

<p align="center"><b>COUNTRY</b></p>	<p align="center"><b>Germany</b></p>
<p><b>How many OPs are there in your Member State? Do they have very different provisions in terms of partnership?</b></p>	<p>Germany has 18 different operational programmes (OP) in total .This large number is a reflection of the federal structure of the country, and also a response to the disparities in the socio-economic situation and challenges. There are 17 regional operational programmes (one for each Land and two for Niedersachsen), designed and managed by the Bundesländer – the German Federal States. For the whole of Germany there is one multi-objective, federal programme that will manage 37% of the overall ESF resources in co-operation with five federal ministries. Co-operation between the different administrations and with Social Partners is typical for all OPs in Germany. The country fiche of Germany below is covered by the German Federal or National operational programme.</p>
<p><b>Does partnership have a geographical focus in your Member State's OP(s)? If so, national, regional, sub-regional e.g. county, district, group of municipalities, municipality, etc.?</b></p>	<p>On federal level partnership is predominantly focused on close co-operation between the different public authorities on federal, regional and local level. “Social partners” (employers/ unions) and non-government organisations are strongly involved in accompanying and carrying out the ESF and the OP on all levels.</p> <p>At the German regional and local level, following the “Territorial Employment Pacts” Initiative (1997) of the European Commission, decentralised partnerships and regional or local pacts have been established in both urban and rural areas (for instance in Berlin, but also in other regions). The federal programme “Learning regions” has been addressing the regions in order to set up regional educational networks and partnerships since 2001. Moreover, since 2003 the European and federal programme “Local Social Capital” had been implemented. In the ongoing ESF period 2007-2013 this programme has been continued under the name “STÄRKEN vor Ort – Empowering Capacities on Local Level”. A further example of a strongly partnership based, federal programme is the on-going “Prospective 50plus - Regional Employment Pacts for Older Long-term Unemployed” – a programme, launched in 2005 (to 2010).</p>
<p><b>Is partnership linked to specific thematic issues / objectives (incl. possible targeting of specific groups / links with policy) in the OP(s)?</b></p>	<p>The main target groups in terms of partnership are social partners (employer and union organisations). Examples of thematic issues on federal level are: business start-ups, innovation in vocational training and further training, employment and social cohesion.</p>
<p><b>Please specify further what is understood as “partnership” in the OP(s) in your Member State?</b> <i>(See Note 1)</i></p>	<p>Ex ante five ministries, including the ESF-leading Ministry for Labour and Social Affairs, have been involved in setting up the National OP. Additionally, the social partners contributed to the programme as well as to the National Strategic Plan. Partnership includes broad participation of all interested institutions, groups, organisations and also single persons who are interested in the European Social fund.</p> <p>The function of partnership within the national OP ranges from strategic decision making (steering committee of the ESF) to the implementation of special programmes. The eligibility criteria for all ESF-national programmes and projects and the beneficiaries of all programmes have</p>

	<p>been published in the internet.</p> <p>The institutionalised partnership (ministries, social partners, NGO`s and others) of the National ESF has the following tasks:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) accompaniment of the structural funds for EU-co-financed programmes</li> <li>2) co-operation in single or special projects (in order to improve access to European means or to the structural funds for those, who had no access so far, like small initiatives. The key word here is participation).</li> <li>3) Common design, development and implementation of special programmes.</li> </ol>
<p><b>What requirements are there for partnerships to become formally established in your OPs?</b></p> <p>(e.g. they need to: write a declaration with intent to work together, prepare a more detailed partnership agreement detailing tasks/roles, launch a call for tenders to acquire partners through contracts or join up in a separate legal entity)</p>	<p>A steering committee for the Federal (and each Land) OP had to be established within three months after the formal approval of the OP. Each OP has (written) standing orders, a chairman, Deputy and so on. The structure of the Steering Committee, its functions and organisation of the decision making process are outlined.</p> <p>Steering Committees have members with a vote and some without (e.g. organisations that work as hosts and counsellors for the Steering Committees). Although they are not formal legal agreements, members with a vote accept the procedures outlined above as binding.</p>
<p><b>What specific questions regarding partnership are asked in (previous/current) ESF application forms?</b></p>	<p>The application forms usually include questions about networks and partnerships. Often times the establishing of local partnerships is required. Further requirements may include a broad variety of local stakeholders, such as private persons in the district or representatives of the civil society or local initiatives.</p>
<p><b>Types of organisations typically involved in partnership (e.g. social partners, NGOs, companies, academia, etc.) in the OP(s)</b></p>	<p>Parties which would be typically involved in partnerships are different administrations or administration levels, social partners, NGOs, actors of the civil society, politicians, chambers of craft and/ or commerce, regional or local employer organisations and scientists.</p>
<p><b>If partnerships are embedded within existing national, regional or local structures, how are these different levels linked to each other and how does this facilitate mainstreaming in the OP(s)?</b></p> <p>(See Note 2)</p>	<p>The priority axes A to E (main fields of activities) are the same at national and regional level. All Programmes are horizontally-oriented and cover all ESF and ERDF grants or programmes. The different levels have in common that they have to be oriented toward the challenge of demographic change in the labour market and toward the Lisbon Strategy (“a must”).</p> <p>Differences between the national and the regional (Länder) level exist in the concentration of the means within the main fields of activities, and how the different “Länder”/ regions want - or try to - achieve the general goals. Programmes at the national level have to have a specific feature, which does not exist in the Regional programmes. Through the close co-operation between the national, the regional and the local level good (multi-level) governance is intended.</p> <p>Vertical mainstreaming is facilitated on the one hand through big</p>

	<p>organisations like the unions, the employer organisations and chambers. These organisations have national central offices or structures and regional or local branch offices. The same structure is typical for the Federal Public Employment Service. This is the main player in the field of labour market policies in Germany. Since the modern labour market reforms – so-called “Hartz - . Reforms” - implemented between 2003 – 2005, more than 400 Jobcentres Germany-wide have been established. On the other hand, the mainstreaming process facilitated by intermediaries targeted directly at local level.</p> <p>Vertical mainstreaming is also enhanced by a kind of “geographical mainstreaming”, for instance in the “Prospective 50plus Programme” of the Federal Ministry of Labour. 93 Jobcentres and their local partners have been involved in the first phase 2005 – 2007, currently there are 237 Jobcentres involved.</p>
<p><b>How do the choices of the OPs in terms of partnership address the EC regulation?</b></p> <p>(See Note 3)</p>	<p>Social Partners are the main actors (besides the strongly dominating administration) in the Steering Committees of the different OPs. The co-operation with social partners, social welfare organizations, NGO`s, organisations which care specifically for gender equality, equal opportunities and environment can be differentiated as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Accompaniment and counselling in the design, implementation and assessment of the National OP (policy advice – Politikberatung)</li> <li>2) Managing special projects (project management)</li> <li>3) Common draft and implementation of programme guidelines, such as the social-partner guideline or the equal opportunity guideline.</li> </ol> <p>At National level the Programme “Learning Regions” (Ministry of Education and Research, since 2001), “The Local Social Capital Programme (LOS)” (Ministry of Family, Senior citizens, Women and Youth, since 2003) and the “Prospective 50plus – Regional Employment Pacts for Older Long-term Unemployed” Programme (Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs) enhance partnerships according to the European integrative guidelines and the Articles mentioned under Note 3.</p>
<p><b>Are there major differences with how partnership was organised in the past OP(s)? Why was the choice made to change? Did EQUAL have influence on this choice and, if yes, how?</b></p>	<p>In the past the partnerships were in most cases partnerships between administrations. EQUAL influenced the adaptation of the new approach (see National Operational Programme, page 156, German Version). EQUAL contributed, for instance, to set up a micro-credit fund for Germany and – more general – to raise the awareness for partnership and co-operation.</p>
<p><b>What are the strong points of the way the OP(s) organise(s) partnership?</b></p>	<p>The participation of social partners, of scientists and NGO`s in developing and implementing of policy strategies is a traditional and strong point in the German partnership organization of the ESF. Since the beginning of the 1990`ies these partners are closely involved in the accompaniment and implementation of ESF-programmes. This fruitful co-operation, ongoing since 2007, is going to continue until 2013. The development and implementation of common guidelines (mentioned above) with organizations outside of the administration is a new element in the ongoing period 2007 – 2013. . The different Steering Committees</p>

	provide an organisational and obligatory framework for partnerships. The nationwide programmes like the Local Social Capital, Learning Regions, Prospective 50plus already mentioned above enhance commitment and establishment of partnerships on a voluntary base.
<b>What are the draw-backs of the way the OP(s) organise(s) partnership?</b>	Sometimes the involvement of partners outside the administration seems to be very formal and not based on a real/ sound commitment (personnel opinion).
<b>What measures, if any, are being taken to build on the strong points and reduce the draw-backs in the OP(s)?</b>	The Prospective 50plus programme, for instance, was established in order to address the demographic change in the labour market on the regional level. Initially the National government expected the regional pacts to help discover a centralized tool for the integration of long-term unemployed older persons. But then it turned out that the strategy to establish and to develop regional employment pacts for older long-term unemployed was a prototype for a new labor market strategy on national level itself.
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## **Notes**

### **Note 1**

- function of partnership within the OP: ranging from implementation of activities on the ground (e.g. through projects) to high level strategic decision making (e.g. in monitoring committee etc.)
- stability of partnership: ranging from supporting ad hoc, task oriented partnerships to permanent, institutionalised partnerships
- importance of ESF funding for partnership: highly dependent to small influence
- mainly cross-sector partnerships or within a sector
- mainly cross-(sub)regional partnerships or within a (sub)region
- highly formalised (e.g. legally binding agreements) to informal
- etc.....

### **Note 2**

Mainstreaming refers here to vertical mainstreaming where lessons learnt and good practice need to be taken up by higher levels of the organisational or political system.

### **Note 3**

Art. 3: promoting partnerships, pacts and initiatives through networking of relevant stakeholders, such as the social partners and non-governmental organisations, at the transnational, national, regional and local levels in order to mobilise for reforms in the field of employment and labour market inclusiveness.

Art. 5:

1. The ESF shall promote good governance and partnership. Its support shall be designed and implemented at the appropriate territorial level taking into account the national, regional and local level according to the institutional arrangements specific to each Member State.
2. The Member States shall ensure the involvement of the social partners and adequate consultation and participation of other stakeholders, at the appropriate territorial level, in the preparation, implementation and monitoring of ESF support.
3. The managing authority of each operational programme shall encourage adequate participation of the social partners in actions funded under Article 3. Under the Convergence objective, an appropriate amount of ESF resources shall be allocated to capacity-building, which shall include training, networking measures, strengthening the social dialogue and activities jointly undertaken by the social partners, in particular as regards adaptability of workers and enterprises referred to in Article 3(1)(a).
4. The managing authority of each operational programme shall encourage adequate participation and access by nongovernmental organisations to the funded activities, notably in the domains of social inclusion, gender equality and equal opportunities.