



Twinning Project

„Support to the MLSSF to strengthen the administration capacity for implementation of ESF-type activities”

RO 2002/IB/SPP/02

Manual for Programming Multi-annual ESF-Type Programmes

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June 16th, 2005

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Abbreviations

AA	Audit Authority
bln	billion
CA	Certifying Authority
CB	Certifying Body (1260/99)
CC	Candidate Country
CFOs	Co-Financing Organisations
COM	Commission of the European Union
CSF	Community Support Framework (1260/99)
EAGGF	European Agriculture, Guidance and Guarantee Fund
EC	European Commission
ECU	European Currency Unit
EES	European Employment Strategy
ERDF	European Regional and Development Fund (1260/99)
ESF	European Social Fund (1260/99)
EU	European Union
FB	Final Beneficiary (1260/99)
FiFG	Financial Instruments for Fisheries Guidance
FR	Final Recipient
GD EMPL	General Directorate for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities
GD Regio	General Directorate for Regional Policy
GDP	Gross domestic product
HRD	Human Resource Development
IB	Intermediate Body (1260/99)
ICT	Information and communication Technology
InB	Independent Body (1260/99)
MA	Managing Authority
MER	Ministry of Education and Research
mln	million
MLSSF	Ministry of Labour, Social Solidarity and Family
MoPF	Ministry of Public Finance
MS	Member State
NAE	National Agency for Employment
NAP	National Action Plan
NAPE	National Action Plan for Employment
NDP	National Development Plan
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NSI	National Statistical Institute
NUTS	Nomenclature of Territorial Units for Statistics
OP	Operational Programme
PA	Paying Authority (1260/99)
PHARE	Poland and Hungary Action for Reconstruction of Economy
PIU	Project Implementation Unit
QR	Quarterly Report
SF	Structural Funds
SME	Small and Medium sized Enterprises
SOP	Sectoral Operational Programme
SPD	Single Programming Document
ToR	Terms of Reference

Introduction

Within the Twinning Project RO 2002/IB/SPP/02 „Support to the MLSSF to strengthen the administration capacity for implementation of ESF-type activities” the Twinning Office considered the transfer of know how on all relevant programming procedures to the Romanian Government Representatives as one of the crucial tasks of the Twinning Project. For this purpose, various trainings in the framework of the Twinning Project have been realized for Officials of the Programming Unit within MLSSF, other relevant directorates, the National Agency for Employment, the Ministry of Education, representatives of the Regions, Social Partners and other relevant stakeholders.

This document summarizes all relevant information for the programming process in a structured way. It is addressed to all persons, Units and Departments within the MLSSF and the MER, as well as the NAE, Social Partners and other stakeholders being involved in the programming process and the preparation of the Programming document.

It aims to give a practical overview, in a structured way, on the different programming stages, its contents, the concrete tasks and further steps to be taken in consideration.

It has to be pointed out that this Manual focuses on programming procedures. Other two manuals cover the implementation of the ESF (“Manual on handling ESF-type funds”) and the monitoring and control system (“Manual on Monitoring and Controlling”).

This Manual is divided in nine sections:

- Chapter 1 gives a comprehensive overview over the most important issues related to the programming process;
- Chapter 2 shows the most important historical developments of the European Social Fund and highlights the ESF relevant reforms that will take place for the coming intervention period 2007-2013;
- Chapter 3 refers to the relationship between the single Structural Funds, their organizational and programming related interdependencies and to the contents of priorities and operations that will have to be implemented within the ESF in the intervention period 2007-2013;
- Chapter 4 focuses on the context of the Operational Programme for Human Resources Development with view to other relevant Programming and Strategy oriented documents, such as the Employment Guidelines established with the European Employment Strategy, the National Action Plan for Employment, and the National Development Plan.
- Chapter 5 describes the organizational and institutional background of both, the programming and the implementation process. Information is given on the relevant administrative Units as the Managing Authority, the Implementing Body, the Intermediate Body, the Paying Authority and the Certifying Authority, but also the Monitoring Committee which is the most important platform for realizing the Partnership Principle;
- Chapter 6 gives practical information and orientation on how to develop and to structure an Operational Programme;
- Chapter 7 contains a glossary on the most important expressions used in the context of an Operational Programme;

- Chapter 8 offers a helpful list for useful Internet-links on topics concerning the programming process, the European Social Fund, and the Structural Funds.
- Chapter 9 closes this document with a list of relevant EU Council Regulations.

A list with types of projects according to Policy fields (from 2007: Priorities) and Measures (from 2007: Operations) is included in the annex.

We hope that this Manual offers a helpful tool for the programming process. To be of practical use, the information contained in this Manual has of course to be updated in a constant process and adapted to changes. It has to be pointed out, that the final documents of the EU Regulation on the Structural Funds as well as of the EU Regulation on the ESF, which will be crucial for establishing the specific programming rules, will not be available before September 2005. Changes in National legislation, regulations and new decisions may also affect the concrete asset of the programming document. Looking back to the last months, structural changes within the organization of MLSSF, new division of tasks and responsibilities between MLSSF with other Ministries in line and the NAE, staff fluctuation, and changing responsibilities of single Units, Departments etc. form a continuity of the work reality, that also have to be taken into consideration.

Taking into consideration the challenges that may arise in the following months, an effective management that is capable of dealing with changes on different – political, structural, organizational – levels has to be implemented within the Managing Authority in order to guarantee that the foreseen time-schedule for programming the ESF can be realized.

1. General Considerations for the Programming Process

1.1 The Framework for Programming

Within the CSF/NDP-programming level, the Ministry of Finance and the Ministries responsible for structural programmes envisage that by the end of 2005 the Romanian institutions will be able to present, at least in a first draft - an ESF-type Programme – i.e. a Strategy paper on the Human Resources Development whose priorities, measures, and actions will be co-financed by the European Structural Funds and the National budget - by themselves and design this in a format considered acceptable by the European Commission.

In the light of this, the programming aims at reaching three goals:

- 1. To elaborate a detailed strategic plan for human resources development.**
- 2. To guarantee the necessary correlation/synergy effects of the measures and projects planned within the scope of the ERDF, as second major Structural Fund).**
- 3. To prepare in writing the documents related to the programming, which have to be presented to the European Commission for approval.**

Considering that the European Commission will on the one hand determine broad parts of the programming documents – i.e. priorities and operations will be fixed by the European level –, defines the “rules” for programming and re-programming and influences the National administration procedures to a relevant extent, and that on the other hand the programming period will cover seven years (with two more “phasing-out”-years), the programming document has to fulfil two functions:

Functions of the programming process:

- 1. Being as precise as needed and foreseen by European Regulations in the description of the strategy, the formal procedures, the administration, the instruments, target groups, etc.;**
- 2. Being as flexible as possible in order to ensure an appropriate answer to labor market changes within a 7 to 9 years period.**

Apart from the so-called Phasing-Out - i.e. the financing of measures launched in the last year of the promotion period may continue for another two years - the necessary phase of preliminary planning itself has to be added to the programming period. This means that the plan will cover a period of approximately ten years. It seems quite clear, that in the programming document it will not be possible to give precise planning data on all detailed questions of the programme evolution – especially on the project and/or regional level – since definitely programme adjustments will be required.

Therefore, it is necessary:

1. **To develop, from today’s perspective, a realistic (internal) plan for the entire programming period.**
2. **On that basis, to derive/distil a strategy that will provide the foundation for the programming documents and will secure enough opportunities for adapting it to constantly occurring changes in the economy framework conditions.**

It is important to know, that according to the Structural Funds regulations modifications within the programming document can only be justified by appropriate recommendations resulting from the Mid-term-evaluation - i.e. approx. three years after the start of the programme - or from fundamental exogenous developments, as for example the flood of 2002 in Eastern Germany, that affected broad parts of the economy.

Important:

1. **Unlike the PHARE projects, for which “programmes” can be amended easily within the (multi-annual) intervention period, the period covered by a Structural Fund related Operational Programme is seven years. Changes to Operational Programmes are only permitted in clearly defined situations.**
2. **If the Phasing-out period is included, the effective duration covered by a Structural Fund intervention is approximately nine years.**

It has to be pointed out clearly, that the structure of PHARE and ESF-programmes follow a completely different philosophy: Whereas the PHARE-programmes easily allow changes in terms of contents, financial allocations and physical targets during the established (multi-annual) intervention period, conditions for this for the ESF are limited. The differences in the “logics” of PHARE and ESF-programmes are shown in the following table.

Table 1: Planning process and financial flows in PHARE and ESF-programmes

PHARE Practice									
Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10
Plan 1 (1 year)	Disbursement	Disbursement							
	Plan 2 (1 year)	Disbursement	Disbursement						
		Plan 3 (3 years)	Disbursement	Disbursement	Disbursement	Disbursement			
					Plan 4 (3 years)	Disbursement	Disbursement	Disbursement	Disbursement

EU Structural Funds Practice									
Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10
Plan (7 years)	Disbursement	Disbursement	Disbursement	Adaptation of the Plan Disbursement	Disbursement	Disbursement	Disbursement	Phasing-Out	Phasing-Out

1.2 Time-schedule for Programming

According to the proposals of the Romanian Government, represented by the Romanian Ministry of Finance that will act as Managing Authority for all Structural Funds – i.e. on CSF/NDP-level – negotiable drafts for the sector-related Operational Programmes – including the Operational Programme for the Human Resources Development (ESF) will be available for December 2005. This month can be considered as definitive dead-line for the submission of Operational Programmes to the European Commission, if the implementation of the programme is foreseen for the beginning of 2007. This means, that negotiations between the Republic of Romania and the European Commission Representatives will take place during the entire year of 2006.

In order to achieve the goal of developing an ESF-related Operational Programme, working groups have been installed in early 2005 on level of the MLSSF after suggestion of STE involved in the Twinning Project. As working agenda, the working group will elaborate, for each ESF-OP-Priorities and Operations appropriate chapters in which the planned actions for the intervention period 2007-2013 will be described. Apart from these detailed description, derived from a well elaborated socio-economic analysis and “translated” into financial tables, during 2005 the “gaining of support” for the elaborated strategic issues by all relevant stakeholders has to be ensured. In the first line, the Implementing Bodies (NAE and MER) have to be mentioned, but the Ministry of Finance (as National co-financing body and Managing Authority for the CSF/NDP), the Ministry of European Integration, other relevant Ministries, Social Partners and Members of the future Monitoring Committee will play a major role in the programming process. Without strong support of all relevant National stakeholders it seems unlikely that the Operational Programme on Human Resources Development may have a chance of being negotiated with the European Commission.

According to the Structural Fund Regulation covering the current intervention period (1260/1999) the Member States has to submit a negotiable draft of the Operational Programme within four months after the European Commission publishes the eligible Regions for Objective 1. It is likely that the definition of eligible regions – and therefore the decision that Romania will be Objective 1 region – will take place in September 2005 at latest. That means that the Operational Programme – as well as the National Development Plan – have to be submitted to the European Commission in December 2005/January 2006 at latest by the Romanian Authorities. After submission, the European Commission has a four months period for reacting to the drafted Operational Programmes and the National Development Plans presented by the Member States. The remaining time in 2006 – that means from May to December – should be used for amending the drafted documents and for negotiating the strategies, priorities, measures, financial and physical targets with the European Commission, so that the implementation can start – as foreseen – by January 2007.

1.3 Principles of Programming

With almost certain probability Romania will have the status of the so-called area subject to assistance under Objective 1.

Romania will have to prepare plans for the programming period 2007 to 2013. The implementation of the programmes will cover the same period (2007-2013), but it is likely that – with application of the n+2 rule, the last projects of the intervention period 2007-2013 will end in 2015.

As pointed out in the previous chapter, the programming documents have to be finalized by the end of 2006, in order to start up with the financing in the beginning of 2007.

The programming should be carried out according to the following model:

- 1. In connection with the Structural Funds Romania, as a candidate country has to draw up a National Development Plan (NDP). For the intervention period 2007-2013 this plan – called Regional Development Plan in the “old” Member States will function not only as a strategic document for highlighting the economic, social and labour market developments in Romania, but will also function as Community Support Framework, which has been the overall Structural Funds related framework document in the past.**
- 2. The European Commission has to approve National Development Plan.**
- 3. The NDP describes the strategy for utilization of all Structural Funds (ERDF and ESF).**
- 4. NDP include plans for financing at least at the level of priorities for each year, as well as global indicators for the funding objectives.**

The sector related Operational Programmes should be described in the NDP on a general level. The detailed definition of strategic issues, priorities, measures, types of projects and concrete action, as well as the description of all administration related procedures and processes, including the monitoring, control and audit system, is integral element of the Operational Programmes (OPs).

There are different types of OPs

- 1. Mono-Fund programmes: Under these only from one fund, e.g. ERDF or ESF, are used.**
- 2. Multi-fund programmes: These refer simultaneously to two or more funds.**

Within the accession period, the Romanian Government generally expressed its preference for mono-fund programmes.

The programming document for Human Resources Development in Romania will focus around four priorities which are subdivided into 12 operations. In addition to that, the Operational Programme has to deal with the Technical Assistance.

The Operational Programme has to be in line with all requirements resulting from European Laws and relevant Council Regulations concerning the Structural Funds. This means that the Operational Programme for Human Resources Development will also have to refer to the revised Lisbon Strategy, especially to the second part (Employment Guidelines) of the “Integrated Guidelines for Growth and Jobs 2005-2008. In detail, this means for the programming process:

The programming process has to be organized in the light of the Partnership Principle that means that all relevant stakeholders have to be integrated in the drafting of the programme. But even after the programme has been adopted by the European Commission, the Partnership Principle, which finds its concrete expression in the setting up of a Monitoring Committee including all labour market relevant actors in the country, will be a characteristic of the ESF implementation. Other principles to which the Operational Programme has to pay particular attention concern the Additionality Principle and the Subsidiarity Principle.

Furthermore it has to be pointed out that – with the exception of the Technical Assistance budget – the European Social Fund will be composed by two major financial sources: European transfers and National budget. The European contribution to the European Social Fund in Objective 1 Regions extend to 75 % of the total budget, whereas National sources (from the Tax and/or the contribution system) will cover 25 % of the total budget. This financial share is motivated by the Principle of Co-financing regularly implemented within European funding: The European Commission will only finance activities for which the Member State itself is taking financial responsibilities.

It should also be clear that explicit reference has to be made by the Operational Programme on Human Resources Development to all administration, monitoring, controlling and auditing related issues. Major stress has to be laid on a consistent indicator system that will give both sides – the Romanian Government and the European Commission – the possibility to assess the progress in the programme implementation.

Major attention has also to be paid – when elaborating the strategy – to the Horizontal Priorities, especially to the Equal Opportunities issue as far as the European Social Fund is concerned. This does not only mean, that specific actions have to be foreseen for a better integration of women into the labour market and the occupational system, but that the Gender-Mainstreaming-Approach, affecting all planned activities, including the administration processes has to be implemented both while programming and carrying out the European Social Fund in Romania.

Finally, an Operational Programme has to include a so-called Ex-ante evaluation. This evaluation has the function of demonstrating from a scientific perspective whether the goals set in the Operational Programme are likely to be reached with the planned set of instruments, whether the defined target groups are the really relevant labour market target groups, etc. For the previous intervention period (2000-2006) it remained open whether the Ex-ante evaluation had to be made by the Managing Authority/Ministerial Bodies themselves or by independent experts and/or research institutes. With one exception – Spain – all “old” Member States opted for the “external” solution. All “new” Member States also preferred to have the Operational Programme on Human Resources Development being evaluated by external experts and/or research institutes.

2. History of the European Social Fund and current Reforms

2.1 The European Social Fund until 2000

The social dimension of Europe is as „old“ as the Union itself. Since the signing of the Contract on the European Economic Community 1957 in Rome, a “support for a harmonic development” and a “compensation of welfare gaps” have been considered as integral part for the European idea. As consequence, the European Social Fund was introduced in 1958. Among the most important changes that have taken place since the introduction of the ESF, the extension of the Structural Funds to the Accession countries (1989), the introduction of an additional Cohesion Fund (1992), the introduction of a specific chapter within the Treaty of Amsterdam to supporting occupation and employment (1997), and the extension of specific budgets for Accession countries have to be highlighted (see Table 2).

Table 2: Planning process and financial flows in PHARE and ESF-programmes

Year	Issue
1957	Signing of the Contract on the European Economic Community (Rome): The Contract foresees a „support for a harmonic development“ and a „compensation of welfare gaps“
1958	Introduction of the ESF and of the EAGGF
1975	Introduction of the ERDF
1986	The Common European Act confirms the Cohesion Policy
1989	Reform of the Structural Funds Management: Multi-annual regional development plans replace single (isolated) funding Introduction of the Community Initiatives Budget: 68 bln ECU for 1989 to 1993
1989	Introduction of PHARE for Accession Countries
1992	Introduction of the Cohesion Fund
1994	Budget for Structural Funds: 177 bln. ECU for 1994 to 1999 Introduction of FIG
1997	The Treaty of Amsterdam confirms the Cohesion Policy and dedicates a specific chapter to supporting occupation and employment
2000	Budget for Structural Funds: 213 bln. € for 2000 to 2006 Limitation of financial transfers to 4 % of national GNP
2000	Extension of specific budgets for Accession Countries/Enlargement 21,8 bln. € for 2000 to 2006 Introduction of ISPA and SAPARD for Accession Countries Additional 40,2 bln. € the New Member States after 2006

2.2 Structural Funds Reforms for the Intervention Period 2000-2006

Major reforms have been undertaken in close co-operation between the European Institutions and the Member States in preparation of the intervention period 2000-2006. The most important changes concerning all relevant Structural Funds – i.e. ESF, ERDF, EAGGF, FIG and Cohesion Fund – were:

- The reduction of overall Objectives from 7 to 3;
- The intensification of links between the Structural Funds and the National Development Plans;
- The attempt of fund integration in order to produce synergies between the single Structural Funds;
- The Contribution of all Structural funds to the European Employment Strategy (EES), i.e. the creation of more jobs;
- The introduction of the so called Efficiency Reserve;
- The introduction of Horizontal Priorities.

The preparation of European Institutions and Member States to the Intervention Period 2000-2006 led to a re-orientation of the European Social Fund and its strategic issues. Since 2000, the European Social Fund has been considered as the central (not the only) instrument for achieving the employment related goals of the European Employment Strategy. Furthermore, an intense discussion of effectiveness and efficiency issues began, which on the one hand opened a controversial debate on level of the Member States but also of the European Institutions, whether competitiveness and social integration related goals can be reached simultaneously by the European Social Fund related interventions. On the other hand, it is due to the ESF specific regulations that in order to appropriately assess and evaluate ESF operations, a clear distinction was made between outcome, result, effect and impact of ESF funded labour-market oriented measures. For some of the (old) Member States, especially in the Mediterranean Countries, a new culture of evaluating labour-market interventions was introduced.

2.3 Current Reforms for the Intervention Period 2007-2013

The major source for summarizing actual reform plans concerning the Structural Funds for 2007-2013 are the **Cohesion Report**, published by the European Commission in 2004, and the proposals for the General Structural Funds Regulation and for the ESF specific Regulation. All documents will lead to important changes that will not only affect the programming process itself, but also the strategic dimension of ESF interventions and its implementation structures in the future intervention period.

Taking into consideration the Cohesion Report, the “philosophy of change” concerning the Structural Funds can be characterized as “evolution, not revolution”: First of all, the principles that made the Structural Funds successful as intervention instruments throughout the Union will be continued in the future. The most important “success principles” are:

- The **multi-annual programming**;
- The **Partnership Principle** for programming, for the decision making process, for the program implementation and for ongoing information-transfer;
- **Continuity of evaluation**: Evaluation has to be undertaken before the Operational Programme is implemented (Ex-ante), during the programme implementation (Mid-term), and at the end of the intervention period (Ex-post);

- **Co-financing mechanisms:** As a general rule, only interventions, for which the Member State itself guarantees a share of eligible costs will be co-financed by the Structural Funds;
- **Shared responsibilities** between European and National level on the one hand, and between Regional and National level on the other hand;
- Retention of **n+2** rule and **system of advances**.

The most important adaptations of the Structural Fund will positively affect the administration procedures, characterized by simplification:

- The most important proposal of the European Institutions consists in a reduction of the **number of financial instruments**. Instead of actually six Structural Funds, only three – European Social Fund, European Fund for Regional Development, and Cohesion Fund – will be implemented in the 2007-2013 intervention period.
- The stages of programming will be reduced: Out of the several strategic documents only the National Development Plan (NDP), in which the former Community Support Framework (CSF) will be incorporated, and the (sector-related) Operational Programmes (including the former Programme Complement) will be maintained.
- The **financial management** will be simplified: Instead of actually five Policy Fields (plus Technical Assistance) four priorities will be introduced in the future European Social Fund.
- In order to reduce the **administrative burden** of controls, the principle of proportionality will be introduced.

Apart from these aspects of simplification, on strategic level a clearer definition of responsibilities will take place: That means that – as far as the European level is concerned – the main platform for political discussions on the Structural Funds will take place in the European Council. The European Parliament will furthermore formulate an opinion on the Regulations that has to be taken into further consideration by the European Commission that will have the mandate for carrying out all ESF actions and that will have to present an annual report to the spring Council.

The concrete asset of the ESF in the intervention period 2007-2013 is also influenced by the discussion of the EC proposal for a new Structural Fund Regulation and a specific ESF regulation, both published in July 2004. The **“Proposal for a Council Regulation laying down general provisions on the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund and the Cohesion Fund”** (COM (2004)492 final) confirms as general frame the principles for funding as they were set for the intervention period 2000-2006. Article 8 determines the “3-C-Principles”, that means:

- Complementarity to National action (Art. 8)
- Coherency to Community action (Art. 8)
- Conformity with EU Legislation (Art. 8)

With regard to the programming documents, the recommendations of the Cohesion Report have widely been taken into consideration: Articles 9 and 31 foresee that the implementation of each Fund – ESF, ERDF, and Cohesion Fund – will be based on (at least) one sectoral Operational Programme. This means for Romania, that all relevant aspects of the ESF are laid down in a specific ESF Programming document. The proposal for a General Regulation strengthen, again, the

broad partnership between European Union and Member States on the one hand, and – within the Member States – between Government Institutions, Social Partners, NGOs and other relevant organizations on the other hand. This partnership principle has to be applied not only in the programming process, but also during the implementation, the evaluation, and the eventual adaptation of the Operational Programme after the Mid-term evaluation. As far as the cofinancing rules are concerned, the proposal for a General Regulation clarifies that a 25 % share of ESF interventions have to be financed by the State Budget and/or by National means, whereas 75 % will be provided by the Structural Funds Budget.

As far as the **Proposal for a specific ESF Regulation** is concerned, the ESF interventions for the 2007-2013 period will – as usual – focus on the following thematic priorities:

- General and vocational training
- Grants for start-ups/creation of small businesses
- Post-graduate training, training of managers, and of highly skilled staff
- Establishment of new job opportunities
- Grants for structures and systems in the vocational training sector and in the National Labour Market Administration

The structure – both, in terms of programming and of implementation – of the ESF will be built around priorities (policy fields) and operations (measures) as already known for the intervention period 2000-2006.

The major reform affecting the ESF refers to the type of fundable actions: A share of 5 % of ESF-funds will be made available for direct investments, as it is proposed in article 3 Commission Proposal. On the other hand, a share of 5 % of ERDF Funds will be made available for Human Resource Development actions.

3. The Structural Funds, the ESF and its Objectives

3.1 The Structural Funds

The Regional Fund (ERDF), Social Fund (ESF), Fisheries (FIFG) and Guidance and Guarantee Fund (EAGGF) make up what is currently known as the Structural Funds of the European Union. The Funds are the main financial instruments used to reduce the gap in living standards between regions and between people and to promote economic and social cohesion across Europe.

The Structural Funds work towards achieving one or more of the current three Objectives.

- **Objective 1:** Development of regions where GDP per head is below 75 % of the EU average, of outlying regions, and of sparsely populated regions.
- **Objective 2:** Supports areas adjusting to change in industrial and services sectors, rural areas in decline, urban areas in difficulty, and economically depressed areas heavily dependent on fisheries.
- **Objective 3:** Provides funding throughout the EU to help adapt and modernize policies and systems of education, training and employment. The entire population of the EU outside Objective 1 areas is covered by Objective 3.

The funds also have a number of common aims, including sustainable development, development of employment and human resources, environmental protection and promoting equality between women and men.

As already lined out, Objective 1 promotes the development of Regions where GDP per head is below 75 % of the EU average, including the outlying regions of the French overseas departments, the Azores and Madeira, as well as the Canary Islands. Further more, sparsely populated regions of Sweden and Finland are part of the Objective 1 region. For the intervention period 2000-2006, Objective 1 is financed through all four Structural Funds (ESF, ERDF, EAGGF and FIFG). For 2007-2013 financial input will be guaranteed by the remaining structural funds, i.e. ESF and ERDF).

For the 2000-2006 period, Objective 1 accounts for 69.7 % of total Structural Funds spending, totalling 135.9 bln. Euros. The EU population covered by this Objective is more than 83 mln. All 10 New Member States, as well as all remaining Candidate Countries (including Romania) are Objective 1 regions.

3.2 The European Social Fund

For the current intervention period the European Social fund is thematically structured around the following six policy fields:

- **Policy field A**

Development of active labour market policies to combat and prevent unemployment, to avoid long-term unemployment, to facilitate the reintegration of the long-term unemployed and to support integration into the labour market of young people and persons returning to work after a period of absence

- **Policy field B**
Promotion of equal opportunities for all in terms of access to the labour market, with particular attention to persons at risk of social exclusion
- **Policy field C**
Promotion and improvement of vocational training, education and counselling in the context of a lifelong learning policy
- **Policy field D**
Promotion of a skilled, well-trained and flexible workforce, innovative and adaptable forms of work organization, and entrepreneurship
- **Policy field E**
Specific measures to improve access and active participation of women in the labour market (career prospects, access to new job opportunities, setting up businesses, etc.)
- **Policy field F**
Promoting social capital measures

Apart from these specific policy fields, three horizontal priorities have to be taken into consideration while programming and implementing all ESF-funded measures. These horizontal priorities have to be applied on all activities carried out under the ESF and refer to the following fields:

- Promoting of **local employment initiatives** (including territorial pacts for employment)
- The social dimension and employment in the **information society**
- **Equal opportunities for men and women** (as part of the drive for mainstreaming equal opportunities policies)

As foreseen in the proposals for the new Structural Funds and ESF Regulations, as well as with reference to the currently ongoing debate on European level on the future “look” of the ESF, it is likely that the ESF will be built around 4 priorities (corresponding to the policy fields) and 12 operations (which replace the so-called measures of the 2000-2006 intervention period. The following structure of the ESF can be expected:

- **Priority 1:**
Adaptability of employees and enterprises, supporting self employment and the creation of new enterprises:
 - **Operation 1.1:**
Investment in human resources, dissemination of ICT skills development and implementation of lifelong learning systems and strategies to ensure improved access to training especially of women, low skilled and older workers
 - **Operation 1.2:**
Development of human potential and innovation

- **Operation 1.3:**
Support of business starters, self-employment and entrepreneurship
- **Operation 1.4:**
Support of enterprises, especially of SME, dissemination of management skills, creation of networks, consultancy of SME in the field of job-creation and restructuring development of specific employment, training and support services to workers in the context of company and sector restructuring
- **Priority 2:**
Increasing labour market participation, employability, prevention and equal opportunities
 - **Operation 2.1:**
Job creation and training for unemployed and long-term-unemployed, e.g. in the field of social economy
 - **Operation 2.2:**
Specific actions to increase participation and progress of women unemployment, reduce gender-based segregation in the labour market including facilitating access to childcare and care for dependent persons
- **Priority 3:**
Social inclusion
 - **Operation 3.1:**
Pathways to integration in employment for disadvantaged people, people experiencing social exclusion, minorities, migrants and people with disabilities
 - **Operation 3.2:**
Specific measures for young people experiencing social exclusion and early school leavers
- **Priority 4:**
Development of structures, networks and the administrative capacity – support of convergence
 - **Operation 4.1:**
 - Modernization and strengthening of labour market institutions, in particular employment services
 - Implementation of active and preventive measures ensuring early identification of needs and personalized support
 - **Operation 4.2:**
 - Modernization and strengthening of the systems of education, of vocation and further training, apprenticeship and lifelong-learning
 - Expanding and improving investment in human capital, updating of skills of teachers and trainers

- **Operation 4.3:**
 - Strengthening institutional capacity and the efficiency of public administration and public services at national, regional and local level
 - Capacity building in the delivery of policies and programmes, with regard to the enforcement of legislation, especially through managerial and staff training and specific support to key services, inspectorates and social-economic actors including social partners and relevant non-governmental organizations
- **Operation 4.4:**
 - Innovative projects

A share of 4 % of the ESF budget for 2007-2013 will be used for Technical Assistance purposes, another 1 % of the budget will form the so called “Reserve for unexpected situations”. It is not clear, at this stage, whether the 1 % reserve has to be programmed under a specific priority.

4. The Operational Programme for Human Resources Development in the Context of other relevant Strategic Documents

4.1 The revised Lisbon Strategy and the Employment Guidelines

On March 22 and 23, the Heads of State and Government of the EU endorsed the revision of the Lisbon Strategy as proposed by the Commission. The Spring European Council approved the simplified governance arrangement with one set of Integrated Guidelines dealing with macro-economic, micro-economic and employment issues. Taking stock of the unsatisfactory results half way to the 2010 target, the Commission proposed a fundamental revision of the original strategy. To overcome the rather limited implementation of reform in Member States so far, the Commission has proposed focusing partnership with Member States on growth and jobs and introduced a Lisbon Action Plan that outlines actions to be taken at EU and at national level under three policy areas:

- **Policy Area number 1: Making Europe a more attractive place to invest and work**
 - Action area 1: Extend and deepen the internal market
 - Action area 2: Ensure open and competitive markets inside and outside Europe
 - Action area 3: Improve European and national regulation
 - Action area 4: Expand and improve European infrastructure
- **Policy Area number 2: Knowledge and innovation for growth**
 - Action area 5: Increase and improve investment in Research and Development
 - Action area 6: Facilitate innovation, the uptake of ICT and the sustainable use of resources
 - Action area 7: Contribute to a strong European industrial base
- **Policy Area number 3: Creating more and better jobs**
 - Action area 8: Attract more people into employment and modernise social protection systems
 - Action area 9: Improve the adaptability of workers and enterprises and the flexibility of labour markets
 - Action area 10: Invest more in human capital through better education and skills.

The Commission proposal for the integrated guidelines package is mainly based on the priority action areas as identified in its Lisbon mid-term review. While the macroeconomic guidelines (covering for instance budgetary policy, reduction of public debts and EMU issues) have no counterpart in the Lisbon Action Programme, the micro-economic guidelines build on Lisbon action areas (1) to (7), and the employment guidelines build on Lisbon action areas (8) to (10).

Future ESF related Operational Programmes will in future have explicitly to contribute to Policy area number 3, to the action areas 8 to 10 and to the employment guidelines 16 to 23.

Integrated guidelines for growth and jobs (200 5-2008)

- **Macroeconomic guidelines**
 - Guideline 1: Secure economic stability
 - Guideline 2: Safeguard economic sustainability
 - Guideline 3: Promote an efficient allocation of resources
 - Guideline 4: Promote greater coherence between macroeconomic and structural policies
 - Guideline 5: Ensure that wage developments contribute to macroeconomic stability and growth
 - Guideline 6: Contribute to a dynamic and well-functioning EMU
- **Microeconomic guidelines**
 - Guideline 7: Extend and deepen the internal market
 - Guideline 8: Ensure open and competitive markets
 - Guideline 9: Create a more attractive business environment
 - Guideline 10: Promote a more entrepreneurial culture and create a supportive environment for SMEs
 - Guideline 11: Expand and improve European infrastructure and complete agreed priority cross-border projects
 - Guideline 12: Increase and improve investment in R&D
 - Guideline 13: Facilitate innovation
 - Guideline 14: Encourage the sustainable use of resources
 - Guideline 15: Contribute to a strong industrial base
- **Employment guidelines**
 - Guideline 16: Implement employment policies aiming towards full employment, improving quality and productivity at work, and strengthening social and territorial cohesion
 - Guideline 17: Promote a lifecycle approach to work
 - Guideline 18: Ensure inclusive labour markets for job-seekers and disadvantaged people
 - Guideline 19: Improve matching of labour market needs
 - Guideline 20: Promote flexibility combined with employment security and reduce labour market segmentation
 - Guideline 21: Ensure employment-friendly wage and other labour costs developments
 - Guideline 22: Expand and improve investment in human capital
 - Guideline 23: Adapt education and training systems in response to new workplace requirements.

4.2 The National Action Plans for Growth and Employment

As the Lisbon Action Programme, its policy areas and action areas as well as the integrated guidelines are agreed every three years by all governments of the Member States, these will have to “translate” the Lisbon Action Programme into National Action Programmes for Growth and Employment, also valid for a three years period. These National Action Programmes set out priorities and clear objectives for the three policy areas mentioned, including labour market relevant action areas and employment guidelines for the following years in the Member States. The progress of the implementation of the National Action Programmes are monitored and assessed on an annual basis within a Strategic National Annual Report that has to be submitted to the Commission in January.

The National Action Plan for Growth and Employment describes the overall political strategy of the country in order to reach the goals of the reviewed Lisbon Strategy. It identifies the strengths and weaknesses of the current economic and labour market policy, in terms of strategic approach, organizational aspects, infrastructure and on basis of economic sectors, regions, and labour market relevant target groups, etc. Together with National labour market action, the ESF will be the central instrument to achieve the set goals within the employment guidelines as part of the integrated guidelines. The strategic, political, financial, and organizational relevance of the ESF therefore plays a major role within the section of the National Action Plan for Growth and Employment that deals with policy area number 3.

This part is therefore strongly linked to a Member State’s National Development Plan (NDP), which is the central programming document for all Structural Fund interventions of one Member State (see chapter 4.3).

As already shown, the specific fund interventions are programmed within the Operational Programmes for the single Structural Funds. Therefore, these Operational Programmes have to be in line with both, National Action Plans for Growth and Employment and NDP.

4.3 The National Development Plan and the Community Support Framework

At the programming phase, the **National Development Plan** (NDP) is the first document submitted by the Member States to the European Commission. It presents an analysis (which, depending on the circumstances, may be at national or regional level) of the difficulties facing the country or region and sets out the government’s main priorities for action. The Plan also highlights the achievements of the previous programming period. For the 2000-2006 period, the priorities outlined in the Community Support Framework (CSF) are based on this analysis. For the 2007-2013 intervention period, according to the Cohesion Report and the proposals for Structural Funds and ESF related Regulations, no separate CSF is required. The NDP must therefore contain the priorities being funded by the Structural Funds Interventions, in addition to only State Budget funded action.

For the 2000-2006 intervention period, the **Community Support Framework** (CSF) is the basic programming document, agreed between the Commission and the Member State. The CSF sets out plans for the entire Structural Fund support in the regions concerned. The CSF identifies particular problems facing the labour market, the strategy and priorities for action and where the money should best be channeled. Within each CSF, Operational Programmes set out in more de-

tail the way the funding will be used. As already pointed out, for the 2007-2013 intervention period the CSF will be “incorporated” by the National Development Plan

4.4 The Operational Programme and the Programme Complement

Member States submit to the Commission a series of sectoral (ERDF, Cohesion, ESF) or regional (Objective 1, 2, and 3) **Operational Programmes** (OP), which set out more detail plans to implement the Community Support Framework/National Development Plan.

While the CSF/NDP, as its name suggests, is the broad strategic framework document, the OP goes into more detail on how and where the Funds will be spent, the expected impact and how the programmes will be monitored and evaluated.

In the current intervention period (2000-2006), the **Programme Complement** “complemented” the Operational Programmes by providing further details on how, where and for what purpose the Funds will be spent and by giving additional and very concrete information on administration procedures, legal frameworks, involved public bodies, etc.

The Programme Complement was presented to the Commission for information only (i.e. no formal approval was necessary), within four months after the national OPs had been approved. For 2007-2013 no Programme Complement is requested, but all elements of the Programme Complement have to be included into the Operational Programme.

5. Organizational Aspects

5.1 Involved Bodies

5.1.1 The Managing Authority

The Managing Authority is the body designated by the Member State to manage the Structural Funds programmes. This body can be a public or private authority at national, regional or local level or even the Member State itself. For the current intervention period (2000-2006) the responsibilities of the Managing Authority are defined in Article 34 of the General Regulations for the Structural Funds (1260/1999). According to this Regulation, the Managing Authority has the overall liability towards the European Commission and is responsible for:

- Gathering reliable information;
- Ensuring proper accounts;
- Ensuring that operations are correct;
- Ensuring the compliance of the Programme and its contents with the Community Rules (e.g. state grants, environment, equal opportunities);
- Ensuring Evaluation (Ex-ante, Mid-term and Ex-post).

Among the different tasks of the Managing Authority the current Regulation in force foresees that:

- the Managing Authority checks and authorises claims,
- it checks, if all final beneficiaries and promoters are fully informed of the administration procedures and Community rules,
- it ensures their application when tenders are published,
- it ensures their application when contracts are awarded, and
- it ensures their application with view to the Community co-financing regulations.

For the Romanian context, there will be one Structural Funds related Managing Authority on NDP/CSF-level, responsible for all Structural Funds implemented in the country. Apart from that, different Managing Authorities – one per Operational Programme – will be in charge of the different sector related programmes. For the ESF, the Ministry of Labour, Social Solidarity and Family will be the Managing Authority for the ESF relevant Operational Programme on Human Resources Development.

5.1.2 Implementing Authority

The Implementing Authority is the body designated by the Member State to carry out actions foreseen in an Operational Programme. This body can be a public or private authority at national, regional or local level or even the Member State itself. An Implementing Authority has the role to implement specific (or even all) parts of the actions resulting from the Operational Programme. For Romania, the National Agency for Employment (NAE) and the Ministry of Education and Research (MER) have been designed as Implementing Authorities.

5.1.3 Intermediate Body

The Intermediate Body is the Body designated by the Member State to have full responsibility of an Operational Programme or specific actions foreseen within the OP, but which does not act as Implementing Authority. In the Romanian context, the Ministry of Labour, Social Solidarity and Family will – as an example – delegate an important part of the action foreseen in the Operational Programme to the National Agency for Employment as Implementing Authority. For this “delegated” action, the MLSSF remains the Intermediate Body.

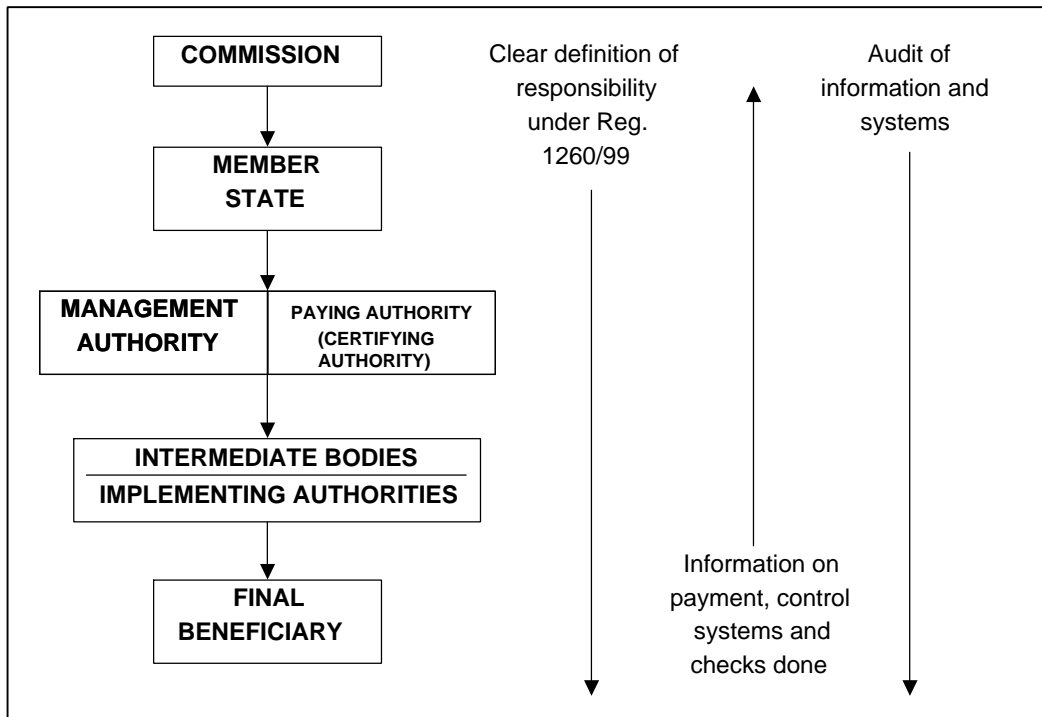
5.1.4 Paying Authority and Certifying Authority

The **Paying Authority** is one or more national, regional or local authorities or bodies designated by the Member State to apply for payments from the Commission and in turn pay projects on the ground

The Paying Authority must have a clear mandate from the National Authorities, with explicit instructions on how to:

- obtain assurances from the Management Authority and to
- compile the claim on Community co-finance from the accounting records.

Chart 1: Organizational levels relevant for the OP implementation



Furthermore, the Paying Authority must be competent to undertake checks. Other responsibilities of the Paying authority refer to the following areas:

- It repays recoveries (and interests) to the Commission;

- It ensures final beneficiaries are paid as soon as possible;
- It makes detailed (computer) records on payments to final beneficiaries available to the Commission;
- It supplies expenditure forecasts to the Commission;
- Keeps a record of recovery orders.

For the intervention period 2007-2013 a new organizational unit, the **Certifying Authority**, will be implemented. Major task of the Certifying Authority is the certification of the claims sent, by the Paying Authority, to the Commission. Furthermore, the Certifying Authority checks whether the claims correspond to all formal requirements established in the relevant Structural Funds Regulations.

Chart 1 shows the different organizational levels that are relevant for the implementation of the Operational Programme.

5.1.5 Independent body

The **Independent body** will present to the Commission, when each assistance is wound up, a declaration summarizing the conclusions of the checks carried out during the period of intervention. He will assess the validity of the application for payment of the final balance and the legality and regularity of the transactions covered by the final certificate of expenditure.

5.2 Committees and Platforms

5.2.1 The Partnership Principle

For the programming, but also the implementation and evaluation process of Structural Funds the participation of all organizations active in labour market policy has to be achieved. This broad participation is motivated by the application of the Partnership Principle. The European Union Institutions and the Governments of the Member States are convinced that a major impact for Community action can only be achieved, if all organizations cooperate in a spirit of mutual respect and partnership.

That means, that the Partnership Principle is applied between Commission and Member States as well as between all levels and stakeholders within a Member State. Partnership therefore demands cooperation between all relevant stakeholders and levels and promotes a decentralized and problem oriented implementation of EU funded programmes.

The past Structural Funds periods show, that a broad cooperation, based on the Partnership Principle could be established:

- Between European Commission and each single Member State on the one hand and
- Within a Member State between the National/central level and:
 - regional and local administration levels,
 - social and economic partners, as well as

- other relevant and competent organizations of the Civil society, NGOs and Organizations promoting Gender equality.

In this context the tasks of the Member State, and – in case of the Structural Funds this task has to be taken over by the Managing Authority – are:

- The definition of representative partners coming from economy, society, and other areas on National, regional and local level;
- The organization of a general and efficient participation of all relevant stakeholders
- To ensure that the Partnership principle is applied during
 - the elaboration and programming of the NDP and during
 - the elaboration, the programming, the implementation, and the evaluation of each single Operational Programme, for example by the Monitoring Committee that has to be created as platform on level of each single Operational Programme.

5.2.2 The Monitoring Committee

Each Community Support Framework (in future: National Development Plan) and Operational Programme is supervised by a Monitoring Committee, which is set up by the Member State in agreement with the Managing Authority. The Monitoring Committee is formally the most important platform in the process of strategy and decision making. Furthermore, the Monitoring Committee supervises the implementation of the Operational Programme during the entire intervention period. The role of the Monitoring Committee is also to assess and approve the annual and final implementation reports on the programmes before they are sent to the Commission. The Monitoring Committee is usually composed by all organizations relevant for the implementation of the ESF in a Member State as well as other competent actors in labour market issues. Apart from all relevant Ministries (for Romania this will be the MLSSF and the MER), the following organizations will/may be members in the future Monitoring Committee:

- The European Commission, GD Employment and Social Affairs;
- The National Employment Agency of Romania;
- The Trade Unions;
- The Employer's Organizations;
- The Chambers of Commerce;
- Gender-Mainstreaming-relevant institutions;
- Non-governmental Organizations (NGOs) active in the field of social inclusion and labour market policy and/or;
- Welfare Organizations;
- Organizations active in the field of environmental protection.

For specific strategic issues affecting programming and implementation sub-committees – e.g. for monitoring, evaluation, controlling, definition of indicators, thematic priorities, etc. – can be set up by the Monitoring Committee.

5.2.3 The ESF Committee

On European level, the Partnership Principle led to the installation of the ESF Committee. The role of the ESF Committee is to give opinions to the Commission on the implementation of the ESF. For the European Commission it is important to get a permanent feed-back by Member States and all organizations of the Member States that are active in the field of labour market in order to continuously adopt the ESF strategy and mechanisms to new needs and trends. The ESF Committee furthermore offers an important platform for discussing innovative actions aimed at reducing unemployment and for exchanging ideas on how these innovative and effective actions can be implemented in the ESF strategy. The ESF Committee meets four times a year and is made up of

- two government representatives from each Member State,
- two trade unions from each Member State, and
- two employer representatives from each Member State.

6. Developing an Operational Programme

6.1 Formal Aspects

The development of an Operational Programme is influenced by a relevant number of formal requirements set by the European Commission and by the Member States. In order to demonstrate that the Member State fulfils all requested requirements, it is helpful to use a **clear structure** within the Operational Programme that makes obvious that all formal aspects have been covered with the document. A clear structure in the document furthermore helps to structure the entire process of programming. Apart from this structure and in order to achieve a consistent programming document within a limited period of time, it proved to be efficient on level of the Member States to implement a team of persons – e.g. **Programming Unit** within the Ministry of Labour – in charge of all programming activities. This team should have clear responsibilities and competences, the persons working in this team should not be subject to staff fluctuation, and the number of persons working in this team should be limited. The clearer the responsibilities and competences are defined, the more organizational and personal continuity and stability is achieved, the more efficient the programming work will be structured.

Of course, certain time constraints within the programming process have to be taken into consideration that should, from a very beginning of the programming work, lead to a continuously updated **time schedule**. Taking into consideration, that Romania's access to the European Union is scheduled for January 2007, all action within the programming should be oriented at this date. This means, that a formal agreement between the Romanian Government Representatives and the European Commission on the Structural Funds – and therefore on all single Operational Programmes – has to be achieved in December 2006, if the programme are to be implemented from January 2007 on.

Experiences in negotiating programming documents between Member States and European Commission show, that a **period of 9 to 12 months** has to be calculated for negotiating, revising, amending and re-negotiating the programming document. From this perspective, it seems clear that a negotiable programming document for the Human Resources Development in Romania should be presented to the European Commission by the end of 2005, as established by the Ministry of Finance as responsible co-ordinating body for all Structural Funds.

Within this time schedule, not only the drafting of the programming document itself has to be carried out. On a formal basis, the following requirements are evoked by the programming process:

- The Ex-ante evaluation of the Operational Programme for the Human Resources Development has to be organized,
- A broad platform of institutions relevant for implementing the Operational Programme has to be installed. This platform may help to prepare the future Monitoring Committee for the ESF;
- The permanent exchange to the CSF/NDP-level has to be achieved in order to guarantee that the HRD OP “fits” into the overall Structural Funds strategy of Romania,
- The support for the HRD OP strategy has to be gained on political level.
- The support for the HRD OP strategy has to be gained for financial issues. One of the crucial requirement of the European Commission will be that the Member State is able to convincingly

demonstrate that co-financing can be guaranteed for the entire seven years programming period.

6.2 The Division of Programming related Tasks between the European and the National level

The overall co-ordination of the general Structural Fund related framework is task of the European Commission. In detail, the **European Commission**

- determines the criteria which lead to the eligibility of regions – and therefore the European Commission defines the eligible regions - and it is responsible for the indicative financial allocations;
- establishes the programme guidance;
- adopts and modifies programmes, but only at the level of strategic priorities;
- monitors the Programme performance at strategic level;
- approves large-scale projects with a budget of over 50 million Euro.

The Member State, represented by the Fund related **Managing Authority** is responsible for

- Preparing the Operational Programme and the Programme Complement;
- sub-delegating responsibilities to Implementing Authorities and assuring that the Implementing Authorities receive global grants for the implementation of the relevant programme components;
- Determining the criteria for the selection of projects
- Preparing the annual report that document the programme performance to the European Commission;
- Implementing the different evaluations (Ex-ante, Mid-term and Ex-post)
- Ensuring that information and publicity rules are adhered to

As already said, the **Monitoring Committee** will play an important role within the programming and implementation process on National level. Its major activities are concentrated on the following issues:

- It agrees on the programming document;
- It lays down the project selection criteria. This means that the proposal on selection criteria made by the Managing Authority has to be approved by the Monitoring Committee;
- It monitors the programme implementation, proposes programme changes to the Managing Authority and agrees on proposals to change the programming document;
- It approves the Mid-term evaluation;
- It agrees on the annual reports before these are sent to the European Commission.

6.3 Key Factors for a convincing Strategy

In order to “produce” a convincing strategy, the following key factors should be taken into consideration during the entire process of programming:

- The strategy drawn in the Operational Programme on Human Resources Development (ESF) should demonstrate that it **consequently meets the labour market needs** of Romania. In other words, the programming document should give an answer to the question, if the strategy is clearly oriented along the labour market needs of the Country;
- The strategy should also demonstrate that **all proposed action will contribute to solve the identified problems**;
- Furthermore, the strategy must have a **defensible design**. This means that the entire document must be convincing and consistent, avoiding for example contradictions.
- As far as analytical parts of the programming document are concerned – for example within the socio-economic analysis chapter, **reliable data and “hard facts”** should form the bases of the Operational Programme.
- Another criteria for a high quality of a programming document is the existence of **strong analytical parts**. Wherever possible, the strategy should be based on analysis rather than on (simple) descriptions.
- All results and conclusions of the strategy should be **credible**. This means that the strategy itself and its single actions should be realistic.
- Last but not least, the programming document should be **clearly written** and **consistent in its structure**. If the Operational Programme for Human Resources Development will not be negotiated in Romanian language, an excellent and reliable English and/or French version has to ensure.

6.4 Structure of an Operational Programme for Human Resources Development

As pointed out in Chapter 6.1 and 6.2 a consistent structure of the programming document is needed in order to cover all necessary elements for a formally correct and strategically convincing Operational Programme. A clear structure of the document furthermore helps to realize a well structured organizational approach to the entire programming process. In different trainings for Representatives for the Human Resources Development Strategy of the MLSSF, the MER, the NAE, the Social Partners as well as in bilateral working meetings, organized by the Twinning Office and under participation of Short Time Experts, it was convened that the following Programme structure is considered being helpful for drawing the Operational Programme on Human Resource Development for Romania:

1. Introduction, Legal basis
2. Description of the situation – Socio-economic analysis
 - 2.1 Economic situation
 - 2.2 Employment system and labour market
 - 2.3 Structural analysis of the labour market
 - 2.3.1 General labour market trends
 - 2.3.2 Structure and development of the work force
 - 2.3.3 Structure and development of unemployment
 - 2.3.4 Structure and development of unemployment among specific labour market groups
 - 2.3.5 Qualification structure of unemployed and issues concerning the employability of the work force
 - 2.3.6 The labour market and equal opportunities issues

- 2.4 General and vocational training and higher education
 - 2.4.1 General description of the training systems
 - 2.4.2 Infrastructure related issues of the training system
 - 2.4.3 Qualification of trainers and teachers in the training system
 - 2.4.4 Quality of the training system
 - 2.4.5 Contribution of the training system to fill qualification gaps
 - 2.4.6 The training systems and lifelong-learning issues
 - 2.4.7 Conclusions

- 2.5 Adaptability of SMEs and employees
 - 2.5.1 Qualification of employees
 - 2.5.2 Awareness of SMEs for training of the work staff
 - 2.5.3 Start-ups and qualification needs – Promoting entrepreneurship
 - 2.5.4 Privatization of formerly state-owned enterprises and qualification needs
 - 2.5.5 Conclusions

- 2.6 Results, effectiveness and efficiency of labour market interventions
 - 2.6.1 Results, effectiveness and efficiency of National labour market interventions
 - 2.6.2 Results, effectiveness and efficiency of PHARE-funded labour market interventions
 - 2.6.3 Results, effectiveness and efficiency of other (bilateral) labour market interventions
 - 2.6.4 Lessons learned in the past and future issues

- 2.7 Conclusions for the future strategy for labour market development in Romania and SWOT analysis

- 3. The strategy for Human resources development of the Government of Romania
 - 3.1 General remarks
 - 3.2 Procedure for allocating subsidy measures
 - 3.3 Horizontal priorities
 - 3.3.1 Equal opportunities and the gender-mainstreaming-approach
 - 3.3.2 Information society
 - 3.3.3 Environmental issues and sustainable development
 - 3.3.4 Local and regional development
 - 3.3.5 Preventing social exclusion of (ethnic) minority groups and the fight against racism and xenophobia
 - 3.4 The ESF strategy by Priorities and Operations
 - 3.4.1 General description of the strategy
 - 3.4.2 Priority 1: Adaptability of employees and enterprises, supporting self employment and the creation of new enterprises
 - 3.4.2.1 Operation 1.1: Investment in human resources, dissemination of ICT skills development and implementation of lifelong learning systems and strategies to ensure improved access to training especially of women, low skilled and older workers
 - 3.4.2.2 Operation 1.2: Development of human potential and innovation
 - 3.4.2.3 Operation 1.3: Support of business starters, self-employment and entrepreneurship
 - 3.4.2.4 Operation 1.4: Support of enterprises, especially of SME, dissemination of management skills, creation of networks, consultancy of SME in the field of job-creation and restructuring development of specific employment, training and support services to workers in the context of company and sector restructuring
 - 3.4.3 Priority 2: Increasing labour market participation, employability, prevention and equal opportunities
 - 3.4.3.1 Operation 2.1: Job creation and training for unemployed and long-term-unemployed, e.g. in the field of social economy

- 3.4.3.2 Operation 2.2: Specific actions to increase participation and progress of women unemployment, reduce gender-based segregation in the labour market including facilitating access to childcare and care for dependent persons
- 3.4.4 Priority 3: Social inclusion
 - 3.4.4.1 Operation 3.1: Pathways to integration in employment for disadvantaged people, people experiencing social exclusion, minorities, migrants and people with disabilities
 - 3.4.4.2 Operation 3.2: Specific measures for young people experiencing social exclusion and early school leavers
- 3.4.5 Priority 4: Development of structures, networks and the administrative capacity – support of convergence
 - 3.4.5.1 Operation 4.1: Modernization and strengthening of labour market institutions, in particular employment services and Implementation of active and preventive measures ensuring early identification of needs and personalized support
 - 3.4.5.2 Operation 4.2: Modernization and strengthening of the systems of education, of vocation and further training, apprenticeship and lifelong-learning and Expanding and improving investment in human capital, updating of skills of teachers and trainers
 - 3.4.5.3 Operation 4.3: Strengthening institutional capacity and the efficiency of public administration and public services at national, regional and local level and Capacity building in the delivery of policies and programmes, with regard to the enforcement of legislation, especially through managerial and staff training and specific support to key services, inspectorates and social-economic actors including social partners and relevant non-governmental organizations
 - 3.4.5.4 Operation 4.4: Innovative projects
- 3.4.6 Technical assistance
- 4. Contribution of the Romanian Operational Programme for Human Resources Development strategy to the European Action Plan for Growth and Employment and to the National Action Plan for Growth and Employment
- 5. Coherence of the Romanian Operational Programme for Human Resources Development strategy with the CSF/NDP and the context indicators for Objective 1
- 6. Quantified objectives
- 7. Compatibility with the local authority policy in accordance with relevant European Union Regulations (in 2000-2006: Art. 12 of Regulation (EC) No 1260/1999; to fix for 2007-2013)
 - 7.1 Competition rules
 - 7.2 Awarding of public contracts
- 8. Implementation regulations
 - 8.1 Managing authority
 - 8.2 Financial control system, audit and independent authority
 - 8.3 Financial flows and paying authority
 - 8.4 Role of partners and representatives in the Monitoring Committee
 - 8.5 Selection processes and selection criteria
 - 8.8.1 Tenders and calls
 - 8.8.2 Grants to individuals
 - 8.8.3 Grants to enterprises
 - 8.8.4 Global subsidies
 - 8.8.5 Financing of campaigns
 - 8.9 Monitoring and evaluation indicators
 - 8.6.1 The monitoring system
 - 8.6.2 The indicator system
 - 8.6.2.1 Context indicators
 - 8.6.2.2 Input indicators
 - 8.6.2.3 System and/or output indicators

8.6.3	Result indicators
8.6.4	Effect indicators
8.7	Technical solution for the financial and the monitoring system
8.8	Electronic data exchange with the European Commission
8.8.1	Applications for payments
8.8.3	Programme monitoring and control
8.9	Time table for annual reports and for the ex-ante, mid-term and ex-post evaluation
8.10.	Publicity measures and communication plan
8.10.1	Objectives of the publicity measures
8.10.2	Implementation of publicity measures
8.11	Indicators for implementing the efficiency reserve (to check for 2007-2013)
9.	Ex-ante-assessment of the Operational Programme
9.1	Ex-ante evaluation as an integral component of the programming procedure
9.2	Assessment of the consistency of the OP strategy
9.3	Assessment of the process of the OP implementation
9.4	Assessment of horizontal priorities: Environmental assessment, assessment of the sustainability of the OP, and assessment of the OP contribution to equal opportunities and ex-ante assessment of the OP contribution to the European and the National Action Plan for Growth and Employment
10.	Indicative financial plan and procedure for estimating the payment regulations
10.1	Procedure for estimating the payment regulations
10.2	Indicative financial plan
11.	Detailed information on administration procedures (formerly: Programme complement)

It should be highlighted, that the **socio-economic analysis** can be considered as crucial starting point for a programming document. In order to built a strong basis for the determination of the Programme's strategy it is of major importance to answer – within the chapter on socio-economic analysis – the following questions:

- Which are the major labour market trends, what is the prognosis for the future programming period?
- Which are the most striking problems? Which priorities are seen by the National authorities?
- How is the National system of active labour market policy prepared to deal with the actual and coming problems?
- How is the system of general and vocational training prepared to deal with the actual as well as the expected challenges?
- How should these systems develop in order to react and act effectively?
- How efficient is public administration, and what remains to do in the future?

6.5 Quantification of Objectives

Within the Programming document the Commission expects by each Member State a clear statement on what should be achieved during the programming period. Quantified targets by priority and operation are therefore of major interest for the Commission. The quantification of objectives is – one the one hand – applied to the financial level of the Operational Programme and therefore an

indicative financial table stating the total budget over the entire intervention period but also with regard to the single years of the intervention period – and as already said for each priority and operation - is an integral part of the Operational Programme.

Within the chapters of the Operational Programme describing priorities and operations, the Member State will also have to give information on the so-called physical performance of the programme. The physical performance shows – at least for the entire intervention period – how many people (structured by relevant socio-demographic indicators, as sex, age, duration of unemployment, qualification, etc.), SMEs (structured by relevant economic indicators as branch, number of employees, etc.) and other organizations (e.g. vocational training centers etc.) will be reached by the planned interventions of each priority and intervention.

It has to be pointed out, that exact targets – both from a financial and a physical view – cannot be fixed, as long as the budget available for ESF interventions in Romania has not been quantified. In a first step, relative shares among policy fields and measures should therefore be defined in order to make National priorities clear. Another rule that should be taken into consideration is, that quantified objectives should always be realistic. Exaggerated and unrealistic targets are neither helpful on National level, since an efficient programme performance cannot be realized, nor for the cooperation between Member State and European Commission, since the Member State will have to explain in detail the reasons for not being capable of implementing efficient programme structures.

Quantified objectives should be regarded by the MLSSF as expected goals: The MLSSF should use quantified objectives as instrument for an efficient Programme management, and not only for documenting Programme development to the European Commission.

6.6 The Translation of an abstract Strategy into concrete Action

One of the major tasks within the programming process is to translate the abstract strategic goals into concrete action that will be funded by the European Social Fund. As general rule, an Operational Programme never defines concrete projects. What the Operational Programme has to do is to define which type of projects – e.g. qualification, direct subsidies to enterprises etc. – are considered being best suited to reach the set goals. The general strategy in which the European Social Fund measures have to fit will be determined on level of the National Development Plan (NDP). It has therefore to be ensured, that all ESF relevant strategic issues are taken into consideration on this programming level. The Operational Programme on Human Resource Development – i.e. the ESF relevant document – defines, the Programme related strategy as part of the NDP strategy and it furthermore states the Programme related goals. This means that the HRD OP is the general frame for concrete action in the Member State. Under the Programme level, the priorities listed above show the specific goals of the Programme, which are in a further step sub-divided into single and more concrete operations. In this way, within the operations, sub-specific goals are defined by concrete intervention fields. All action described for achieving the operation and priority related goals will need be realized by concrete projects. Since it is not possible to define, over a seven years period, concrete projects, within the programming document the different types of projects have to be described. Examples for these types of projects can be subsidies for (unemployed) persons creating their own business, qualification and training measures for unemployed,

specific groups of unemployed (e.g. Roma population, women after maternity leave, early school leavers, long-term unemployed, etc.) and/or for employees in SMEs, direct subsidies for SMEs creating additional job opportunities for unemployed, subsidies to vocational training centers, Universities and others for the development of training curricula and modules, etc.). Chart 2 gives an overview on the relationship between strategic and project level.

Chart 2: From the Strategic to the Project Level

Level of contents	Level of the goals	Kind of described action	Relevant document
Overall strategic level concerning the entity of Structural Funds	Strategic goals for the Structural Funds	Political action	National Development Plan
Single Fund related strategic level	Programme related goals (as part of a broader strategy)	General frame for the concrete implementation of a specific Structural Fund (in this case: ESF)	Operational Programme on Human Resources Development (HRD OP)
Level of priorities	Specific goals under the Programme level and by thematic priority	First step of concretisation of the general frame into concrete action on ESF level	Operational Programme on Human Resources Development (HRD OP)
Level of operations	Sub-specific goals by action field	Second step of concretisation of the general frame into concrete action on ESF level	Operational Programme on Human Resources Development (HRD OP)
Level of types of projects/interventions	No own goals are defined. Types of projects/interventions should contribute to reach goals set on operations and/or priority level	Concrete group of action/intervention that may help to achieve goals on level of operations and/or policy fields	Operational Programme on Human Resources Development (HRD OP)
Level of a single project	Project related goals	Single action belonging to a type of intervention	Project application

As far as the project level is concerned – this means for the Operational Programme the described “Level of types of projects/interventions” – the Operational Programme, especially the section that refers to all administration related aspects that are covered, in the 2000-2006 period separately within the Programme Complement, will have to clearly define the selection procedure as well as the selection criteria.

Without going into details – the project level and especially the selection procedures are subject to a separate Manual¹ - it is regarded as necessary to describe within this Manual the essential aspects with regard to the project level. The most important types of projects are the following:

- Grants to enterprises (SMEs) for integration of unemployed;
- Grants to unemployed for start-ups;
- Qualification of unemployed;
- Qualification of employed staff in SMEs;
- Guidance of unemployed (counselling, etc.);
- Funding of projects to improve vocational training systems (new curricular, new work organization models, e.g. job rotation);
- Combined qualification and job programmes;
- Funding of projects to enhance co-operation between the vocational training system and SMEs, research facilities and SMEs, etc.

These types of projects can be further diversified into sub-categories, for example with reference to specific target groups. Target groups are all groups of persons that can be considered as most vulnerable groups of the labour market, being at a higher risk of becoming or remaining unemployed. It is the Member State that defines within its Operational Programme who are the target groups that are addressed to with appropriate action. Examples of labour market relevant target groups are:

- Young people (< 25 years);
- Older people (> 50 years);
- Women in general, young women (< 25 years), older women, women after maternity leave, women belong to minority groups, etc.;
- People with disabilities;
- People from Ethnic Minorities, Roma population;
- Early school leavers;
- Long-term unemployed;
- People with no, insufficient or inadequate school career;
- People with no, insufficient or inadequate vocational training career;
- People with no or little work experience;
- Homeless people, people with drug career, released prisoners, etc.

Even if single projects, as already described, will not be part of the Operational Programme for Human Resources Development, the Operational Programme has to define the processes and (formal) regulations that determine the project selection. Especially in the chapters of the Operational Programme that are dedicated to the contents that in the previous intervention periods were covered by the Programme Complement, all formal and administrative procedures have to be clari-

¹ See „Manual on Handling ESF type Funds“

fied. Of particular importance is in this context the description and definition of project selection procedures. For each type of project that will be implemented in the intervention period the Member State has to make a choice within its programming document, whether the project selection will base on bidding procedures, calls and/or single project proposals. The programming document furthermore will have to describe the formal and qualitative selection criteria.

6.7 The Indicator System

It has been pointed out in Chapter 6.5 that the European Commission expects, within each Operational Programme, the clarification of quantified targets. This applies in a first step to general financial and physical indicators that have to refer not only to the single intervention years, but also to each priority and intervention. In order to measure the progress of the programme performance, additional indicators have been established in the past years that have been negotiated between the European Commission and the Member States. Roughly said, these indicators refer to four different levels:

- Input indicators;
- Output indicators;
- Success indicators;
- Context indicators.

Input indicators are especially used for quantifying the finances that are used for the implementation of a programme. They refer – apart from the above mentioned general figures on total budget and on priority and measure related budget per year – to costs for types of projects, for single projects, but also to costs per participant, per “product” such as developed training curriculum or module.

On the other hand, **output indicators** help to give an overview on how many persons, enterprises and/or vocational training centers have been reached by the action funded by the ESF. In detail, output indicators can cover the following areas:

- Number of unemployed persons trained, according so specific target groups;
- Number of persons employed in SMEs trained, according to functional categories (such as unskilled and/or skilled workers, managers, etc.) and to type of SME (with reference to the branch, the total number of employees, etc.);
- Number of business starters supported, specifying whether the supported business starters were employed or unemployed before the own business was set up;
- Number of SMEs supported (e.g. by counseling), according to economic sector, branch and number of employees;
- Number of new training curricula developed;
- Number of computer-based-training systems that have been implemented.

Particular attention has to be paid to the success indicators. These are generally used not that much to document the simple progress of the programme, but to demonstrate which effects could

be reached with the actions described in the Operational Programme. Examples for success indicators are:

- Integration quota of trained unemployed into the labour market;
- Integration cost for each successfully integrated unemployed person;
- Number of participants in training with a certificate;
- Number of working-places created in enterprises of supported business starters;
- Number of working places secured in enterprises,
- Reduced quota of early school leavers;
- Increased number of employed women;
- Reduced number of unemployed young people;
- Increased number of part-time workers.

On the other hand, **context indicators** help to characterize the general economic and labour market developments during an intervention period. The starting point for documenting context indicators is given within the chapter on socio-economic analysis of the Operational Programme. Its continuous update helps the Managing Authority to see, whether and to which extent the general labour developments can be influenced by the ESF interventions. Examples for context indicators refer to:

- The development of unemployment (total and for women, older workers, young people, long term unemployed, other relevant labour market target groups etc.);
- The development of employment (total, women etc.);
- The development of employment in service;
- The development of the number of self-employed;
- The development of the number of business starters;
- The development of the number of workers participating in training;
- The development of the number of early school leavers;
- The development of part-time-workers.

6.8 Horizontal Priorities

Within the mainstreaming strategy adopted by the European Institutions for all Policy Fields major attention has to be paid while drafting the Operational Programme on Human Resources Development to horizontal priorities. This means, that all action foreseen within the European Social Fund will have to take into consideration its (potential) effect on issues like:

- The promotion of the local development;
- The information society;
- The protection of the environment;
- The sustainable development;
- The equal opportunities.

6.8.1 Local Development

Local and regional governments, local agencies and other local actors are key partners in delivering economic and social development across Europe. Many Member States see decentralisation as a way to improve the relevance and quality of services and respond to needs and opportunities in the local economy.

Success in the fight against unemployment and poverty in Europe requires the mobilisation and support of all resources available, including, and especially, at regional and local level. Mobilisation of local communities in combating unemployment and poverty can be regarded as crucial, since:

- Localities are best placed to translate national and regional strategies into action on the ground;
- Local actors can best understand local conditions, aspirations and needs.

Within the Operational Programme on Human Resources Development the Member State will have to demonstrate, to which extent local partners are included in the programming and the implementation process and which platforms are organized for enhancing the transfer of information and experiences between local, regional and National level.

6.8.2 Information Society

The fast development of the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) has brought about deep changes in our way of working and living, as the widespread diffusion of ICT is accompanied by organisational, commercial, social and legal innovations.

Our society is now defined as the "Information Society", a society in which low-cost information and ICT are in general use, or as the "Knowledge(-based) Society", to stress the fact that the most valuable asset is investment in intangible, human and social capital and that the key factors are knowledge and creativity.

This new society presents great opportunities: it can mean new employment possibilities, more fulfilling jobs, new tools for education and training, easier access to public services, increased inclusion of disadvantaged people or regions.

The opportunities of the Information Society and the consequences for the European Social Fund in Romania, especially as the types of projects, the contents of qualification projects and the needs of (specific) target groups are concerned have to be integrated in the Operational Programme on Human Resources Development.

6.8.3 Environmental Protection

Environmental protection is one of the major challenges facing Europe and is therefore a Community objective. Looking beyond Europe's environmental concerns, the Community has committed itself to tackling global environmental issues with the Cardiff Process (1998).

The Single European Act the Commission sets out guidelines which will enable the environmental dimension to be properly integrated into other policies:

- integrating the environment into all activities of the EU institutions;
- a review of existing policies;
- introduction of strategies for action in key areas;
- definition of priority actions and mechanisms for monitoring implementation;
- review by the European Council of environmental integration into sectoral policies;
- a joint study by the Council, Parliament and the Commission on the development of mechanisms for implementing these guidelines and for monitoring their implementation.

The Operational Programme for Human Resource Development will have to demonstrate its links to the issue of environmental protection. Especially within the fields of vocational training and further training the Operational Programme has to show the foreseen activities effectively integrating environmental protection on the project level.

6.8.4 Sustainable Development

Sustainable Development can be defined simply as a better quality of life for everyone, now and for generations to come. It is a vision of progress that links economic development, protection of the environment and social justice, and its values are recognised by democratic governments and political movements the world over. Sustainable Development, as defined within the Gothenburg Strategy of 2001, is about:

1. Balanced and equitable economic development
2. High levels of employment, social cohesion and inclusiveness
3. A high level of environmental protection and responsible use of natural resources
4. Coherent policy making in an open, transparent and accountable political system
5. Effective international co-operation to promote sustainable development globally

For the European Social Fund Sustainable Development is generally interpreted as orientation of all funded activities to the integration of unemployed in the labour market. A clear preference should be given to work opportunities on the regular labour market on the one hand and on long-term working contracts. Sustainable Development can furthermore be referred to other ESF relevant action fields: In the context of support activities for start-ups, the ESF should help to create new enterprises that are competitive on the market. Sustainable development for SMEs – for example in the context of qualification of employees – can mean to fund projects that support continuous training models that allow lifelong learning processes within enterprises.

6.8.5 Equal Opportunities

The most important horizontal priority for the European Social Fund is the Equal Opportunities goal. As in the intervention period 2000-2006 the new intervention period 2007-2013 foresees specific measures and actions promoting equal opportunities between women and men in the labour market. Operation 2.2. of the Operational Programme for Human Resources Development will specifically deal with the issue of reducing gender-gaps (access to general, vocational and further training, access to jobs, equal pay) on the labour market, of enhancing the structures for better

combining family and working life, as well as for reducing sexual harassment on the working place. Specific actions under the Equal Opportunities goal will also have to be carried out in order to transform traditional gender roles in society. Examples for this could be specific projects for motivating male employees to reduce working hours or to change from full-time to part-time employment.

Apart from these specific actions, the Equal Opportunities goal affects the entire strategy and all foreseen action of the Operational Programme for Human Resources Development. Every single action should be “checked” whether it helps to realize equal opportunities for women and men. This approach known as Gender-Mainstreaming will lead to introduce a new perspective in the programming, implementation and evaluation process for the ESF. In this way, Gender-Mainstreaming approach can be seen as a process oriented management tool.

6.9 Leading Principles for the ESF

Among a number of leading principles for funding of actions on National level by the ESF the principle of additionality, the principle of subsidiarity and the principle of co-financing are of major interest. Within the Operational Programme on Human Resources Development the Member State has to demonstrate that these principles are not only respected from a general point of view but that appropriate measures are undertaken to secure the practical adoption of these principles.

6.9.1 The Additionality Principle

The main philosophy of the additionality principle is that European Funds, and therefore also the ESF may not replace public, that means National, or other equivalent expenditure by a Member State.

The Member State has to give proofs within its Operational Programme for Human Resources Development (and also for the National Development Plan) that the level of expenditure for a certain policy field – for the case of the ESF this is the expenditure for active labour market interventions – will not decrease during the period for which European funds are made available in a Member State. This means for the European Social Fund, that the Programming Document has to demonstrate that the level of expenditures for active labour market interventions for the intervention period 2007-2013 from National sources – i.e. the Contribution and the Tax system – will be maintained.

The European Commission requests by each Member State that a verification of the validity of the Addtionality Principle has to be carried out at three different stages: At the Ex-ante evaluation of the Operational Programme, the Mid-term evaluation, and finally at the end of the intervention period.

6.9.2 The Subsidiarity Principle

The Principle of Subsidiarity influenced the progress of European integration from the start. Article 5 of the Treaty on the European Union states that *“The Community shall act within the limits of the powers conferred upon it by this Treaty and of the objectives assigned to it therein. In areas which do not fall within its exclusive competence, the Community shall take action, in accordance with the*

principle of subsidiarity, only if and insofar as the objectives of the proposed action cannot be sufficiently achieved by the Member States and can therefore, by reason of the scale or effects of the proposed action, be better achieved by the Community. Any action by the Community shall not go beyond what is necessary to achieve the objectives of the Treaty”.

Applied to the ESF the Principle of Subsidiarity means that no action may be financed by the European Union and/or by this Fund which can be financed out of the State budget or the contribution system. In other words that means, that the Operational Programme for Human Resource Development in Romania can foresee action

- That has not been financed before by the State budget or the contribution system;
- That addresses to persons and/or target groups that have not been in the focus of National active labour market policy;
- That can be considered a prolongation (in time) or an addition (in terms of contents) of actions that so far have exclusively been financed by the funds available for the National active labour market policy;

6.9.3 The Co-financing Principle

As far as the European Social Fund in Objective 1 regions is concerned, the available budget for ESF relevant expenditure is composed by two major sources, consisting of transfers from the European Union to Romania and finances coming from the State budget and/or the contribution system. While the EU transfer accounts for 75 % of the total budget, National resources have a share of 25 %.

Behind this division of financial inputs lays the so-called Co-financing Principle. The European Union does only finance – with a few exceptions – actions for which the Member State will also take a financial risk. It is worth to know, that the co-financing regulation applies to the entire budget of the ESF in the intervention period. According to the General Structural Funds Regulation in force – that means covering the intervention period 2000-2006 – it remains open, whether the Co-financing Principle has to be applied for each single Policy Field (in future: Priority) and/or Measure (in future: Operation). It seems to depend on the concrete development of negotiations between the European Commission and the Member State, whether the Co-financing Principle has to be applied only to the Operational Programme as a whole, or is extended to Priorities and Operations.

It is worth pointing out, that the Co-financing Principle does not apply to the Technical Assistance budget, that means that Technical Assistance in a Member States for the ESF is financed to 100 % out of European financial sources.

7. Glossary

This glossary of main terms and expressions used in both the European Social Fund and the European Employment strategy have been taken from the Homepage of the European Commission – General Directorate for Employment and Social Affairs (GD EMPL). The relevant link is:

www.europa.eu.int/employment_social/esf2000/glossary-en.htm

Please check this site for updates.

EUROPEAN SOCIAL FUND AND EMPLOYMENT STRATEGY	
Community Support Framework (CSF)	The CSF, is the basic programming document, agreed between the Commission and Member States, which sets out plans for Structural Fund support in the regions concerned. It identifies particular problems facing the labour market, the strategy and priorities for action and where money should best be channelled. Within each CSF, Operational Programmes set out in more detail the way the funding will be used.
Development Plan	At the programming phase, this is the first document submitted by Member States. It presents an analysis (which, depending on the circumstances, may be at national or regional level) of the difficulties facing the country or region and sets out the government's main priorities for action. The Plan also highlights the achievements of the previous programming period. The priorities outlined in the Community Support Framework or the Single Programming Document are based on this analysis.
Employment Guidelines	As part of the ongoing European Employment Strategy, the Employment Guidelines, agreed annually by all EU governments set out priorities and clear objectives for labour market policy for the following year. Each Member State implements the Guidelines through their national employment policies, but these are monitored and assessed annually by the Commission and by the other Member States.
ESF Committee	The role of the European Social Fund committee is to give opinions to the Commission on the implementation of the Social Fund. The committee, which meets four times a year, is made up of two government representatives, two trade unions and two employer representatives from each EU Member State.
ESF eligible activities	<p>Activities that can be supported by the Social Fund include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education and vocational training, apprenticeships pre-training, upgrading of basic skills • Employment aids and aids for self-employment • Training in the fields of research, science and technology • Development of new sources of employment • Development and improvement of training, education and skills acquisition, including the training of teachers • Modernisation and improved efficiency of employment services • Development of links between the worlds of work, education and research • Development of systems for anticipating changes in employment and in qualification needs • Assistance in the provision of services to beneficiaries, including dependants • Innovative measures and pilot projects concerning labour markets, employment and vocational training

<p>ESF policy fields</p>	<p>There are five main areas or policy fields for European Social Fund activity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Developing and promoting active labour market policies</i> • <i>Promoting equal opportunities for all in accessing the labour market</i> • <i>Promoting and improving training, education and counselling as part of a life long learning policy</i> • <i>Promoting a skilled, trained and adaptable workforce</i> • <i>Improving women's access to and participation in the labour market</i> <p>The ESF complements Member States activities in these policy fields, by supporting the National Action Plans for Employment, which the Member States put forward every year as part of the European Employment Strategy.</p>
<p>ESF policy frame of reference</p>	<p>In order to ensure consistency with the National Action Plans for Employment, Member States are required to submit an "Objective 3 Policy Frame of Reference" before the negotiations on national programmes begin. This document outlines priorities for employment and human resource development <i>throughout</i> the Member State (ie. not just in Objective 3 areas) and the way in which all Structural Funds will contribute.</p>
<p>European Agricultural Guidance and Guarantee Fund (EAGGF)</p>	<p>Part of the Guidance (for Objective 1) and Guarantee (for Objectives 2 and 3) sections of the EAGGF, finance the EU's rural development policy. This aims to improve the efficiency of farm structures, to support investment in the food processing and marketing sector and to provide compensatory payments in less-favoured farming areas.</p>
<p>European Employment Strategy</p>	<p>The Strategy provides ongoing co-ordination of Member States' employment policies through the Employment Guidelines, which are grouped around four common themes or pillars:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employability – <i>helping both unemployed people and those in work to develop the right skills</i> • Entrepreneurship – <i>making it easier to start and run a business and to employ people in it</i> • Adaptability – <i>modernising skills and ways of working in a fast changing world</i> • Equal Opportunities – <i>equal access to jobs for men and women, help to balance work and family life</i> <p>The annual cycle for implementing and monitoring national employment policies is known as the Luxembourg Process after the 1997 Luxembourg Jobs Summit where the procedures were first agreed.</p>
<p>European Regional Development Fund (ERDF)</p>	<p>The aim of this Fund is to promote economic and social cohesion by correcting the main regional imbalances and participating in the development and conversion of regions. To that end, the ERDF shall also contribute to sustainable development and creation of sustainable jobs.</p>
<p>European Social Fund (ESF)</p>	<p>Created in 1957, the ESF is the European Union's main tool for the development of human resources and the improvement of the workings of the labour market. It supports measures to prevent and combat unemployment and to develop human resources. The ESF aims to promote a high level of employment, equality between men and women, sustainable development and economic and social cohesion. The key aim of the Fund is to provide supporting finance for implementing the National Action Plans for Employment.</p>
<p>Financial Instrument of Fisheries Guidance (FIFG)</p>	<p>The FIFG was set up by the EU to improve the competitiveness of the fisheries sector through restructuring. Measures include adapting and modernising the fleets, developing aquaculture, upgrading the processing and marketing of fishery and aquaculture products and improving fishing port facilities.</p>

Joint Employment Report	The Commission and EU employment and social affairs' ministers examine each of the National Action Plans on an annual basis. Their comments and recommendations are then drawn together in a Joint Employment Report which is presented to the Heads of State and Government at the European Council for approval.
Managing authority	The body designated by the Member State to manage the Structural Funds programmes. This body can be a public or private authority at national, regional or local level or even the Member State itself. The managing authority and the paying authority can be the same if the Member State so decides.
Monitoring Committee	Each Community Support Framework, Operational Programme, and Single Programming Document is supervised by a Monitoring Committee, which is set up by the Member State in agreement with the managing authority. The role of the Monitoring Committee includes overseeing implementation of the programmes on the ground and seeing that targets are being reached. The Committee also assesses and approves the annual and final implementation reports on the programmes before they are sent to the Commission.
National Action Plans for Employment (NAPs)	Every year each Member State presents a National Action Plan outlining how the Employment Guidelines will be applied in the way best suited to that country.
Objectives	The Structural Funds work towards achieving one or more of the three Objectives listed below. The Funds also have a number of common aims, including sustainable development, development of employment and human resources, environmental protection and promoting equality between men and women. With the reform of the Structural Funds in 1999, the number of Objectives was simplified and reduced from seven to three
Objective 1	<p>Objective 1 promotes the development of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regions where GDP per head is below 75% of the EU average. • Outlying regions, eg, French overseas departments, Azores, Madeira. • Sparsely populated regions of Finland and Sweden <p>Objective 1 is financed by all four Structural Funds: ESF, ERDF, EAGGF and FIFG and accounts for 69.7% of total Structural Funds spending, totalling Euros 135.9 bn for the period 2000-2006. The EU population covered by this Objective is more than 83 million.</p>
Objective 2	<p>Supports areas facing the following difficulties:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Areas adjusting to change in industrial and services sector • Rural areas in decline • Urban areas in difficulty • Economically depressed areas heavily dependent on fisheries <p>Objective 2 is financed primarily by the ESF and ERDF and represents 11.5% of total Structural Funds spending or Euros 22.5 bn for 2000-2006.</p>
Objective 3	<p>Provides funding throughout the EU to help adapt and modernise policies and systems of education, training and employment. The entire population of the EU outside Objective 1 areas is covered by Objective 3.</p> <p>Objective 3 is financed by the ESF alone and represents 12.3% of total Structural Funds spending, a total of Euros 24.05 bn from 2000-2006.</p>

Operational Programme (OP)	Member States submit to the Commission a series of either sectoral (eg tourism, training and human resources) or regional Operational Programmes, which set out more detail plans to implement the Community Support Framework. While the CSF, as its name suggests, is the broad framework document, the OP goes into more detail on how and where the Funds will be spent, the expected impact and how the programmes will be monitored and evaluated.
Paying authority	One or more national, regional or local authorities or bodies designated by the Member State to apply for and receive payments from the Commission and in turn pay projects on the ground.
Phasing out	'Phasing out' regions were included under Objectives 1, 2, 5b or 6 in the last Structural Fund programming period, but have progressed so well that they no longer need full support and are not therefore included in Objectives 1 and 2 in this period. These regions will, however, continue to qualify for support received under the last period on a transitional basis until, depending on the region, 31 December 2005 or 31 December 2006.
Programme complement	This document "complements" the OPs/SPDs by providing further details on how, where and for what purpose the Funds will be spent. It is presented to the Commission, for information only (ie no formal approval is necessary), within 4 months after the national OPs/SPDs have been approved.
Programming Period	The current programming period, the number of years the programming documents (CSF/OP/SPDs) are valid, runs over a seven-year period from 2000 to 2006. ESF funding for this period is expected to total Euros 63bn. The last Structural Funds programming period ran from 1994 to 1999.
Single Programming Document (SPD)	In order to speed up and simplify the programming phase, Member States have had the option since 1993 of presenting a Single Programming Document per Objective . The SPD, which is generally used in cases where EU financing is less than Euros 1bn, incorporates both the Development Plan and the financing request and therefore requires only a single Commission decision. Combining the content of a Community Support Framework and an Operational Programme, the SPD sets out the strategy, priorities, objectives and expected impact of Structural Fund activities and outlines how the programmes will be managed, monitored and evaluated on the ground.
Structural Funds	The Regional Fund (ERDF), Social Fund (ESF), fisheries (FIFG) and Guidance and Guarantee Fund (EAGGF) make up what is known as the Structural Funds of the European Union. The Funds are the main financial instruments used to reduce the gap in living standards between regions and between people and to promote economic and social cohesion across Europe.

8. List of useful links

The following links will help you to get general information on the ESF, the Structural Funds in general, the European Employment Strategy and other related topics that may be of interest during the programming process. You will find additional links on the listed Internet-sites that will provide further information.

- **European Commission:**
www.europa.eu.int
- **Council of the European Union:**
ue.eu.int/en/summ.htm
- **European Parliament:**
www.europarl.eu.int/home/default_en.htm
- **European Economic and Social Committee:**
www.esc.eu.int/pages/intro_ro.htm
- **Committee of the Regions:**
www.cor.eu.int
- **European Ombudsman:**
www.euro-ombudsman.eu.int
- **Inforegio (Information on EU Structural Policy):**
http://europa.eu.int/comm/regional_policy/index_en.htm
- **Forum for discussing Commission proposals and debate on the Cohesion Policy and on Structural Funds after 2006:**
http://europa.eu.int/comm/regional_policy/debate/forum_en.htm
- **Information on EU wide implementation of Structural Funds in the intervention period 2000-2006:**
http://europa.eu.int/comm/regional_policy/atlas/index_ro.htm
- **General information on ESF implementation 2000 -2006:**
http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/employment_social/esf2000/links_en.htm
- **Background information on tasks and organization of General Directorate for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities:**
http://europa.eu.int/comm/dgs/employment_social/index_en.htm
- **Background information on the European Employment Strategy:**
http://europa.eu.int/comm/employment_social/employment_strategy/index_de.htm
- **Glossary of the most important terms and expressions concerning the European Social Fund and the European Employment Strategy:**
http://europa.eu.int/comm/employment_social/esf2000/glossary_en.htm
- **Methodological Working Document: Vademecum – Plans and programming documents for the Structural Funds 2000 -2006**
http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/regional_policy/sources/docoffic/vm2002006/vademecum_en.htm
- **Overview of the Council Regulation in force for the European Social Fund (2000 -2006):**
http://europa.eu.int/comm/employment_social/esf2000/regulations_de.htm#sf
- **Regulation on information and publicity measures to be carried out by the Member States concerning assistance from the Structural Funds:**
http://europa.eu.int/comm/employment_social/esf2000/regulations/i_p/en.pdf

9. List of relevant Council Regulations

- Council Regulation 1260/1999: The Framework for the Structural Funds 2000-2006
- Council Regulation 1783/1999: ERDF-Regulation (2000-2006)
- Council Regulation 1784/1999: ESF-Regulation (2000-2006)
- Council Regulation 1257/1999: EAGGF-Regulation (2000-2006)
- Council Regulation 1263/1999: FIG-Regulation (2000-2006)
- Council Regulation 1685/2000 on Structural Funds financing of eligible expenditure (2000-2006)
- Council Regulation 438/2001 on Administration and Control Systems (2000-2006)
- Council Regulation 448/2001 on procedures for correction of financial tables (2000-2006)
- Council Regulation 1159/2000 on Information and Publicity Measures (2000-2006)
- Council Regulation 70/2001 State grants for Small and Medium Sized Enterprises/SME (2000-2006)
- Council Regulation 68/2001 on Grants in the field of Vocational training (2000-2006)

- Proposal for a Council Regulation laying down general provisions on the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund and the Cohesion Fund (presented by the Commission): Council Regulation SEC(2004)924 from July 14th, 2004 (2007-2013)
- Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the European Social fund (presented by the Commission): Council Regulation 2004/0165 (COD) from July 14th, 2004 (2007-2013)

Germania
FSE Obiectivul 1 2000 - 2006
M suri eligibile

M sura 1:
Tineri

Orientarea și pregătirea profesională, consiliere și asistență

1. Acțiuni de orientare profesională a tinerilor, de ex. practică, ocupare de probă
2. Programe de pregătire profesională și formare
3. Consiliere și asistență (socio – pedagogică)

Muncă și învățare

4. Proiecte integrate de ocupare și calificare
5. Sprijin în vederea muncii și învățării
6. Promovarea atelierelor pentru tineri etc.

Oferte specifice de formare, formare continuă

7. Formare în domeniul mediului
8. Proiecte de calificare (transnaționale): de ex. schimb internațional
9. Promovarea calificării suplimentare pentru persoanele cu talente deosebite

Promovarea calificării duale

10. Promovarea locurilor de calificare în afara întreprinderilor
11. Promovarea locurilor suplimentare de calificare în întreprinderi, promovarea angajării tinerilor cu abilități practice
12. Promovarea angajării în întreprinderi a ucenicilor proveniți din întreprinderi falimentare
13. Sprijin în perioada de calificare

Promovarea preluării unei ocupații

14. Promovarea ocupațiilor tinerilor dezavantajați
15. Promovarea tranziției spre al doilea prag
16. Formarea continuă a tinerilor
17. Subvenții salariale pentru angajatori

**M sura 2:
Calificare, informare și consiliere pentru omeri**

Orientare și pregătire profesională, consiliere și asistență

1. Consilierea și medierea omerilor: oferte de informare și consiliere
2. Asistență socio – pedagogică
3. Măsurile de formare

Calificare, formare continuă, recalificare

4. Programe generale de perfecționare și calificare pentru persoanele amenințate de omajul de lungă durată
5. Programe de perfecționare și calificare în zonele urbane problematice și în domeniul cultural
6. Programe de perfecționare și calificare în profesii din domeniul informației și comunicării și din sectorul media
7. Programe de perfecționare și calificare în sectorul serviciilor
8. Calificare în limbi străine
9. Intermedierea calificărilor cheie
10. Indemnizații de întreținere și sprijin pentru mobilitate acordate omerilor fără drept de indemnizare
11. Job-Rotation
12. Programe de perfecționare și calificare pentru absolvenții de învățământ superior

**M sura 3:
Promovarea ocupării**

Indemnizații la angajare etc.

1. Indemnizații pentru angajare / adaptare la locul de muncă pe prima piață a muncii
2. Indemnizații pentru angajare / adaptare la locul de muncă pe a doua piață a muncii
3. Derularea proceselor de adaptare a personalului într-o manieră suportabilă din punct de vedere social, de ex. societăți de transfer
4. Predarea responsabilității către angajator (de interes comunitar)
5. Proiecte de ocupare (locale) – de ex. în sectorul serviciilor

Promovarea ocupării și calificării

6. Ocupare și calificare pe prima piață a muncii
7. Ocupare și calificare pe a doua piață a muncii

**M sura 4:
Calificare, informare și consiliere pentru omerii de lung durat**

Orientare și pregătire profesională, consiliere și asistență

1. Consilierea și medierea omerilor de lung durat : oferte de informare și consiliere, burse ale locurilor de muncă
2. Asistență socio – pedagogică orientată pe grupurile întinse de intervenție
3. Sprijinul acordat tinerilor cu prestații mai scăzute în tranziția școală / profesie
4. Orientarea și consilierea persoanelor cu handicap
5. Măsurile de formare

Calificare, formare continuă, recalificare

6. Pregătirea profesională a tinerilor fără certificat de absolvire
7. Oferte integrale pentru tineri cu dificultăți de mediere multiple sau severe, de ex. motivarea și stabilizarea, asistență, modalități de locuire asistată
8. Calificarea tinerilor cu dificultăți de învățare, de ex. calificări parțiale în module, „calificări simple”
9. Programe de perfecționare și calificare pentru omerii de lung durat și grupurile de persoane dezavantajate
10. Programe de perfecționare și calificare pentru omerii vârstnici de lung durat
11. Cursuri pentru analfabeți
12. Cursuri de limbă pentru minoritățile etnice
13. Intermedierea calificărilor cheie
14. Indemnizații de întreținere și sprijin pentru mobilitate pentru omerii de lung durat fără drept de indemnizare
15. Job-Rotation
16. Proiecte model pentru persoanele cu nivel redus de calificare (reducerea poverii contribuțiilor sociale)

**M sura 5:
Promovarea ocupării omerilor de lung durat**

Indemnizații pentru angajare etc.

1. Indemnizații pentru angajare / adaptare la locul de muncă pe prima piață a muncii
2. Indemnizații pentru angajare / adaptare la locul de muncă pe a doua piață a muncii
3. Muncă în locul ajutorului social pentru omerii de lung durat
4. Predarea responsabilității către angajator (de interes comunitar)

5. Proiecte locale de ocupare
6. Întreprinderi de integrare

Promovarea ocupării și calificării

7. Ocupare și calificare pe prima piață a muncii
8. Ocupare și calificare pe a doua piață a muncii

Măsură 6: Sisteme

Consiliere și informare

1. Consilierea șomerilor: oferte de informare și consiliere, burse ale locurilor de muncă etc.
2. Birouri de consiliere pentru femeile care revin în viața activă
3. Informare și consiliere referitoare la meseriile în care se organizează calificarea, noi meserii în calificare etc.
4. Promovarea consilierii în domeniul formării continue, în special și pentru IMM
5. Promovarea consilierii în domeniul timpului parțial de lucru / timpului de lucru, în special și pentru IMM

Acțiuni în vederea evitării abandonului școlar

6. Proiecte model pentru evitarea abandonului școlar

Srijinul acordat structurilor

7. Cercuri de lucru coală - economie
8. Proiecte de cooperare între coală în întreprinderi precum și institute de cercetare în domeniul tehnologiilor informației și comunicării precum și mediilor
9. Sisteme și structuri pentru flancarea într-o manieră suportabilă din punct de vedere social a efectelor mediilor de comunicații
10. Pacte de ocupare locale și regionale
11. Proiecte pentru utilizarea potențialelor de ocupare în sectorul serviciilor (gospodărești)
12. Formare inițială de completare dincolo de necesarul întreprinderii
13. Instituirea forurilor de discuție în sensul pachetelor de ocupare la nivel local
16. Proiecte model de cercetare în domeniul formării profesionale, proiecte de optimizare a calificării și formării continue
19. Proiecte de stabilire a necesarului de formare continuă
20. Formarea continuă a personalului didactic în funcție de realitățile practicii (de ex. în tehnologiile informației și comunicării), formarea formatorilor

21. Dezvoltarea noilor module de calificare și formare continuă precum și a curricula (de ex. formare pe calculator)
22. Dezvoltarea conceptelor unei practici de certificare optimizate
23. Reorganizarea Agenției Naționale pentru Ocupare

**M sura 7:
Adaptabilitatea persoanelor ocupate**

Formare continuă, calificare

1. Formarea continuă a forței de muncă, în special din IMM, a studenților și absolvenților de învățământ superior, calificări cheie
2. Calificare în domeniul limbilor străine în funcție de necesarul constatat în meserie a forței de muncă, studenților și absolvenților de învățământ superior și multiplicatorilor chiar prin intermediul stagiilor în străinătate
3. Programe de calificare în domeniul tehnologiilor informației și comunicării și mediilor
4. Programe de calificare în domeniul noilor tehnici de producție și noilor forme de organizare a muncii
5. Proiecte de calificare în vederea transferului noilor cunoștințe dobândite în domeniul științei în IMM
6. Programe de calificare în domeniul mediului (auditul ecologic etc.)
7. Măsurile de calificare în domenii speciale: de ex. în agricultură, în servicii gospodărești etc.

Dezvoltarea organizării timpului de lucru – timpul de lucru parțial

8. Promovarea timpului parțial de lucru și a timpului flexibil de lucru – informare și consiliere

Modernizarea organizării muncii - sporirea adaptabilității întreprinderilor

9. Proiecte de optimizare a transferului de tehnologie
10. Proiecte de abilitare a IMM în acțiunea pe piețele externe
11. Promovarea cooperării întreprinderilor / creșterii de rețele – și transnaționale
12. Promovarea flexibilității proceselor de adaptare a structurii de personal într-o manieră suportabilă pentru angajați
13. Proiecte de adaptare a organizării muncii, optimizare a strategiei și organizării întreprinderilor

**M sura 8:
Costurile tehnice și calificarea**

1. Preluarea costurilor de calificare
2. Preluarea costurilor de asigurare socială

**M sura 9:
Promovarea înființării de IMM**

Informare, consiliere, sensibilizare

1. Activități de sensibilizare și informare în coli, instituții de formare profesională, facultăți
2. Seminare pe tema înființării de IMM pentru omeri, studenți, absolvenți de învățământ superior și angajați ai facultăților
3. Activități de informare pentru potențialii antreprenori (de ex. în cadrul târgurilor)

Consiliere, coaching (asistență)

4. Consiliere în vederea înființării, calificarea antreprenorilor înainte de înființarea întreprinderii
5. Coaching după înființare

Finanțare

6. Promovarea întreprinderii în prima etapă de la înființare
7. Sprijin la un nivel scăzut în vederea înființării de IMM acordat persoanelor care provin din grupuri întinse speciale (sprijin de-minimis)

**M sura 10:
Egalitatea de șanse pentru femei și bărbați**

Promovarea înființării de IMM

1. Promovarea întreprinderii în prima etapă de la înființare
2. Sprijin la un nivel scăzut în vederea înființării de IMM acordat persoanelor care provin din grupuri întinse speciale (sprijin de-minimis)

Consiliere

4. Birouri de consiliere pentru femei, în special pentru cele care revin în viața activă

Calificare

4. Proiecte de calificare specifice femeilor
5. Programe de promovare a femeilor (de ex. în IMM, femei în funcții de conducere)
6. Promovarea calificării în „meserii tipic masculine” și în meserii de viitor (de ex. meserii în domeniul informației și comunicării)

Timpul de lucru, acordul dintre familie și meserie

7. Promovarea timpului parțial de lucru și a formelor flexibile de muncă
8. Promovarea formelor de asistare a copiilor etc.

Promovarea ocupării

9. Indemnizații de angajare pentru ocuparea femeilor, în special a celor vârstnice, români

Studii și analize a cauzelor

10. Studii și analize