



EUROPEAN UNION

Investing in your Future

European Social Fund

European Social Fund

Programme for Employability, Inclusion and Learning

2014-2020



Information and Communication

Guidelines



Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland

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1 Glossary of Terms

Beneficiary	A public or private body responsible for initiating or both initiating and implementing Operations
CPR	The Common Provisions Regulation (EU) 1303/2013
ESF	European Social Fund
ESF Logos	Ireland's Structural Funds Logo in conjunction with the EU Emblem
ESIF	European Structural and Investment Funds
EU	European Union
IB	Intermediate Body
MA	ESF Managing Authority (Department of Education & Skills)
Omnibus	Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2018/1046
Operation	A project, contract, action or group of projects that contributes to the objectives of a priority or priorities
PEIL	ESF Programme for Employability Inclusion and Learning 2014-2020
PMC	Programme Monitoring Committee
YEI	Youth Employment Initiative

2 Introduction

The European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF) are the EU's main investment policy tool, which in the Irish context include the ESF; the European Regional Development Fund; the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development and the European Maritime & Fisheries Fund. The rules covering all ESIF are set out in the CPR with further regulations setting out specific rules for each Fund. Member States agree Partnership Agreements with the European Commission setting out the national authorities' plans on how to use funding from the ESIF in the 2014-2020 funding period. These agreements outline each country's strategic goals and investment priorities, linking them to the overall aims of the Europe 2020 strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth.

The “*Programme for Employability, Inclusion and Learning (PEIL) 2014-2020*” is the sole ESF programme for Ireland for this period. It contains a total budget of €1.157 billion with the ESF and the Exchequer each contributing €544.5 million while the EU Youth Employment Initiative (YEI) budget contributes €68 million. The Department of Education and Skills has primary responsibility for the ESF. However, the day-to-day responsibility for the implementation of co-funded Operations rests with the appropriate statutory bodies.

These guidelines have been produced to assist Beneficiaries comply with both the EU and national Information and Communication requirements. They are based on a number of EU Regulations including the Common Provisions Regulation (CPR) 1303/2013¹, ESF Regulation 1304/2013², Commission Implementing Regulation 821/2014³ and Omnibus Regulation 2018/1046⁴ and the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform Circular 13/2015⁵ in conjunction with the Information and Communication Guidelines⁶ for the ESIF in Ireland.

3 Information and Communication

The overall aims of Information and Communication actions in relation to ESF funding are:

- to recognise the role and support provided by the ESF (and the YEI where relevant), with a view to enhancing the visibility of the Funds,
- to promote an understanding of the objectives and achievements of funds/activities supported by the ESF, including the YEI, and
- to provide information on the availability of the ESF/YEI support for Beneficiaries, applicants, participants and the general public.

Each Body in the ESF Cascade has responsibilities in relation to Information and Communication, which are outlined in the following sections.

3.1 Responsibilities of the Managing Authority

The MA is responsible for the management of the PEIL and its specific responsibilities in relation to Information and Communication are to:

- Draw up and pursue the Communication Strategy as approved by the PEIL Programme Monitoring Committee (PMC), in order to improve visibility of the Funds and the PEIL and interaction with citizens,
- Ensure Beneficiaries are provided with guidelines outlining the requirements regarding information, communication and visibility,
- Report annually to the PEIL PMC regarding information and communication activities and its ongoing measures to enhance visibility,
- Consider proposals for the use of Technical Assistance for joint Information and Communication activities,

¹ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32013R1303&from=EN>

² <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32013R1304&from=EN>

³ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32014R0821&from=EN>

⁴ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32018R1046&qid=1533730705197&from=EN>

⁵ <http://www.esf.ie/en/ImageLibrary/Repository/Info-and-Pub/Circular-13-2015-Management-Control-Procedures-for-ESIF-2014-2020-DPE-.pdf>

⁶ <https://www.esf.ie/en/ImageLibrary/Repository/Info-and-Pub/Information-and-Communication-Guidelines-2014-2020-.pdf>

- Provide tools including electronic templates to help Beneficiaries meet their obligations, where appropriate,
- Provide posters and publicity materials to Intermediate Bodies (IBs), Beneficiaries and Operations,
- Display the Union Emblem at its premises,
- Maintain the ESF website www.esf.ie, which is accessible to all regardless of ability, to provide information on the PEIL, including a list of Operations supported by the PEIL to be updated on a 6 month basis and provide examples of Operations,
- Ensure compliance with Information and Communication Regulations and ensure that IBs/Beneficiaries who report directly to the MA are kept informed and up to date on any Information and Communication requirements,
- Organise a major event publicising the launch of the PEIL and a major information activity each year promoting the ESF/YEI,
- Involve partners (including public authorities, economic and social partners and relevant NGOs), information centres and Educational/Research Institutions in Information and Communication measures, where appropriate, and
- Attend the Information and Communication network to enable joint planning or coordination of communication measures with the European Commission.

3.2 Responsibilities of Intermediate Bodies

The specific responsibilities of the IBs are to:

- Promote the individual Priorities and Operations for which they are responsible (and the financial support provided by the EU) using the various channels at their disposal, i.e., websites, launches, sectoral publications, business/community groups, advertisements, information leaflets and selected seminars and conferences,
- Inform potential Beneficiaries that the acceptance of funding is an acceptance of their inclusion in the list of Operations which is published by the MA and liaise with the Beneficiaries on Information and Communication requirements,
- Publicise the availability of funding, the selection process, deadlines, eligibility criteria and associated regulations concerning ESF/YEI funding through all appropriate channels,
- Inform the public of the assistance obtained from the EU,
- Display the ESF Logos⁷ on their website (which must be accessible to all regardless of ability) and provide a short description of their co-funded Operations including their aims and activities highlighting the financial support from the EU,
- Display posters in accordance with regulatory requirements,

⁷ Ireland's ESIF logo and the EU Emblem (referred to collectively as **the ESF Logos**).

- Display the Union Emblem at its premises,
- Inform the MA of any publicity events regarding ESF/YEI co-funded Operations,
- Ensure all press releases/speeches/publications etc. issued reference the ESF support,
- Report (as part of annual progress reports) to the PEIL PMC on planned and completed information actions relating to their priorities and Operations,
- Provide publicity material for use by the MA and co-operate with the MA in project visits/study tours,
- Nominate a point of contact to liaise with the MA in relation to Information and Communication activities,
- Check compliance of co-funded Operations with the Information and Communications regulatory requirements and guidelines.

Section 4 of these Guidelines provides specific requirements in relation to these responsibilities.

3.3 Responsibilities of Beneficiaries

The specific responsibilities of Beneficiaries are to:

- Promote the individual Priorities and Operations for which they are responsible (and the financial support provided by the EU) using the various channels at their disposal, i.e., websites, launches, sectoral publications, business/community groups, advertisements, information leaflets and selected seminars and conferences,
- Carry out Information and Communication measures and measures to enhance visibility of the ESF, relevant to their Operations in accordance with the regulatory requirements and these guidelines,
- Display the ESF Logos⁸ on their website (which must be accessible to all regardless of ability), where one exists, and provide a short description of the co-funded Operation including its aims and activities, highlighting the financial support from the EU,
- Ensure participants on co-funded Operations are aware of the ESF and/or YEI support as appropriate,
- Ensure that documents relating to the implementation of co-funded Operations which are used for the public or participants include the ESF Logos and a statement acknowledging the ESF/YEI support,
- Place at least one poster with information about the Operation “*at a location readily visible to the public*” at each location where a co-funded Operation is being implemented,
- Nominate a contact point to liaise with the IB and MA on Information and Communications activities,

⁸ Ireland’s ESIF logo and the EU Emblem (referred to collectively as **the ESF Logos**).

- Report (as part of annual progress reports) to their IB on planned and completed information actions relating to their priorities and Operations,
- Inform the IB and MA of any publicity events regarding ESF/YEI co-funded Operations,
- Provide publicity material for the MA for its newsletter, calendar and website, and
- Maintain an Information and Communication file for the PEIL 2014-2020.

Section 4 of these Guidelines provides specific requirements in relation to these responsibilities.

3.4 Role of the Programme Monitoring Committee (PMC)

The functions of the PMC are set out in Articles 49 and 110 of the CPR and Article 272 (19) of the Omnibus Regulation.

In relation to Information and communication the PMC:

- approves the Communication Strategy and any amendment of the Strategy,
- examines the implementation of the Communications Strategy, including information and communication measures and measures to enhance visibility of the Fund, and
- makes observations on the visibility of support from the ESF and awareness about its results.
- gives an opinion on the activities and measures planned for the following year.

4 Promoting the Support of the European Union

Failure to acknowledge and publicise the EU’s contribution can lead to a financial correction being applied by the European Commission.

4.1 Ireland’s ESIF Logo and the EU Emblem

Ireland’s ESIF Logo:



EU Emblem



In relation to the programming round 2014-2020, Ireland’s ESIF logo and the EU Emblem (referred to collectively as **the ESF Logos**) **must be used for any Operations which have an ESF co-funded element.**

The ESF Logos must feature on any Information and Communication material produced by Operations which are ESF co-funded. The EU Emblem must be the same size as Ireland’s ESIF logo (and that of

any other logo(s) featured). **To ensure legibility, the minimum individual logo size should be 58mm x 19mm.** However, it is accepted that for small items of merchandise this minimum size may not be achievable.

If used horizontally Ireland's ESIF logo should be placed on the left, followed by the EU emblem and other logos, as appropriate. If used vertically Ireland's ESIF logo should be placed on the top, followed by the EU emblem and other logos, as appropriate. Sufficient `breathing space` between logos should be utilised to enhance the visual appearance of publications and signage.

Ireland's ESF Logos must feature on articles/materials produced in relation to Operations in receipt of ESF funds such as:

- Posters/Publicity Signage
- Websites
- Attendance records
- Certificates that are exclusive to the Operation
- Application Forms
- Offer letters, correspondence with Operations/Beneficiaries/Participants
- Brochures/Literature, Annual Reports, Advertisements & Supplements
- Press releases/Launches/Awards
- Conference Material, Display/Exhibition stands
- CD-ROMs/DVDs/videos

Copies of all of these articles/items should be retained on an Information and Communication File to demonstrate compliance with the Regulations, in particular the requirement that participants have been made aware of the ESF's support for the Operation.

The technical characteristics for the ESF Logos can be found in Annex I and II. The ESF logos are available to download from the MA website⁹.

4.2 Referencing the Support from the ESF/YEI

It is a regulatory requirement that all participants on ESF co-funded Operations are informed of the ESF support. The Regulations state specifically that any document *“relating to the implementation of an operation which is used for the public or for participants, including any attendance or other certificate, shall include a statement to the effect that the operational programme was supported by the Fund”* and *“the YEI”* where applicable.

Wherever possible, for instance in press releases, speeches, publications, annual reports, etc., a description of the ESF should be used. It is recommended that the following statement (or an equivalent) be used, namely that **“the Operation is co-funded by the Government of Ireland and the European Social Fund as part of the ESF Programme for Employability, Inclusion and Learning 2014-2020”** or for YEI Operations, **“the Operation is co-funded by the Government of**

⁹ <https://www.esf.ie/en/Information-Centre/Communication/Download-Logos/>

Ireland, the European Social Fund and the Youth Employment Initiative as part of the ESF Programme for Employability, Inclusion and Learning 2014-2020.”

4.3 Promoting the Role of the ESF/YEI

It is essential that all participants on ESF/YEI co-funded Operations are made aware of the role of the Funds. Staff involved in the delivery of EU co-funded Operations should also be aware of the ESF/YEI support and any specific recruitment campaigns in relation to such Operations should acknowledge this support, where appropriate.

The MA recommends various means of providing information and promoting the role of the ESF/YEI, which can include:

- **Printed material** such as publications, newsletters, brochures and pamphlets which must contain a clear indication on the title page of the EU’s support i.e., the ESF Logos and a statement to the effect that the Operation was supported by the ESF/YEI within the printed material.
- **Notification of grants** by the IB to Beneficiaries, which must indicate that the grant is co-funded by the EU and must specify the ESF/YEI.
- **Posters** displayed on the premises of the MA, IB, Beneficiaries and Operations.

It is a regulatory requirement for Beneficiaries to ensure that posters are displayed in the premises of the Operations “... *at a location readily visible to the public, such as the entrance of a building*”. The MA recommends that posters are displayed in reception areas, in all training centres, class rooms, offices, common rooms and learner centres where trainees or participants assemble in.

The posters must be of a minimum size of A3 and contain the following information: the ESF logos and a reference to the financial support of the ESF/YEI.

Electronic displays on TV screens, plasma, etc. of the poster or ESF Logos in reception areas, is not sufficient of itself; the paper poster is primarily required to be displayed (other methods are considered as additions, not replacements).

The MA will arrange printing of generic ESF/YEI posters which can be obtained from the relevant IB or directly from the MA. The MA will also work with the IBs/Beneficiaries in designing Operation specific posters.

- **Websites** concerning Operations supported by the ESF/YEI should include the ESF Logos and should mention the Fund’s contribution, using the recommended statement at 4.2 above.

The Regulations stipulate that **where** a website is operated by a Beneficiary in receipt of EU funding that the following information must be provided:

- a short description of the Operation, proportionate to the level of support, including its aims and results, and highlighting the financial support from the EU [Reg. 1303/2013, Annex XII, 2.2.2 (a)]; the Union emblem, the reference to the EU and the ESF fund must be displayed in the required colours [Implementing Regulation 821/2014, Article 4.1];
- The ESF Logos “*shall be visible, when landing on the website, inside the viewing area of a digital device, without requiring a user to scroll down the page*” [Implementing Regulation 821/2014, Article 3(a)];
- The ESF Logos must be the same height and width as the largest logo on the website.

In relation to large organisations or bodies that have ESF/YEI co-funded Operations as one of their many activities, it is sufficient that the specific page relating to the Operation has the required references and logos. A website entirely dedicated to one or more Operations is required to have the ESF Logos and references on its home page.

- **Social Media** provides different platforms for promoting the role of the ESF including Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube which may be useful to target a range of audiences
- **Information Events** such as conferences, seminars and exhibitions on ESF/YEI co-funded Operations, should include the ESF logos and a reference to the ESF/YEI support on all documentation and display the EU flag in meeting rooms. **IBs and Beneficiaries are requested to liaise with the MA in relation to any launches and associated publicity events proposed for the co-funded Operations.**
- **Press Releases/Speeches** and information directed at the national or local media (press, radio and television) with appropriate references to the ESF/YEI contribution are useful ways of reaching the general public.
- **Correspondence** with participants such as letters of acceptance, time sheets, certificates etc. should include the ESF Logos and statement to the effect that the Operation is supported by the ESF (and YEI, if applicable).

4.4 Promoting an Operation Co-funded by the ESF/YEI

The start of an Operation provides an opportunity to promote the role of the ESF/YEI. The following publicity actions will provide the opportunity to promote the EU’s contribution to an Operation.

- **Launching the Operation** - A publicity event should be organised to launch the Operation and the MA recommends that relevant Ministers, local public representatives and local media, are invited to attend. Representatives from the European Commission Representation Office in Ireland and the MA should also be issued with invitations to relevant events.

Media - for the promotion of locally based Operations the focus should be firmly on the local media. A strong presence should be established with local radio with project coordinators on

hand to answer questions from the general public. Advertising in the local press should be considered as an option in any communications plan.

- **ESF Newsletter and Calendar** – the MA annually seeks case studies including photographs of participants taking part in ESF/YEI supported Operations. In order to do this, all IBs, Beneficiaries and the Managers of Operations are required to ensure that such occasions as launches, completion of Operations, certificate awarding ceremonies, and any other notable occasions, are reported to the MA with text describing the purpose of the Operation, the event taking place, with accompanying photographs suitable for publishing in either the ESF Newsletter or Calendar. It is important to ensure all participants and staff that feature in a case study are aware that such material may be used as part of a wider ESF/YEI publicity campaign and have given the appropriate consent for their details to be shared. The MA will provide a consent form which Operations can use for this purpose.

5 Management Verifications

Procedures for desk checks and on the spot checks for verifying expenditure of co-funded Operations under Article 125(5) of the CPR will include checks on compliance with the Information and Communication Regulations. These checks can be found in Annex III.

6 Official Languages Act 2003 (Section 9) Regulations 2008

The requirements of the Official Languages Act 2003 (Section 9) Regulations 2008, must be adhered to by public bodies when placing signage and designing stationery¹⁰. Further details on the provisions of these regulations are available at: <http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/2008/en/si/0391.html>. Irish versions of the ESF Logos are available to download from the ESF Website¹¹.

7 Unified Government identity

All Government communications campaigns, whether run by a Department or a non-commercial state agency must now use the Government of Ireland identity/logo. The ESF Managing Authority recommend that all relevant ESF Bodies familiarise themselves with the Government of Ireland Unified visual identity guidelines¹².

8 Contact Details

The Information and Communications Officer for PEIL is **Ms Nicola Finnegan**.

If you have any queries on these guidelines or any other issues re ESF PEIL please email a member of the MA at PEIL@education.gov.ie

¹⁰ <http://www.coimisineir.ie/userfiles/files/Guidebook4.pdf>

¹¹ <https://www.esf.ie/en/Information-Centre/Communication/Download-Logos/>

¹² <https://www.esf.ie/en/ImageLibrary/Repository/Info-and-Pub/Unified-Identity/Government-Of-Ireland-Identity-Guidelines.pdf>

Annex I: The European Union Emblem

The logo has 12 stars. The blue (Pantone Reflex Blue) and yellow (Pantone Yellow) should be used whenever possible with the chosen Typeface (see Article 4.4 of Implementing Reg. 821/2014 for the list of acceptable Fonts) for the words **European Union**, **European Social Fund** and **Investing in your future**.

- EU emblem/flag with the words “**EUROPEAN UNION**” in larger type and with the slogan “**Investing in your Future**” and the fund title “**European Social Fund**”.



EUROPEAN UNION

Investing in your Future

European Social Fund

- The EU emblem/flag is also available in Irish. The applicable text to use for the Irish version of the Logo is “**An tAONTAS EORPACH**” in larger type and with the slogan “**Ag infheistiú i do Dhán**” and the fund title “**Ciste Sóisialta na hEorpa**”.



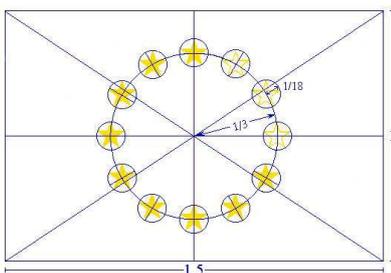
AN tAONTAS EORPACH

Ag Infheistiú i do Dhán

Ciste Sóisialta na hEorpa

Geometrical Description

All stars are upright, i.e., with one point vertical and two points in a straight line at right angles to the mast. The circle is arranged so that the stars appear in the position of the hours on the face of a clock. The number of stars is invariable at 12. (See Annex I of Commission Implementing Regulation 821/2014 for instructions for creating the emblem and a definition of the standard colours).



Single Colour Reproduction:

In the event that blue is the only colour available (it must be Pantone Reflex Blue), use it 100% with the stars reproduced in negative white and the field 100% blue.



If only black is available, outline the rectangle in black and print the stars in black and white. **Note that Monochrome versions can only be used following prior approval from the MA (Article 4, Implementing Reg. 821/2014).**



Reproduction on a coloured background

The emblem is reproduced for preference on a white background. Avoid a background of varied colours, and in any case one which does not go with blue. If there should be no alternative to a coloured background, put a white border around the rectangle, with the width of this being equal to 1/25 of the height of the rectangle.



Annex II: Ireland’s ESIF Logo

Ireland’s ESIF logo and the EU flag must be used for all Operations that have or will receive EU funding. Ireland’s ESIF logo is a white harp facing left that has the text.

*“Ireland’s European Structural and Investment Funds Programmes 2014-2020
Co-funded by the Irish Government and the European Union”.*



Logo colours are PMS 3015C and PMS Process Cyan. For CYMK and RGB breakdown see below. For screen display use a .JPG or .PNG file. For print, use an .EPS file.



Colour Breakdown:	-	<u>CMYK 100,35,3,21</u>	<u>100,0,0,0</u>
		RGB 0,108,163	0,158,218
Grayscale:	-	Black 100%, Black 60%	



The Irish version is also available to use with the text:

*“Cláir Chistí Eorpacha Struchtúracha agus Infheistíochta na hÉireann 2014 - 2020
Cómhainithe ag Rialtas na hÉireann agus ag an Aontas Eorpach”.*



Clearspace: The clearspace is the smallest distance allowed between the logo and the edge of a page, the edge of an image or text.

Minimum size: - To ensure legibility, minimum logo size should be 58mm x 19mm

Annex III: Information and Communication Checklist

Desk Check - Prior to Visit	Checked By	Results satisfactory Y/N	Comments
Check the IB/Beneficiary/Operation's website, if one exists, to ensure it contains the ESF Logos and a short description of the operation, including its aims and results, and highlighting the financial support from the EU.			
Check if there have been any recent press releases, advertisements or reports and if these comply with the regulations.			
Check previous Management Verification/Audit Reports for Information and Communication issues/recommendations.			
Obtain a clear explanation of how the IB/Beneficiary/Project ensure that regulations and guidelines are followed.			
Does the Beneficiary/Operation maintain an Information and Communication file? This file should contain relevant notices from the MA, up to date guidelines and any other publicity material that shows compliance with ESF requirements.			
Does the IB/Beneficiary/Operation display posters (minimum A3) in a place where it can be clearly viewed, i.e. reception area; classroom			
Do all marketing materials contain the ESF Logos e.g. Brochures, Literature, Advertisements			
Does all documentation relating to the Operation/Project contain the ESF Logos and a statement that the operation/project is co-funded by the EU e.g. letters, course materials, attendance records, application forms.			

On-the-Spot Check - Site Visit	Checked By	Results satisfactory Y/N	Comments
<p>Have the IB/Beneficiary/Operation held any publicity events regarding ESF co-funded projects. If yes, was the MA informed/invited and was the ESF publicised? Are there any publicity events planned that the MA could support?</p>			
<p>Based on the evidence reviewed above, has the Body followed the necessary guidelines and complied with Information and Communication Regulations and guidelines?</p>			