

EMPLOYMENT MEASURES IN THE FIELD OF LABOR MARKET FINANCED BY THE EUROPEAN SOCIAL FUND

Associate Professor PhD **Mihai POPESCU**
"Ștefan cel Mare" University of Suceava, Romania
mihaip@seap.usv.ro

Abstract:

This paper presents an overview of Sustainable Development in the European context and in particular about European policies in the field of the labor market.

I have pointed that the accessibility of the funds of the Human Capital Operational Program (POCU), which have as main purpose the promotion of high-quality and long-term jobs for young people and disadvantaged people, with a view to combating economic development disparities and between Romania and the EU Member States.

Key words: The European Social Fund, economic development, labor market

JEL classification: F15, O15, Q01

1. INTRODUCTION

The European Social Fund (ESF) is the instrument by which the European Union funds the strategic objectives of employment and training policy to anticipate social and economic change (1). The European Social Fund finances employment proposals with a view to increasing the adaptability of enterprises and, implicitly, workers, labor market participation and promoting accessibility to vocational training and promoting social inclusion and facilitating access to the labor market for disadvantaged people. Thus, through the programs and projects proposed, the employment and the reduction of the unemployment rate are pursued.

The European Social Fund is thus the main means of financing employment and social inclusion policies by approving and supporting various funded projects, the main aim being to reduce labor market imbalances on the low employment rates by certain social categories by attracting the potential workers on the labor market, especially the disadvantaged (young people, the elderly, the unemployed, women, people of certain ethnic groups) who are finding it difficult to find a job.

The promotion of active employment measures aims to attract and retain staff on the labor market by supporting the activities started for the purpose of employment as follows:

Table No. 1: Projects contracted by types of beneficiary organizations

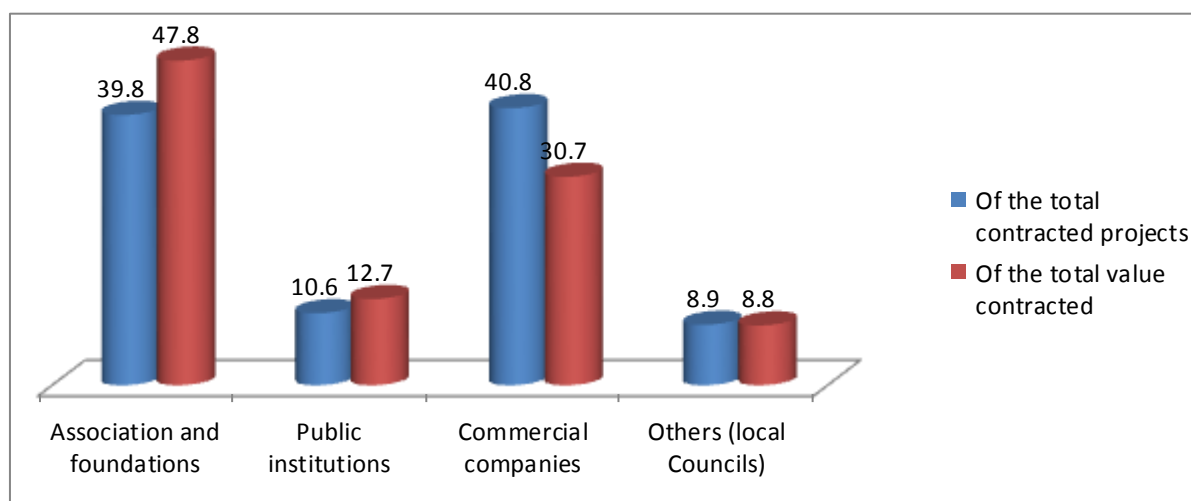
	DMI 5.1 % of projects	DMI 5.1 % of value	DMI 5.2 % of projects	DMI 5.2 % of value
Associations and Foundations	39.8%	47.8%	54.8%	57.1%
Public institutions	10.6%	12.7%	5.0%	10.0%
Commercial companies	40.8%	30.7%	30.3%	25.8%
Others (Local Councils)	8.9%	8.8%	9.9%	7.1%

Source: Social Economy and Employment - Stefan Constantinescu

DMI 5.1 - Developing and implementing active employment measures - targets unemployed aged over 45 and aims to integrate them into the labor market;

For DMI 5.1, approximately 298.5 million euros was earmarked for 65 thousand unemployed people, with the funds being accounted for in particular by Associations, Foundations and Social Economy Organizations (2).

Chart No.1: Number and value of projects contracted by DMI 5.1 by types of beneficiary organizations

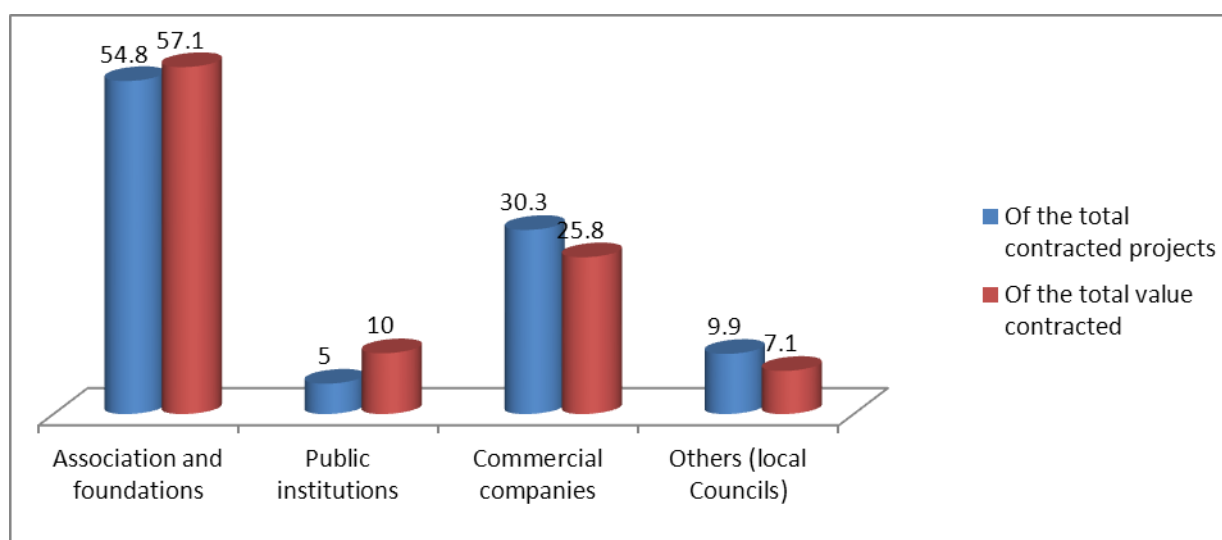


Source: Social Economy and Employment - Stefan Constantinescu

DMI 5.2. - Promoting long-term sustainability of rural areas in terms of human resource development and employment - Supporting vocational training programs for rural people working in agriculture to increase rural labor force.

DMI 5.2 has an estimated allocation of 260 million euros for the participation of 150,000 people from rural areas (3).

Chart No. 2: Number and value of projects contracted by DMI 5.2 by types of beneficiary organizations



Source: Social Economy and Employment - Stefan Constantinescu

Promoting social inclusion aims to finance projects to promote the social economy by:

DMI 6.1 - Developing the social economy - with 294 million euros to create 5,000 jobs for 10,000 people.

DMI 6.2 - Improve access and participation of vulnerable groups in the labor market - use training programs and provide assistance to vulnerable people to actively participate in the labor market, with assigned funds of around 175.6 million euros allocated to 130 thousand people vulnerable groups.

DMI 6.3 - Promoting equal opportunities in the labor market - funds training programs for women encouraging entrepreneurship among them. An estimated budget of 150 million euros is estimated for 20,000 women (4).

Table No. 2: Projects contracted by types of beneficiary organizations

	<i>DMI 6.1 % of projects</i>	<i>DMI 6.1 % of value</i>	<i>DMI 6.2 % of projects</i>	<i>DMI 6.2 % of value</i>	<i>DMI 6.3 % of projects</i>	<i>DMI 6.3 % of value</i>
Associations and Foundations	70.2%	72.4%	53.4%	51.4%	51.8%	46.7%
Public institutions	21.1%	19.9%	34.5%	40.1%	16.7%	19.6%
Commercial companies	3.5%	4.2%	5.2%	2.1%	22.2%	23.1%
Others (Local Councils)	5.2%	3.5%	6.9%	6.4%	9.3%	10.6%

Source: Social Economy and Employment - Stefan Constantinescu

The European Social Fund thus targets occupational occupational programs for employment by supporting 1.5 million beneficiaries whose projects are worth 2.5 million euros, of which 1.4 million relate to a total of 785 thousand beneficiaries groups at risk of exclusion from the labor market, young people, the elderly, the unemployed, people from rural areas (5).

2. STRATEGIES FOR CREATING NEW JOB OPPORTUNITIES

In order to create new job opportunities through the Human Capital Operational Program (POCU), various strategies have been developed as follows:

- The strategy for the contribution of the POCU to sustainable and inclusive growth with a view to achieving economic, social and territorial cohesion, with emphasis on human resource development needs, with the aim of building sound and healthy development (6).
- The strategy of motivating young NEETs on the labor market through specialized support programs in order to find a job through training and certification courses for young people to create new jobs by employers for employment among young people.
- The strategy to improve the participation of long-term unemployed persons, ie workers over the age of 55, minorities, people with disabilities, people from rural areas, the labor market through qualification and re-qualification programs, and personalized measures to meet the needs of each person.
- The strategy of supporting and educating people who are part of marginalized communities and are on the brink of poverty through the implementation of projects for Internet connections of rural areas and the installation of an electronic network in the community, thus providing young people with the possibility of informing and learning electronically.
- Strategy to promote the social inclusion of devaforated communities by offering community counseling and social assistance and modernizing educational institutions.
- The strategy to improve the skills of the inactive and the unemployed, especially the elderly, by creating new jobs and offering specialized courses in the field.
- Enterprise support strategy to identify and support the workforce potential by creating temporary qualification programs.
- The strategy for improving the quality and diversity of services provided by the Public Employment Service.
- The strategy to improve health and social care services among marginalized communities by implementing integrated measures for economic and social development.
- Motivation strategy for young people belonging to disadvantaged communities who have dropped out of study through second-chance programs along with ensuring participation in professional qualification programs (7).

- The strategy for improving the education system by updating, validating and implementing a quality curricular offer along with the increase of tertiary education at system level, in line with market requirements.
- The strategy to strengthen partnerships between universities and academia by adapting and linking education to labor market requirements, especially economic sectors with growth potential.
- Implementation of the lifelong learning program and increasing access among low-skilled, low-educated people from disadvantaged groups, offering the opportunity to recognize and certify the results by offering jobs.
- The strategy for adopting and implementing quality programs relevant to the labor market by creating partnerships between the business community and the public sectors supplying the workforce.

In order to materialize the strategies proposed in the POCU, 7 Priority Axis have been established which in their turn include 13 investment priorities as follows (8):

- PRIORITY AXIS 1 - Initiatives for young people;
- PRIORITY AXIS 2 - Improving the situation of young people in the NEETs category (aged 16-25);
- PRIORITY AXIS 3 - Jobs for all;
- PRIORITY AXIS 4 - Social inclusion and combating poverty;
- PRIORITY AXIS 5 - CLLD (Community Based Development Strategies);
- PRIORITY AXIS 6 - Education and competences;
- PRIORITY AXIS 7 - Technical Assistance.

3. PRIORITY AXES IN THE POCU

The priority axes under the POCU aim to solve the economic and social problems in order to increase the living standard of the population.

Priority Axis 1 aims to create jobs for young people

Total amount allocated - 230,693,510 Euros through the Youth Jobs Initiative.

The objectives are to increase the employment of young unemployed NEETs aged between 16 and 24, registered with the Public Employment Service on the one hand and to improve the level of skills by evaluating and certifying the competences acquired on the other hand.

Axis 1 targets the regions of Central, South-East and South Muntenia.

Priority Axis 2 - Improving the situation of young people in the NEETs category

Total allocated amount:

- 408,572,233 Euros for less developed regions of which 26,535,106 Euros performance reserve.
- 18,701,987 Euro for Bucharest-Ilfov Region of which 1,253,350 Euros performance reserve.

The specific objectives targeted are also related to increasing the employment of young unemployed from NEETs along with improving the skills level and increasing the number of inactive young people registered with the Public Information Service, but this time the objectives target the regions: Bucharest-Ilfov, North- East, Northwest, West, Southwest, Oltenia.

Priority Axis 3 - Jobs for All

Total allocated amount:

- 1,270,959,911 Euros for less developed regions of which 81,309,527 Euros performance reserve;
- 24,853,622 Euro for the Bucharest-Ilfov Region of which 1,688,063 Euros performance reserve.

The specific objective under the priority axis is to improve the level of knowledge and skills of the economic sectors of the employees. In order to achieve this objective, the ESF will undertake both actions targeting employees and actions targeting employers.

Actions targeting employees:

- Participation of young and elderly employees in vocational training programs for existing jobs on the market in economic sectors with competitive potential;
- Periodic evaluation and certification for the recognition of skills related to job requirements in the economic sectors with competitive potential.

Actions targeting employers:

- Stimulating employers to adopt and implement workplace learning programs to motivate and increase employee productivity.

Priority Axis 4 - Social inclusion and combating poverty**Total allocated amount:**

- 1,047,023,965 Euros for less developed regions of which 65,852,595 Euros performance reserve;
- 63,168,893 Euros for Bucharest-Ilfov Region of which 4,118,209 Euros performance reserve.

The objectives related to the axis of inclusion refer to:

- adopting and implementing integrated measures to reduce the number of people on the brink of poverty and social exclusion in marginalized communities (Roma and non-Roma);
- reducing the number of people belonging to vulnerable groups who have exceeded the vulnerability by providing social, medical, socio-professional services, training, etc. appropriate to the specific needs for socio-professional integration.

Priority Axis 5 - Local Commitment Developed under the Responsibility of the Community (DLRC)**Total allocated amount:**

- 206,392,106 Euros for less developed regions of which 13,287,556 Euros performance reserve;
- 5,586,112 Euros for the Bucharest-Ilfov Region of which 364,329 Euros performance reserve.

The objectives targeted of this axis are:

- Implement integrated measures to reduce the number of people at risk of poverty and social exclusion in marginalized communities (Roma and non-Roma) in cities with more than 20,000 inhabitants, especially those with a Roma population;
- Implement integrated measures to reduce the number of people at risk of poverty and social exclusion in marginalized communities in the rural area and cities with a population of up to 20,000.

Priority Axis 6 - Education and Competencies**Total allocated amount:**

- 1,393,631,965 Euros for less developed regions of which 89,680,233 Euros performance reserve;
- 85,004,079 Euros for Bucharest-Ilfov Region of which 5,526,743 Euros performance reserve.

The objectives pursued under this axis are represented by:

- Pre-school support among children from rural areas and Roma minorities;
- Reducing the risk of school dropout by pupils from vulnerable groups, especially Roma pupils and pupils from disadvantaged communities;
- Improving the quality of compulsory education through activities specific to the needs and the environment of origin;
- Implementing the second chance program for young people who have not completed their studies;
- Improvement of school curricula in order to acquire key competences of pupils in compulsory education;
- Thematic studies on the application of the revised curriculum and acquisitions of key competences focusing on Roma children and young people, children from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds, and children with disabilities;
- professional development of the teaching staff in order to promote new managerial practices, to provide quality educational services oriented to the needs of young people, to motivate young

people through interactive programs in order to avoid school dropout especially of children from disadvantaged communities and minorities.

Priority Axis 7 - Technical Assistance

Total allocated amount:

- 286,276,051 Euros for less developed regions;
- 18,590,933 Euros for the Bucharest-Ilfov Region.

The objectives under the Technical Assistance axis are to cover the funding needs for the smooth implementation of the POCU in order to ensure the functioning of the institutions responsible for recruiting staff.

4. CONCLUSIONS

Developing a sustainable development strategy is not just about linking sectoral policy measures that only address the social or environmental spheres, but involves a broad reflection of the long-term implications of all policies, especially economic ones.

Sustainable development is grounded in the concept of social and fundamental rights. Against this background, the fight against poverty, raising living standards, promoting equity in capital and income distribution are the primary goal of any sustainable development strategy.

The EU Sustainable Development Strategy aims to be a defining catalyst for policy-makers to change behavior in European society, thus creating active involvement of citizens in decision-makers regarding the development, monitoring and implementation of sustainable development objectives.

ENDNOTES:

- (1) <http://www.e-antreprenor.ro/despre-fse/>
- (2) <http://www.fonduri-ue.ro/images/files/programe/CU/POSDRU/dci.v11.pdf>
- (3) <http://www.fonduri-ue.ro/images/files/programe/CU/POSDRU/dci.v11.pdf>
- (4) [http://www.ies.org.ro/library/files/raport economia sociala si ocuparea fortei de munca. integrarea grupurilor vulnerabile pe piata muncii.pdf](http://www.ies.org.ro/library/files/raport%20economia%20sociala%20si%20ocuparea%20forței%20de%20munca%20integrarea%20grupurilor%20vulnerabile%20pe%20piața%20muncii.pdf)
- (5) http://www.ise.ro/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/Raport-cercetare-NEET_final_2016.pdf
- (6) Operational Assistance Program (OPTA) 2014-2020
- (7) <https://www.edu.ro/a%20doua%20sansa>
- (8) https://www.librabank.ro/programe_finantare_europeana_nerambursabila_2014-2020

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