European Commission

ROADMAP			
TITLE OF THE INITIATIVE	Communication: Investing in Growth and Jobs – maximising the contribution of European Structural and Investment Funds		
LEAD DG – RESPONSIBLE UNIT – AP NUMBER	REGIO-DGA.2- 2015/REGIO+/008	**DATE OF ROADMAP**	09/07/2015
LIKELY TYPE OF INITIATIVE	Autonomous Acts/ Communication from the Commission		
INDICATIVE PLANNING			
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION	*No specific website exists*		

This indicative roadmap is provided for information purposes only and can be subject to change. It does not prejudge the final decision of the Commission on whether this initiative will be pursued or on its final content and structure.

A. Context, Subsidiarity Check and Objectives

Context

The negotiations on the more than 500 programmes are being finalised in 2015 and implementation is just starting. The Commission will present the outcome of negotiations on the programming documents (the Partnership Agreements and the programmes) at the end of 2015 to the European Parliament (EP), the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) and the Committee of the Regions (CoR). In addition to reporting on the outcome of the negotiations in each MS, it will include an overview of key issues, for each Member State. This policy communication is an important opportunity for the Commission to show how EU taxpayer's resources spent through the ESI Funds in Member States and regions will serve during the next years the European economy on the ground, contributing to growth and jobs. It will show the Commission's role in negotiating with Member States to come to good quality and solid frameworks for the years ahead and supporting reform efforts in Member States.

The ESI Funds will contribute to the Union's priorities, in particular to the Europe 2020 Strategy.

The ESI Funds will also support the President's Political Guidelines and the Commission's priorities as set out in its work programme. The Communication will take into account the challenges of providing evidence on alignment between funds and these priorities, as they were not in place at the time the acts for 2014-2020 were adopted.

- A New Boost for Jobs, Growth and Investment: More than EUR 90 billion is planned for investment in transport networks and environmental infrastructure (including preserving natural capital which inter alia acts as a driver for growth) to benefit business and citizens by speeding transport access and addressing environmental sustainability in the wider economy. Moreover, the ESI Funds will help the Member States facing the difficult challenge of getting more people into work, and ensuring that workers have the skills they need to progress and adapt to the jobs of the future, including in the maritime and agricultural sectors. Finally, and as part of the Investment Plan for Europe the Commission has urged Member States to boost the impact of the ESI Funds by committing to increase significantly their use of financial instruments in key investment areas, leading to at least an overall doubling in the use of financial instruments for the 2014-2020 period. This Communication will outline how the ESI Funds will interact with the European Fund for Strategic Investments (EFSI). The European Investment Advisory Hub (EIAH) will act as a single technical advisory hub (including on legal issues) for project financing within the EU, and coordination mechanism for existing and new advisory programmes and technical assistance (TA) initiatives and will provide recommendations for project preparation, use of EU financial instruments, use of public-private partnerships and access to finance.

- A Connected Digital Single Market – more than EUR 13 billion euros is dedicated to building the digital economy, promoting e-society and investing in world-class ICT research and innovation under the thematic objective for ICT.

- A Resilient Energy Union and a Forward-Looking Climate change Policy – EUR 38 billion worth of expenditure is foreseen to support low carbon economy with the largest share of that envelope contributing to building smart energy grids, wider use of renewable energy production and use and improving energy efficiency. The ESI Funds contribute as well to climate action and to the sustainable management of natural resources.

- A Deeper and Fairer Internal Market with a Strengthened Industrial Base – supporting SMEs is in the forefront of ESI Funds, with more than EUR 32 billion dedicated to addressing SME competitiveness helping the SMEs to start-up and grow with a strong emphasis on innovation and (or through) improving the knowledge base. Furthermore, as foreseen in the Investment Plan, the ESI Funds' impact can be further enhanced by a significant increase in the use of financial instruments.

The ESI Funds will further finance investments in the following fields:

- Getting people into work – major efforts are made towards providing more and better active labour market policies and quality training for the unemployed and others in need of (re)training to ensure that workers have the skills they need to progress and adapt. A specific focus is put through the Youth Employment Initiative on young people not in employment, education or training. Investing in education aims at improving its quality and increase access with a view to reduce early school-leaving and increase the number of people with a tertiary or equivalent education degree. To support the achievement of the Union's poverty reduction target and reintegrate people further away from the labour market, a minimum of 20% of the ESF is to be allocated to promoting social inclusion, combating poverty and discrimination. Moreover, the ESI Funds contribute to the creation and maintenance of employment in less developed regions, including rural areas, and to ensuring sustainable development of these areas.

- ESI Funds efforts are also foreseen for helping marginalised communities to integrate and make best use of their talents and skills. This supports the New Policy on Migration.

- Institutional capacity building of public authorities and stakeholders for policy delivery will be worth some 5 billion, and will have an impact on the efficiency of the public administration and reform initiatives.

- As well as contributing to the objectives described above, a significant proportion of the ESI Funds budget is devoted to ensuring the long-term sustainability of the EU through the provision of key public goods for the economy and society, such as water quality, biodiversity and nature protection.

- The funds stimulate the mobilisation and involvement of local communities through Community-led Local Development (CLLD), in designing and implementing integrated and multi-sectoral local strategies that help their areas address local needs and challenges.

- In addition, within sustainable fisheries and maritime policies – € 5.7 bn will help fishermen in the transition to sustainable fishing, supporting coastal communities in diversifying their economies and financing projects that create new jobs and improve quality of life along European coasts.

- Making the most of the opportunities for simplification for beneficiaries and the reduction of administrative burden that reach across the ESI Funds' implementation will improve the efficiency of the funds, contributing to better regulation.

It is important that the commitments taken by Member States and regions are now fully translated during the implementation of the programmes, and that the selection of operations maximises the contribution to the creation of jobs and growth.

This communication will analyse how the new Cohesion policy and ESI Funds are being delivered on the ground. The new policy builds on evaluations of the earlier programming periods. It is not explicitly part of the REFIT agenda.

Several studies have been launched on specific aspects of the new policy (ex-ante conditionalities, performance framework, partnership, new elements of the policy) to see to which extent new provisions have been taken up and served their purpose. First results (available in autumn 2015) of these studies will, among other things, be used to feed into this communication, which will also feed into the debate for the design of the post 2020 period. DG EMPL has also launched a study to feed into the Communication relevant results relating to the ESF in Partnership Agreements (PAs) and Operational Programmes (OPs).

Issue

The communication will focus on the contribution of the ESI Funds programmes in different policy areas linked to the review of Europe 2020 Strategy, as further detailed in the Commission Work Programme and the Political Guidelines including jobs, growth, investment and competitiveness, Energy Union, Digital Single Market, getting people into work, and deepening the internal market. It will provide recommendations to Member States on how the alignment with EU priorities reflected in the programming documents can be maximised during the implementation phase, including the doubling of the contribution to innovative financial instruments. The Communication will also outline the interactions between the ESI Funds and the European Fund for Strategic Investments.

In the 2014-2020 programming period, five European Structural and Investment Funds are brought together in terms of strategic planning and delivery. It poses an opportunity for bigger impact and better synergies in investment areas covered by the Funds.

The addressees are the EP, Council, CoR and EESC as well as MS, regions and local authorities who are responsible for implementing programmes. But beyond this it should form the basis for a major communication effort to European citizens on how the European Union is investing to promote growth, jobs and support reform processes and is supporting the fight against unemployment and social exclusion.

The Commission is the institution mandated to provide an overview of the planning and use of ESI Funds across all Member States and to assess and coordinate their implementation. The preparation and presentation of this report is required by the Common Provisions regulation.

Subsidiarity check

Article 16(3) of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 December 2013 laying down common provisions on the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund, the Cohesion Fund, the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development and the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund and laying down general provisions on the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund, the Cohesion Fund and the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund and repealing Council Regulation (EC) No 1083/2006

The preparation and presentation of this report is required by the Common Provisions regulation.

Main policy objectives

To demonstrate the contribution of investment through ESI Funds to jobs and growth and to tackle the challenges identified in the CSRs.

To show the outcome of negotiations/expected results of the ESI Funds programmes in 2014-2020, the added value created by EU intervention and, in particular, the contribution of ESI Funds to the EU's priorities.

To provide recommendations to Member States and regions on how to maximise the impact of the contribution of the ESI Funds during the implementation phase to EU priorities.

To present how the ESI Funds and the European Fund for Strategic Investment interact.

The communication will analyse the expected results of the joint investment of the ESI Funds in Member States and Regions.

B. Option Mapping

Not applicable (As the report sets out to present the impacts on growth and jobs of existing measures there are no policy choices involved, and no IA is required)

Proportionality check

The preparation and presentation of this report is required by the Common Provisions regulation.

C. Data collection and Better Regulation instruments

Data collection

A series of studies has been launched in 2014 to analyse specific aspects (ex-ante conditionalities, performance framework, partnership, new elements of the policy); these will deliver the necessary inputs by autumn 2015. As soon as a sufficient number of programmes have been adopted for all funds, data analysis on the EU level of the indicators provided in the programmes will be possible.

The new programmes make use of common output indicators which allow aggregation across the EU. Programme specific indicators and targets allow for presentation of expected results in a quantified way. Furthermore, the programmes also present the planned expenditure by thematic objectives, to show the intended impact of the investments.

The monitoring, reporting and evaluation arrangements for the 2014-2020 ESI Funds are aligned with the Europe 2020 Strategy. The Communication will take into account the challenges of aligning them to the new Commission priorities which were not in place when these arrangements were set up.

Consultation approach

Not applicable. Once adopted, the report will be presented to the Council and the Parliament.

Will an Implementation plan be established?

☐ **Yes** ■ **No**

Not applicable

Will an impact assessment be carried out for this initiative and/or possible follow-up initiatives?

Not applicable (As the report sets out to present the impacts on growth and jobs of existing measures there are no policy choices involved, and no IA is required)