



STRUCTURAL REFORM SUPPORT PROGRAMME 2017-2020

Regulation (EU) 2017/825 (SRSP Regulation)¹

INSTRUCTIONS

Accompanying the template for request for support (Article 7 of the SRSP Regulation)

The Request for support should be filled in after careful reading of these instructions and the Regulation (EU) 2017/825 (the SRSP Regulation).

The purpose of these instructions is to facilitate the submission of the request for support to the Commission. The Commission will analyse the Request for support in line with Article 7 of the SRSP Regulation. The information submitted will also serve as a basis for reaching an agreement with the Member State concerned, resulting in a Cooperation and Support Plan.

Should a Member State want to submit a Request for special measures under urgency (interim support - Article 12(6) of the SRSP Regulation), the Member State should contact the SRSS at SRSS-SRSP@ec.europa.eu for the relevant template. Please note that the Request for special measures under urgency should be filled **only if** there are **serious grounds of urgency requiring an immediate response**. The special measures that may be provided under urgency will only be interim support (for a maximum of six months), to be replaced by support measures that are to be provided under normal circumstances, and according to the procedure thereof, under the SRSP Regulation. If the Member State concerned wishes to continue receiving support under the SRSP, after the special measures expire, the standard Request for support will need to be submitted according to the Article 7 of the SRSP Regulation.

The information included in the template for request for support will be considered sensitive or confidential to the Member State insofar as it concerns the public interest of the Member State, unless otherwise specified by the authorities submitting the request.

Personal data will be processed pursuant to existing law applicable to data protection in the European Union.

These instructions are accompanied by a pre-filled example.

¹ REGULATION (EU) 2017/825 of 17 May 2017 on the establishment of the Structural Reform Support Programme for the period 2017 to 2020 and amending Regulations (EU) No 1303/2013 and (EU) No 1305/2013

INTRODUCTION

Who submits the request for support?

All templates need to be formally submitted by the **Coordinating Authority**, i.e. the authority responsible for submitting requests for support on behalf of the one Member State concerned. Under the SRSP, this Coordinating Authority is responsible for coordinating the planning and submission of the Requests for support, as well as the overall implementation of the Request for support in cooperation with the Commission.

The Coordinating Authority is the single contact point for the interaction with the Commission. Member States can designate the Coordinating Authority from among the existing authorities, and in accordance with their legal framework.

Please note that each request should be submitted on a separate template.

Please indicate the title or the subject matter of the request for support. The title/subject matter should indicate the purpose of the request for support (e.g. addressing weaknesses in the distribution of disability benefits for pensioners).

The Coordinating Authority submits all requests **in the order of priority** decided by the Member State.

General information: contact details and subject matter (title) of the request

Please indicate the relevant **contact details** of the national Coordinating Authority, the recipient national authority and the relevant contact persons, including their contact details (name, address, function, email, phone number, etc.).

The **recipient national authority** is an authority of the Member State (including authorities at regional and local levels) that is responsible for the "thematic" request and for its implementation, in cooperation with the Commission (i.e. the SRSS).

1. DESCRIPTION OF THE PROBLEM/NEED TO BE ADDRESSED

*Article 7(2) of the SRSP Regulation **defines the criteria for analysis by the Commission of the request for support: urgency, breadth and depth of the problems identified, support needs** in respect of the policy areas concerned, analysis of **socio-economic indicators and general administrative capacity of the Member State.***

The information provided by the Member State should allow the Commission to carry out such analysis.

1.1 What is the problem/need to be addressed with the support requested?

Please provide a detailed description of the problem or the need to be addressed with the requested support measures.

1.2 Breadth of the problem/need

How broad is the problem/need? Does the problem/need spread across several policy areas (i.e. could the results of the action also have an impact on other policy areas?), or is the problem/need likely to spread to other policy areas ("spill-over")?

1.3 Depth of the problem/need

How deep is the problem/need? Is the problem/need severe or persistent? Did any previous attempts to address it fail?

1.4 Urgency of the request for support

In order to determine the urgency of the request, information should be provided on the basis of the following elements [NOTA BENE: The urgency of the "thematic" request should not be confused with the request for (temporary) "special measures" under urgency]

- Is the problem/need a new/emerging one?
- Is the request for support linked to a deadline that must be respected (e.g. in the context of an economic adjustment programme, European Semester Country Specific Recommendations, deadlines imposed by Union law (due to infringement procedures, transposition of Union directives), European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF) ex-ante conditionalities, etc.)?
- Is the rapid execution of the support a key factor in resolving the problem/need?
- Is there a date after which the support measures become irrelevant?

1.5 Socio-economic indicators

The relevant socio-economic indicators will also be taken into consideration when analysing the request. These socio-economic indicators may be macro-economic indicators, general indicators or indicators related to the relevant policy area (e.g. unemployment rates, rates for early leavers from education, at-risk-of-poverty-or-social-exclusion rates, investment rates, indicators of investment bottlenecks, non-performing loans rates, etc.). These data will back-up the request for support. For each request, if available, please provide socio-economic indicators relevant to the policy area(s)/sector(s). Detailed quantitative evidence can be submitted as an Annex to the request, or at a later stage.

2. DESCRIPTION OF THE SUPPORT MEASURES REQUESTED AND ESTIMATED COST

2.1 Indicative description of the support measures requested

If already envisaged, please provide an outline of possible support activities, e.g.: provision of ad hoc experts; placing resident experts on the ground; seminars, conferences, workshops; working visits; training; collection of data; development of methodologies; studies and expertise related to policy advice, policy change, legislative, institutional, structural and administrative reforms, etc.

If appropriate, please differentiate between support "phases"; this could help to identify which activities need to take place first, or which activities can only start at a later stage (e.g. after the finalisation of some other actions, etc.).

2.2 Indicative duration of the support measures requested and estimated cost

If already envisaged, please provide an indicative starting and an end date of the envisaged support measures/activities and/or their estimated duration.

Whenever possible, please indicate how much you estimate the support measures/activities would cost.

2.3 Expected results /use of the results of the support measures requested

Indicate the ultimate objective that the support measures should achieve and specify the expected results of the support measures and how you intend to use the results/outcomes of the support measures.

2.4 Administrative capacity of the Member State *(in the context of the SRSP, this refers to the recipient national authority for the purpose of the request for support)*

The administrative capacity should take into account the capacity of the Member State to implement and absorb the support measures to be provided and to carry out the reforms for which support is requested, e.g. how much resources (staff, budget) the recipient national authority requesting support has at its disposal to accompany and follow up the relevant support measures.

2.5 Envisaged provider(s) (if applicable)

*According to Article 9(1) of the SRSP Regulation, the Commission may, with the consent of the beneficiary Member State, organise the **support in cooperation***

with other Member States' bodies (agencies, authorities) or European and international organisations.

If applicable, please indicate suggestions you may have for support provider(s) for certain support activities (a Member State authority or public body, international organisations, other public-sector entities, etc.). Please also indicate which entity / organisation (and why) could help carry out the support measures. If more than one, please indicate accordingly.

NOTA BENE: this is without prejudice to the application by the Commission of the relevant rules (inter alia, on grants and procurement) of the Financial Regulation (Regulation (EU) No 966/2012).

3. CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE REQUEST

*According to Article 7(3) of the SRSP Regulation, the Request for support can be related to **different circumstances** ("triggering factors").*

- The implementation of reforms by Member States, undertaken at their own initiative, notably to achieve sustainable investment, growth and job creation (e.g. national reform priorities linked with Union priorities, Europe 2020, etc.);
- The implementation of the actions linked to Union priorities, e.g. Capital Markets Union (CMU), Energy Union, other Union priorities;
- The implementation of economic adjustment programmes for Member States that receive Union financial assistance under existing instruments, in particular in accordance with Regulation (EU) No 472/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council for the euro-area Member States and Council Regulation (EC) No 332/200224 for non-euro-area Member States;
- The implementation of reforms in the context of economic governance processes, in particular of the Country Specific Recommendations issued in the context of the European Semester (or the Country Reports);
- The implementation of actions related to the implementation of Union law (e.g. infringement procedures, other governance cycles).

Please indicate which of the above-mentioned circumstances your request for support is related to. Please also add relevant explanations as appropriate.

For economic governance, please indicate also the Member State's Country Specific Recommendation(s) and Country Report(s) concerned (number(s), years(s)).

For Union priorities and own reforms, indicate specific priorities and add references to national reform(s).

4. EURO-AREA MEMBERSHIP SUPPORT RELEVANCE (EURO-AREA TAGGING)

FOR NON-EURO-AREA MEMBER STATES WISHING TO ADOPT THE EURO
(NB. This section is conditional on the adoption of the amendment to the SRSP Regulation)

If the request is relevant for "euro-area membership support" (euro-area tagging selected), please explain the link and relevance of the request to the preparation of the Member State for euro-area membership (cf. new Article 5a of SRSP Regulation).

Disclaimer

Please note that the request for support is fully subject to the principles governing the SRSP Regulation and Regulation No 966/2012 on the Financial Rules applicable to the General Budget of the Union. In compliance with the principle of prohibition of double funding, the recipient national authority shall immediately inform the European Commission of other related on-going actions financed by the EU budget. In no circumstances, shall the same costs be financed twice by the European Commission.

By submitting this request, the Member State accepts that, should the request for support be selected for funding under the SRSP, the Member State will confirm to the Commission that there is no overlap between the request selected under the SRSP and concrete actions funded under other EU instruments and that double funding is not present for this selected request.



STRUCTURAL REFORM SUPPORT PROGRAMME 2017-2020
Regulation (EU) 2017/825 (SRSP Regulation)

REQUEST FOR SUPPORT*
(Article 7 of the SRSP Regulation)²

DEADLINE: 31 October 2018

Member State:	Country X
Total number of requests:	4
Date of submission:	30/10/2018

COORDINATING AUTHORITY	
Name	Secretariat General for EU Affairs
Address	Rue de la loi 170; 1000 Brussels, Belgium
Contact person	Mr John Smith
Email	...@ec.europa.eu
Telephone number	+123456789

² REGULATION (EU) 2017/825 of 17 May 2017 on the establishment of the Structural Reform Support Programme for the period 2017 to 2020 and amending Regulations (EU) No 1303/2013 and (EU) No 1305/2013

REQUEST FOR SUPPORT

Subject matter (title) of the request:	Addressing disability benefit imbalances among pensioners in Country X
Order of priority of the request:	3

RECIPIENT NATIONAL AUTHORITY Ministry of Labour	
Name	Unit on disability policy
Address	Rue de la loi 170; 1000 Brussels, Belgium
Contact person	Ms Jane Smith
Position	Director
Email	...@ec.europa.eu
Telephone number	+987654321

1	DESCRIPTION OF THE PROBLEM/NEED TO BE ADDRESSED
1.1	What is the problem/need to be addressed with the support requested?
	In Country X, the share of disability pensioners is high compared to other EU countries. There are many reasons for this, but one of the problems is linked to how the disability pensions are being granted. In a reform in 2014, eligibility criteria were tightened and the Regulation for assessing disability benefit claims was revised. However, it has been difficult to implement changes to the assessment of the disability benefits. There are still problems with the methodology for redistributing disability pensions. Validity, reliability and standardisation of the redistribution process remain problematic.
1.2	How broad is the problem/need? Does it spread across several policy areas ("spillover")?
	The problem also affects other policy areas: (i) employment of older workers - the disability benefit system should be closely linked with active labour market policy measures for older people; (ii) the pension system - people leaving the labour market early will receive smaller pensions and will face a higher risk of old-age poverty
1.3	How deep or severe is the problem/need? Is it persistent? Did any previous attempt to address it fail?
	The problem is severe as the current methodology leads to a non-standardised assessment and long waiting times. The current system introduced in 1995 is no longer

suitable and the 2014 reform has not managed to make full use of the possibilities of modern IT systems.	
1.4	How urgent is the need to address the problem?
The reform of the disability assessment system is a high priority for the country and is on the reform agenda of the Ministry of Labour. Representatives of the disability community have recently been raising concerns about the lack of fairness in the assessment process.	
1.5	(If available,) provide relevant socio-economic indicators linked to the problem/need
Data on the number of disability pensioners, public spending for disability pensioners, and waiting times can be provided upon request.	

2	INDICATIVE DESCRIPTION OF THE SUPPORT MEASURES REQUESTED AND THE ESTIMATED COST
2.1	Briefly describe the indicative support measures requested
<p>We would use the support to develop a new IT system for assessing and processing applications for disability pensions. Thanks to the support received, we would also have guideline to train our personnel and communication material to communicate changes to new existing system to the local authorities and the general public.</p> <p>To revise the methodology for distributing disability pensions, we envisage two stages during which support could be requested: during the preparation phase of a new methodology for assessing requests for disability pensions and during the implementation of this strategy:</p> <p>a) Preparation phase: Support would be needed (e.g., expertise, exchange of good practices, expert missions, etc.) for designing the application process, including the application form, the guidance for assessors, etc. We would like to introduce a more modern IT system to improve and speed up the assessment procedures.</p> <p>b) Implementation phase: Support would be needed at different stages of the implementation: training of assessors, developing a communication campaign to inform the local authorities and citizens, and developing a new IT system to assess and process requests for disability pensions.</p>	
2.2	Indicate the possible duration of the support measures and the estimated cost
<p>Starting in March 2019, we consider that the duration of the project would be 16 months.</p> <p>The estimated cost is EUR xxx.</p>	

2.3	Indicate the expected results/use of the results of the support measures (what is the ultimate objective that the technical support should achieve)
<p>The expected result is a successful implementation of the reform of the disability assessment methodology (from 2014) – we would use the support provided to achieve faster processing of claims and a more transparent & standardised system.</p> <p>A successful implementation of the reform of the disability assessment methodology will ensure longer working lives and prevent premature early retirement.</p>	
2.4	Provide information on the administrative capacity of the recipient national authority in relation to the use of the support measures
<p>Administrative capacity: 60 people in the ministry, 2 working on the reform of the disability reform. A working group has been established with representatives from the Ministry of Health, the National Pension Fund, and the Central Assessment Institution to work on the implementation of the reform of the assessment methodology until 2020. This working group will work together with the support providers and will follow-up after their departure to ensure long-term effects of the support provided.</p>	
2.5	(If applicable,) indicate an envisaged provider
<p>Country Z and WHO; we already worked with these two bodies for certain aspects of the reform of the sector; we can provide further details on this.</p>	

3	CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE REQUEST
<p>Implementation of:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> MS own reform priorities</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Union priorities (e.g. CMU, Energy Union, etc.)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Economic adjustment programmes</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Economic governance (e.g. CSR, Country reports, etc.)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Union law (e.g. infringements)</p> <p>Add relevant explanations as appropriate</p> <p>[i.e. number of CSR; policy priority; relevant national strategy documents, etc.]</p>	
<p>CSR No 9 (2018) calls for restricting pathways into early retirement. Disability pensions account for a large share of pensions that are paid to people below the standard retirement age. This is not directly addressed by the CSR, but is covered in the Country Report (2018). In addition, the reform of the disability assessment system is a priority for the Ministry.</p>	

FOR NON-EURO-AREA MEMBER STATES WISHING TO ADOPT THE EURO (NB. This section is conditional on the adoption of the amendment to the SRSP Regulation)	
4	RELEVANCE OF REQUEST FOR EURO-AREA MEMBERSHIP SUPPORT (EURO-AREA TAGGING)
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes, this request is relevant for "euro-area membership support" <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No, this request is not relevant for "euro-area membership support"	
If the request is relevant for "euro-area membership support" (euro-area tagging), please explain the link and relevance of the request to the preparation of the Member State for euro-area membership (cf. new Article 5a of SRSP Regulation).	

<p>DISCLAIMER</p> <p>Please note that the request for support is fully subject to the principles governing the SRSP Regulation and Regulation No 966/2012 on the Financial Rules applicable to the General Budget of the Union. In compliance with the principle of prohibition of double funding, the recipient national authority shall immediately inform the European Commission of other related on-going actions financed by the EU budget. In no circumstances, shall the same costs be financed twice by the European Commission.</p> <p>By submitting this request, the Member State accepts that, should the request for support be selected for funding under the SRSP, the Member State will confirm to the Commission that there is no overlap between the request selected under the SRSP and concrete actions funded under other EU instruments and that double funding is not present for this selected request.</p>

* Should a Member State wish to submit a *Request for special measures under urgency* (interim support - Article 12(6) of the SRSP Regulation), it should contact the SRSS at SRSS-SRSP@ec.europa.eu for the relevant template. Please note that the *Request for special measures under urgency* should be filled **only if** there are **serious grounds of urgency requiring an immediate response**. The special measures that may be provided under urgency will only be interim support (for a maximum of six months), to be replaced by support measures that are to be provided under normal circumstances, and according to the procedure thereof, under the SRSP Regulation. If the Member State concerned wishes to continue receiving support under the SRSP, after the special measures expire, the standard *Request for support* will need to be submitted according to the Article 7 of the SRSP Regulation.