



Ipsos MORI
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Final Report

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Introduction

In September 2016 Ipsos MORI has been commissioned by Eurofound to conduct a synthesis of evaluation evidence reported between 2001 and 2016 to inform answering the question *‘what overall progress has Eurofound made over time towards fulfilling its mandate in its original founding regulation’*. The objective of this exercise was threefold:

1. To provide insight into the ‘distance travelled’¹ by Eurofound as an organisation and the contribution it has made to policy making over the last 15 years.
2. To allow Eurofound to proactively contribute synthesised evidence into the upcoming crosscutting evaluation of the Agencies under Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion ²
3. To help Eurofound’s senior management team in programme development from 2019 onwards given the rolling nature of programming and given the commitment to focus and make best use of operational resource.

This concise report described the approach and all evidence reviewed / collected and then provides a headline assessment on Eurofound’s performance over the period within each of the evaluation criteria drawing on distance travelled according to the evidence and a critical assessment of the level of evidence on which the original assessment was derived from.

Approach and breadth of evidence reviewed

To meet the objective of this study, the team collated a breath of evidence produced over the years by Eurofound staff and external contractors working on evaluations supporting Eurofound’s programming cycle. The study team produced a framework for reviewing the evidence, consisting of a tool to:

- a) assess the quality of each evidence source (based on a number of quality criteria such as research instruments used, response rates, quality and number of case studies etc.);
- b) summarise main contextual factors influencing Eurofound’s performance and;
- c) assess distance travelled on each evaluation criteria, along with weight of evidence on which this assessment was based (adapting a on ‘a zero to five-point’ scale for both distance travelled and weight of evidence).

The team had reviewed all of the evidence and team members involved in the review were then involved in validation of scores to ensure consistency in the approach.

The evidence base is broad and works on a number of levels (see figure 1). The ‘top level’ evidence consists of aggregated evaluative findings from the ex post evaluations of four 4-year work programmes, summarising how Eurofound had performed and providing recommendations for the future. Reports produced on the annual level tend to

¹ With the term ‘distance travelled’ we refer in this report to the performance of Eurofound on each of the evaluation criteria

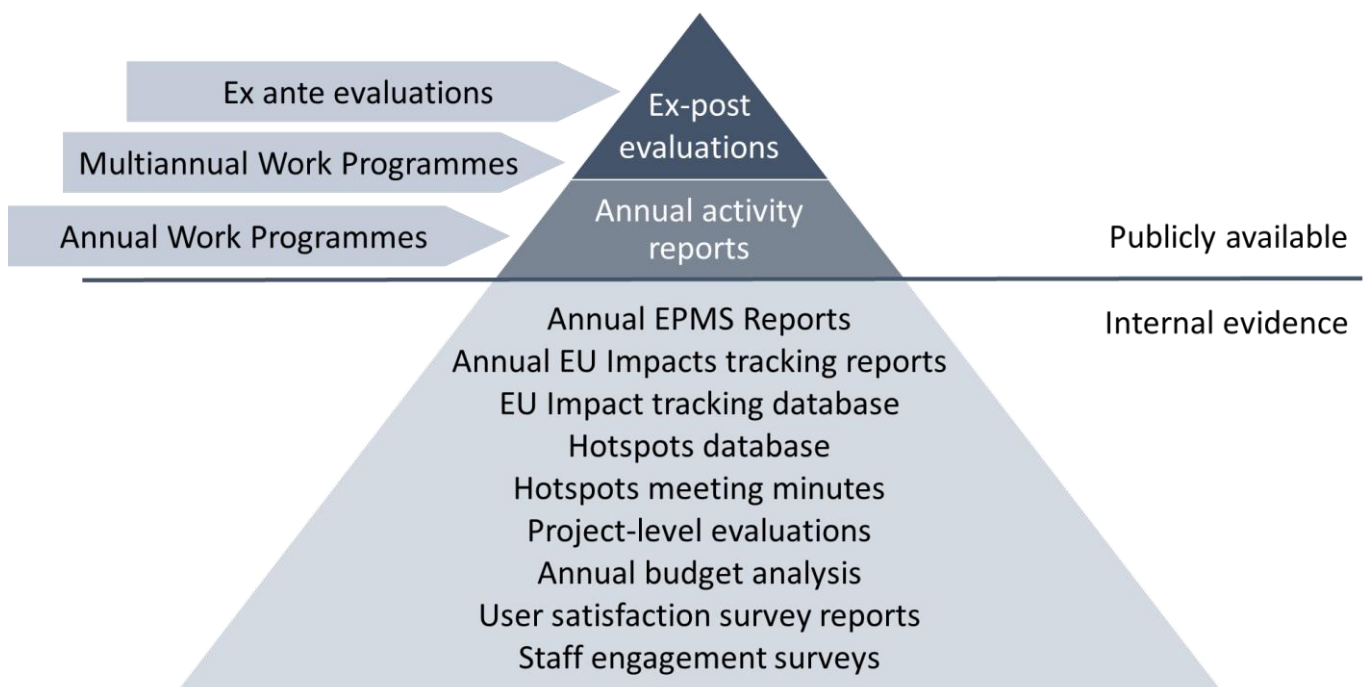
² ‘Evaluation of the EU Agencies under the remit of DG EMPL: EUROFOUND, CEDEFOP, ETF and EU-OSHA’. Accessed at: http://ec.europa.eu/smart-regulation/roadmaps/docs/2016_empl_020_evaluation_agencies_en.pdf

provide a more detailed account of the activities that Eurofound staff performed but tend to be more descriptive (i.e. not implying any judgement) in nature. The internal evidence consists of a wealth of data on single components of Eurofound’s work, and/or data that is data not yet subjected to full analysis, such as the individual components of EPMS data, which feeds in the evaluative top level reports.

It should be noted that for the 2013-2016 programming period no ex post evaluation was available, for the obvious reason that this multiannual work programme is still ongoing. Hence, for this period, this report relies mainly on the ex ante evaluation and annual activity reports and the key performance indicators (KPIs) in these reports. This has some limitations, however, as the annual activity reports are not designed to be full ‘evaluations’ and pay for example little attention to internal coherence.

Figure 1 overleaf highlights the large evidence base of internal documents used for management purposes.

Figure 1: Evidence available for evaluators of Eurofound



Source: Ipsos MORI Analysis, 2016

Evidence available that will be useful for any future evaluators is briefly described in the following bullet points (in order of importance):

- **Ex post evaluation reports** – these four reports relating to relevant studies cover time period since Eurofound’s inception until 2012, period 2001-2012 with dedicated report for 4-year programming periods. They were produced in years 2001, 2007, 2010 and 2014. In all cases the evaluations were conducted by external providers of evaluation services, commissioned by Eurofound and overseen by a large steering group ensuring independence of the assessment. These reports contain a wealth of useful evidence and in all cases include a summary of findings organised under the standard EC evaluation criteria and methodology sections.³ In majority of cases the main

³ With the exception of European Value Added which was not included in evaluation completed in 2001

reports are supplemented by annexes with research instruments and sets of case studies exploring how Eurofound delivered on its objectives. The assessment of quality of evidence and their limitations is presented in the annex.

- **Annual activity reports** – over the whole period in scope of this exercise, Eurofound produced annual reports summarising the activity over the past year. This source of evidence has become more sophisticated and elaborated over time, and the latest annual activity reports provide specific summaries of findings of user satisfaction surveys as well as presentation and analysis of the internal Eurofound Performance Monitoring System (EPMS) key performance indicators.
- **Regular detailed analysis of secondary evidence collected internally feeding to annual activity reports** – Eurofound collects a set of KPIs within its EPMS. Specific detailed analytical reports produced internally on regular basis include **annual summary reports of the EPMS data, impacts tracking reports, records of monthly ‘hotspots tracking’ discussions** with the Brussels Liaison Office, **internal analysis of the user satisfaction surveys**, conducted annually.
- **Other detailed analysis looking at performance of Eurofound** – This includes ‘Annual Internal Audit Reports’ produced by Internal Audit Service of the European Commission and evaluations of individual projects, activities or themes, such as for example, the evaluation of the ‘Application of Research Methodologies in Eurofound’ (2011), the periodic ‘Evaluation of Network of European Observatories’ (2008, 2013, 2016) and the evaluation of ‘European Network of Cities for Local Integration Policies for Migrants (CLIP)’ (2010).
- **Ex ante evaluation reports** – Ex ante evaluation reports had been produced in 2008, 2012 and 2016. The one covering the 2013-16 period was most relevant for this exercise as there has not yet been an ex post evaluation of that period (which is still ongoing). These documents provide summaries of forward-looking formative assessments of the relevance and often describe feedback from various stakeholder groups as a ‘wishlist’ of what Eurofound should be delivering in the upcoming periods.
- **Action plans produced by Eurofound in response to recommendations / lesson learnt from evaluations** – These action plans are required⁴ in response to externally conducted programme level ‘ex-post evaluations’ and include concrete sets of actions and responsibilities. Often, improvements in indicators can be tracked in the following evaluation report.

In addition to the evaluations and documents describing Eurofound’s performance, there are 4 year and annual work programmes outlining the planned activities and focus for given period. These documents had been approved by the tripartite Governing Board and provide useful insight for understanding changing priorities of Eurofound and the context within which it works. Other background documentation including Eurofound’s own summary material produced to celebrate 40 years of operation, and other relevant archival information/documentation – including those that relate to Eurofound’s mandate.⁵

⁴ A requirement under the 2012 ‘Common Approach on EU decentralised agencies’ and the accompanying European Commission ‘Roadmap’. Both documents can be accessed at: https://europa.eu/european-union/about-eu/agencies/overhaul_en

⁵ Including the 1975 Founding Regulation of Eurofound. See the ‘Regulation (EEC) No 1365/75 of the Council of 26 May 1975 on the creation of a European Foundation for the improvement of living and working conditions’. Link: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=OJ:L:1975:139:FULL&from=EN>

Context of delivering on Eurofound's mandate

1.1 Context

Eurofound's mission to provide knowledge to assist in the development of social and work-related policies has remained stable over time since Eurofound was established but the context in which it strived to achieve this mission changed profoundly over the last 41 years. This changing context has a direct effect on the scale of challenges that Eurofound helps to tackle through provision of data and analysis for shaping policy. This section intends to provide a brief summary of the main contextual changes, focusing in more detail on the last 15 years.

When Eurofound was founded in 1975, the European Community consisted of 9 Member States, today's European Union counts 28. This alone shows that, during its 40 years of existence, Eurofound has been confronted by momentous changes both in internal growth and in its external context. In many ways the flux has been continuous, but this section summarises changes taking place over time, well summarised in a recent publication 'Eurofound: The first 40 years'.⁶ Even though Eurofound's first years of existence coincided with a period of stagnation in European integration, this period was nonetheless marked by important changes in the social dimension, as testified by the 'Directive on equal treatment for men and women in employment' (1976)⁷ and the 'Action programme for safety and health at work' (1978).⁸

In the decade that followed, European integration was deepened profoundly by the signing of the 'Single European Act' in 1986, which provided the basis for a far reaching programme aimed at sorting out the problems with free trade across EU borders and which created the 'Single Market'. This single market programme was matched by more cooperation in the social dimension of the European Community via the 'European social dialogue', commencing in 1985 at the initiative of then EC President, Jacques Delors. Together with increased qualified majority voting in the institutions, this led to a wave of social policies directives; for instance, on working time and part-time work, the posting of workers, parental leave and European Works Councils.⁹

The collapse of communism in the late 1980s and early 1990s changed the face of Europe profoundly, triggering German unification and eventually the further enlargement of the EU. This went together with – and was closely linked to – the further deepening of European integration. The 'Maastricht Treaty' on European Union in 1993 and the 'Treaty of Amsterdam' in 1999 spread integration into new areas and completed the Single Market with the 'four freedoms' of: movement of goods, services, people and money. For European economic and social policy making, the last decade of the 20th century was dominated by the inauguration of the 'post-Maastricht agenda' and its focus on the cementing of employee rights. Also for Eurofound, the deepening of European integration in the nineties was marked by broadening

⁶ 'Eurofound: The first 40 years', Eurofound (2014). Accessed at:

http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/sites/default/files/ef_publication/field_ef_document/ef1436en.pdf

⁷ 'Council Directive 76/207/EEC of 9 February 1976 on the implementation of the principle of equal treatment for men and women as regards access to employment, vocational training and promotion, and working conditions'. Link: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A31976L0207>

⁸ 'Council Resolution of 29 June 1978 on an action programme of the European Communities on safety and health at work'. Link: [http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A31978Y0711\(01\)](http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A31978Y0711(01))

⁹ 'Analysis of the Social Agendas', IZA Research Report No. 24, based on a study conducted for the European Parliament under contract IP/A/EMPL/FWC/2008-002/C1/SC1. Link: http://www.iza.org/en/webcontent/publications/reports/report_pdfs/iza_report_24.pdf

and diversification, as testified by, for example: the launching of the first wave of ‘European Working Conditions Survey’ (EWCS) in 1990; the development of the European employment and industrial relations glossaries on employment law, industrial relations and the labour markets in all Member States; and the setup of the ‘European Industrial Relations Observatory’ (EIRO) in 1997, which collects and disseminates information and analysis on developments in industrial relations in the EU Member States.

Around the turn of the millennium, we see much more emphasis upon employment in reaction to the perceived malaise in European competitiveness vis-à-vis other global competitors. The ‘Lisbon Strategy’, adopted for a ten-year period in 2000, enshrined labour market flexibility and employment growth into all aspects of EU thinking, agreement and action. In 2003, the Commission introduced a new ‘European Social Policy Agenda’ for the period 2005-2010, which put the need for ‘better quality’ jobs at the centre of attention. Around the same time, the EU also experienced its biggest single round of enlargement: 10 new countries joined the EU in 2004, followed by Bulgaria and Romania in 2007. At the EU level, enlargement led to the need to strengthen social policy, as existing challenges (unemployment, low pay and poverty, industrial relations, etc.), became more urgent and new challenges emerged. The objectives of the Lisbon Strategy and the challenges of the growing EU required Eurofound to expand coverage of its large surveys. A challenge Eurofound responded to by further broadening its scope, as exemplified by the launch of the ‘European Quality of Life Survey’ (EQLS) and ‘European Company Survey’ (first waves in 2003 and 2004, respectively).

In 2009, the EU was modernized institutionally by the ‘Treaty of Lisbon’, which in the social dimension added the non-discrimination principle and equality between women and men to the values of the EU. Around this time, Europe experienced the full effects of the financial crisis, which put under pressure years of progress in closer social integration in Europe and exacerbated the impact of longer-term issues such as population ageing. At the EU level, this led to diminished or stagnant budgets (including for Eurofound) and a new focus on smart, sustainable and inclusive growth, as encapsulated by the ‘Europe 2020’ strategy. The combination of changes brought about by the Treaty of Lisbon and the economic crisis were reflected by Eurofound’s priorities in the 2013–2016 work programme, which focussed among others on increasing labour market participation and combating unemployment by creating jobs, making work sustainable throughout the life course, and on Improving standards of living and promoting social cohesion in the face of economic disparities and social inequalities.

1.2 Eurofound’s objectives and priorities

Eurofound’s objectives changed over the period that the meta-study considers. Whereas the first three multiannual work programmes recognised that there is a need for continuity and forward looking new activities, the strategic objective of the 2013-2016 work programme emphasised quality and relevance to policy stakeholders and drive for making impact. Themes covered by Eurofound remained in the core of labour market policies, cutting across, industrial relations and working conditions and quality of life. Greater focus on employment and change took place since establishment of EMCC and continued towards introduction of more responsive research activities as ERM and European Jobs Monitor. Since 2009, there was a stronger focus on growth and changing labour market as a result of the economic crisis. The table below summarises the objectives of the 4-year programmes and thematic areas from the multi-annual work programmes.

Table 1: Summary of Eurofound's Programme Objectives and Thematic Areas

	Aims and Objectives	Thematic Areas Covered
2001 -	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CONTINUITY: building on expertise developed over 25 years, and 	<p>CORE AREAS OF EXPERTISE:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working conditions

2004	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ INNOVATION: exploring emerging issues and responding to societal change. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Industrial relations ▪ Living conditions <p>TRANSVERSAL THEMES:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Promoting better employment ▪ Extending equal opportunities for men and women ▪ Managing diversity ▪ Supporting social inclusion ▪ Examining the use of time
2005 - 2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ ‘Reinforcing core activities, strengthening the monitoring role and developing a forward looking perspective across all areas...’ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Employment. ▪ Work–life balance. ▪ Industrial relations and partnership. ▪ Social cohesion
2009 - 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Be a reliable source of high-quality information and identify emerging issues for research and debate ▪ Strengthen the tripartite character and stakeholder relationships of Eurofound’s activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Employment growth and demand and supply of labour in changing labour markets ▪ More and better jobs and higher productivity through partnership ▪ Promotion of social inclusion and sustainable social protection
2013 - 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The strategic objective for 2013–2016 is to provide high-quality, timely and policy-relevant knowledge as input to better informed policies in four priority areas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increasing labour market participation and combating unemployment by creating jobs, improving labour market functioning and promoting integration ▪ Improving working conditions and making work sustainable throughout the life course ▪ Developing industrial relations to ensure equitable and productive solutions in a changing policy context ▪ Improving standards of living and promoting social cohesion in the face of economic disparities and social inequalities

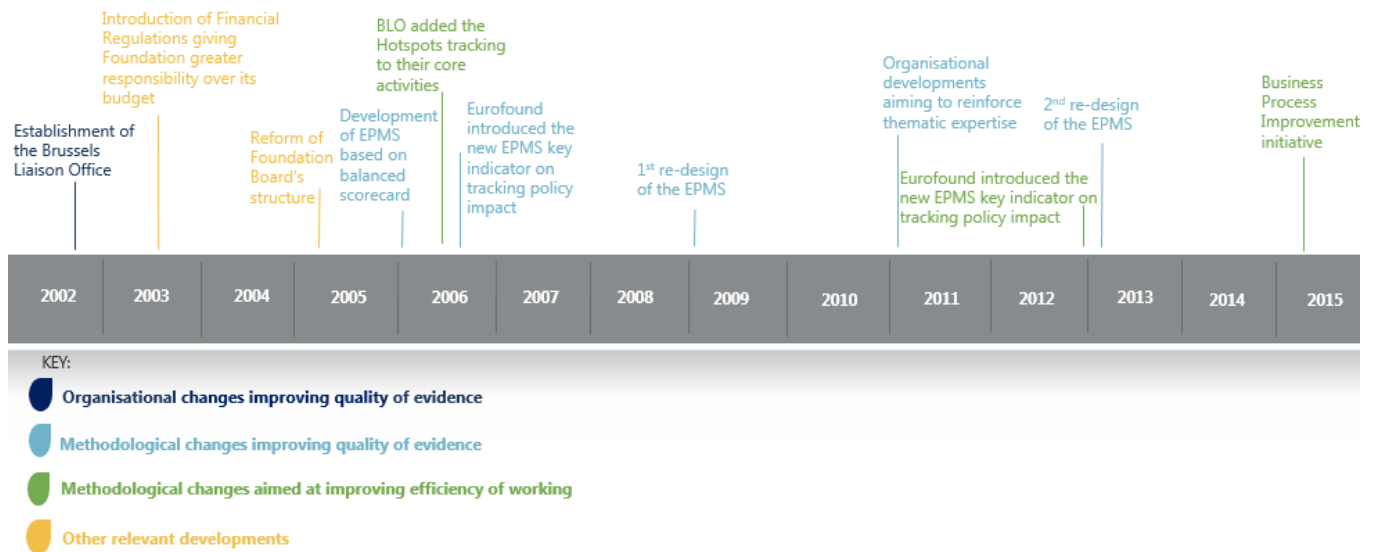
Source: Four-year work programmes for 2001–2004, 2005–2008, 2009–2012 and 2013–2016, Eurofound

Findings from the meta-study

1.3 Strength of evidence used for meta-evaluation

As highlighted above, there is a large evidence base that was reviewed within this exercise which contains various levels of detail and insight on assessing distance travelled by Eurofound over the period. The quality of evidence available to evaluators has evolved over time. Most notable developments within Eurofound in strengthening monitoring information available for evaluation resulted from organisational and methodological changes with this aim. One of the most notable early change was the establishment of the Brussels Liaison Office (in 2002) with a mission to strengthen and broaden the exchange and cooperation with the EU target audiences and to expand Eurofound's visibility for EU key decision makers and impact on policymaking processes.¹⁰ At the same time, Eurofound started to track EU impacts, which was later (in 2006) formalised with the introduction of a performance indicator. This brings us to the second tranche of developments, which related more to changes in monitoring processes and systems, such as the introduction of the Eurofound Programme Monitoring System (EPMS) in 2006 based on the Balanced Scorecard approach and its subsequent redesigns in 2009 and 2013. The main developments in four different types of event are presented in the timeline below.

Figure 2: Timeline of main developments strengthening evidence for evaluation



Source: Based on ex post evaluations and the document 'Eurofound: The first 40 years'

The key evidence sources for the meta study have been the ex post evaluations commissioned by Eurofound over the years. Strengths and limitations of their approaches are presented in the table overleaf but in general, most of the studies relied on a combination of user survey, consultations with stakeholders and a set of case studies. Early evaluations did not explicitly rely on theory based approaches but made efforts to be inclusive in data collection (e.g. inclusion of two additional languages in the survey and conducting case studies of nearly a quarter of all funded projects). The evaluations

¹⁰ The 2002 annual work programme mentioned the following reasons to set up a Brussels Liaison Office: "...to monitor the activities of the Commission, the Parliament and the social partners, and to prepare meetings for the Directorate and the research managers. Its task will include the identification of the most relevant persons within a specific target group, and also the level of information and communication needed." See 'Programme of work 2002' Eurofound. Link: http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/sites/default/files/ef_publication/field_ef_document/ef0201en.pdf

in later years were theory driven and the 2009-2012 ex post evaluation attempted to work with user satisfaction team to avoid evaluation/research fatigue. Even though the case studies in the latter period were less numerous, they were more in depth and addressed questions of attribution of Eurofound research to specific policy developments. The main limitations across all evaluations were reliance on Eurofound’s internal records of users when drawing the samples for qualitative and quantitative research components introducing certain bias, time lags and limitations in Eurofound’s internal monitoring systems to assess efficiency.

Table 2: Strengths and limitations of Ex-post evaluations of Eurofound

Period covered	Strengths of the approach	Limitations
Pre-2001	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Study drew on a large quantitative survey produced in 3 languages to improve the response rates and give a wider target group ability to respond. ▪ 12 out of 50 projects as case studies. ▪ Long report with very detailed presentation of charts in each individual sections and a decent effort attributed to organisational assessment rather than just activities within the programme. . 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Results were often descriptive rather than evaluative ▪ Survey and interview sampling relied on Eurofound’s database and the report does not explain how these were selected. ▪ Covering a very long period reduces depth of analysis. ▪ Other limitations recognised were the complexity of organisation covering a breadth of expertise; Large stakeholder and user bases; regular changes in structure and focus of the work programmes; difficulty in extracting data on activities, contacts and expenditure. ▪ The evaluation did not contain any section on European Added Value or sustainability.
2001 - 2004	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Telephone survey with higher response rate than other studies. ▪ Addressed bias towards Board members in the survey, ▪ The findings from the survey have been supplemented with those of the other methodological tools. This has provided the opportunity for triangulation which has involved verification and elimination of bias by cross-checking the findings across each of the research methods. In addition to the surveys, the evaluation drew on Desk-based analysis; In-depth interviews; Focus groups; and Case studies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Common problems with ex post evaluation: ▪ Time lag that exists between the end of work programme activity and the fieldwork analysis (contacts, change of systems holding information, recollection of those interviewed, changing context since end of programme). ▪ Specific limitations were relatively low survey sample base for the survey identified and agreed by the Advisory Committee), ▪ Bias towards Board member and not many academics. This resulted in low number of responses. Potential case studies were set out in Terms of Reference (ToR) and evaluation team selected 5 of them (not an independent selection, potential bias).
2005 - 2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Evaluation driven by theory drawing up an intervention logic. ▪ Large mixed-method (online + face-to-face) quantitative survey, with high overall number of stakeholders/users surveyed. ▪ Use of impact tracking evidence (EPMS) in combination with survey results. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Although more limited than in previous evaluations, some time lag existed between the end of work programme activity and the fieldwork analysis; the report mentions that they experienced a lower response rate to the stakeholder survey because of this. ▪ The overall response rate to the surveys of key stakeholders and target audiences (+ two smaller case study surveys) was 10% - this is relatively low. ▪ Difficulties in making contact with Governing Board members in some countries. ▪ Bias: In the case of the key stakeholder survey, employers were under-represented and national authorities over-represented, which could have led to some bias. ▪ EF’s 2005-08 work programme did not include a fully developed performance measurement framework and hence it is not assessed whether targets were achieved in the evaluation. ▪ The evaluation did not contain a specific section on European

2009 - 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Broad range of methods used, triangulating evidence from interviews, secondary evidence from internally run surveys and impacts tracking evidence. ▪ Attempt to reduce bias by including former staff in consultations. ▪ Case study selection driven by a framework developed by the evaluators. ▪ Working with user satisfaction survey delivery team to reduce evaluation fatigue. 	<p>Added Value or sustainability.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ There was a certain bias towards consulting those who are close to the Eurofound’s governance processes and / or involved in the wider consultations that Eurofound conducts during work Programme development. ▪ The breadth of evaluation (number of questions) limited the contractor in selecting a greater number of interviews with target groups that are not Eurofound’s direct stakeholders. ▪ Organisation of the budgeting information and changes in the structure of the Eurofound’s research units during the period restricted evaluation’s ability to assess the efficiency of the Foundation.
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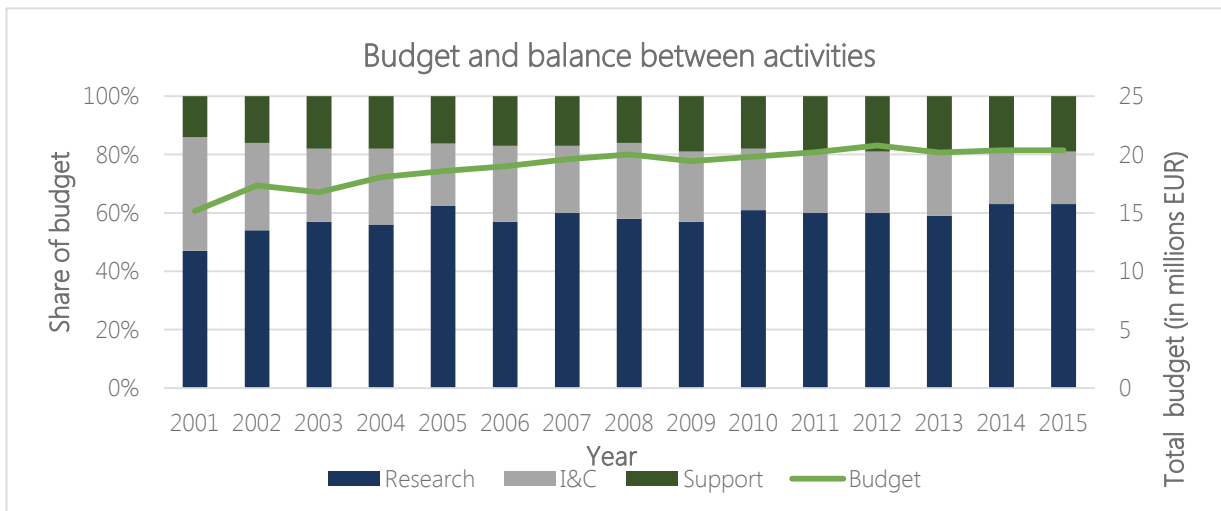
Source: Ipsos MORI analysis, 2016

1.4 Activities delivered and balance of activities within the budget

Eurofound has over the period delivered on its mission through knowledge generation and dissemination (or research, information and communication). These core activities had been supported by administrative functions running Eurofound. Recent publication looking at Eurofound’s existence over the last 40 years provided an overview of the vast research areas covered, across, industrial relations, working conditions and quality of life.

As part of this study we looked at the balance of the research, information and communication and support activities over during the 15-year period. The overall budget grew up to 2012, reduced in 2013 and then remained relatively stable. About 60% of the budget related to research activities, with more fluctuation between I&C and support budgets.¹¹ The study team analyse balance between large surveys and smaller research studies over the last four years (presented in the annex) however the exercise would have to be conducted over a longer period of time to allow for looking at trends.

Figure 3: Eurofound budget and balance of activities 2001-2015



Source: Ipsos MORI analysis of ‘actual consumption of human and financial resources by the year end, broken down by activity’, from annual activity reports 2001-2015, Eurofound

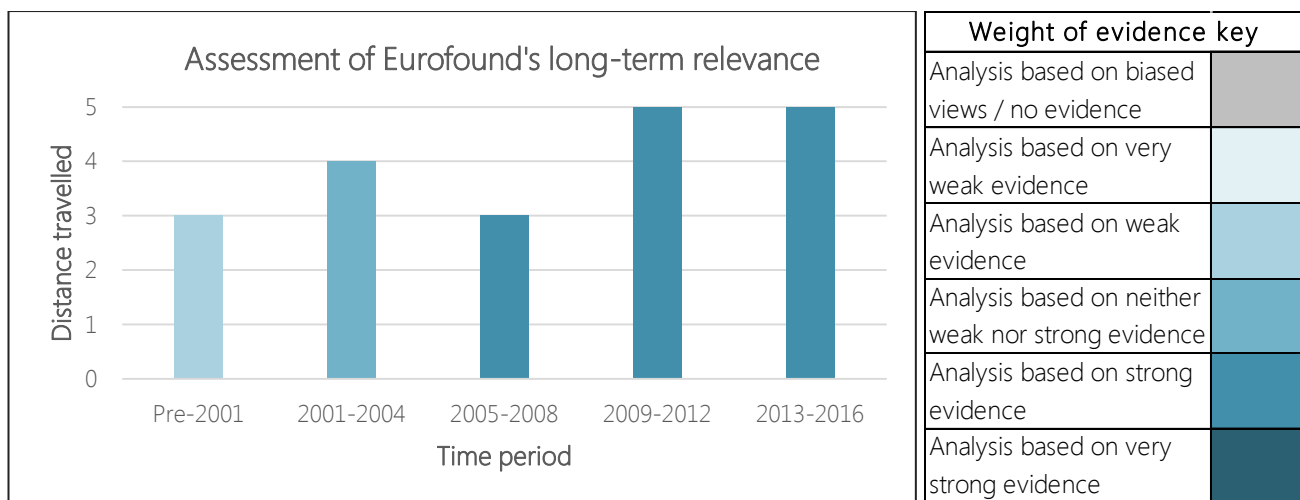
¹¹ For the period before 2007, translation budgets were included in communication. Since 2007, no specific figure for translations has been provided.

1.5 Relevance

All of the ex post evaluations reviewed considered relevance of Eurofound as the extent to which the objectives of Eurofound (as expressed in the multiannual work programme) were in line with the needs of stakeholders. The methods used to measure this characteristic were predominantly assessed through quantitative and qualitative research with users and stakeholders.

The diagram below provides an overview the assessments of Eurofound over the last 15 years in terms of its relevance or the extent to which Eurofound's objectives and activities corresponded with the needs of its stakeholders and users. This evaluation criterion has received very positive assessments from independent evaluators, especially since 2009, which shows that Eurofound has travelled a substantial distance over the years in the right direction (as can also be seen from the 'distance travelled score in the diagram). There was a relative reduction in assessment of relevance in the 2005-2008 period which coincided with the challenges relating to waves of EU enlargement in 2004 and 2007 (see below for more detailed information).

Over the years, the evidence base of the evaluation has strengthened substantially as well, with the introduction of user satisfaction surveys triangulated with other data (monitoring information and qualitative stakeholder research) and also formalised ex ante evaluations for the period from 2009 and onwards. This is evident from the 'darker colours' of the bars in the diagram in the more recent periods.



The 1997-2000 ex post evaluation assessed Eurofound's long-term relevance as 'satisfactorily' and added that some policy areas were covered quite well (employment, IR, participation and health and wellbeing), whilst other were less well covered (social cohesion, equal opportunities). It should be noted, however, that the 1997-2000 evaluation presented views from surveyed users but did not triangulate with any other evidence, nor were any judgements made on the achieved levels of satisfaction.

The findings in 2001-2004 ex post evaluation were more positive than before in assessment of Eurofound's relevance. This evaluation was in particular positive about the way Eurofound adapted to the momentous changes within the EU that accompanied the implementation of Economic and Monetary Union, further enlargement of the Union and the shift to the Lisbon Strategy. The stakeholders consulted agreed that Eurofound has responded well to the EU policy agenda and worked to address their needs, which was facilitated by the participatory planning process. Eurofound also performed well in historically strong research areas and in the inclusion of new ones (e.g. better employment, enlargement from Lisbon

Strategy, but some areas (including immigration) were not addressed immediately. In line with this, EU policymakers stated that Eurofound could be more proactive by taking a prospective look at emerging economic and social issues.

The 2005-2008 ex post evaluation was the first to present the triangulated views from surveyed users, supported by references to the monitoring information and qualitative stakeholder research. This strengthened evidence base led to a slightly more negative assessment of Eurofound's long term relevance compared to the previous evaluation. This could largely be explained by strains in Eurofound's governance and weaknesses in the mechanisms needed to reach target audiences at a national level – which may be explained by the fact that during this period the 2004 and 2007 enlargements of the EU took place adding many audiences with expectations of policy recommendations applicable to the national level. In general, the 2005-2008 evaluation was quite positive commending Eurofound on successfully tackling the need to broaden surveys and research studies to include new Member States. Moreover, over half (55%) of key stakeholders who fed to the evaluation thought that Eurofound had been 'very' or 'quite' successful in achieving a positive impact and in contributing to a better understanding of issues concerning working and living conditions in Europe.

The 2009-2012 ex post evaluation showed that Eurofound succeeded in addressing the issues raised in the 2005-2008 evaluation and concluded that Eurofound's intervention logic, activities and choices were fully in line with the needs of socio-economic policymakers and stakeholders consulted within the evaluation. Moreover, stakeholder agreed that Eurofound provided 'unique' information, in line with its mandate.

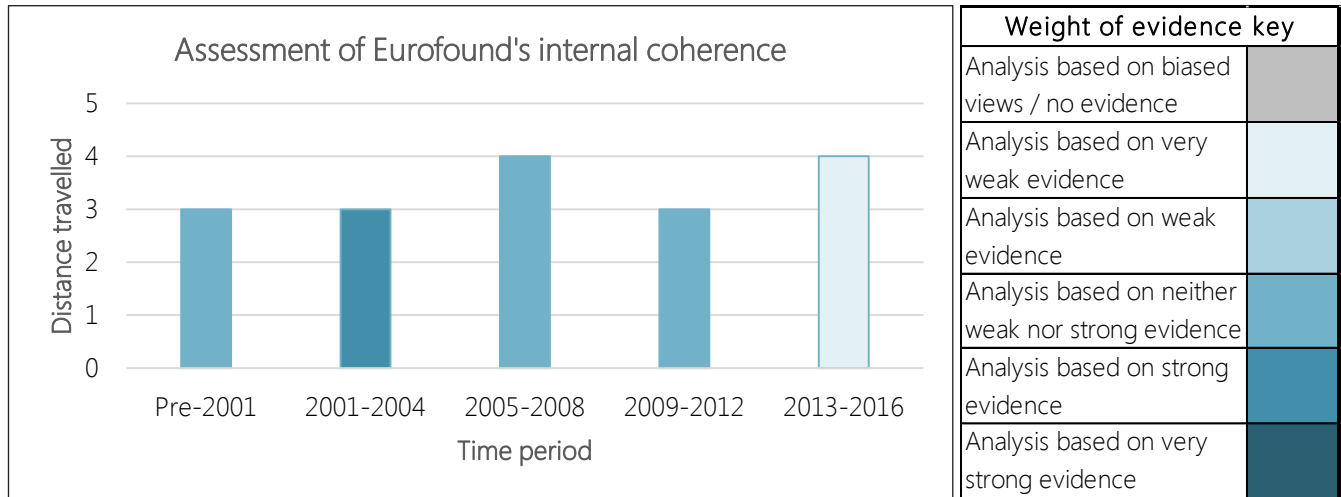
For the most recent years (2013-2016), no ex post evaluation has been produced yet (given that the programme is still in its final year of implementation). Nonetheless, there is strong evidence showing that Eurofound still very much listens to the needs of key stakeholders. The 2013-2016 ex ante evaluation noted that the new four-year programme provided a good description of the problems affecting the environment in which Eurofound operated and provided a convincing rationale for the definition of key objectives and priorities. The ex ante evaluation mentioned that finding the right balance between reaching the relevant key target audiences at the national and EU level would remain challenging. The 2017-2020 ex ante evaluation confirmed the positive findings, stressing that the work programme was very relevant due to programme development process with frequent and close involvement of stakeholders and other bodies, and because of a large amount of continuity building on the existing strong knowledge base, while flexibility is built into the programme with provision of ad-hoc requests. It was noted, however, that there is some tension between long term programme delivery and adaptiveness to changing circumstances and that it would be advisable for Eurofound to have a clear view on how its commitments should be prioritised. In line with the ex ante reports, the 2013-2015 annual activity reports concluded that the high relevance of Eurofound's activities was confirmed, among others, by the indicators concerning scientific quality of output, the uptake of Eurofound's knowledge through its website, the highly valued European Working Conditions Survey (as evidenced by worldwide requests for cooperation), and the contributions to research to policy development both on the European and national levels.

1.6 Coherence

1.6.1 Internal Coherence

All ex post evaluations have explicitly assessed coherence of Eurofound's programme. Within this assessment, internal coherence referred to the extent to which elements of Eurofound's objectives and activities were complementary, mutually supportive and non-contradictory.

The diagram below presents an overview of the internal coherence assessments of Eurofound over the last 15, showing to what extent Eurofound’s interventions were judged as internally coherent. This evaluation criterion has had fairly positive and stable assessments over the years. The availability of high quality evidence is, however, limited and no clear improvements have been made to address this over the years. An alignment analysis and indications of coverage is available for all evaluation periods covered, but these are mostly based on qualitative research and desk research.



For the pre 2001 period, the ex post evaluation concluded that the Eurofound projects were coherent with the programme but there was insufficient integration of the content-related objectives, information and dissemination. The latter issue was addressed in the subsequent work programme, as the ex post evaluation of 2001-2004 noted “greater direction and linkage between the research and communication functions”. However, the same evaluation also noted that some concerns had been raised over the compatibility and duplication, although no evidence was found that suggested that the diversity of format and methodologies was a problem or alternatively, that there should be a conscious strategy of harmonising instruments.

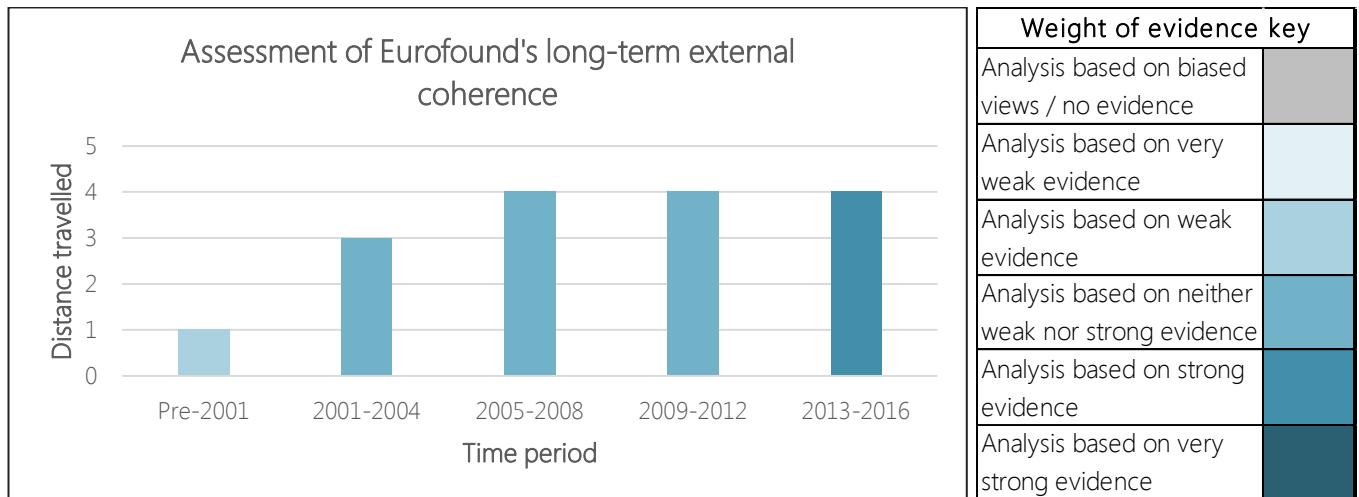
The 2005-2008 ex post evaluation concluded that the internal coherence of Eurofound’s 2005-08 work programme was ‘high’, in particular because feedback showed that there was an inherent coherence built into Eurofound’s remit of monitoring and analysing living and working conditions.

The 2009-2012 work programme preparation encompassed a wide consultation that was inclusive internally and externally and resulted in high level strategic priorities to guide Eurofound during the period. Specific objectives were set in individual years and related especially to improvements in effectiveness and quality of achieving impact and efficiency in its working. However, these objectives were not included in the first year of the multiannual work programme, leading to slightly lower coherence, although this did not appear to have had a detrimental effect on the working of Eurofound.

The 2017-2020 ex ante evaluation noted that achieving internal coherence is challenging for Eurofound, because of the broad mandate, an assessment in line with the annual activity reports from 2013-2015. In particular, the ambitious nature of the programme and the various requests for ad hoc contributions were reported as having a negative impact on programme delivery. This clearly is a subject that received a lot of attention from Eurofound’s management; as can be derived from the increased focus on key policy agendas and stakeholders (referred to in the annual activity reports) and as testified by Eurofound’s ongoing ‘fit for purpose’ exercise, which aims to improve internal coherence by reviewing the current structure and workflows of the organisation (described in the 2017-2020 ex ante evaluation report).

External Coherence

External coherence within the assessments related to the extent that the objectives and activities of Eurofound support, contradict or duplicate those of other EU public interventions, over the concerned period. The diagram below shows the evolution of the external coherence assessments of Eurofound over the last 15 years. As can be seen in the diagram, Eurofound's external coherence has improved notably over the years and has been assessed positively since the 2005-2008 period. However, the quality of evidence used to make the assessment has generally been lower than in other evaluation criteria; the external coherence assessments having been based mostly on qualitative evidence and linked desk-based analysis. An exception is the most recent period, which – taking into account the limitations on the available evidence for this period – showed increased attention for external coherence (see further).



When looking at whether the Foundation's work displayed coherence with important issues in the policy arena, the 1997-2000 ex post evaluation concluded that the level of coherence with the Commission and other EU agencies was not very high, even though there were examples of useful and helpful cooperation. From 2001 and onwards this coherence has increased notably, as testified for example by a growing number of publications of joint reports and surveys. The 2001-2004 ex post evaluation did not find any evidence for duplication or inconsistencies between the EU Agencies, although it added that the level of co-operation between the Foundation and other EU bodies was 'variable'.

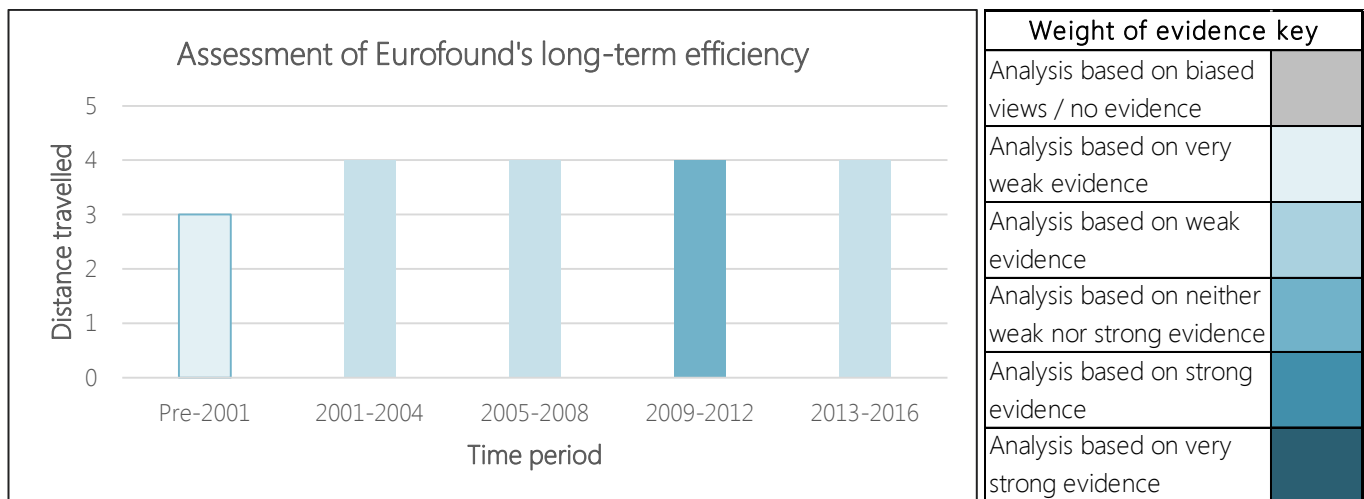
The 2005-2008 period showed further improvements, with the ex post evaluation concluding that, from an external coherence perspective, Eurofound's 2005-08 work programme was "...closely aligned with the EU policy framework – including the Lisbon Strategy and European Social Policy Agenda – both in its design and implementation." It was noted that this had been made possible by an extensive stakeholder consultation process, at a national and EU level, on the aims and contents of Eurofound's 2005-08 work programme. Even so, it was also noted that coherence was greater with EU-level programmes/policies than was the case at a national level.

During the 2009-2012 period, the EU had to react to the financial crisis. For Eurofound, this meant that it had to re-focus some of its projects in order to maintain coherence with EU policies. This seems to have been largely successful, but may have caused some gaps as some topics selected in 2007-8 were not fully implemented or did not receive the emphasis they were originally planned to. The ex post evaluation of the 2009-2012 work programme also noted that there were potential gaps on the bordering remit with other agencies (notably EU-OSHA), which were caused by agencies trying to prevent overlap, although stakeholders raised no specific complaints. The ex post evaluation concluded, however, that the collaboration with external organisations could be improved further, especially with the OECD.

The ex ante evaluations for the 2013-2016 and 2017-2020 programming periods showed that Eurofound tries to address external coherence further by means of for example improved plans for collaboration with EU agencies, implemented through annual action plans. The 2016 annual work programme mentions a number of concrete collaboration projects, notably with EU-OSHA.¹² The 2017-2020 ex ante evaluation also included a specific mapping of activities by agencies with related mandates.

1.7 Efficiency

Efficiency was an integral part of each ex post evaluation of Eurofound in the concerned period. This study looked to answer the question to what extent did Eurofound efficiently deployed its resources (human and financial) to achieve the objectives set out in the multiannual work programme, over the concerned period? The diagram below provides an overview of the efficiency assessments of Eurofound over the last 15 years. It highlights that evaluators over the period assessed Eurofound to improve its efficiency in the 2001-2004 period and since then commended the Foundation on performing on a good level. That being said, the weight of evidence used to make these individual assessments has been much lower than in other areas of evaluations. This conclusion is exemplified by recommendations of individual evaluations for the Foundation to introduce a closer on-project monitoring of time spent through timesheets



The 1997-2000 Ex post evaluation concluded that Eurofound had in place formalised and efficient procedures, with respect to price and quality. It stated that in relation to programming procedures, the process in place ensured that unnecessary duplication of work was avoided through signposting of work by those involved. The key issue from efficiency point of view was the risk of fragmented or disjointed planning through inadequate central control of the process but that during the period this had been minimised. The evaluation compared planned and actual spending and concluded that there were no major discrepancies beyond translation budgets. It was however noted that the "Southern Member States" contractors were underrepresented in some of the research and that small Member States were over-represented. I&C unit planning is difficult due to not having concrete publication plans in advance which made the assessment of efficiency challenging. Some issues identified in relation to efficiency were lack of professional knowledge management and a relatively long production of publications of 2-4 months, owing to the time required for editing design and publishing process.

¹² This refers for example to cooperation with EU-OSHA on the analysis of the situation of older workers based on data from the sixth EWCS. See the 'Annual work programme 2016', Eurofound (2015). Link: http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/sites/default/files/ef_publication/field_ef_document/ef1560en.pdf

The 2001-2004 ex post evaluation concluded that Eurofound had made progress in terms of implementing the measures to improve efficiency: This progress related to introduction of project management and finance processes, improving monitoring of the budget and enabling better financial planning; Eurofound enhanced the appraisal procedures by introducing a competency based performance management system and was particularly effective at addressing enlargement and ensuring that all groups and countries are represented within the organisation. Eurofound established during the period an approach to governance in which Board members felt involved and valued, though some concerns had been raised about its 'unwieldy' nature. Areas for improvement identified in the period were in research and information and communication activities which had broadly stayed the same but that administrative costs have increased. Secondly, the evaluators highlighted that the absence of KPIs for previous period at the organisational level made it difficult to assess the performance. Nevertheless, this period had seen an improvement in assessment of efficiency and monitoring and included an independent view from evaluators suggesting specific changes.

In the 2005-2008 period, Eurofound's assessment of efficiency remained at high level, the evaluators concluded that, during this period, Eurofound deployed its financial resources efficiently in supporting implementation of the work programme. In particular, the new Member States were integrated successfully in the Eurofound structures, even though there was only a slight increase in Eurofound's funding in the 2005-08 period. There was also only a rather modest increase in Eurofound's (authorised) personnel levels during the 2005-08 period; actual staffing levels (excluding contract agents) actually fell from 82 in 2005 to 77 in 2008 (-6.1%). The main development commended was a substantial strengthening of Eurofound's in-house research capacity with the addition of 15 new staff. It was recommended to Eurofound to develop a comprehensive approach, starting with the recruitment of suitable people but also including some of the issues highlighted in the report (staff retention, striking a balance between immediate operational requirements and developing staff research interests, sharing knowledge, etc.).

Evaluation of the 2009-2012 programming period recognised Eurofound to have a good setup for efficient production and delivery of research outputs for its main target groups. Top line indicators suggested increased efficiency but detailed data for a more granular level assessment was not available – same as in previous periods. Due to the ongoing refinement of the EPMS, some of the detailed performance measures were not available for the entire period covered. The evaluation stated that there was a need for an introduction of a project-focused monitoring system. Project level efficiency reviews provided some basis for a stronger assessment and positive results / actions for improvement.

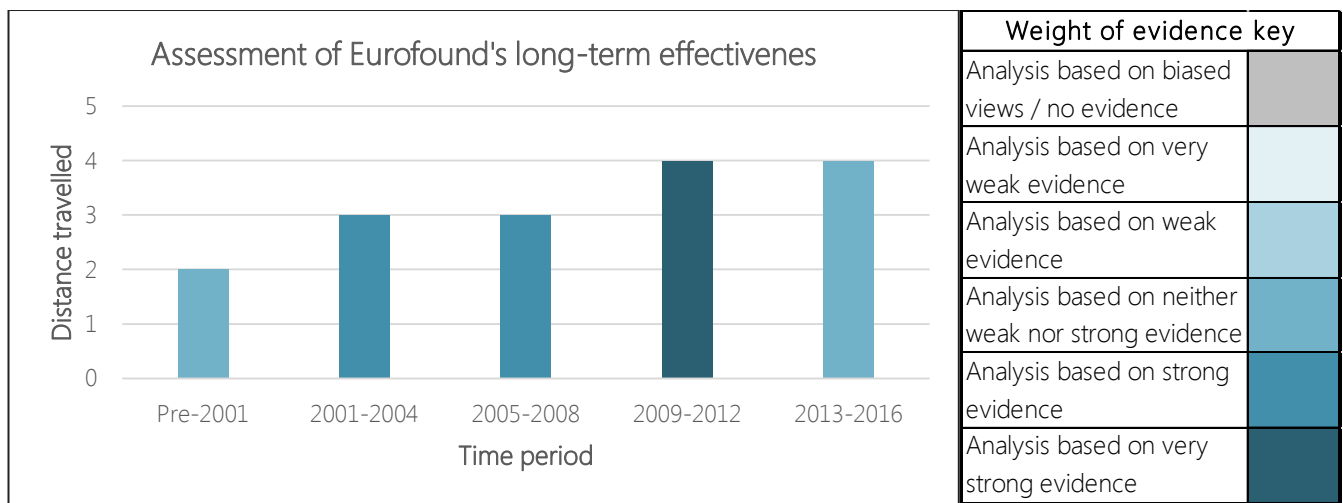
Ex ante evaluation covering the 2013-2016 period commented that the systems in place at the time did not allow for calculation of cost effectiveness ratios for all projects. Annual activity reports of the 2013-15 period commented on Eurofound's achievement of targets that provide an indication that Eurofound was performing at a good level drawing on efficiencies from delivering these activities for decades. The weight of evidence however remained relatively weak with the exception of a few project-based evaluations.

1.8 Effectiveness

Assessment of effectiveness of Eurofound was covered by each of the ex post evaluation, looking at the extent to which the inputs result in the attainment of its desired objectives, some of the studies assessed how different attributes of the programme contributed to achievement of these objectives, for example looking specifically how organisational changes contributed to overall achievement of goals.

Eurofound's effectiveness (achieving objectives through given the level of inputs) was relatively high across the period covered by ex post evaluations, however there were two notable spikes over the period. As Eurofound recognised from

the outset that new knowledge produced was only achieving its objectives if it was communicated to the correct user groups. Two notable developments were improvements in communications strategy and the establishment of the Brussels Liaison Office in 2002. The latter development was highlighted as one of the success stories in the relevant ex post evaluation for the period. The BLO improved the effectiveness of Eurofound by playing a central role in promotion of its research and targeting and attending events and meetings, and building a network of stakeholder contacts and worked to facilitate linkages and the flow of information between the EU. Effectiveness of Eurofound grew in the following periods in which the evaluators were able to draw on stronger evidence demonstrated by the EU Impact tracking database and minutes of meetings discussing upcoming policy hotspots. These functions supported an ever-more satisfied user base due to high quality, unique research.



Early period ex post evaluation concluded that Eurofound was a major source of information for users in all three core areas. It was specifically noted that the effectiveness was ‘average to good’ in all research areas but that EIRO and EWCS were highlighted as particularly useful. Information and communication in the period was found to lack quality contact management but users were satisfied with electronic dissemination. Languages were found to be an issue, especially as products got more targeted.

In the 2001-2004 period, Eurofound was found to have made much progress in meeting the broad objectives across research and monitoring, communication and dissemination, awareness and evaluation. There was a high perceived quality of publications by external stakeholders, linked to better integration between the communication and research functions. The communication processes have raised awareness and invited interest from a range of stakeholders across the EU. The Brussels Liaison Office (BLO) has played a central role in raising awareness about Eurofound at EU level. Areas for improvement identified by the evaluation were finding balance between focusing on key EU institutions, national governments and employee and employer organisations, and other stakeholders within broader civil society.

The 2005-2008 ex post evaluation was generally positive on the extent to which Eurofound achieved the research objectives of the 2005-08 work programme, with key stakeholders and target audiences reporting high added value, even though more was identified to be possible in order to measure performance. It reported that Eurofound was generally very effective in communicating information to key stakeholders at the European level, however it was considerably less successful in disseminating information in the Member States. The evaluation recommended that Eurofound worked with its Board members and Member States to define target audiences at a national level and that it needed to consider setting up a network of focal points based on the national authorities represented on its Governing Board. It was also

recommended that the Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system was further improved to ensure that contacts are relevant and kept up-to-date, and to facilitate the electronic dissemination of information

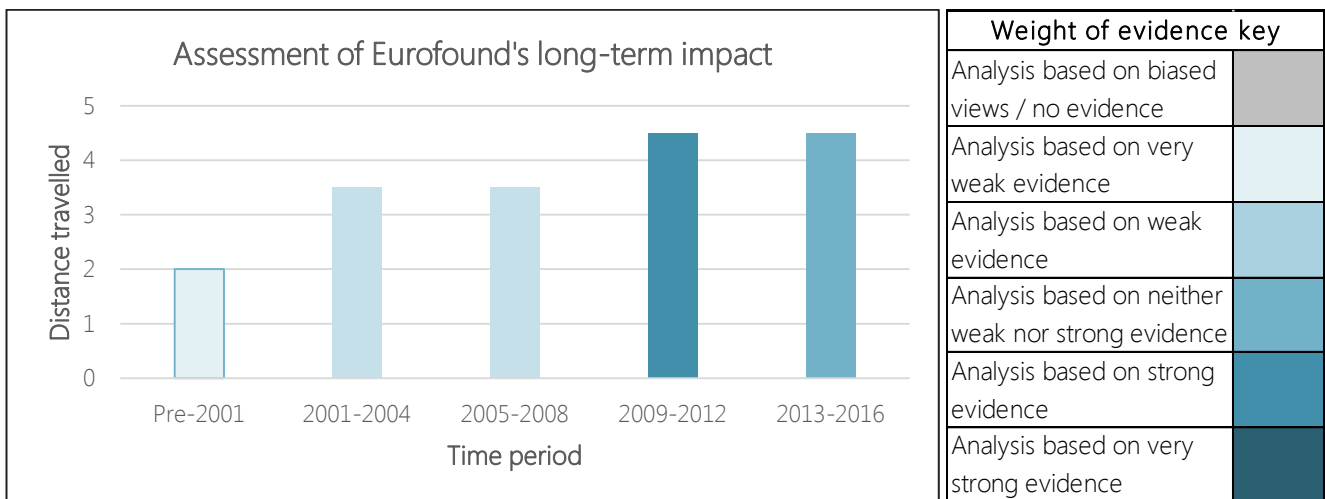
The 2009-2012 period was set during the time of economic turmoil and stakeholders saw timely response to these issues as very important. The evaluation found that there were a number of project delays experienced over the period but most users and external stakeholders consulted either did not notice or did not consider these being a significant issue. Specific projects require more timely execution and the annual work programme design and approval process had some flexibility built into it in order to address challenges faced by Europe posed by the economic crisis. Methods and quality of outputs of Eurofound research and continued strengthening in-house research capability were found to positively impact on Eurofound’s effectiveness. Information and communication activities were found to be well established and thought out resulting in several improvements and innovative approaches to presenting information throughout the period.

The still ongoing 2013-2016 programming period has not yet received a full ex post evaluation and therefore the available information for this period was from annual reports, which can only be used to highlight specific achievements. The assessment of Eurofound’s effectiveness in relation to its multiannual objectives was challenging but next chapter summarises impacts tracked through the EPMS over the period.

1.9 Impact

Assessment of Eurofound’s impact has always related to achieving its original mission. Over the years, however, Eurofound became more realistic about the expectations of what is reasonable to achieve and recognised that there are a number of factors that need to be in place to improve realisation of impact, some in control of Eurofound and some external.

Similar to the picture on effectiveness, impact of Eurofound of the years has been growing and evidence monitoring achievements available to the evaluators strengthened over time. Each of the ex post evaluations included project level case studies highlighting individual achievements of these efforts. Despite of high number of case studies in the first ex post evaluation, the level of detail captured by them was relatively low. Case studies in ex post evaluations since 2005 highlighted specific projects and series of projects that realised direct impact on policy development. Other case studies exemplified less direct routes to impact. The diagram below highlights this assessment over time, indicating that Eurofound has over time improved its processes to gear up towards supplying policy stakeholders with required unique reliable knowledge.



In the pre 2001 period, the evaluation found Eurofound to make a useful and significant contribution to EU policy development, less so but acceptable on national policymaking. Living conditions area was found to have a less direct impact. Improvements in contribution to new policy development was found to be delivered by new instruments such as collaboration with Council presidencies. Evaluators acknowledged that ultimately the decisions to apply Eurofound-produced knowledge lies with policymakers. Much of these findings were found on qualitative research and through self-reporting.

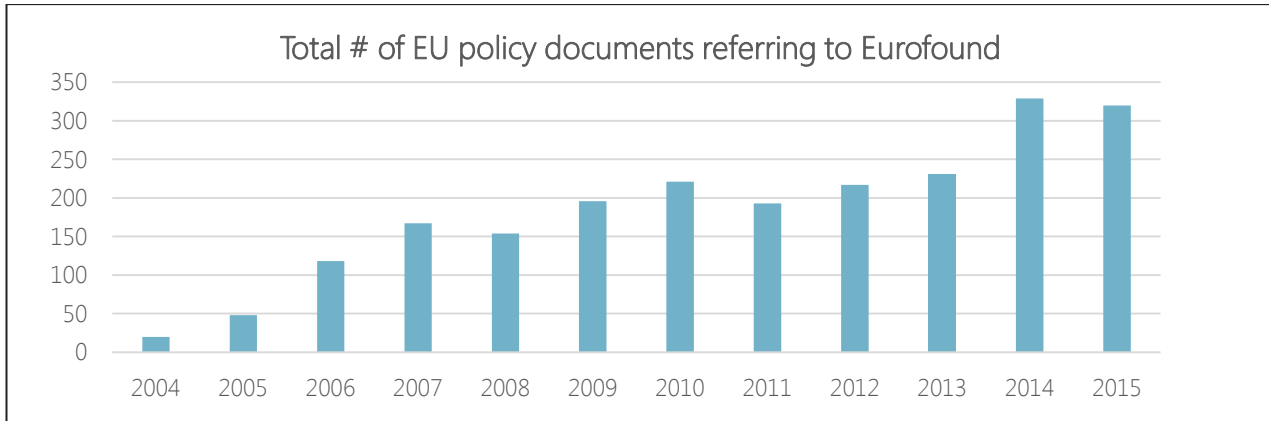
In 2001-2004 period found a high level of usage of Eurofound's outputs among key external stakeholders (academics and representatives of the EU institutions). The work of Eurofound has fed into the policy process and the newly established 'EU impact tracking function' identified a range of cases in which the EU institutions cited the work of Eurofound in papers, reports and policy submissions. As well as informing policy, some examples can be identified of cases in which Eurofound has made a contribution towards influencing some policy debates at both the national and EU level. Examining the level of influence of Eurofound's research in terms of enhancing an organisation or changing policy was found to be challenging. The number of concrete examples that can be identified in which Eurofound's research has influenced policy appeared to be low. The overall impact of Eurofound on stakeholders and EU policy was found to be largely rested on raising awareness of key issues and providing information. The extent to which this information actually influences policy decisions or actions was difficult to ascertain and quantify.

2005-2008 ex post evaluation concluded that Eurofound's research contributed to the improvement of living and working conditions in the EU by providing the EU and national authorities, and other social partners, with the information needed to take better decisions. Insofar as Eurofound influenced EU policies during the 2005-08 period (which was again found to be difficult to ascertain and quantify), it contributed to the 'better' aspect of the goal set out in the Lisbon Strategy of creating 'more and better jobs', and to most aspects of the European Social Policy Agenda. The impact of Eurofound's activities during the 2005-08 period was more pronounced at EU than at Member State level. It was noted that there was scope to improve impact monitoring using EPMS, for example by obtaining feedback more regularly from target audiences.

Evidence gathered within the evaluation of 2009-2012 period suggests that Eurofound's projects to a large extent contributed to policy developments but the complexities in the policymaking process prevented establishment of a direct link between research and policy change. Users indicated that the most frequent means for contributing to policy developments is through preparation of policy proposals and contributions to policy impact assessments. The majority of Governing Board members confirmed that in their view the most important means by which Eurofound contributed to relevant socio-economic policy development was informing policy debate by providing background and contextual knowledge. These findings were supported by Impact tracking which had been well established and highlighted how Eurofound was making a difference in form of formal recognition by quotes of policymakers. The new database of impacts allowed better identification of scale of contribution to policy developments and was used as a basis for selecting case studies highlighting routes to impact.

Due to lack of ex post evaluation of 2013-2016 period, the study team conducted a brief analysis of Eurofound's KPIs relating to impact. As part of the EPMS, the Eurofound Brussels Liaison Office monitors the extent to which Eurofound's survey data and research is quoted in EU documents as a way helping to assess impacts on policy-makers at a European level. The trend over period 2004-15 is presented below. As can be seen in the graph, the usage of Eurofound research increased notably over the years, in line with the assessment of Eurofound's long term impact and sustained relevance of its publications to EU policymakers.

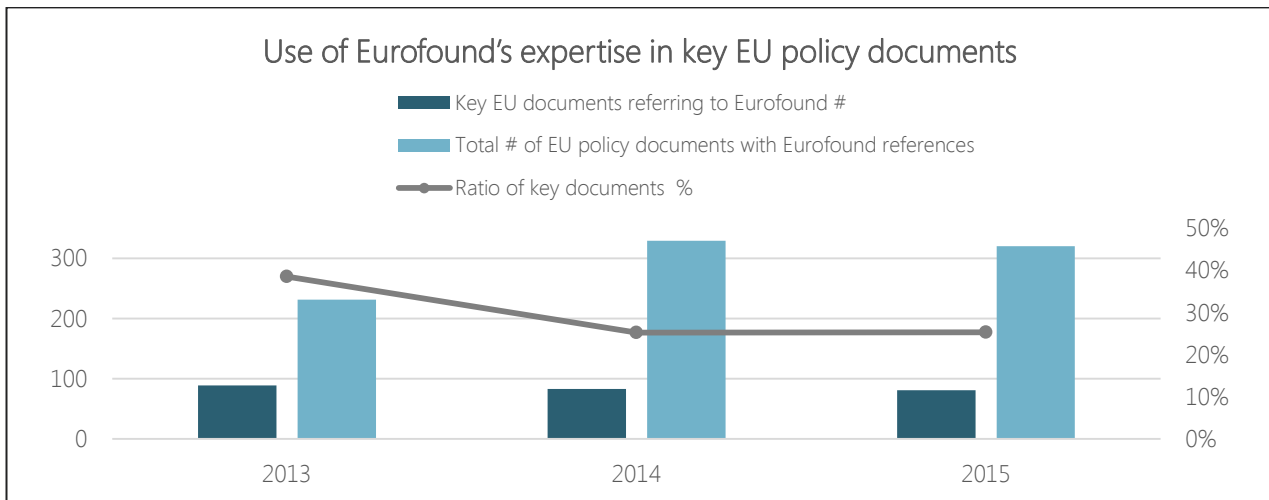
Figure 4: EU Impact tracking 2004-2015



Source: EPMS Impact tracking data 2004-2015, compiled by Ipsos MORI from annual activity reports

Over the last three years, the KPI for key EU policy documents referring to Eurofound remained relatively stable. It should be noted that the context in 2014 with European elections and the new European Commission’s emphasis on ‘European subsidiarity’ led to reduced legislative activity at EU level, but Eurofound’s impact has not been affected, underlining the continued relevance of Eurofound’s work.

Figure 5: EPMS KPI relating to use of Eurofound’s expertise in key EU policy documents



Source: Annual activity reports 2013-15

1.10 European Added Value

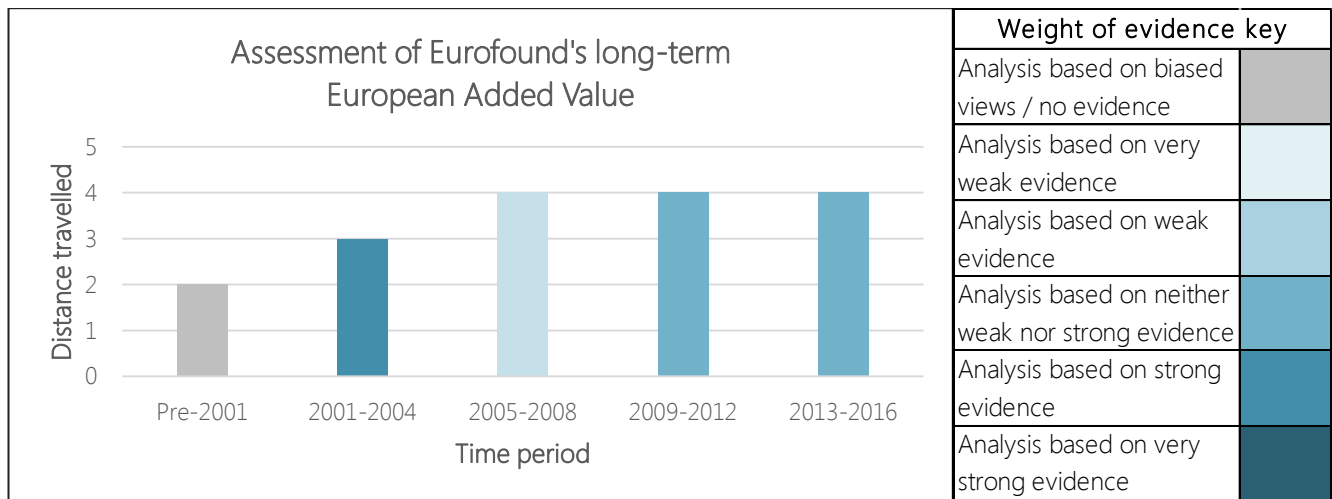
European added value of Eurofound – defined as the additional value resulting from Eurofound’s intervention(s), compared to what could be achieved by Member States at national and/or regional levels – was not explicitly assessed in the first ex post evaluation and in 2005-2008 ex post evaluation it was integrated under the assessment of impact. The last ex post evaluation has integrated relevant questions into all research streams and triangulated this evidence in its assessment. It should be noted, however, that the evidence base was relatively weak in Pre-2001.

The diagram overleaf presents an overview of the European Added Value assessments of Eurofound over the last 15 years. As is shown in the diagram, this evaluation criterion has had relatively positive assessments over the years, with

notable improvements since 2005. In general, the evaluations showed that there is a strong general view that Eurofound has a role in informing and contributing towards better evidence-based policymaking in areas relevant to living and working conditions. All data available suggest that Eurofound is seen to provide a unique added value for its key stakeholders, who see Eurofound's main strength in the provision of:

1. European coverage, which facilitates comparative analysis across all EU Member States and the exchange of information and best practices; and
2. neutral, objective and reliable longitudinal (trend) data together with qualitative depth studies and extensive reporting across key social issues.

The tripartite structure was found to provide a guarantee that the research focuses on the practical needs of social partners and public authorities. As such, over the years, the evaluations have concluded that Eurofound has added value in its 'niche market'.



When looking at the 'distance travelled' by Eurofound, the upward trajectory in Eurofound's long-term EAV is linked to Eurofound paying more attention to defining its exact role and taking into account that added value cannot be taken for granted. The pre-2001 evaluation showed that during these years, Eurofound's stakeholders had 'mixed' views on its added value, although some examples were provided in the case studies. This changed in the 2001-2004 programming period, as reflected by the specific chapter on added value in the ex post evaluation. This evaluation concluded that, by acting at the EU level and having developed a niche in terms of trend data, Eurofound provided unique comparative analysis across all Member States and facilitated the exchange of information and best practice. The 2001-2004 evaluation identified the tripartite structure as an area in which the role of Eurofound could be improved. Particularly representatives of employee and employer organisations commented that they had mainly acted in a decision making capacity or as a 'control panel' and that Eurofound needed to be more ambitious about the possible uses of the tripartite structure.

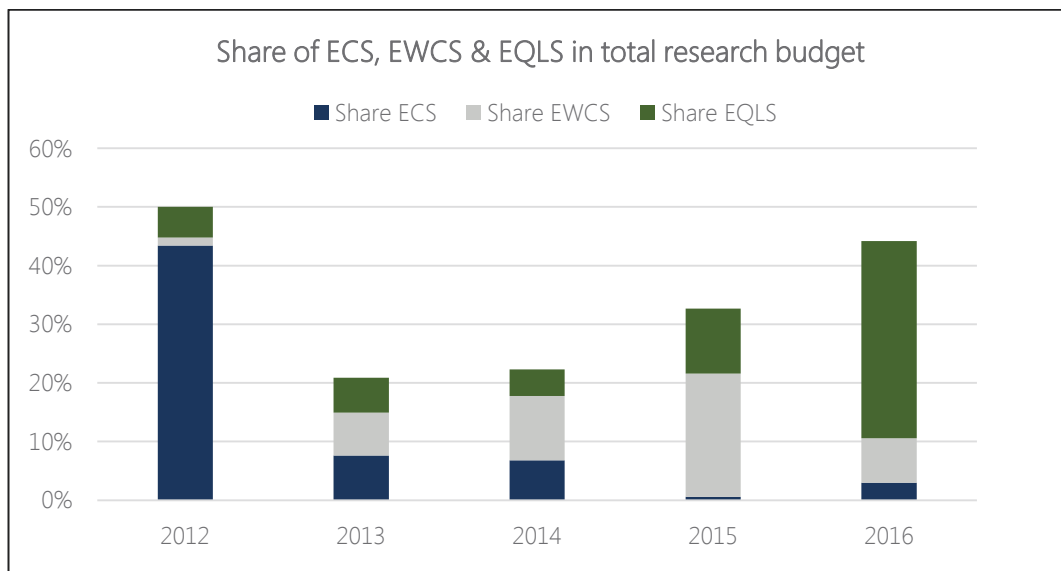
The 2005-2008 evaluation was less ambitious in its assessment of EAV than its predecessor, the section on EAV only containing questionnaire results. That said, in line with its predecessors, it highlighted the importance of Eurofound's outputs in filling a gap in the availability of comparative information on living and working conditions and the role this plays in EU and national policy-making.

The 2009-2012 ex post evaluation did pay particular attention to Eurofound's position vis-à-vis other organisations and stakeholders, and concluded that it Eurofound staff had developed a comprehensive understanding of the needs of the various stakeholder and user groups that Eurofound targets. Moreover, the evaluation concluded that more was done to prevent overlap with other organisations (both in- and outside the EU), as exemplified for example by the fact that Eurofound signed a memorandum of understanding with five European Agencies working in related fields: EIGE, FRA, Cedefop, EU-OSHA and ETF.

For the most recent period, among others the 2015 annual EPMS reports confirmed a very high and stable visibility and reputation of Eurofound's expertise at EU level policy arena, as proven by a high number of EU policy documents quoting Eurofound and high user ratings. The 2013-2016 ex ante evaluation shared this positive conclusion, but added that Eurofound 'can never take added value for granted'.

Annex 1: Analysis of large research projects' share of Eurofound Research budget 2013-2016

As can be seen in the diagram below, over the last four years, at least twenty per cent of Eurofound's research budget was spent on the three largest Eurofound surveys: European Companies Survey (ECS), European Working Conditions Survey (EWCS) and European Quality of Life Survey (EQLS). This figure varied over the years and reached a third or more in 2015 and 2016, when fieldwork was (and is being) carried out for, respectively, the 6th EWCS and the 4th EQLS. The relatively lower proportion of the three main surveys in the research budget in 2013 is explained by a higher spend on fieldwork in previous years, similarly to that of the EWCS and EQLS in 2015 and 2016.



Source: Ipsos MORI analysis of 'full costs' (Title 1 + Title 2 + Title 3) as provided in annual activity reports for 2012-2016

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