

Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived (FEAD) 2014-2020

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The Commission presented a summary of annual implementation reports for the operational programmes co-financed by the Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived in 2014 (FEAD).

In brief, the Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived (FEAD) was created by Regulation (EU) No 223/2014, with the objective of contributing to **alleviating the worst forms of poverty in the EU**, such as homelessness, child poverty and food deprivation.

Under the terms of the Regulation, the FEAD can be used to support the most disadvantaged groups in society, by providing food, basic consumer items such as clothing, footwear and toiletries, or by organising social inclusion activities.

The FEAD can also be used to **finance the collection and distribution of food donations** as a measure to combat food waste.

The total available amount of FEAD funds is **EUR 3 813 million** at current prices and the allocations to all Member States are set out in Annex III to Regulation (EU) No 223/2014.

Implementation: the FEAD is being implemented in all EU Member States during the 2014-2020 programming period. It is being implemented via **operational programmes**, approved by the Commission.

Member States can decide how to make best use of the funds by choosing to develop a food and/or basic material assistance operational programme (OP I) and/or a social inclusion of the most deprived persons operational programme (OP II). Member States also have freedom in determining the target groups, the specific types of support provided and the geographic coverage of their programmes.

While social inclusion of the most deprived is central to OP II, it is also an essential part of OP I. The provision of material assistance must be complemented by accompanying measures, designed to promote the social inclusion of the end recipients² (e.g. referring them to the appropriate services, offering guidance on a balanced diet and providing advice on budget management). OP I thus responds to the basic material needs of the most disadvantaged and also helps them make a step towards reintegration into society.

Member States cooperate with **partner organisations** to implement the FEAD programmes. These organisations, which can be public bodies or non-profit organisations, provide the material assistance (OP I) or set up and run the social inclusion measures (OP II), as described in the programmes.

This cooperation means that the Fund is also supporting capacity building within the partner organisations in the area of **social policy**.

The monitoring arrangements for the Fund specify that Member States must send a **report on the implementation of their programmes to the Commission** each year, by 30 June of the following calendar year. The Commission assesses the implementation reports and, if necessary, asks the Member State concerned to make changes. The Commission is also required to present a summary of the reports submitted by Member States to the European Parliament and the Council in due course.

This summary reflects the information contained in the implementation reports for the year 2014. It gives a general overview of developments relating to the FEAD at EU level, and presents the information provided by Member States, following the structure of the reports.

General developments: the majority of Member States specified in their reports that 2014 was dedicated to the preparation of their programmes, consultations with the relevant parties and the negotiations with the Commission. The process of preparing programme implementation also involved designating programme authorities (managing and certifying authorities).

A total of 13 Member States (BE, CY, ES, FR, IT, LT, LU, LV, NL, PL, PT, RO and SI) committed expenditure to operations. At the end of 2014, the total amount of expenditure committed to operations totalled **EUR 330.7 million**. Eight Member States (BE, ES, FR, LT, RO, PL, PT and SI) had already begun providing assistance in 2014. A total of EUR 95.9 million was paid out in five Member States (BE, ES, FR, LT, RO) for operations relating to the provision of food. Assistance was also purchased in IT in 2014, but its distribution did not start until 2015

A total of 228707 tonnes of food were distributed in 2014 by the above-mentioned eight Member States, with RO, FR and ES accounting for respectively 42.3 %, 28.8 % and 21.3 % of the quantity distributed.

Moreover, **a total of 10 964 726 people**, of which 5 612 926 women, are estimated to have benefited from FEAD assistance in 2014. Approximately a quarter of the recipients (3 092 695 people) were estimated to be children aged 15 years or below and 1 220 615 people aged 65 years or above. Among the recipients, there were an estimated 621 979 people with disabilities, 719 708 migrants, people with a foreign background (including refugees) and minorities, **and 69 451 homeless people**.

The number of people supported by the FEAD in 2014 already significantly exceeds the initial forecast.

Main conclusions: the FEAD programmes aim to target the groups of people who are the **most difficult to reach** and to provide them with immediate relief. The social inclusion aspect of programmes, on the other hand, helps integrate disadvantaged people into society. The FEAD output indicators demonstrate that a large number of people were already reached by FEAD support in 2014. At the same time, the modest budget of the FEAD relative to the high number of people at risk of poverty in the EU (**122.3 million people in 2014**) means that its **contribution to the overall efforts to reduce poverty in the EU is limited**. Complementarity with other instruments and measures at EU and national level is therefore key.

The 2015 reports are expected to show more of the FEAD programmes starting to be implemented, in a growing number of Member States.

The FEAD has always been envisaged as an instrument with simple management, which is able to address social emergencies. This is why the rules for using FEAD funds have been simplified in comparison with those for the ESI Funds. The success of FEAD actions will depend on Member States keeping the implementation provisions simple during the programming period.