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## **COVER NOTE**

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Secretary-General of the European Commission, signed by Ms Martine DEPREZ, Director

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To:

Ms Thérèse BLANCHET, Secretary-General of the Council of the European Union

Subject:

REPORT FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, THE COUNCIL, THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE AND THE COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS Midterm evaluation of the Technical Support Instrument (2021-2027)

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## REPORT FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, THE COUNCIL, THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE AND THE COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS

**Mid-term evaluation of the Technical Support Instrument (2021-2027)** 

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# REPORT FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, THE COUNCIL, THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE AND THE COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS

**Mid-term evaluation of the Technical Support Instrument (2021-2027)** 

#### INTRODUCTION

**Structural reforms** can be understood as measures with long-lasting effects on the structure of the economy, the institutional and regulatory framework in which businesses and people operate, public governance, or progress towards relevant policy objectives. **The Technical Support Instrument (TSI) was set up by Regulation (EU) 2021/240**, building on its predecessor - the structural reform support programme (SRSP, 2017-2020) - and managed by the Directorate-General for Structural Reform Support (DG REFORM)<sup>1</sup>. Since its creation in 2021, the TSI has provided tailor-made technical expertise to any Member State facing challenges in designing and implementing its reform agenda in a wide range of policy areas. The support is demand-driven and does not require co-financing from Member States.

This mid-term evaluation covers all projects funded under the 2021, 2022 and 2023 TSI cycles, in all 27 Member States. This constitutes a total of 611 technical support projects, corresponding to 886 national components of projects, for a total budget of EUR 359 million. The mid-term evaluation analyses the operational cycle of the TSI annual work programmes, from the reception and assessment of Member States' technical support requests to the evaluation of closed technical support projects after implementation.

The results of this evaluation will help identify potential ways to improve the implementation of the TSI until end-2027 and will inform discussions and decision-making on the future of technical support.

## **METHODOLOGY**

This evaluation is informed by: (i) a supporting study<sup>2</sup> carried out by an independent contractor over a period of 11 months starting on 21-December-2023; (ii) a series of four internal workshops organised by DG REFORM; and (iii) monitoring data, including information collected after the closure of TSI projects through the feedback mechanism<sup>3</sup>. In

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Since 1 February 2025, DG REFORM was merged into the Reform and Investment Task Force (<u>SG</u> REFORM).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> PPMI and CSES (2025), Supporting study for the mid-term evaluation of the Technical Support Instrument (2021-2027): final report. Publications Office: <a href="https://op.europa.eu/publication/catalogue\_number/HT-01-25-000-EN-N">https://op.europa.eu/publication/catalogue\_number/HT-01-25-000-EN-N</a>.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> DG REFORM has put in place in 2019 a two-step 'feedback mechanism' to monitor and assess individual TSI projects after their implementation. First, after closure of each technical support project, 'satisfaction questionnaires' are respectively sent to main stakeholders (Commission policy officers, beneficiary authorities, and technical support providers) to gather feedback on the project's design and implementation, the interaction

line with EU better regulation guidelines, the mid-term evaluation is structured around the **five evaluation criteria**: relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, coherence, and EU added value.

The evaluation methods used include a **desk review** (of DG REFORM monitoring data, TSI project documents, and other publicly available documents) and **stakeholder consultations**. Consultation activities included: (i) an **open public consultation**; (ii) three **surveys** targeting TSI stakeholders (technical support providers, and coordinating and beneficiary authorities), receiving 289 responses; (iii) three **focus group** discussions, gathering a total of 37 participants; and (iv) 114 **interviews**. The evaluation also relies on several analyses, including: (i) a **cost-benefit analysis**; (ii) seven **case studies**, covering 98 projects in various policy areas (); and (iii) an analysis of TSI projects' **contribution to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals**.

The evaluation process has encountered some **limitations**, particularly with respect to the assessment of effectiveness. The first main limitation relates to the nature and design of the TSI: the TSI Regulation does not include the actual adoption and implementation of reforms in Member States among the general and specific objectives of the instrument, but it rather focuses on 'assisting national authorities in improving their capacity'. In addition, the TSI Regulation does not impose specific reporting obligations on Member States concerning the use of the support measures and the status of the reforms supported. A second limitation relates to the current monitoring and evaluation system of TSI projects, which does not capture in a systematic and objectively verifiable manner the achievements of TSI projects, especially at outcome and impact level. Data collection tools used (such as surveys and questionnaires) rely on self-reporting, which can introduce bias into the measurements. Third, the TSI started in 2021, and around half of projects from the 2021-2023 cycles had been closed by the time of this evaluation. The outcomes and the longer-term impacts of the support may only be observable in the Member States after some years, and only if specific reforms have actually been implemented, so it is possible that several results of projects have not materialised yet.

The mid-term evaluation includes **mitigation measures** to address, to the extent possible, these limitations and ensure the reliability of findings. In particular, multiple data sources were combined and cross-referenced, for example, by complementing the perceptions of stakeholders with more objective data. In addition, a case study on the follow-up to SRSP projects has been carried out to better analyse the use of technical support measures by Member States and their sustainability in the medium-term.

It is important to acknowledge the aforementioned limitations. Firstly, because acknowledging them better prepares the ground for the *ex post* evaluation, which will enable a more accurate assessment of outcomes and impacts once the programme ends. Secondly, recognising these limitations provides valuable insights that can guide future planning and

between the stakeholders, as well as on the scope for improvement and lessons learned. Second, 6, 12 or 18 months later, another 'outcome questionnaire' is sent to the beneficiary authorities only, to assess the extent to which the expected project outcomes were achieved, with a score ranging between 1-10.

decision-making. SG REFORM is currently working on several workstreams to improve monitoring and evaluation of the TSI, moving towards a more results-oriented monitoring and evaluation system that might improve the measurement of the medium- and long-term impacts of the TSI.

The contractor carried out all tasks under the scrutiny of an interservice steering group and the guidance of DG REFORM. The evidence collected is considered to be representative and meaningful, making it possible to provide solid answers to the evaluation questions and draw reliable conclusions and lessons learned.

#### **MAIN FINDINGS**

Since its creation in 2021, the TSI has provided technical support to Member States to improve their capacity to design, develop and implement reforms, as well as to prepare, amend, implement and revise recovery and resilience plans (RRPs) under the Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF).

While keeping the above-mentioned limitations in mind, the implementation of the TSI was found to be overall successful in terms of effectiveness, efficiency and coherence in 2021-2023. The programme was also found to be highly relevant in addressing the needs of beneficiary authorities and Member States, which is mainly due to the design of the instrument. The TSI also had EU added value compared to what could have been achieved by Member States alone.

## **Effectiveness**

Despite the limitations described above, findings from the evaluation show that between 2021 and 2023, the TSI made significant progress towards its **objectives**, as set out in the TSI Regulation. Regarding its specific objectives, the TSI effectively assisted Member States in improving their capacity to design and implement reforms. It also effectively supported the preparation and implementation of national RRPs by contributing to more than 500 projects directly or indirectly linked to specific RRP milestones.

In relation to **support to RRPs**, certain misalignments between the deadlines of the RRP milestones and the delivery schedule of TSI support occurred during the early implementation of the support in 2021. In some cases, TSI support was provided too early while in others it arrived too late to be used, which was due to the very narrow window in terms of timing. These shortcomings highlight the relevance of addressing technical support needs of Member States from the outset of funding or policy initiatives, ensuring timelines and deadlines are properly aligned.

A vast majority of TSI stakeholders expressed high satisfaction with the success and results of technical support projects. TSI projects have delivered valuable **outputs**, especially recommendations, workshops, training sessions and training material, analysis reports, action plans and roadmaps, and guidelines. Outputs have been utilised to a substantial extent by beneficiary authorities to achieve changes at individual, organisational and policy levels. This contributed to progress in achieving expected **outcomes of the TSI**.

The TSI played a significant role in strengthening all types of administrative capacities, especially internal administrative mechanisms for reforms across the EU.

However, these achievements are highly dependent on **national factors**, such as ownership of reforms, availability of financial resources to follow up on recommendations, staff stability as well as political and administrative continuity. The actual achievement of reform results depends on wider efforts of Member States, considering that the cooperation and support plans, in which their commitment to engage in the implementation of support measures is expressed, are not legally binding documents. Nevertheless, there is good potential to multiply these benefits and improve their sustainability, by fostering (in)formal connections for existing and future collaborations and exploiting existing knowledge, through a more systematic dissemination of project results, continued support from Commission officials and exchange of knowledge among Member States.

## **Efficiency**

Overall, the execution of the TSI and its associated administrative processes has been **largely efficient**. Thanks to the design of the instrument, there are no reporting obligations for Member States, and the **administrative burden** is very low compared to other EU instruments, which is praised by all Member States. Beneficiary authorities considered the administrative burden associated with the application and project implementation processes to be reasonable and proportionate.

The high demand for TSI support ensured a good level of competition and the selection of high-quality proposals, based on the internal scoring attributed to the selected requests under the seven criteria assessed.

To improve efficiency, DG REFORM has implemented lessons learned from evaluations of the SRSP, for example **by simplifying and streamlining programme management**. The introduction of multi-country projects, representing about 10% of all TSI projects from 2021 to 2023, helped tackle common issues among Member States. Multi-country and flagship projects appear to be more **cost-effective and time-efficient** than stand-alone projects and those selected under general requests. However, the efficiency of multi-country projects may potentially be affected by the increased complexity of such projects.

In 2021-2023, the programme was efficient in terms of **process duration** and **budget execution** from commitments to payments, achieving a high budget utilisation rate. The overall **cost of controls** by DG REFORM progressively decreased in 2021-2023 and remained in line with the DG REFORM target and comparable with other EU programmes.

The total time between the application deadline and the start of technical support slightly but continuously decreased over the evaluation period, amounting to 11 months on average. Minimising the time gap between the application and the actual start of the project was considered crucial for the success of individual projects and their effective contribution to ongoing reforms, especially to respond to urgent needs. Further reflection may be considered on the annual deadlines for the submission of general requests and the extent to which setting different deadlines could improve the efficiency at the start of technical support.

TSI projects are implemented through various **delivery methods**. Beneficiary authorities and technical support providers were generally very positive about the clarity, transparency and user-friendliness of the procedures for application and selection of requests for funding, approval of deliverables, project monitoring and evaluation. Coordinating authorities were less satisfied with the **monitoring of TSI projects**, especially with the tools and procedures and the access to relevant information at national level. Beneficiary authorities considered the support of DG REFORM policy officers as highly useful, from the start to the end of the technical support.

#### **Coherence**

In terms of **internal coherence**, the evaluation found no major inconsistencies between the TSI projects in individual Member States. However, there is limited evidence of collaborative mechanisms between different TSI projects in the same Member State. The evaluation also found significant differences in coordinating authorities' involvement in programme implementation across the EU. There is room for exploring synergies between TSI-funded projects in the same Member State in the same policy area.

During the evaluation period, the TSI demonstrated increased external coherence compared to its predecessor, the SRSP, with regional and national level interventions as well as other EU interventions having similar objectives. The TSI operates in a complementary manner to other EU instruments and programmes. The evaluation found the TSI's purpose and its activities to be complementary to those of the European Social Fund Plus, the European Regional Development Fund and the RRF. The TSI is not only different in terms of budget implementation methods, but also in its cross-cutting nature and broad scope of intervention (not limited to a specific policy sector), the duration of support provided and the type of capacities supported. Coherence could be further improved if Member States strategically combined various EU instruments to support the whole reform cycle from design to implementation. The greatest synergies appear to be developed with the RRF and TAIEX<sup>4</sup>. By providing both general and specialised support, the TSI was able to address issues crucial for the implementation of the RRPs, such as project management and governance. Evaluation evidence highlighted the significance of TSI support in strengthening the operational capabilities required to effectively execute RRF initiatives. However, the evaluation raised concerns from some Member States on the need to have a more comprehensive view due to the availability of multiple funding instruments within the EU policy framework.

The TSI is also consistent with the European Semester process, through the role it plays in addressing country-specific recommendations (CSRs) issued as part of the European Semester. Most coordinating and beneficiary authorities stated that TSI projects supported reforms addressing CSRs to a high or a moderate extent. This was confirmed by the case studies, which demonstrated that the TSI played a major role in implementing CSRs. However, challenges remain regarding the systematic monitoring of how TSI projects

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> <u>TAIEX</u> (Technical Assistance and Information Exchange) is an EU institution building tool, which mobilises public sector expertise from EU Member States in a Team Europe spirit to support reform processes around the world.

specifically contribute to carrying out CSRs, due to the limited mandate of the TSI after project implementation.

Finally, TSI projects are closely aligned with the Commission's top priorities, such as the digital and green transitions. The increasing number of TSI projects contributing to top priorities may be linked with the introduction of flagship requests. The TSI has also gained recognition as a valuable tool to support Member States in implementing EU legislation.

#### EU added value

The TSI exceeded what individual Member States could have accomplished independently. In particular, the TSI offers **international - especially European - expertise** that is typically unavailable at local, regional or national levels, addressing specific needs that Member States would struggle to meet alone. By combining international and local expertise, the TSI proved to be beneficial - with local experts offering context-specific insights and international providers providing more strategic approach - and helped to increase the credibility and acceptance of reforms.

The TSI provided EU added value by supporting the development and implementation of the RRPs. The TSI produced **significant cross-country impacts**, and delivered high EU added value by building communities of experts and sustained cooperation among Member States. By offering the chance to create channels of communication with peers and professionals across various Member States, the TSI facilitated the sharing of lessons learned and good practices across Member States. Also, TSI projects have played a major role in implementing EU policies and priorities and supporting the digital and green transitions. In this regard, **flagship projects** (encompassing both standalone and multi-country projects) add value by supporting EU priorities, driving regulatory compliance, and promoting the application of EU law. However, stakeholders noted that flagship projects risk diverging from the specific aim of the TSI, which is to provide support tailored to the needs of specific Member States. There is a strong consensus among stakeholders consulted on the TSI's significant contribution to the digital and green transitions. In particular, the TSI contributes more to the green transition than its predecessor, the SRSP.

**Multi-country projects** are seen as valuable because of their ability to tackle broader, cross-border challenges while boosting collaboration and the sharing of good practices among participating countries. However, concerns were raised about their complexity and the fact that these projects may lead to lower ownership and political commitment by participating countries, potentially undermining their success.

#### Relevance

Findings from the consultation suggest that the **TSI** is a highly relevant instrument, well-tailored to the needs of Member States and their beneficiary authorities, with improvements in areas identified in the *ex post* evaluation of SRSP. Evidence shows that there is still a **need for technical support**, especially in developing and implementing procedures and methodologies.

Most consulted beneficiary authorities and coordinating authorities agreed that the TSI was suitable to provide technical support, and confirmed that TSI projects were able to address the

main needs of their institutions, mainly thanks to the design of the instrument, and in a timely manner. All stakeholders view the TSI's **design and structure** as highly relevant for strengthening the administrative and institutional capacity of Member States to design and implement the reforms needed to tackle the challenges faced.

However, it is important to consider these positive findings in the context that TSI support is provided at almost no cost to all Member States whose requests are accepted, regardless of their capacity to organise their own technical support. Interviews highlighted some limitations in the response to **urgent needs** through general calls of the annual cycle, considering the necessary duration for projects to start after the need emerges. However, The TSI design demonstrated high flexibility to address Member States' unforeseen and emerging needs through dedicated calls and special measures outlined in the TSI Regulation. Compared to the *ex post* evaluation of SRSP, and thanks to these modalities, most beneficiary authorities and national coordinating authorities agreed that thanks to its design, the TSI was able to address urgent and/or unforeseen needs of the country. The introduction of flagship requests for support and of multi-country and multi-regional projects made it possible for the programme to better address EU priorities and to improve the application and implementation of EU law.

#### MAIN LESSONS LEARNED

The evaluation highlighted several improvements in the TSI compared to its predecessor, the SRSP, demonstrating a more active involvement of stakeholders and a greater cross-country dimension. The main lessons learned from the TSI mid-term evaluation, based on its findings and conclusions, are set out below:

## Design of the TSI

- The **demand-driven nature** of the TSI helps ensure Member State's ownership of projects and stakeholders' commitment, which are crucial for the success of reforms, although concrete achievements are highly dependent on **national factors**. Projects' alignment with the European Semester framework and relevant EU priorities is ensured during the selection process, through the selection criteria.
- The current design of the TSI suffers from limitations in tracking specific outcomes in Member States because its legal base does not directly refer to the achievement of reforms, nor does it impose specific requirements on Member States to report on the status of supported reforms. In the future, these observations should be taken into account and ways should be explored to improve the focus on reforms. Additionally, specific reporting obligations should be considered, while ensuring that the administrative burden remains proportionate to the activities carried out under the instrument.
- Technical support should maintain enough flexibility to cater to the needs of Member States and adapt to shifting political priorities and situations. Public authorities might encounter both internal and external changes - including policy changes, economic and social challenges, and changing legal and regulatory landscapes - which necessitate technical support and assistance to adjust to new objectives and strategies.

• The TSI's design has been generally effective in addressing the needs of Member States, but the annual cycle might limit its ability to respond to urgent needs of Member States. While the TSI effectively addressed some urgent needs through dedicated calls, these calls require significant time and resource investment.

## TSI project implementation

- Evaluation findings highlight the importance of identifying the most appropriate project type for technical support, considering Member States' strengths, weaknesses, needs and contexts. Multi-country and flagship projects (covering stand-alone and multi-country projects) proved to be highly relevant in addressing EU priorities, fostering collaboration, and sharing good practices across borders. Stand-alone projects appear to be more appropriate and better tailored to address more specific needs, as they enable more targeted reforms, ensuring more engagement by beneficiary authorities.
- A variety of **delivery methods** were used across technical support projects, with high satisfaction rates among stakeholders. Evidence demonstrates that private providers may be more suitable to deliver technical tasks, while international organisations appear to be better suited to contribute to broader strategic issues, and ensure a consistent response across the EU to the same type of need in the case of multi-country projects. Using a tailored mix of delivery methods such as combining TAIEX with other methods proved to be an effective approach, particularly for complex or multi-country projects.
- Nevertheless, further efforts are needed to ensure the effective use of TSI deliverables and concrete follow-up by Member States.
   The ad-hoc support of DG DIGIT providing expert advice has been assessed as beneficial for the implementation of projects. This support has been exacerbated after the adoption of the Interoperable Europe Act Regulation (EU) 2024/903. Remarkably, the "Statistical Interoperability Node" project was awarded the special "ASEDIE 25 years" prize due to the value provided.

## Facilitator role of the Commission

- The evaluation found that the Commission has played a **significant role in the implementation** of TSI projects. In particular, DG REFORM policy officers' close involvement was crucial in supporting project design (to facilitate implementation) and addressing diverse challenges encountered during implementation. Their continuous operational supervision was important too.
- Stakeholders indicated that further support by Commission policy officers might be useful after the completion of TSI projects to ensure the sustainable achievement of long-term results.
- In some cases, closer involvement of policy officers from specific Directorates-General of the Commission was highlighted as beneficial for improving the implementation of TSI projects, especially for TSI projects related to the implementation of EU law (in the case of complex EU legislative requirements, such as the 'do no significant harm' principle).

## Results and sustainability of the technical support

- Beneficiary authorities have used the outputs of TSI projects such as recommendations, findings from workshops, and analysis reports to achieve **changes at individual**, **organisational and policy level**.
- The success of technical support and the achievement of long-term sustainable results depend on Member States' consistent and systematic follow-up of technical support projects. Continued ownership by national authorities proved to be a crucial factor to ensure that they take follow-up action and that outputs delivered by technical support projects are used. The evaluation found that this follow-up also depends on national factors, such as ownership of reforms, availability of financial resources, staff stability, and political and administrative continuity.
- However, apart from filling in the satisfaction and outcome questionnaires, national authorities have not yet formally committed to following up on technical support projects (e.g. by adopting relevant reforms). Further reflection may be considered on how to incentivise Member States to more consistently and systematically follow up on technical support projects and report on this follow up. There is also a need to strengthen the monitoring and evaluation of the technical support to better track achievements, objectively and depending on the type of measures (e.g. training and capacity building, support for specific reforms, recommendations to national authorities, etc.), as well as to use lessons learned to improve new projects.

## Multi-annual dimension

- The TSI currently lacks a medium- to long-term programming approach, which would connect technical support to other programmes to improve their effectiveness and create a coherent strategic vision for technical support in a given Member State. However, this needs to be reconciled with the annual nature of the instrument, which is enshrined in the TSI Regulation. A short-term strategic overview of the TSI's implementation is provided in cooperation and support plans, but these documents are not legally binding. In 2021-2023, the alignment of technical support with the ongoing reforms at national level was also ensured through national RRPs.
- Some consideration may also be required on the definition of **flagship** projects. For example, it might be advantageous to develop them with a medium-term perspective, spanning multiple years or calls for technical support. A medium-term perspective on flagship projects could bring more focus to specific challenges faced by Member States and the EU as a whole and, at the same time, improve efficiency by reducing the administrative burden linked to annual consultations with different Commission services and Member States and the adjustment of corporate tools on an annual basis.

## Thematic and policy dimension

• Since 2023, initiatives such as the European Administrative Space (ComPAct) – including the Public Administration Cooperation Exchange Programme (PACE) – have proposed specific actions implemented through the TSI, to help public administrations meet the needs of people and businesses across the EU. These initiatives have highlighted the added value of the TSI in strengthening the administrative capacity of public administrations at national, regional and local level, and ensuring all citizens have access

to timely and high-quality public service provision. If successfully implemented, these initiatives and projects could serve as an inspiring example in terms of policy integration, coherence and effectiveness in the provision of technical support across policy areas.

- The ComPAct initiative provides a good platform and 'knowledge hub' for the provision of technical support in the field of governance and public administration, complementing other EU instruments.
- Over the years, technical support projects have generated a wealth of thematic policy knowledge. In the evaluation period, DG REFORM played a more active role in disseminating outputs and deliverables of technical support, which could be strengthened to better use them in all **thematic fields**. The <u>EU Supervisory Digital Finance Academy</u> platform constitutes a good practice example of effective dissemination to foster the use of materials and deliverables from other and closed projects, especially in the same policy area.
- Through the TSI, Member States have benefitted of tailored technical expertise to design and implement digital reforms. It has supported projects that enhance digital governance, modernise public administration, and improve public service delivery through the adoption of digital technologies and foster cross-border interoperability.

## Country dimension

- The evaluation found that there is a need for **improved coordination and synergies between TSI-funded projects in the same Member State.** Some consideration may also be required on how to further improve the overview and follow-up of support provided, developing a more holistic vision of country support. This might also help to strengthen synergies and complementarities between different EU programmes and to better align timelines and country-specific deadlines.
- Over the evaluation period, the role of DG REFORM country coordinators and coordinating authorities proved key to ensuring the country relevance of the technical support measures delivered, identifying any issues emerging during the implementation phase, and proposing adequate mitigation measures.
- Evidence shows untapped potential for coordinating authorities to monitor the need for and use of technical support deliverables at national level to achieve medium- and longer-term results (e.g. adopt the relevant reforms) as well as to adopt a strategic approach towards combining technical support with other EU programmes and instruments.
- The evaluation found that the engagement of coordinating authorities might depend on their position within the institutional framework, the size of the Member State's public administration, and the resources dedicated to this task. Strengthening the institutional framework and introducing reporting obligations for Member States might increase the effectiveness of the programme.
- A more formalised and unified role for coordinating authorities has the potential to strengthen ownership of reforms (through an improved prioritisation of requests) and improve the monitoring of projects across Member States, while keeping some flexibility in tailoring their role to the specific context of each Member State.

#### **Cross-country dimension**

- The TSI has demonstrated significant **cross-country impacts**, with multi-country projects tackling broader, cross-border challenges and strengthening collaboration and the sharing of knowledge and good practices among participating countries.
- The programme has built communities of experts and sustained cooperation among Member States, delivering high EU added value.
- The TSI has also been instrumental in increasing the credibility and acceptance of reforms, boosting their legitimacy and visibility at national and EU levels.
- The introduction of **multi-country and multi-region** requests has also brought significant efficiency gains, by enabling the selection of multiple requests under a single contract or agreement. However, these projects present a certain risk of diluting country-specific needs, limiting the engagement of Member States progressing at different paces.
- The introduction of **flagship requests** was considered a success as they enabled a better alignment between national reforms and EU priorities, driving regulatory compliance, and promoting the application of EU law. These projects could cater to more long-standing, structural challenges across Member States and the EU at large.

## Synergies with other EU programmes

- The TSI has been effective in supporting the implementation of reforms, with a significant number of reforms linked to specific RRP milestones. Incorporating technical support from the outset of implementation of funds and other policy instruments, as it has happened in specific cases for the RRF, could be advantageous, and could help ensure that administrative capacity requirements are satisfied, and timelines are synchronised.
- The TSI has been consistent **with other EU processes**, such as the European Semester, and has contributed to the achievement of EU priorities, including the digital and green transitions.
- The TSI can improve the effectiveness of other programmes by building the
  administrative and institutional capacity required for their successful implementation.
  However, the evaluation showed that some Member States would prefer to have a more
  comprehensive view given the availability of multiple funding instruments within the EU
  policy framework.