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CONCLUSIONS OF THE ESF FINAL EVALUATIONS

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1. INTRODUCTION

This document presents an overview of the final evaluations of the ESF assistance under Objectives 1, 3 and 4¹. It is an update of the work of synthesis of the mid-term evaluations. It therefore reproduces the structure of the synthesis but is more focused on the results and the impact of the programmes. Each part is structured in an identical way, around the questions of programming and implementation, output, results and impact, as well as the recommendations. It was written with the dual objective of demonstrating the scope and quality of the work carried out in the Member States and identifying strong and robust results for the ESF as a whole. This first draft relies on the reports approved in the first quarter of 2000 and therefore does not take into account Member States as important as Greece. It will be supplemented at a later date and validated gradually with the Member States.

The final evaluation was designed as an extension of the mid-term evaluation. The Commission had formulated five specific expectations for this new evaluation exercise:

- An update and a supplement to the mid-term evaluation report
- An evaluation of the extent and impact of the mid-term review
- A first evaluation of the impact of the assistance
- Preparatory work for the ex-post evaluation
- Information for the period of programming 2000–2006.

The final evaluations addressed these points differently. In practice, the conditions of the final evaluation have been at least as heterogeneous as those of the first phase: the timetable, the duration and the contents of the mandates given to the evaluators, the quality of the monitoring systems, the resources allocated for additional collection of information, and the set-ups to involve partners remained different between the Member States and determinant for the contents of the evaluation work. Other characteristics of the final evaluation came in addition to these factors: keeping or changing the evaluation teams responsible for the mid-term evaluation, adoption of a different set-up (continuous evaluation in Ireland, detailed evaluation of measures rather than of programmes in Portugal, etc.), thematic or horizontal work (particularly on equal opportunities).

In all the Member States, the final evaluation gave the opportunity of undertaking important empirical work which has substantiated the conclusions and the hypotheses of the mid-term evaluation. It benefited from this first evaluation, in particular from a favourable partnership climate and from a consensual diagnosis on the initial conditions. In spite of the great heterogeneity of the set-ups and methods, the national final evaluations provide us with strong messages that are consistent with the lessons of the previous evaluations.

¹The conclusions have been prepared by the evaluation unit of the Directorate General for Employment and Social Affairs. The team included : Anne Bucher, Dora Correia, Sylvie Finné, Olivier Rouland, Jadranka Vukovic and Winfried Kleinegriss.

The Community Initiatives EMPLOYMENT and ADAPT have been evaluated separately. The results of the EU wide evaluations are available on request and will be published in the near future.

2. HUMAN RESOURCES IN OBJECTIVE 1 REGIONS

2.1. Evolution of programmes and impact of the mid-term review

The issues related to labour market and training policy which were raised at the time of the mid-term evaluation seem to have been integrated in the policy agenda of ESF programmes, and were part of ongoing discussions : emphasis on integrating training with other types of action; focus more on disadvantaged groups and better targeting; match between training provision and labour-market needs and a "client-driven approach"; quality issues such as certification and accreditation, training of teachers and trainers, etc. However, in terms of actual implementation, the final evaluation has not identified major progress. Indeed, bottlenecks in delivery mechanisms, as well as rigidities in programming and institutional set-ups, seem to have prevented a stronger implementation of such policy priorities. Therefore, the extent and impact of the mid-term review seem to have been limited and has not been a priority of the final evaluation. This might be due to the limited financial reallocations and/or because not enough time has elapsed to assess the results of more fundamental changes.

In Ireland, the mid-term review has, nevertheless, brought about a serious policy response to Early school leavers, accompanied by reinforcement of financial allocations. As regards Long-term unemployed, as well as catering to poorly qualified people, it has become an issue but pathways to progression are not implemented yet and there is a need for co-operation between agencies and departments. A Local development approach has started to be more prevalent in addressing the needs of these groups. The evaluator concluded that these priorities have yet to impact fully, but delivery mechanisms have **begun** to respond. It must also be added that the mid-term review process in Ireland benefited from an exceptionally favourable economic context, which has helped to bring about the conditions for such an increased focus on those further away from the labour market.

The Portuguese evaluation underlined the financial character of reprogramming, with the purpose of maximising financial take-up, which has not led to changes in the content of the programmes.

The Spanish evaluator recognised that the reprogramming decision of the Monitoring Committee highlighted some issues which seemed to have been taken up at policy level (greater integration of projects, pathways...) but not yet put in practice. In his view, the effects of the reprogramming did not counter the drifts induced by implementation. These had resulted in allocating more funds to the priorities **better able to absorb them**, due to the rigidity of the existing institutional structures. He underlined a series of bottlenecks in the delivery mechanisms which contributed to this rigidity, including an absence of co-ordination between different programmes and territorial levels, the promoters' strategy of renewal of funding and of maximisation of existing structures and resources and the general weakness of the feed-back mechanisms (monitoring and information systems), which in particular has not allowed policy makers to check activities on the ground and to enforce their strategy. This has resulted overall in directing the funds towards general measures targeted at less vulnerable people, which was in contradiction with the objectives of the programme.

Nevertheless, overall delivery mechanisms seemed to have been fine-tuned since the mid-term evaluation. Some of these improvements related to the strengthening of management capacities in some countries both at OP level and CSF level; development or improvement of co-ordination between programming levels and among delivery agencies; and finally some

strengthening of information systems at OP level, both as a result of the mid-term evaluation and of the delay in setting-up more comprehensive systems.

Again, evaluators have pointed out the extreme weakness of data on beneficiaries – monitoring systems have continued to be based on numbers participating, not taking into account that individuals might have taken part in several projects. In most countries, it has not been possible to take into account the duration of the projects. Evaluators did underline that at the level of the promoter there was a fair amount of information (though sometimes on paper only), which meant that the problems identified in the mid-term evaluation regarding the transmission of information between the various administrative levels have continued. More complex data, in terms of follow-up of beneficiaries and results of the projects, were generally not available, at least not in an exhaustive way.

2.2. Output and participation of target groups

The main trends in implementation identified in the mid-term evaluation have continued: predominance of young people and short-term unemployed in schemes targeting those out of work; a minority of women and concentration on skilled workers for schemes targeting the employed; a large percentage of qualified young people in schemes targeting this age group. However, a growing participation of long-term unemployed and disadvantaged groups has been identified, even if they continued to be a minority in absolute terms. This might be due to a greater awareness of the difficulties felt by these groups and of the higher net impact of action targeting them, as well as to the generally improved economic climate. This increased participation of groups further away from the labour market has not always been through the most suitable types of action, as mentioned below in the section on impact on beneficiaries.

Most evaluations put forward coverage rates linking the number of beneficiaries to the target population. Given the deficiencies in physical output data mentioned before, these rates must be interpreted cautiously.

The evaluation confirmed the conclusions of the mid-term evaluation as regards the drifts towards beneficiaries closer to the labour market, especially in the priorities targeting unemployed persons threatened with LTU and young people. The analysis of output per priority showed that continuous training accounted for 22% of the recipients whilst the social exclusion and equal opportunities priorities were almost residual (2% and 0.4% of the recipients respectively). Men over 25 years old seem to be the majority of beneficiaries, and employees accounted for 37% of beneficiaries. Coverage of the total unemployed population was 25%, and 61% of the LTU, mainly through guidance and counselling. For young people, the coverage rate was 51% of the unemployed population under 25. As regards the priority targeting disadvantaged groups, disabled persons were the main beneficiaries and training activities were predominant. To calculate the coverage rate of schemes targeting women the total of female unemployment has been taken as a "proxy": the coverage rate is 1%. The degree of targeting of assistance has also been discussed through a standard profile by priority and a "specificity rate". This rate identified the percentage of beneficiaries who do not correspond to the target groups of that priority. In the priority targeting the unemployed threatened with LTU, conclusions were worrying: employed beneficiaries were identified (around 15% of the total), both in training activities and employment subsidies. As regards the priority targeting unemployed young people, 8% of the recipients were employed. Selection seemed to be more effective in the schemes targeting disadvantaged groups (with 76% of the beneficiaries being LTU), but absolute numbers were very low. Continuous training was concentrated on qualified

workers (20% of beneficiaries have low qualifications) and 55% came from large companies.

In Italy, 62% of total beneficiaries consisted of young people, and 45% were women. Coverage rates have been calculated, using different definitions and methodologies. The results are therefore quite different but the main trends seem to be confirmed. Indeed, there is good coverage of young people (15% of potential beneficiaries), especially within schemes targeting the student population (for "post-qualifica", for example, these reach 62% of potential beneficiaries). As regards LTU coverage rates, these are much lower, ranging from 1 to 8% across different regions.

2.3. Evaluation of outcomes and impacts of the programmes

The final evaluation was expected to give a full picture of programmes' outcomes and impacts. As regards the types of methodologies chosen, evaluators have resorted to a full range of different techniques, usually combining quantitative and qualitative instruments. There was also a widespread use of discussion and/or focus groups with stakeholders to validate conclusions. Most analysis addressed gross outcomes and impacts, but some evaluations did address net effects through comparative approaches between different measures and/or between participants in co-funded measures and national employment services' databases. As to the type of outcomes and impacts, the main emphasis is still on employment outcomes, but other positive impacts on beneficiaries and systems have been considered.

These two levels of impact analysis, on beneficiaries and on systems and structures, have been addressed by evaluators as required by the final evaluation remit. The main conclusions of these analysis confirmed the trends identified during the mid-term evaluation, adding to the robustness of ESF evaluation results. Some illustration of those conclusions can be found below:

2.3.1. *Impact on beneficiaries*

- Gross placement rates have been higher than for the mid-term evaluation, but the more favourable economic context must be kept in mind. The characteristics of placement and the variation across target groups have not changed.

The Spanish ESF Objective 1 evaluation dealt with gross placement rates only. In comparison with the mid-term evaluation, placement levels were in general higher. The main conclusions were:

- Placement was generally fast (less than 6 months) but precarious, with a high rotation rate and not always linked to the training received.
- Looking for a job was mostly done informally, with a limited role of the training/employment centre: as a rule, the further away the group was from the labour market, the more it relied on institutional mechanisms in its search for employment.
- Self employment was considered as a good means of integrating disadvantaged groups but again only gross effects have been taken into account: the survival rate of these companies was very limited, some beneficiaries gave up once they found a job.

- Greater net impact of assistance by concentrating on the most disadvantaged groups has been confirmed.

The Irish "Labour Market Impact of Human Resources Interventions funded under the Human Resources Development OP" evaluation compared the labour market performance of a group of participants in 14 measures, two years after participation, with that of a comparison group.

As regards gross placement in employment, all participants in ESF-cofunded measures fared substantially better, with great variation across measures. When individual characteristics and labour market histories were taken into account, only 8 measures have significantly increased the employment chances of participants (Employment incentive scheme, Employment subsidy scheme, Enterprise allowance and Training schemes, the Return to work, Skills foundation, Specific Skills training and Job training). Estimated improvements in employment chances ranged from 12% to 55%.

More importantly, evaluators have identified significant differences across subgroups: the long-term unemployed benefited more from the measure than the short-term unemployed, and the size of the employment effects were also greater. As regards gender, the effects were similar for men and women, with some differences across measures relating to the composition of their target groups. In general, the over-25s seemed to benefit more from participation and again the size of employment effects was bigger, even if the younger group enjoyed higher baseline employment chances. Evaluators have tried to control selection biases, and estimated that effects were overstated by one third – however they advised some caution in interpreting these results given existing statistical uncertainties.

Measures with strong linkages to the labour market were more likely to enhance employment prospects: five of the measures found to improve chances significantly were characterised by strong market orientation. Evaluators underlined that conclusions on low employment impact of some measures were not in themselves a cause for worry. Some measures might not have brought about jobs immediately but they might be the first step in progression. For that to happen, reintegration paths needed to be designed to allow for groups further away from employment to progress through a series of measures tailored to their particular needs; these might start with activities with low employment effects but must end in a training or employment programme with high net placement rates. Evaluators have also assessed impact on wages, which has been found to be quite limited two years later. The analysis has some data limitations, but it seemed that the principal impact of effective measures was to increase the employment chances of participants and not to enhance their earnings compared to non-participants who found work.

Italy was the only exception to this conclusion on the greater effectiveness of targeting on the disadvantaged. Indeed, participation in training targeting the long-term unemployed did not increase the chances of finding a job, if one excluded the beneficiaries who were placed in protected employment (*lsu*). The performance in the labour market of the participants was compared to a control group of people eligible to participation but not selected to take part. The percentage of former participants who were unemployed was higher than in the control group, and the percentage of those in stable employment was much lower (27% differential). These negative effects on employability have been explained by the demotivation brought about by the nature of the measure (a yearlong basic skills course) and the composition of the target group (older persons suffering long-term unemployment). There seemed to be a psychological acceptance of being unemployed, even if positive externalities of training on social integration and the beneficiaries' general well-being have been identified. Evaluators underline that there seems to be a vicious circle leading participants to protected employment, with hopes of turning these jobs into permanent ones. The failure of these hopes creates discouragement and ultimately puts an end to the search for employment in the open market.

In the region of Sardinia, a comparative study on placement rates of unemployed youth having participated in training schemes, ascertained a positive impact with a 9% difference between participants and a control group. Using logical regression analysis, the influence of other variables on the probability of finding employment was discussed. The results showed that social background (measured by the educational level of the family) and gender had the strongest influence on employability. Participation in a training initiative had a positive influence, albeit to a lesser extent. This influence can be increased by targeting individuals with a low educational level (compulsory education only). Placement still relied on an insertion process handled directly by the family network: the evaluator pointed out the weakness of the Italian PES system, which was responsible for 17% of placements against 40% obtained through family and friends.

- Some evaluators have also demonstrated the greater impact of combined measures.

The evaluation of the measure "Training and Employment" in the Portuguese Pessoa OP involved an analysis of the effects on beneficiaries taking into account the characteristics of beneficiaries and a longitudinal dimension (from 1994). Evaluators tested an approximation to the effects of integrating training and work experience by comparing results with the mid-term evaluation of training-only measures: this showed more positive long-term effects on the stability of placement and also a better match between the content of the training received and the job subsequently found.

- Positive outcomes, other than placement, need to be given more priority as they can be the incentive to continue an integration pathway.

The thematic "Progression Evaluation" in Ireland consisted of a review of progression across measures of the Human Resources OP, identifying good practice and barriers. Its main conclusions were as follows:

- progression targets in programmes were attained but they were set at a very low level initially;
- there was a lack of an overall progression strategy;
- the main desired outcome of schemes and stakeholders is employment even when it is not suitable nor realistic for the target group, and unemployment outcomes are still significant;
- good practices included progression mentors, extensive guidance and counselling, modular organisation of programmes, certification mechanisms, reserved places and bridging between measures.

The Spanish CSF evaluation also highlighted a number of positive outcomes, which should be followed up: increase in the qualification level, motivation for job search; acquisition of work experience; dissemination of information on the labour market and its needs; return to the education system; strengthening of social networks; increase in incomes. On the basis of a qualitative analysis at OP level, it concluded that forms of action designed to dovetail with the local labour market boosted these positive outcomes.

- Projects targeting the most disadvantaged should combine work experience with some form of (basic) skills training.

This was one of the conclusions of the Irish Human Resources OP mid-term evaluation regarding the measure Community employment. It has been confirmed by a number of evaluations, such as that of the Portuguese POC measure (an equivalent short-term employment contract of local interest, the target group is LTU with low qualifications and other disadvantaged groups). Indeed the evaluation concluded that the employability of beneficiaries had not been substantially increased in most cases. It also identified a drift associated with losing sight of the original objectives: some of these contracts were used to fill the staff needs of central and local administration, without provision of any skills training. Nevertheless, evaluators have underlined the importance of such measures for small rural communities, with an ageing population, where they did have an impact on local development.

- Transfer of acquired knowledge to (work) practice continued to represent a hurdle to effectiveness of assistance and continuous training measures' main impact seemed to be not on the career progression of workers but on the competitiveness of enterprises.

This conclusion emerged from the Spanish, Portuguese and the Italian evaluations and was based on the perceived impact by workers, their characteristics as well as those of the companies involved. Results demonstrated the contribution of training projects to the

personal development of workers, and their satisfaction. However, they identified the competitiveness of enterprises as the ultimate purpose of this training and the fundamental influence on the organisation of training provision. Evaluations put forward the substantial contribution of the ESF in bringing about a training culture in enterprises, in promoting the active participation of small firms which had never carried out continuous training before and in structuring a continuous training system.

- Measures strengthening education systems have included an evaluation of impact on indirect beneficiaries, yielding conclusions on effectiveness at system level.

This was the case of the Spanish Education OP evaluation, where the beneficiaries of all training measures were surveyed in terms of immediate employment outcomes and recent labour market history; appropriateness of and follow-up to the training received; satisfaction with provision; etc. Interestingly, placement rates of students having followed work experience modules were compared with placement of students not having followed these modules. Higher and quicker entry rates to the labour market were observed for the first group. These conclusions were then complemented by an appraisal from entrepreneurs and school directors on the relevance and quality of the skills provided, and on implementation issues. By comparing gross placement rates of the different measures of the Education OP, the Italian evaluator has shown that schemes combining school-based training and work-experience ("post-qualifica") have had the greatest impact on placement (33% hold jobs, compared to 21% in "post-diploma"). Beneficiaries found jobs very rapidly (a third within three months of concluding training), but these jobs were not always in accordance with the training received (this happens only in 16% of cases).

2.3.2. *Impact on systems and structures*

Issues to be addressed by the final evaluation included support for the creation or upgrading of structures or measures (training of trainers, new curricula, certification and accreditation mechanisms) as well as the development of links between education and training systems. To ascertain outcomes and impacts at this level, evaluators have mostly resorted to a qualitative analysis of how ESF action has integrated with or modified national practices/policy priorities. The main conclusions were:

- As regards action to strengthen the education systems, the role of the ESF in promoting quality improvements has been confirmed.

The Spanish Education OP has been the object of a comprehensive evaluation, which included an extensive collection of primary information to assess impact on beneficiaries (see above). From this work at beneficiary level, the evaluators have been able to draw conclusions on the effectiveness of the system supported by the ESF. They underlined the important contribution of the ESF to the implementation of the technical stream reform at secondary level (through the development of work experience modules, setting up guidance and counselling systems, catering for disadvantaged students, etc.). The added value of the ESF was perceived as supporting the implementation of the reform, encouraging concentration on the most disadvantaged and promoting career guidance. At a more macro level, evaluators compared the evolution in recent years in terms of investments per student and education level across different streams, and they compared it to the evolution of the qualifications structure of relevant age cohorts. They concluded that, in spite of considerable progress in recent years, the rationale and scope of ESF assistance remained relevant, given that technical secondary education still accounted for a minority of students and budget allocations were still unbalanced.

The Training of teachers evaluation in the Portuguese Education OP was an in-depth measure evaluation. It has taken a systemic approach to impact analysis, taking into account not only immediate outcomes on the teachers undergoing training, but also the effects on the

quality of their teaching, on their contribution to the schools projects, and the overall impact on the setting up of a continuous training system for teachers. The following aspects can be singled out: (a) it contributed to raising the awareness of teachers (at the three levels of education: infant, primary and secondary) and making them receptive to the importance of continuing training; (b) the training projects influenced the efforts of some teachers to introduce innovations in their educational practice; similarly, they had some positive impact in updating the scientific and technical knowledge of teachers; (c) the training projects had little effect at the level of the school environment, apart from the occasional innovation in the operation of schools and some extension of co-operation between teachers; (d) similarly, no significant impact was noted on the improvement of the quality of education or on school achievements of pupils. Other measure evaluations in Portugal included: strengthening the quality of third-level education which analysed the utilisation of ESF funding and its evolution compared to national budgets (the conclusion being that the ESF support has been directed to strategic items of expenditure which have contributed to the maintenance of the quality of higher education in a context of a substantial increase in demand) and the forthcoming evaluation of the technical schools system (Escolas Profissionais).

The evaluation of the Italian Education OP has confirmed these conclusions by identifying ESF value added as increase in quality and strengthening of technical streams. Quality improvements can be found in the gradual implementation of training of teachers (50% of all vocational education teachers), of work experience modules (30% of the overall course duration), and new training methodology and curricula. Strengthening of the technical streams was reflected by some key indicators: (a) establishment of stable links with local employers ; (b) change of family choices towards these streams namely the increase of the enrolment rate in vocational education from 1995 onwards; (c) increase in the rate of permanence in the education system (3% over the 1995–99 period) and decrease of the drop-out rates in the first three years of the VET schools (-6% for the same period). The contextual nature of some of these indicators has made establishing direct causal links very difficult. Still, it can be said that the OP has on the whole achieved good results. The evaluator underlined some critical aspects: the education system was considered to be still a closed world ("self-referential"), it has not integrated with the vocational training system managed by the regional authorities, and a common certification and a mutual skill recognition has not been implemented yet.

- Quality issues, such as certification and accreditation mechanisms, continued to be problematic and an obstacle to effective links between the education and training systems (and hence progression).

The Irish thematic evaluation on cross-measure progression in the HRD OP has concluded that certification assisted that progression when applicants met entry requirements – but in the case of people starting from a low educational base, certification has constituted a barrier to participation in education and training. The evaluation put forward the need for a flexible or modular certification as a means of facilitating progression. It also stressed the urgency of a national framework of qualifications.

- Structural or institutional effects of ESF co-funding have been put forward by a number of evaluations.

In Spain, the ESF's role was perceived as reinforcing existing national policies and measures (quantitative value added) but the evaluation has also underlined institutional effects. Indeed, co-funded schemes, by their requirements and administrative constraints, have had an effect of encouraging and developing mechanisms for better planning of activities, co-ordination structures and interinstitutional relations. This effect has been all the more important because it has been developed with a single or standardised frame of reference, across agencies and regions. This uniformity has allowed for the diffusion of methods, techniques and instruments of socio-economic action from a territorial and sectoral point of view.

In Ireland, an overview of Human Resources Development challenges for 2000–2006 (see below) concluded that the ESF's added value has been to be used as a lever to force greater levels of proximity between policy and practice; to have ensured that provision was focused on the client and relevant to the market, that co-funded provision contained all necessary flanking measures and that the routes between and amongst programmes were made as explicit as possible. In this way, the ESF could be used in a concentrated manner to demonstrate the possibility of reintegration for marginalised groups. It must also be noted that evaluation of the ESF co-funded activities has played a major part in integrating these activities in national policy.

The overall conclusion is that the added value of the ESF is very much linked to the impact on systems.

2.3.3. *Impact on economic and social development*

This topic has not been a priority for most evaluations. The issues of synergy between Structural Funds and of applying the distinction between competitiveness and equity-oriented action remain open for the ex-post evaluation.

Italy was the only exception as regards the specific regional component of the growth of employment, using a shift- share technique . The analysis has taken into account the various economic sectors and the characteristics of the labour market. It must be noted that for Objective 1 regions no correlation was observed between that regional component and the coverage of young people by active labour market policies. This conclusion was in sharp contradiction with the results for Objective 3 regions, which might be explained by the greater effectiveness of training and employment systems in these regions.

2.4. **Recommendations and lessons for the 2000–2006 period**

The final evaluation had the objective of providing information for the next programming period, in particular on how to improve monitoring and evaluation standards on the basis of weaknesses observed in the past. Evaluators have carried out an extensive review of existing information systems and have put forward very precise and detailed recommendations on how to structure and feed the new systems for the next programming period. Some have also put forward a number of recommendations on the content of the programmes, by highlighting priority issues or proposing a fine tuning of objectives.

The review "Challenges for Human resource development 2000–2006" carried out by the Programme Evaluation Unit in Ireland dealt with three questions for the period 2000–2006: on what must the projects be concentrated; how must these programmes be implemented ("delivery mechanisms"), how is transparency of the results to be ensured ("follow-up-evaluation").

On the first question, there was a consensus that social exclusion should be tackled as a priority, because such investment yields the highest return (minimal dead-weight). Other issues were meeting the skill needs of the economy, implementing a lifelong learning policy; developing equal opportunities and the social economy through enterprise development; emphasising more support and less grant aid. A major issue that remains a priority is the integration pathways and the need for a holistic approach with the disadvantaged and long-term unemployed. As regards delivery mechanisms, the main areas for progression are: co-ordination between policy and implementation and between

agencies; more competition in delivery; a client-driven approach, including real pathways to progression, longer-duration activities and flexible provision; establishment of a national qualifications authority and effective certification. Finally, the importance of transparency issues demands that good monitoring and evaluation or feedback systems are ensured. There was a strong emphasis on implementation issues, as it emerges from this programming period that often the failure is not in the policy but in its implementation. For a more focused and co-ordinated approach, the real issue is "how" – the need for a mode of delivery which is flexible, tailored, and market- or client-driven, and critically, closely monitored and evaluated on an on-going basis.

The main policy directions of the recommendations for the next programming period could be summarised as follows:

- bring policy objectives and implementation mechanisms closer;
- improve monitoring and evaluation systems to have an instrument providing feed-back into policy;
- structure training and education systems in a more flexible way;
- after a period of emphasis on capacity issues, move towards quality issues;
- increase responsiveness to the demands of the labour market;
- first discussion of the sustainability of co-funded activities, in particular in view of phasing-out of some Objective 1 regions.

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3. OBJECTIVE 3

3.1. Review and mid-term reprogramming

The Objective 3 programmes appear to have attained their funding take-up objectives for the 1994–99 period. The breakdown of spending is unchanged since the mid-term evaluation.

The weaknesses noted in the mid-term evaluations (e.g. lack of an equal opportunities strategy or inadequate monitoring systems) have not been mitigated.

Success in targeting the most vulnerable groups on the labour market has remained limited. Young people are sometimes found to be over-represented in financial and physical terms in relation to their weight in the out-of-work population. This reflects political priorities at national level. Several evaluators observed that a large proportion of beneficiaries had high skill levels.

In Italy, the trend was to admit better-qualified young people to the training system, with schemes for young university graduates, offering an opportunity to acquire more specialised expertise of a medium to high standard. As a result, there was very little participation of the long-term unemployed (LTU). Planned spending on the Objective 3 LTU priority was 32% of the CSF, but in fact amounted to 22.5% on 31 December 1998. The long-term unemployed represent 6% of the jobless. On the other hand, there was an overspend on assistance for young people (57% of funding as opposed to the planned level of 43%). Young people account for 13% of the unemployed. Young people with second and third-level qualifications represented 52% of this priority, while training for young post-graduates accounted for 62% of Objective 3.

In Spain, the under-25s represent 50% of beneficiaries. When the skill levels of those concerned were examined, they appeared somewhat high (about 25% having higher-level diplomas). However, efforts had been made to target the assistance, the LTU percentage increasing from 6.2% to 10% of beneficiaries since the mid-term evaluation.

In the United Kingdom, a study of the targeting of beneficiaries in terms of their characteristics revealed that young people were over-represented, with very few older people, who at present form the hard core of the long-term unemployed.

In the Netherlands, the evaluator found that the target groups had not been reached, the disadvantaged being under-represented in relation to the proportion of jobless people for which they account. The impact of ESF funding on the relative position of the disadvantaged has been limited.

In Austria, targeting of the most disadvantaged was partly linked to the emphasis on the disabled, who accounted for over 20% of Objective 3 beneficiaries. On the other hand, individual data confirmed that young people were over-represented (30% of clients were under 25) and that the skills structure reflected that of the unemployed population (43% had no certified training). Moreover, the scope of the youth priority has been broadened, the ESF co-funding all projects connected with the avowed objective of full employment for the young: the evaluator states that the massive use of recruitment subsidies for all young people probably gave rise to large substitution and windfall effects.

The situation was different in Denmark, Sweden and Germany:

– In Denmark, the proportion of persons drawing social benefit increased over the period to 70% of programme beneficiaries, while that of young people fell to 28%.

- In Sweden, 40% of ESF participants were drawing social benefit. This is a higher proportion than in national schemes.
- In Germany, the evaluator found that target group participation in the projects – at both federal and *Land* level – largely matched the OP objectives. However, migrants accounted for nearly 50% of federal programme beneficiaries and 25% of beneficiaries of the programmes of the *Länder*, although they had not as such been specified as a target group in the OPs.

Overall, no real progress was made in identifying and specifying the groups at risk of exclusion. States which assigned a smaller proportion of funding to exclusion targeted groups such as ethnic minorities, prisoners or the disabled. This does not take account of the diversity within these groups in the problems they have in entering the labour market. The difficulties experienced e.g. by immigrants in finding work vary greatly depending on their educational level, age and length of absence from the labour market.

Member States which had a “risk of exclusion” priority targeted groups which have great difficulty in entering the labour market by co-funding integration policy schemes rather than conventional ALMP measures.

In most cases, training courses greatly outnumbered other types of action such as employment grants, work experience placements, job-search assistance or job creation schemes. However, in certain Member States where integration policy was not far developed, there was a diversification of the instruments used.

Where substantial reprogramming took place, it tended to be linked to trends in funding take-up, public policy developments or the socio-economic context. The evaluators did not think it arose from their mid-term conclusions and recommendations.

3.2. Better implementation

In the 1989–94 period, the “promoters” complained of administrative problems, unwieldy procedures, long delays in payment and their adverse effects on programming. There is little analytical backing to give an objective measure of these problems: the evaluations quote the promoters’ views and criticise the negative impact on the programmes’ effectiveness.

In forming their judgments, evaluators increasingly took account of the burden of implementation. Implementation studies covered both management (funding flows, controls, etc.) and aspects concerning the quality of the delivery mechanisms (eligibility and information, partnership, etc.), which make it possible to see inside the “black box” and examine the quality of assistance.

3.2.1. Management

Some final evaluations revealed management problems, which were attributed both to the Commission and to the Member State administrations. Confusion arose from the juxtaposition of Community and national rules. The way in which the ESF was or was not dovetailed with national schemes, for example, led to more cumbersome financial arrangements and co-funding and payment rules.

The evaluators noted discrepancies between the principles and aims of the ESF and the way in which they had been interpreted and built into the projects. There was a failure to translate programming principles into practical tools for steering the programme. Shortcomings were found in the role of intermediaries, technical assistance and the information provided to potential players in the programmes. This is apparent, for example, in rigid application of eligibility criteria instead of a more strategic interpretation of the rules.

3.2.2. *Quality of delivery mechanisms*

The partnership principle has certainly progressed, with fuller participation of those responsible for regional policy and of the various “institutional actors” in the fields concerned. This took place in the monitoring committees, which are the “formal” aspect of the partnership.

On a less formal level, the evaluations mention efforts to ensure better involvement of players with a decisive influence on the quality of programming and execution.

Nonetheless, the evaluators found that the “world of work”, and in particular business, did not have a sufficient role in developing strategies which would have allowed action to be better matched to the needs identified.

The impact of the ESF related as much to the modes of operation (policy formulation) as to the amount of activity or the impacts on beneficiaries. Positive effects on management were also noted e.g. as regards operator selection procedures, the partnership and better monitoring systems.

In France, in-depth thematic studies were made of how the programme’s effectiveness was affected by various aspects of implementation. They investigated e.g. the partnership’s role in programming, the handling of checks and rules, funding flows, representation of the actors and evaluation, and always considered both the national and the regional level. It transpires that the national context continues to exert a fundamental influence on the system for carrying out the programme. Overall, the programme partnership remained loosely structured and involved little commitment by the actors. There was no shared project around the partnership. The co-funding provided thus did not allow Community assistance to realise its full potential. This adversely affected the ESF programme’s ability to attain recognition and legitimacy as desired by the parties involved.

In Finland, the programme evaluator produced a “strategic interpretation framework” for collation of the comments by the evaluators or “stakeholders” (partners and actors) on various questions such as the programme’s linkage with employment strategy in Finland, programme implementation, targeting and the partnership. This provided a way of conveying the opinions of a range of stakeholders (covering 15 categories, including organisations representing the public) on how far the programme outcomes and impacts were innovatory as compared with established national practice. A set of 17 questions covering the many dimensions of the Objective 3 programme indicated that the only major innovation was the boost to local and regional cooperation between the various players. The other perceived innovations were the involvement of new players in the areas covered by the programme, better targeting of the most difficult groups (towards the end of the programme), greater emphasis on more personalised approaches, good involvement of project promoters and the scope for projects to learn from each other.

3.3. Outcome and impact analysis

Broadly speaking, the ESF Objective 3 evaluations looked for two types of impact:

- impacts on the beneficiaries, usually observed by means of change-of-status surveys or surveys of placement into work;
- an impact on how public policy operates (systemic impact), usually linked to qualitative changes brought about by ESF assistance.

3.3.1. The information available

- The monitoring system's failure to yield adequate information for use in outcome and impact analysis has generally not been overcome. Governments whose monitoring systems were uninformative saw no appreciable improvement. The evaluators continued to play a key role in information-gathering.

This particularly applied to Spain and France. In Spain, the evaluators put a great deal of effort into making good the shortcomings of the over-general information contained in the final claims forms. They obtained details directly from the operators or by beneficiary surveys. This system depended on a coordinator and involvement of the regional administrative authorities and evaluators.

In Austria, the federal ministry made a particular effort to ensure that from 1998 onwards the ESF evaluation could be based on individual data available from the employment services and social security institutions.

- In virtually all Member States, client surveys were carried out (either on a significant sample of those participating in Objective 3 projects or on a number of specific schemes). These surveys have yielded a great deal of information even if they differ in their arrangements, do not relate to similar schemes and are thus not strictly comparable.

“Control groups” were intended to compare individuals who had benefited from a project (usually including at least one training course) with those who had not received training. They are biased in that the characteristics used to “construct” them (age, sex, educational level, spell of unemployment) are not always the explanatory variables. It is not always possible to interpret the net impacts on individuals.

- Methodological improvements also result from better integration of the various evaluation methods. Qualitative studies have made a very large contribution to better understanding of the ESF, particularly as regards the systemic effects. Including context analyses (statistics on the unemployed and on national policies) in the interpretation of the ESF's role has allowed better assessment of how it relates to national policies. During the reference period, the labour market has profited from a more benign economic climate. However, this improvement in the labour market situation was uneven. There are large disparities between regions and between the different groups concerned: at Community level, there has been a rise in the rates for those who have been out of work for two

years or more. At the same time, new vacancies have remained unfilled. These generally required new skills.

3.3.2. *Impacts on beneficiaries*

The outcome or impact indicators used by the evaluators were as follows:

- Outcome indicators are not solely focused on placement into work, since this is not appropriate for all types of operation. The most frequent definitions are:
 - drop-out rates (positive outcome if the beneficiary has found work, negative if he does not progress to any other activity);
 - numbers obtaining a diploma or training certification (e.g. pass rates in apprenticeship tests);
 - transition rates (or situation on exit from the projects) to other projects, placement into work (nature, type).
- Project relevance: a measure of the link between the project and the job found.
- Satisfaction: the main effects mentioned tend to relate to such factors as quality of life, self-confidence, proactive job-seeking, less isolation.
- Stability indicator: checks the results over time to ascertain impacts.

3.3.2.1. Placement rates

When figures are available, there are two approaches to assessing effects on beneficiaries. One was to aggregate such effects by target group (programme priorities), as in Belgium, Spain, Italy, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom. The other was a breakdown by scheme, as in France, Luxembourg and Finland. The effects were then specific, e.g. to young people who had taken up apprenticeships or to training projects.

Gross effects

Some evaluators did not employ control groups, which would have been ill-suited to the approach of co-funding existing national schemes (e.g. in France and Spain). In some cases, they calculated the gross placement rates by scheme or target group.

In Austria, fairly detailed gross results could be obtained from the individual data. They showed a rise in the placement rate: from 47.5% in 1995 to 57% in 1997 for all Objective 3 beneficiaries, six months after completion. If analysed by client category, the rates were much higher for young people and women than for the LTU and disabled priorities. The evaluator notes that these figures were particularly high given that Objective 3 targeted the most vulnerable. This improvement is due as much to the economic upturn as to a change in the way assistance is provided, viz. greater use of employment grants, which have a greater short-term impact on employment, broadening of the youth priority to cover all young jobseekers and childcare provision, as a result of which the 1997 placement-into-work rates were for the first time higher for women than for men.

In Germany, the employment status of beneficiaries six months after project completion and that of early leavers match the corresponding figures for the national programmes. Given that the target groups are generally regarded as those hardest to place on the labour market, this outcome may be regarded as positive. Early leavers are more likely to have a job after

the end of the project than completers (40% as against 23% one month after the end of the project and 48% against 46% after six months).

In France, an in-depth assessment was made of the PLIE scheme (*Plan local d'insertion par l'économie* — local employment plan), which assists various groups in difficulty. This found fairly stable positive outcome rates over the whole of the period: about 60% for all positive outcomes and around 45% for placement in work. These are regarded as good results in view of the beneficiaries involved, although they do include placement in assisted employment.

In Spain, the main factor influencing integration into working life is age. Placement rates are nearly 60% for those under 25 and fall to 30% after the age of 35. Other factors such as sex, skills level or duration of unemployment have much less influence on the employability of the jobless.

Overall, the gross placement-into-work impacts ranged from about 30% to 80%, while the net figures were always lower.

Net effects were assessed in two ways:

- Comparison of the effects of ESF projects on the beneficiaries compared with a population which was not involved in the project (Italy, Netherlands, United Kingdom).

In the United Kingdom, the results were analysed using several indicators. Generally, upgrading of qualifications concerned the lower skill levels. The improvements were not large, since many training projects were not certified. On average, between 40% and 60% of positive outcomes were achieved for integrated projects. The chances of finding a job depended on the type of project. The surveys revealed that the most effective eligible activities were employment grants and job-search assistance. Surveys of the fate of clients who had taken part in integrated projects showed that ESF projects most improved older men's chances of finding work (net effects). Integrated projects also had a better impact on the least employable. The higher costs of the integrated approach are justified by the fact that it is more effective.

In the Netherlands, placement rates were found to be generally high, largely because of easier conditions on the labour market. Net impacts were generally fairly slight, except for the most disadvantaged groups, which had the highest net placement rates. The net effect of training projects was 33% for the least-skilled and 25% for the over-40s, whereas the average net impact was virtually nil.

In Italy, the placement survey was used to study the impact on beneficiaries. It showed that there was a higher proportion of young graduates than in the reference population. The trainee placement rate was 51% as compared with 28% for the control group which had had no training. The absolute difference was 23%, the relative difference (the net impact taking account of personal characteristics) being 43 points. There was a 61% match between the training followed and the job found. These figures were compared with the chances of finding work determined according to sex, age and educational level. 32% of ESF project leavers obtained open-ended employment contracts (as compared with 60.9% in the reference population). ESF outcomes tended more towards fixed-term contracts, work training contracts and apprenticeship contracts than was the case in the reference population. The logistic regression analysis showed that the factors which most affected the likelihood of finding work were, in descending order, attendance at a training course, sex (the chances being better for men) and educational level.

- The Member States which had set innovation objectives for their programming — Denmark, Finland and Sweden — compared the impact of ESF schemes with that of national schemes in terms of the effects on beneficiaries and of some of the features of ESF projects, such as innovation, partnership and the bottom-up approach.

In Finland, the programme strengthened the tendencies towards a more interactive approach, with a new role for the public sector and the partnership, but only to a limited extent. There was a need for consolidation, to progress from temporary partnerships to a strategic partnership.

In Sweden, an extensive analysis was carried out using a control group (of participants in national schemes) which was the same as for the mid-term evaluation so that the results covered a longer period. Most of the national policy schemes appear to have yielded better results than the Objective 3 schemes. A detailed study was made of persons born outside Sweden, with various group comparisons.

Windfall and creaming effects

- Creaming effects were discussed only rarely in the evaluations. They result from bias in the group selection criteria, since the criterion of direct placement into work was used as a criterion of success and preference was given to the groups most likely to satisfy these performance criteria.

In Italy, the aim of competitiveness led to skewing of selection towards well-qualified participants, and this gave rise to a creaming effect. The groups in greatest difficulty were liable to be neglected in the ESF schemes.

- Windfall effects are effects which would have come about even if no action had been taken. They generally arise because of delivery mechanisms which are not sufficiently focused on those intended to benefit from assistance. The windfall effect is in fact a typical example of programme inefficiency².

In the United Kingdom, comparisons of the placement rates for beneficiaries and for those not registered as jobseekers revealed windfall effects comparable with those measured for the national programmes. They were estimated at about 75%.

In the Netherlands, preventive measures for all the unemployed, including those who had a “reasonable” chance of finding work (given the favourable situation on the labour market) led to substantial windfall effects.

3.3.2.2. Satisfaction surveys

Client satisfaction ratings were generally high. This was true of all evaluations which sought to determine them (in Denmark, Spain and the United Kingdom). It highlights the “contact-establishing” benefits of projects which break down isolation in joblessness, and their motivating effects. Clients were generally less satisfied with direct work relevance, i.e. the link between the training followed and the job found.

In Denmark, participants’ opinions were included in the evaluation results. Their expectations were compared with the results obtained. Completers were more satisfied than the others, one of the factors influencing the likelihood of finding work apparently being motivation. The evaluators noted a correlation between project content and effects on participants. Qualitative variables were identified: self-confidence, social integration and motivation.

² Evaluating EU expenditure programmes: A guide – Ex post and intermediate evaluation, First edition, January 1997, European Commission.

It emerged from the results that the gross effectiveness of projects was greater for young people, but this did not take account of windfall or substitution effects.

Net placement rates depended on the client categories: the lower the “employability” of individuals (the probability that they would find a job), the more effective the projects were.

The chances of finding work depended less on beneficiaries’ personal characteristics than on the availability of jobs on the labour market and the type of project. Good, stable placement rates were achieved using means such as work experience placements, recruitment subsidies as part of integrated projects or placement intermediaries.

3.3.3. The effects on systems

The evaluators stressed qualitative system improvement. System effects usually do not lend themselves to quantification, and the conclusions were based on qualitative studies seeking to demonstrate e.g. better specification of apprenticeship routes, modularisation of training content, operating arrangements, project integration, personal monitoring, etc. Such concepts as pathways to integration or partnership gave rise to such effects and were regarded as fairly novel.

3.3.3.1. The ESF contribution to policy

Quantitative enhancement of existing systems is measured by estimated coverage ratios, both physical (number of ESF beneficiaries/number of national policy beneficiaries in the same area) and financial (ESF expenditure/national policy expenditure in the same area).

ESF co-financing rates for Objective 3 are of course low (3% to 15% of public expenditure on employment or training). Only the French evaluator calculated ratios for the public policy budgets. These studies are questionable, since the areas covered by employment policies in the Member States and the ESF are neither identical nor structured according to the same priorities.

As regards physical ratios, the basis of calculation has no doubt led to overstatement of the ESF’s role: the ESF definitions are not consistent with those of national policy and the ESF monitoring systems count the same beneficiaries several times, aggregating direct and indirect beneficiaries. The resulting ratios are always high (between about 15% and 25%).

3.3.3.2. Innovative factors: pathways to integration

Pathways to integration had been given priority at the programming stage and this was put into effect. Pathways already existed in some countries, e.g. Finland and France, and were developed in others, e.g. Belgium, Spain, Italy and the United Kingdom, where they were a priority for the 1997–99 period.

The pathways approach generally amounted to no more than an integrated approach at individual level, and did not really mesh with the employment dimension. The evaluators consider that these are not new approaches but a

generalisation of existing practices, with mainstreaming effects on all public occupational integration policies. Coordinating capacity is needed for project integration and much depends on local arrangements. The “missing link” in the pathway partnerships always appears to be that of direct contact with employment and business.

In the Netherlands, post-pathway placement rates are lower than for training or placement projects. This poorer outcome is explained by the target groups and by the fact that the pathways to integration take a long time and are rarely completed within the one-year period covered by the study.

In the United Kingdom, in-depth studies of the net effects on placement rates after six months show that for the most disadvantaged groups better rates are achieved with integrated projects.

In Spain, the ESF's impact rests on project diversification. The long-term impact of this type of activity on the less-advantaged was highlighted.

In Italy, the systemic impacts were attributed to the way in which training policies were programmed and managed, with better integration of training and labour policies, the concomitant dialogue and integration of activities along the pathway.

In Germany, the evaluator notes that ESF-cofunded activities contributed to developing and implementing pathways to integration, financing a series of steps allowing enabling persons who were excluded or at risk of exclusion to connect to the labour market.

In Belgium, the added value of the Community dimension of ESF policy can be seen in the general adoption of the pathway to integration approach. Its main merits are the partnership and monitoring of action taken by different operators. As regards the partnership, three approaches coexist, depending on the territorial levels concerned: a charter for relations between institutional players, specific partnership agreements, cooperation between operators. The third approach allows the training and placement services on offer to be tailored to the needs of the target groups. Approaches to monitoring vary greatly. The reasons given by the French Community for not establishing a system to evaluate scheme effectiveness relate to clients' privacy. The evaluator believes the explanation lies in reservations about a tool which would allow the results of various operators to be compared.

In France, the impact on action by the public authorities is discussed broadly in terms of three types of effect:

- Increased capacity linked to the level of funding. This effect is accentuated when the marginal extra funding determines whether arrangements can exist or not. More precise targeting on the type of scheme/project is required to measure these make-or-break effects.
- The innovatory effect is most apparent in the PLIE schemes (the integration pathway). The pathway concept has become an established way of working in employment and integration policy. Innovation is also apparent in connection with educational engineering, practice followed by trainers, etc.
- The public management effect: the most indisputable effect lies in the spread of the principles of monitoring and evaluation. The ESF also has an image-enhancing effect and the wish to use it is sometimes motivated by the legitimacy it confers.

The evaluator concludes that it is difficult to analyse the strategic effects, in the sense of lasting changes in the employment, integration and training systems attributable to the ESF, since public policy and ESF priorities are moving in the same direction.

3.4. Recommendations for the 2000–2006 period

The timetable for the final evaluation (with reports scheduled for the spring of 1999) was such that recommendations were generally available for the new period. It must be said that they do not greatly differ from those made on the basis of the mid-term evaluation.

The main problem in linking the recommendations for the 1994–99 period more closely to the new programming exercise is that there have been changes in the ESF policy stance.

On the whole, the recommendations are therefore more general than in the mid-term evaluation and do not always endorse the choices made for the 2000–2006 programming. The most important are:

- better targeting of the major problems on the labour market and better identification of clients' individual problems;
- a more focused approach to raise the profile of the ESF and ensure that it provides added value;
- integrated programmes taking the local dimension into account and bringing in businesses and private funds;
- very specific recommendations on monitoring systems, which were generally felt to be unsatisfactory for evaluation purposes.

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4. OBJECTIVE 4

4.1. Evolution of programmes and impact of the mid-term review

Objective 4 is the objective which has changed most over the reference period as the co-funded policies and the interpretation of the underlying principles have evolved. In a number of Member States, the programmes provided for developments in the schemes and projects, such as the progression from anticipation projects to training and networking projects (Sweden) and the implementation of the continuing training system following its design in the first programming period (Italy). With regard to other Member States, the evaluators pointed out that the mid-term recommendations had indeed been carried out, either mentioning them specifically (greater assistance for SMEs, development of partnerships with joint bodies to organise continuing training, contribution to local development in France, broadening of the target groups to include the self-employed, greater concentration on SMEs in the Netherlands) or reporting in general terms, estimating a “percentage” of recommendations which have been implemented (Finland).

Apart from the mid-term review, a number of points specific to Objective 4 programming were considered by some evaluators in the final evaluation:

- Integration of anticipation projects: the role of anticipation, i.e. to identify the priority skills and occupations interest and the training projects to be co-financed in order to help workers to adapt to industrial change, was not very apparent. Generally speaking, the “anticipation” priority did not expand greatly in the second period, although progress was noted in some countries (France, Netherlands, Finland). In Sweden, anticipation projects to establish training plans for all the employees of the businesses involved in the programme were a prerequisite for the training projects, so that anticipation was integrated at programme level. In other cases, the “anticipation” aspect was included in the other two programme priorities. In some countries, including France, the “training” priority activities appear to have supported those of the “anticipation” and “systems improvement” priorities, rather than the other way round.
- Funding take-up: the underspend noted in the 1994–96 period was made good in the second period, possibly at the cost of looser selection criteria (Netherlands) and/or less strict targeting in terms of the groups concerned or the types of training co-funded (France, French-speaking Belgium). In France, the sources of co-funding were diversified by involving the bodies responsible for collecting businesses’ training contributions. As a result of the budgetary situation in several “Länder” and the entry into force of the new social legislation (*Sozialgesetzbuch III – SGBIII*), changes had to be made in the public co-funding of certain activities in Germany and greater use had to be made of other sources, with the result that implementation was delayed. This acceleration of funding take-up was mainly apparent in training projects.
- Delivery mechanisms: in most cases, the evaluators noted no fundamental changes in this aspect in the course of the reporting period. The

procedures were considered to be too lengthy and burdensome for businesses, and in particular SMEs, to be motivated to submit projects (Belgium, France, Italy, Netherlands). This also applies vis-à-vis “equivalent” projects financed under national policies (Italy). A necessary condition for success proved to be the use of intermediaries to liaise with companies and assist in getting projects off the ground, whether this was done by private consultants (France), the agency in charge of implementation (Sweden) or the public administration (in Spain, simpler approval conditions for “joint plans” involving several businesses).

- Monitoring and information systems: here the evaluations fall into two broad categories, one noting the inadequacies of the monitoring systems, with little or no improvement during the programming period (Italy, Netherlands, French-speaking Belgium, Spain), and the other reporting the evaluators' efforts to set up databases which were integrated with the administrative system and sought to remedy the deficiencies (France, Denmark). Some reports mentioned no particular problem with monitoring systems (Finland, Germany).

4.2. Implementation

- Most of the evaluations report an increase in the 1997–99 period in the number of participating SMEs other than VSEs (Sweden, France, Italy, Finland, Spain), and this was seen as improving the focus on SMEs. However, this finding was not necessarily confirmed in terms of the amount of money or numbers of employees involved. In some cases, the explanation lay less in a conscious policy of favouring SMEs than in a wish to use up the funds available (France). SME participation (88%) fell slightly in Germany in the second period, but still represented a large number of workers (72%).
- There were no very clear trends in the profiles of the businesses concerned as regards the sectors to which they belonged and/or their situation with regard to industrial change. The average number of businesses per Objective 4 project varies greatly across the Member States and the priorities in question. The industrial/secondary sector appears to have been “over-represented” compared with the tertiary sector (France, Germany). Some evaluations (Italy, Germany) also mention a “creaming effect”: the businesses taking part tended to be firms which were growing rather than firms which were restructuring. This effect is linked to the way in which the Member States handled the concept of industrial change.
- The principle of across-the-board action was not put into practice, at least as originally formulated. The evaluators found that the projects either addressed firms' specific needs (Sweden, France) without ensuring transferability to other companies/sectors or had very “generic” content such as general training in office technology (Belgium).
- The breakdown of beneficiaries by skill level, age and/or position in the business varied from one Member State to the other depending on targeting criteria which were more or less explicit in the various programmes. Most evaluations note a substantial proportion of skilled

workers, management staff or workers already following training in their firms (France, Italy, Finland, United Kingdom, Spain, Germany). In Germany, the evaluator comments that the high proportion of management staff was justified by the fact that the success of investment in human resources depended on the commitment and support of this category of employee. In the Netherlands, there was a very high coverage rate for less-skilled workers in SMEs and the evaluator noted that the training was not targeted on the (medium and high-level) qualifications which were of greatest importance in firms' organisational changes. In Sweden, all employees of the firms participating in the programme were covered by the training courses, the majority being low-skilled. However, a higher average skill level was observed in the smallest firms.

4.3. Results and impacts

A great deal of information was collected for the Objective 4 evaluation, mainly on how respondents perceived the Objective 4 activities: surveys of project promoters and stakeholders and of businesses and workers. Germany is a special case since a comparative analysis was carried out using "mirror" groups of companies which had not been involved. This work is detailed in the attached table.

Results and impacts were classified as relating to businesses, workers and strengthening of systems. In assessing them, it must be borne in mind that since Objective 4 was generally rather late in starting up an appreciable number of projects had not been completed when the evaluations were made.

4.3.1. *Businesses*

As regards businesses, the effects observed in terms of organisational adjustment to industrial change generally related to attitudes and continuing training practice: an impact on training plans (both quantitatively and qualitatively), the nature of the training offered, its relevance to industrial change, the degree of worker involvement.

In France, the Objective 4 projects to improve workers' skills and flexibility led to an enhancement of businesses' training plans but had limited effects on adjustment to new technologies, the development of new techniques or products and work organisation. The evaluator considered that Objective 4 had made a "limited" contribution to positioning firms with respect to their environment.

The evaluator in French-speaking Belgium devised an index rating the relevance of training to industrial change on the basis of a project survey which took account of training content, beneficiary characteristics and organisational features (certification, evaluation). This index generally proved to be positive.

In Italy, on the other hand, the evaluator found that most of the training was multidisciplinary and linked to firms' specific needs, without being closely integrated into their training plans.

In Sweden, the evaluator found that Objective 4 had allowed many small firms to make a start on skills development. However, most of the firms participating in Objective 4 already had experience of continuous training. (There was a positive correlation between the positive effects of projects and previous experience in the field.)

In the United Kingdom, a before-and-after comparison of training systems in the firms participating in Objective 4 found a significant rise in the proportion of workers involved in training activities, the proportion of workers with a training plan and the proportion of firms reporting that they had a training budget.

In the Netherlands, the evaluator noted that the participation of large firms in joint projects produced "structuring" effects in human resources management practice (training plans, etc.) in the SMEs.

In Finland, one of the evaluators identified broader impacts in the form of closer cooperation between businesses, the authorities and the training and research organisations, better "self-organisation" in businesses and the creation of new forms of cooperation between SMEs.

In Germany, a number of microeconomic indicators (turnover, profit, exports and employment rate) was analysed for businesses which had participated in Objective 4 activities, showing that they scored more highly than non-participants. The scores for firms which had an active training policy were higher than for those which did not, but appreciably lower than for Objective 4 participants.

4.3.2. *Workers*

The impacts on workers were considered case by case in terms of improvement in employment (or reduced risk of redundancy) and employability, the latter being assessed on the basis of improved qualifications. Some evaluators thought that firms benefited more from these programmes than the workers concerned (France, Spain, Germany) while others suggested that the benefits were shared between greater competitiveness of the businesses and better qualifications for some categories of worker (United Kingdom). These impacts must in any case be seen against the background of improving labour market conditions over the period 1997–99 and the "running in" of an approach with a greater focus on life-long learning.

Few attempts were made to assess the effects on employment.

In France, Objective 4 does not seem to have avoided redundancies: 20% of the 800 businesses surveyed had shed labour between 1995 and 1998, with fewer workers dismissed in 1998. Over the three years, between 23% and 52% of the "beneficiary organisations" had made workers redundant after completion of Objective 4, of whom 50% had been involved in Objective 4 projects. In 1998, 72% of firms thought Objective 4 had not made it possible to avoid redundancies and 43% thought it had not limited the number of redundancies. In this evaluation, it was not possible to determine whether Objective 4 beneficiaries had been better placed in seeking work after dismissal. The training was very closely linked to the requirements of the jobs occupied by the workers at the time and had not led to much career mobility.

In the United Kingdom, 55% of the businesses surveyed stated that they had taken on labour in the last three years, as compared with 16% who said they had cut their workforce. (No information was available on the nature of the flows into and out of employment).

In Finland, on the basis of firms' returns and various extrapolations, the evaluator estimated that 10 000 jobs had been created or saved. None of these evaluations yielded reference data allowing the scale of redundancies to be related to developments on the labour market.

According to the German evaluator, the impact on workers could be determined only by studying the results for control groups. He observed that the number of workers employed in Objective 4 firms did not fall in the period 1996–99, whereas there was a fall of 2% in firms with an active training policy and 6% in firms with no training activity. The evaluator also used control groups for workers (comparing workers employed in Objective 4 firms, workers employed in firms with an active training policy and workers employed in firms with no training policy). For methodological reasons, this approach did not yield sound results and had to be abandoned.

The effects on upgrading qualifications were inferred from levels of participation in training activities rather than observed as such (Spain).

4.3.3. *Systems*

Systems improvement related to continuing training and arrangements for anticipating requirements.

In Italy, Objective 4 made it possible to structure continuous training systems in businesses, but at the cost of more unwieldy procedures than in national policies. It contributed to projects such as the personalisation of training and training vouchers, which remained at the experimental stage.

In Spain, too, Objective 4 contributed to strengthening the continuous training system, allowing the emergence of activities which complemented current FORCEM practice, such as mentoring, counselling and targeting of workers traditionally less involved in continuous training.

In Belgium and the Netherlands, Objective 4 made it possible to establish, strengthen or bring into play “employment observatory”-type bodies.

In Finland, thorough analysis of the anticipation projects established that they had helped to strengthen an analysis system but that the results were little used and there should have been greater cooperation both among forecasters and between forecasters and potential users of their findings.

4.4. **Recommendations and lessons for the 2000–2006 period**

The Objective 4 priorities were incorporated into the policy fields c) and d) distinguished by the new ESF regulation under the headings of promotion of life-long learning and promotion of adaptability.

A substantial number of recommendations and conclusions arising from the final evaluations were relevant to programming for the 2000–2006 period but were not necessarily convergent:

- greater involvement of businesses in project preparation;
- better matching of the needs of individuals and businesses;
- a more integrated approach embracing several policies (businesses, regions, branches);
- greater targeting of the workers “in greatest difficulty”;
- fuller use of an anticipative approach, covering both dissemination of the results of anticipation projects and the use of these methods in training projects;

- better mobilisation of SMEs;
- greater flexibility in the arrangements for implementation.

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Objective 4 programme evaluation surveys

Country	Surveys	Notes
Austria	Sample of 2 000 workers	Currently being processed
Belgium	French-speaking: (all) 79 promoters; 1 235 training beneficiaries	In hand (see activity report October 1999)
Denmark	226 projects	
Germany	Samples: 12 443 workers (response rate 23.5%: 2 925 respondents) and 3 713 businesses (response rate: 19.7%: 732 respondents). Control groups for businesses: 1 070 (10.7%) returns allowing two groups to be distinguished: 781 have an active training policy and 289 do not.	
Spain	2 400 workers; 400 + 760 promoters; 408 workers on training leave	
Finland	“Anticipation” priority: 46 “networks”; 3 case studies. “Training, counselling, support” priority: 100 project promoters, 400 businesses and beneficiaries. “Promotion of expertise and innovation networks” priority: 76 project promoters; 64 businesses.	
France	200 promoters + 200 businesses (1997–98) + 400 businesses (1999), 80 regional officers; 1 500 workers	“Indirect” survey of workers through their employers
Italy	20 case (project) studies involving interviews with training beneficiaries, detailed observation of how the projects operated	
Netherlands	15+10 promoters 9 businesses 8 workers 31 projects/studies	
United Kingdom	20 “stakeholders” 200 businesses +1 000 workers + 30 promoters	
Sweden	50 promoters; 1 295 workers; 9 “mirror” case studies	

5. EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR MEN AND WOMEN WITHIN ESF ACTIVITIES

5.1. Output

5.1.1. Participation rates of women

Table 1. Unemployment weight, participation rates and distribution of funds in the ESF (1997)

Country	Female share of unemployment, %	Female share of LTU, %	Female share of part time employment, %	Female share of ESF participants, %	Female share of ESF financing, %
Austria (obj. 3)	56	44	86	49	
France (obj. 3)	50	54	82	42	38
Ireland (obj.1)	31	51	73	54	45
Sweden (obj.4)	46	42	80	45	
UK (obj. 3)	37	26	81	46	
Italy (obj.3)	51	51		57	
Germany (obj.3)	44	44	87	45-55	
Spain (obj.3)	54			52	

The 1999 Employment Guidelines emphasised the importance of offering active labour market policies to women in proportion to their share of unemployment. As shown in the mid-term review, this general principle has not been systematically followed in ESF programmes. In two of the countries examined – Austria and France – the share of women in ESF measures was clearly lower. In France the gap between the female share of the long-term unemployed and their share of participants was even wider. The French report pointed out that because the ESF is only marginally involved in the public sector the share of women in the programme has been low.

In Spain and Sweden, the participation of women in ESF projects almost equalled their share of the total unemployment. The Swedish report however noted that this was largely due to the participation of the (female dominated) public sector in the programme: In the public sector 90% of participants were women, in the private sector only 35%.

In the UK, Ireland, Italy and Germany on the other hand, women's participation in ESF measures was high compared to their share of the unemployed. In Germany, this was mostly attributed to the federal (further training) programme which had a higher proportion (55%) of female participants than the Länder-programmes (45%). In the light of long-term unemployment figures the situation in Ireland came out as less favourable. It must also be noted that in the UK and Ireland in particular, the female unemployment rate and women's share of unemployment did not give a full account of women's situation in the labour market; there was hidden unemployment among women who stayed home and did not register themselves as unemployed. It is thus important to include non-unemployed

women in various measures. Lack of childcare was a major reason for the low labour market participation – this was taken into account in those countries, with programmes designed to alleviate the situation.

Part-time unemployment among women is also a factor distorting unemployment statistics. Women's share of part-time work varied between 73 and 87 percent in the countries examined. Involuntary part-time work is hidden unemployment that also applies to countries such as Sweden and UK, where women's share of the unemployed is relatively low.

The overall level of female participation was at about the same level as in the mid-term reports, although fluctuations can be observed over time in some countries. In Ireland, the proportion of women has increased from 36% (1992) to 54% (1997), though women's participation in the labour market increased at the same time. In Austria, female participation in the programmes has diminished constantly during the latter part of the programming period, from 53% (1995) to 49% (1997).

5.1.2. Participation of women in different types of measures

The participation of women can vary significantly between measures within a programme. As also noted in the mid-term evaluation, women still tended to be underrepresented in initiatives that directly involved employers, such as work-placement and professional experience initiatives. In Austria, women were the majority in training programmes, while men were the majority in active employment-finding measures. The French and German reports acknowledged that women participated to a lesser extent in employment measures than in training measures; in Spain and the UK women were a minority in e.g. wage subsidy projects. However, in Ireland an increasing proportion of women participated in work experience and work preparation projects.

The 1999 Employment Guidelines also paid attention to the imbalance in the representation of women or men in certain sectors and occupations. Offering training for non-typical occupations was seen as an essential starting point to diminishing the segregation in the labour market. In the UK, Ireland and Italy, specific measures for training for non-traditional occupations were put in place. In Ireland the share of women in training for non-typical occupations was higher than women's share in those occupations in the labour market. In Italy, the specific measure for training women for non-traditional sectors did not reach its full potential due to difficulties in implementation. In general however, the measures reflected the occupational segregation and gender stereotypes. As illustrated in the Spanish report, women were for the most part trained for typical female occupations (service sectors, health and care, clerical and banking).

5.1.3. *Distribution of funds*

Data on the distribution of funds between men and women was available for a few countries only. In France and Ireland it was shown that women received less financing than their proportion in the programmes reflected. The Swedish report states that the female dominated public sector received 75% - 85% of the amount received by the private sector per participant and that even within the public sector, the participating men spent more time in the projects than the women. The Spanish report notes that women were over-represented in projects which have lower unit costs (e.g. guidance) and under-represented in projects with high unit costs – an estimate given shows that the overall average expenditure by male participant could be as much as 50% higher than the expenditure by female participant.

5.2. **Outcomes**

Most of the indicators used concerned female participation rates in the programmes. Outcome indicators giving information on positive outcomes for women and men, employment in subsidised vs. non-subsidised work, employment in non-typical occupations etc. were less common. Outcome goals varied from one Member State to another. For some countries the priority has increased the share of the female workforce. Others, who had already achieved a good level of female participation in the labour market, aimed at diminishing horizontal and vertical segregation.

Preliminary conclusions based on specific country results would suggest that:

- employment outcomes after the projects were for women at least at the same level as for men, although women got more part-time and/or temporary jobs;
- more women than men generally reached a positive outcome: more women than men moved into further training or education after the project;
- however, specific groups of women were particularly disadvantaged and reached less positive outcomes, e.g. women returnees, women with no or low qualifications, women with a disability;
- in general, the measures, as well as jobs obtained after the measures, tended to reflect the occupational segregation and gender stereotypes. Training for non-traditional occupations has not made a substantial contribution to alleviating this situation; lack of child-care in some countries reinforced the segregation;
- women entrepreneurs: there was evidence to suggest that the share of women in enterprise support measures is increasing; in addition, more women than men achieved self-employment after the measures.

5.2.1. Employment outcomes

The results of male/female comparisons of post-project employment outcomes were mixed. In the UK, a lower proportion of women moved into jobs than men on leaving the projects. However, an analysis taking account for personal characteristics and other factors showed that women had a higher probability than men of being in work 6 months after leaving their project. In Ireland and Germany, employment outcomes for men and women were largely at the same level. However, in Ireland and the UK, it was noted that women got more part-time and/or temporary jobs than men. Also, job outcomes were consistently lower for lone parents, women with no qualifications and women returners than for the rest of beneficiaries.

In Austria more women than men got a job after the measure and the women were also more likely than the men to still be in work 9 months after the projects, a finding that was consistent also when looking at **breakdowns** by age group, qualifications and type of measures attended by the women. One explanation for this was found in the targeting of the measures: men belonging to particularly disadvantaged groups had been targeted while the women on the programme in general represented a cross-section of the normal population.

In Italy, it was noted that more men than women found a job at the end of a training measure and that women tended to return to unemployment to a higher extent than men. In Spain, it was also observed that generally more men than women find a job after the measures (overall 42% of men and 38% of women), except in the youngest age groups, where the differences were smaller and tended to disappear.

5.2.2. Other positive outcomes

Progress to further training was the main positive outcome considered in addition to job outcomes. In the UK, 76% of women and 69% of men obtained a positive outcome. Significantly more women than men moved into further training or education after the project. That was also the case in Ireland. In the UK more women than men were also able to obtain qualifications on their projects. However, this may partly be explained by a higher level of initial qualifications for women. Also some of the difference was due to the nature of projects women attended, which generally had more emphasis on training (and sometimes, also, had further training as their intended outcome) rather than work experience. It was however noted again that some groups of women (lone parents, women with no qualifications and women returners) faced particular difficulties and their level of positive outcome was clearly lower than the overall figure. The Italian report arrived at a similar conclusion – the training systems have difficulties in meeting the needs of women who want to return to the labour market after a long absence.

5.2.3. Reducing segregation in the labour market

Data on the type of employment obtained by former participants was not widely available. The Irish data showed evidence of gender segregation: women concentrating in the service sectors, banking and insurance; men in the industry, engineering, transport and communications and agriculture sectors. One main factor identified by the Irish report, reinforcing the horizontal and also the vertical segregation, was the lack of child care, which keeps women in part-time jobs and in typical female occupations.

In the UK, a particular effort to reduce the horizontal segregation of the labour market was made through Priority 3, which was successful in re-training participants for non-traditional occupations. However, across priorities, the jobs gained after the measures were in gender-typical occupations (clerical for women, manual for men) and the overall conclusion was that gender stereotypes were being reproduced under Objective 3. In Italy, the measures have resulted in increased opportunities for employment in the service sector and in jobs requiring intermediary qualifications – sectors which already have the highest concentration of female employment.

In France, women's employment has been limited to few professions, which has meant fierce competition for the jobs available. The lack of childcare especially in the rural areas has aggravated the situation. Widening the scope of professions for women would reduce labour market segregation and improve women's employment level. In Austria non-typical jobs were mainly thought to be found in the new sectors that do not yet have an established gender image.

The Spanish report gave an example of a new approach to wage subsidies where the subsidy was increased if the (female) participant was integrated in a sector where women are under-represented – despite being economically attractive, this type of aid did not reach a significant volume.

In Sweden, a main target in the short term was to improve the labour market situation of women by developing their competencies, with a particular focus on female-dominated workplaces. Objective 4 measures contributed to this objective, without having a wider impact on vertical and horizontal segregation.

5.2.4. Women entrepreneurs

ESF programmes have given increasing visibility to the theme of women entrepreneurs. In Ireland, the share of women in the enterprise support and employment grant measure has varied from 37% (1992) to 50% (1995), being 44% in 1997. Women's participation has thus increased, especially in the Local Enterprise measure (over 60%). In addition, in the enterprise support measure, the expenditure on women was higher than their share in the measures. There was no data on the number of businesses started as a result of the measures.

In Italy, a specific measure to promote gender equality in business creation was implemented as well as other types of management training for women within the national programmes.

In Sweden, within the Objective 4 programme, enterprise networks for women were established, offering advice, exchange of experiences and training.

In the UK, 5% of female and 4% male leavers (in Priority 1, 9% of female and 7% of male leavers) moved into self-employment. Women's better performance was seen as encouraging.

In Germany the proportion of women in the enterprise creation measure was 82%.

In France the share of women in enterprise creation measures was slightly higher in ESF-funded than in national measures.

5.2.5. Disadvantaged groups of women

Disadvantaged groups of women were not systematically identified and targeted in ESF programmes, although there is evidence of increased awareness and steps towards an improvement in this respect and in some countries **disaggregated** results have been presented.

In the UK, women returners (women who had 12 months ago been looking after the family or home) were less likely to get a job after the projects than other women. They tended to end up more often in training rather than employment, reflecting the greater need of some women for further training and/or education. However, women returners were more successful in achieving qualifications and building confidence on projects than leavers as a whole.

In Ireland as a result of specific measures for women returners, 50% of participants (1996-98) found employment while 5-8% went into further training. A growth in self-confidence was observed as well. Women returners were also mentioned in the Austrian programme as one of the disadvantaged groups for which special measures should be envisaged but there were no results available.

While women returners are a particular problem group in the UK, lone parents and women with no previous qualifications were also seen as disadvantaged groups. These groups experienced consistently poorer labour market performance after the ESF measures than all women or men. Lone parents, however, had greater success in achieving qualifications than leavers as a whole, although they more often left the projects for domestic reasons.

In Ireland, a Woman's Education Initiative was established that targeted different educationally disadvantaged groups of women: lone parents, women with literacy problems who have children, domestic violence

victims, refugees etc. The projects had various formats but many of them addressed literacy.

In Sweden, 15% of the funding directed to developing women's competencies was devoted to women with low education level. In Italy, young women with low education level were identified as particularly disadvantaged.

5.3. Significance of the ESF for equal opportunities

The Structural Funds is one of the EU policies where a particular effort has been made to enforce the principle of equality between men and women. The ESF has since the 1970s played a key role in this respect. The ESF measures have resulted in some improvements in women's position in the labour market and progress has been made in identifying specific problems and developing appropriate measures. Transferring the equal opportunities approach is now a current topic, but there was little information in the evaluations on the influence of the ESF measures on national policies.

Swedish experience showed that equal opportunities tended to disappear on their way from the documents to practical implementation. At the grass-roots level there was uncertainty about how equal opportunities should be implemented and a bottom-up approach thus did not work – more top-down instructions were needed. However, Objective 4 has successfully developed women's competencies and it was said that the improvement would not have taken place without the Objective 4 programme. Equal opportunities was a theme running through all priorities and public awareness campaigns played an important role.

In Spain, the evaluator noted a trend towards greater awareness and efforts to disseminate equality material: good practice guides have been published and distributed at local and regional levels.

In France there was a strong belief in the universalistic approach. The ESF has provided the 'affirmative action' policies that exist in France. But in past years there has been a change away from the universalistic approach: specific measures are now viewed more positively and equal opportunities for men and women are now talked about at the government level. In national measures the share of women in the projects was lower than in ESF-funded projects (38.5% vs. 42%). There is a goal of integrating this EU-induced target of equal opportunities into national employment and training policies.

Ireland sees that the current *de jure* gender equality in Ireland achieved largely because of EU legislation can only lead to *de facto* equality through mainstreaming policies. ESF-supported pilot projects have an important role to play in providing good practice examples. There now exist a number of national equal opportunities measures as well, with significant progress made, particularly since 1993.

5.4. Recommendations

Most reports have emphasised the need to continue efforts to promote gender equality in the next programming period. Gender equality as a policy objective needs to be strengthened and put into operational practice, from the level of selecting projects to improving awareness of gender segregation at individual organisations and companies. It is acknowledged that looking at women as a single group is too simplistic. A more strategic approach is needed with focus on particular groups of women, as well as men, if the impact of gender equality policies is to be maximised. In this connection, the UK, Ireland, France and Italy have emphasised the need to develop the childcare system and to ensure flexible provision of training. Improvements were seen to be needed also in data-gathering systems and the quality of data concerning the equal opportunities aspect in general.

Participation of women in the labour market and in ESF activities

	B	DK	D	EL	E	F	IRL	I	L	NL	A	P	FIN	S	UK	EUR 15
<i>Share of women in : (in %) (1)</i>																
Working population	42%	46%	43%	39%	39%	46%	39%	38%	37%	42%	43%	46%	48%	48%	44%	42%
Of which : Working in manuf. Ind.	19%	26%	24%	22%	16%	24%	23%	24%	11%	17%	22%	32%	25%	22%	23%	23%
Unemployed	54%	56%	47%	62%	51%	53%	38%	51%	50%	53%	43%	52%	49%	43%	34%	49%
Long-term unemployed	56%	53%	51%	68%	58%	56%	33%	52%	50%	49%	48%	53%	42%	37%	24%	51%
<i>Share of women in beneficiaries in: (in %) (2)</i>																
Obj 1	-	-	54%	na	48%	-	39%	48%	-	-	-	44%	-	-	-	-
Obj 3	64-52%		50%	-	48%	43%	-	51%	na	na	56%	-	48%	55%	43%	-
Obj 4	68%	Na	24%	-	26%	20%	-	na	na	15%	32%	-	-	40%	-	-

Source : (1) Labour Force survey –1996 data
(2) Mid-term evaluation reports

B	obj. 3	'64% =data 94-96; for the Flemish Community - report p 34 51,6%=data 93-95; for the French Community - report p 137
	obj. 4	Flemish Community only: 74 % for 94 and 65 % for 95-report p 27 (68 % pour 94+95)
DK	obj. 3	data for 1995- Executive summary of report - p11
D	obj. 1	data for 94-96 (to be compared with weight in unemployment for the area of 59,6%; synthesis report p 103
	obj. 3	data for 1995-only for training projects in the Bund programme-synthesis report p 65- data for other parts of the programme indicate higher shares.
	obj. 4	1996- evaluation report: tab 5,4-p90
E	obj. 1	data for 94-96, excl. OP on small organisations; synthesis report p103
	obj. 3	data for 95, for training projects only; synthesis report - vol 3 - p27
	obj. 4	data for 94-95- French version of the synthesis report: tab 26 p 33

F	obj. 3 obj. 4	data for 95, p 88 June 97 report data for priority 2 (training) "six questions clés..." 9/07/97 p 19 "avec une représentation de 20 %, ..., elles sont sous-représentées par rapport à leur poids dans l'ensemble des salariés mais la répartition est conforme à leur représentation dans le secteur secondaire"
IRL	obj. 1	data for 94-96, HRD OP; HRD mid-term evaluation report-p 208
I	obj. 3 & 1	data for 1995-National evaluation report 1994-95- p 154
NL	obj. 4	data for projects which had started before 1/7/96- evaluation report p 42
AT	obj. 3 obj. 4	data for 1995 - evaluation report p 38 data for 95-96-evaluation report p 30
P	obj. 1	data for 1995- PESSOA OP- mid-term evaluation report – p 160
FIN	obj. 3	data for 95-97 (July) from individual reports on the measures in Objective 3
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