1 – 38.1(a))	35	91 862 004.0
Simplified procedure – Services/Works < EUR 300 000 – Supplies < EUR 100 000. Legal services as in Annex 1 – 38.6. (Annex 1 – 38.1(d))	18	4 032 617.3

By department and legal basis	In number	In value (EUR)
DG International Partnerships	127	268 406 664.8
External procedures > EUR 20 000	121	232 690 905.7
(External action) Service – International restricted procedure with prior publication	1	22 991.0
Negotiated procedure with single tender (Annex 1 – 39.1)	19	16 383 137.4
Negotiated procedure without prior publication (Annex 1 – 11.1)	26	68 052 897.1
Open procedure – As provided for in Article 164(1)(a) – Services/supplies as from EUR 300 000 – Works as from EUR 5 000 000 – publication (Annex 1 – 38.1(b))	5	7 555 653.0
Procedure with single tender – Contracts with a value of up to EUR 20 000 (Annex 1 – 38.2 (d))	2	59 850.0
Restricted procedure – As provided for in Article 164(1)(b) – Services/supplies as from EUR 300 000 – Works as from EUR 5 000 000 – publication (Annex 1 – 38.1(a))	49	134 226 302.0
Restricted procedure with dynamic purchasing system (Article 164(1)(b))	1	1 584 000.0
Simplified procedure – Services/Works < EUR 300 000 – Supplies < EUR 100 000. Legal services as in Annex 1 – 38.6. (Annex 1 – 38.1(d))	18	4 806 075.1
Internal procedures > EUR 60 000	6	35 715 759.1
Negotiated procedure without prior publication (Annex 1 – 11.1)	1	200 000.0
Open procedure (Article 164(1)(a))	2	28 023 560.0
Restricted procedure based on a call for expressions of interest – Preselection of candidates (Annex 1 – 13.3(a))	1	2 699 750.0
Restricted procedure with dynamic purchasing system (Article 164(1)(b))	1	708 449.1
Restricted procedure without dynamic purchasing system (Article 164(1)(b))	1	4 084 000.0
DG European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO)	6	228 042 999.0
Internal procedures > EUR 60 000	6	228 042 999.0
Negotiated procedure middle-value contract (Annex 1 – 14.2)	1	142 999.0
Negotiated procedure without prior publication (Annex 1 – 11.1)	1	600 000.0
Open procedure (Article 164(1)(a))	4	227 300 000.0
Eurostat	22	12 993 794.0
Internal procedures > EUR 60 000	22	12 993 794.0
Negotiated procedure middle-value contract (Annex 1 – 14.2)	3	339 638.0
Negotiated procedure without prior publication (Annex 1 – 11.1)	1	407 385.0
Open procedure (Article 164(1)(a))	18	12 246 771.0
DG Interpretation	2	280 000 000.0

By department and legal basis	In number	In value (EUR)
Internal procedures > EUR 60 000	2	280 000 000.0
Open procedure (Article 164(1)(a))	2	280 000 000.0
DG Translation	1	142 999.0
Internal procedures > EUR 60 000	1	142 999.0
Negotiated procedure middle-value contract (Annex 1 – 14.2)	1	142 999.0
Publications Office	9	90 117 363.2
Internal procedures > EUR 60 000	9	90 117 363.2
Negotiated procedure without prior publication (Annex 1 – 11.1)	1	6 000 000.0
Open procedure (Article 164(1)(a))	8	84 117 363.2
Service for Foreign Policy Instruments	32	109 642 872.0
External procedures > EUR 20 000	32	109 642 872.0
Negotiated procedure with single tender (Annex 1 – 39.1)	5	18 590 000.0
Negotiated procedure without prior publication (Annex 1 – 11.1)	10	26 829 767.0
Open procedure – As provided for in Article 164(1)(a) – Services/supplies as from EUR 300 000 – Works as from EUR 5 000 000 – publication (Annex 1 – 38.1(b))	1	4 935 500.0
Restricted procedure – As provided for in Article 164(1)(b) – Services/supplies as from EUR 300 000 – Works as from EUR 5 000 000 – publication (Annex 1 – 38.1(a))	16	59 287 605.0
Office for the Administration and Payment of Individual Entitlements	1	1 133 951.6
External procedures > EUR 20 000	1	1 133 951.6
Competitive dialogue – Requires prior negotiations due to nature, complexity or legal/financial make-up of the contract (Annex 1 – 12.1(b)(iii))	1	1 133 951.6
Office for Infrastructure and Logistics in Brussels	43	198 474 936.9
Internal procedures > EUR 60 000	43	198 474 936.9
Competitive procedure with negotiation (Annex 1 – 12.1)	1	494 400.0
Negotiated procedure middle-value contract (Annex 1 – 14.2)	20	4 176 310.0
Negotiated procedure without prior publication (Annex 1 – 11.1)	6	19 019 755.0
Open procedure (Article 164(1)(a))	16	174 784 471.9
Office for Infrastructure and Logistics in Luxembourg	13	61 605 106.0
External procedures > EUR 20 000	1	585 106.0
Local open procedure – Supplies between EUR 100 000 and 300 000 – Works between EUR 300 000 and 5 000 000 – (local) publication (Annex 1 – 38.1(c))	1	585 106.0
Internal procedures > EUR 60 000	12	61 020 000.0
Competitive procedure with negotiation (Annex 1 – 12.1)	1	49 500 000.0

By department and legal basis	In number	In value (EUR)
Negotiated procedure middle-value contract (Annex 1 – 14.2)	3	244 300.0
Negotiated procedure without prior publication (Annex 1 – 11.1)	4	998 200.0
Open procedure (Article 164(1)(a))	4	10 277 500.0
European Personnel Selection Office	2	63 159 200.0
Internal procedures > EUR 60 000	2	63 159 200.0
Open procedure (Article 164(1)(a))	2	63 159 200.0
European Innovation Council and SMEs Executive Agency	14	28 125 641.3
Internal procedures > EUR 60 000	14	28 125 641.3
Open procedure (Article 164(1)(a))	14	28 125 641.3
European Education and Culture Executive Agency	2	54 934 969.0
Internal procedures > EUR 60 000	2	54 934 969.0
Open procedure (Article 164(1)(a))	2	54 934 969.0
European Climate, Infrastructure and Environment Executive Agency	16	33 596 824.8
External procedures > EUR 20 000	1	22 940.0
Negotiated procedure without prior publication (Annex 1 – 11.1)	1	22 940.0
Internal procedures > EUR 60 000	15	33 573 884.8
Open procedure (Article 164(1)(a))	15	33 573 884.8
European Research Council Executive Agency	1	84 900.0
Internal procedures > EUR 60 000	1	84 900.0
Negotiated procedure middle-value contract (Annex 1 – 14.2)	1	84 900.0
European Research Executive Agency	1	65 750.0
External procedures > EUR 20 000	1	65 750.0
Negotiated procedure without prior publication (Annex 1 – 11.1)	1	65 750.0
European Health and Digital Executive Agency	17	182 784 875.0
External procedures > EUR 20 000	1	21 000.0
Negotiated procedure without prior publication (Annex 1 – 11.1)	1	21 000.0
Internal procedures > EUR 60 000	16	182 763 875.0
Competitive procedure with negotiation (Annex 1 – 12.1)	1	23 933 817.7
Open procedure (Article 164(1)(a))	15	158 830 057.4
Total for the 48 departments, excluding 'external relations'	613	6 428 175 053.1
Total for the 'external relations' departments	280	624 974 546.6
Grand total	893	7 053 149 599.7

Source: European Commission.

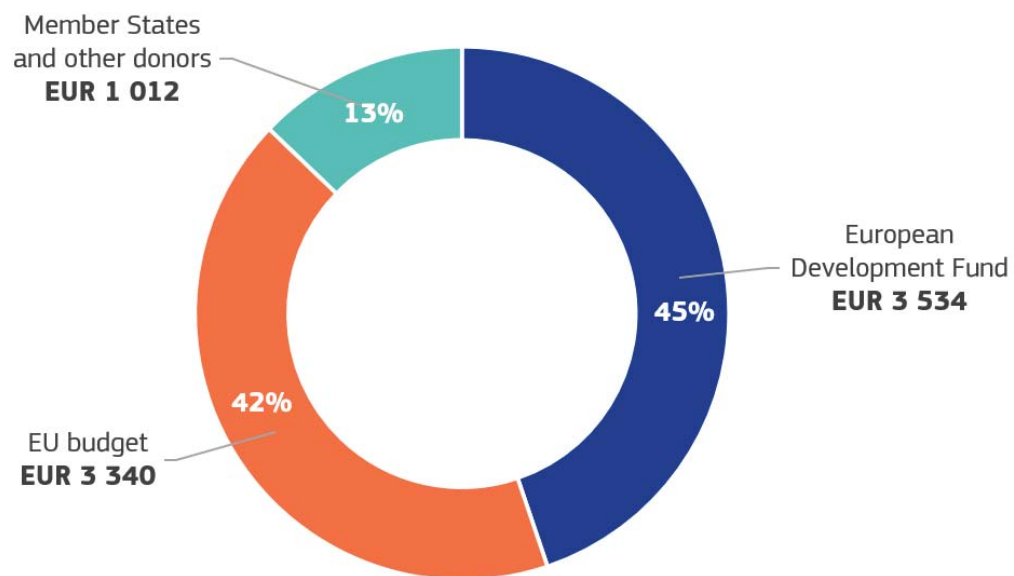


Annex 11 – EU trust funds

Annex 11 – EU trust funds

The European Commission, with several external donors, established four EU trust funds between 2014 and 2016. During their life cycle, up to the end of 2024, the four EU trust funds received approximately EUR 7.9 billion in contributions from the EU budget, the European Development Fund, EU Member States and other external donors.

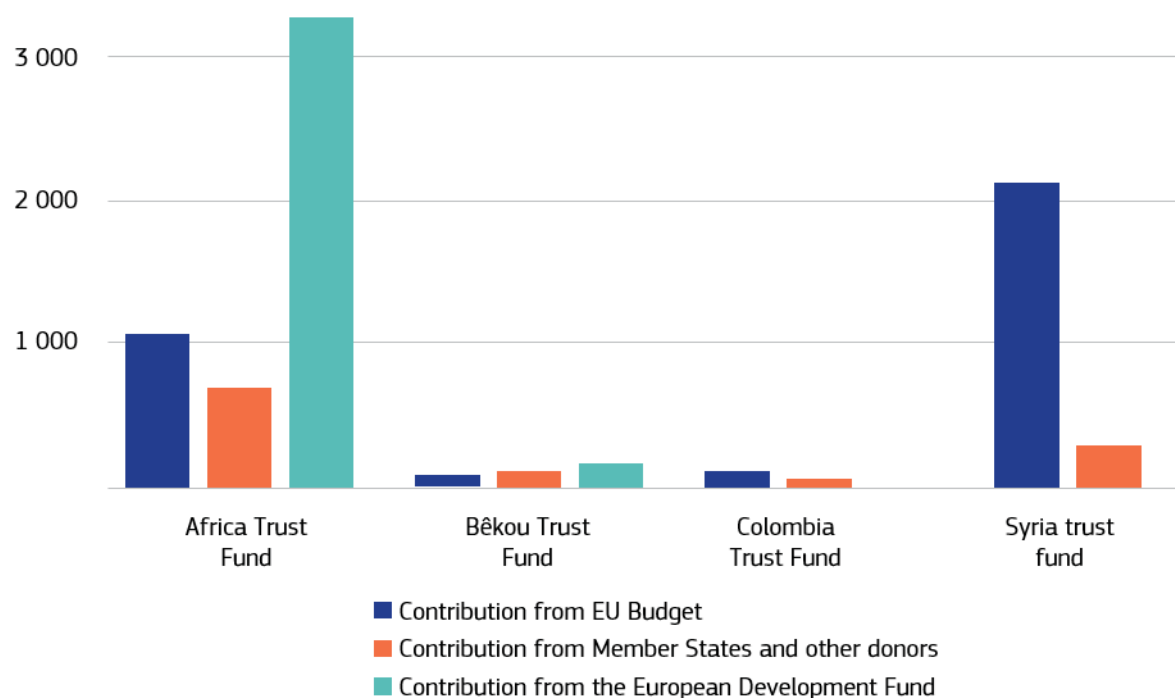
Source of financing of EU trust funds (million EUR)



Source: European Commission.

Cumulative amount made available for payments (million EUR)

The cumulative amount made available for payments for the four EU trust funds amounted at the end of 2024 to EUR 7.8 billion, of which 42.5% comes from contributions from the EU budget (for a total of EUR 3.3 billion) and 43.5% from the European Development Fund budget (for a total of EUR 3.4 billion).



Source: European Commission.

The EU trust funds' annual reports set out, in accordance with Article 258 of the Financial Regulation ⁽⁴⁵⁾, the activities they supported, their implementation and performance and their accounts. These reports are annexed to the annual activity reports of DG Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations and DG International Partnerships, as follows.

⁽⁴⁵⁾ Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2024/2509 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 September 2024 on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union, OJ L, 2024/2509, 26.9.2024, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2024/2509/oj>.

Established (year)	EU trust fund	Annual report annexed to DG's annual activity report
2014	Bêkou Trust Fund – EU Trust Fund for the Central African Republic	DG International Partnerships
2014	EU Regional Trust Fund in Response to the Syrian Crisis	DG Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations
2015	Africa Trust Fund – European Union Emergency Trust Fund for stability and addressing root causes of irregular migration and displaced persons in Africa. This EU trust fund involves three regions: the Horn of Africa, the Sahel and Lake Chad, and the North of Africa (management cross-sub-delegated to DG Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations)	DG International Partnerships
2016	Colombia Trust Fund – European Union Trust Fund for Colombia	DG International Partnerships

The constitutive act of the EU trust funds signed by the Commission and donors details the main features of each EU trust fund, including its specific objectives, the rules for its composition and the internal rules of its board, and the duration of the trust fund, which is always limited in time.

The EU trust funds were set up for an initial 60 months (five years), apart from the Colombia Trust Fund, which was set up for four years. Before their end date, they were all subject to a one-year extension that was adopted after consultation with the European Parliament and the [European Council](#). This one-year extension allowed the EU trust funds to adapt their activities in order to address the challenges relating to COVID-19 in the countries within their scope. This also gave the EU trust funds the necessary time to adapt the ongoing initiatives to the new challenges and to finalise their contracting by the end of 2021. The implementation of the existing projects will, however, continue until 2025.

11.1. The Bêkou Trust Fund

The total contributions from external donors, the European Development Fund and the EU budget reached over EUR 310 million. France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands and Switzerland have contributed to this EU trust fund. By 31 December 2024, the Bêkou Trust Fund had funded initiatives for a total value of EUR 308 million in commitments and contracted EUR 306 million in total, corresponding to an implementation rate of 98%.

The priority sectors that the trust fund supports include basic services, notably in health, agriculture development, the restoration of national and local administrations, economic recovery and reconciliation within the society of the Central African Republic.

11.2. The EU Regional Trust Fund in Response to the Syrian Crisis

By the end of 2024, the contributions from the EU budget amounted to more than EUR 2.1 billion, while the contributions received from Member States and other donors amounted to EUR 262 million, including EUR 24.7 million from Türkiye. By 31 December 2023, the EU budget, 22 Member States and Türkiye had contributed to the trust fund, with total available contributions reaching more than EUR 2.3 billion.

Projects mainly focus on education, livelihoods and health, for which more than EUR 2.3 billion has been contracted to the trust fund's implementing partners on the ground. The benefiting region is the Middle East, mainly Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon and Türkiye.

These programmes support refugees and host communities with their needs for basic education and child protection, training and higher education, better access to healthcare, and improved water and wastewater infrastructure, along with support for projects promoting resilience, economic opportunities and social inclusion.

11.3. The Africa Trust Fund

In total, the 27 EU Member States, along with Norway, Switzerland and the United Kingdom, had, by the end of 2024, contributed EUR 623 million to this EU trust fund. The contributions through EU instruments and the European Development Fund amount to EUR 4 440 million.

As of 31 December 2024, EUR 5 billion had been made available for commitments, of which nearly 100% was committed. The split was EUR 2 088 million (41%) for the Sahel and Lake Chad region, EUR 1 793 million (35%) for the Horn of Africa and EUR 882 million (17%) for the North of Africa region, along with EUR 295 million (6%) for regional and other programmes. Contracts have been signed with implementing partners for a total amount of more than EUR 5 billion.

The trust fund aims to foster stability and contribute to better migration management. In line with the EU's development-led approach to forced displacement, it also helps address the root causes of destabilisation, forced displacement and irregular migration by promoting economic and equal opportunities, security and development. The EU Trust Fund for Africa has addressed a comprehensive group of African countries crossed by the major migration routes.

11.4. The Colombia Trust Fund

By the end of 2024, the contributions from the EU budget amounted to EUR 94 million, while the contributions from 21 Member States, along with a contribution by Chile, amounted to EUR 37 million.

The Colombia Trust Fund has a total amount of EUR 135 million available in commitment appropriations, out of which EUR 133.5 million was contracted.

The trust fund helps to support the implementation of the peace agreement in the early recovery and stabilisation phases of the post-conflict environment. The overall objectives are to help Colombia secure stable and lasting peace, to rebuild its social and economic fabric and to give new hope to the people of Colombia.