

Social Agencies for Future Europe



SAFE



SAFE

EUROPE

FUTURE

TOGETHER

GROW SUCCESS

EESSI

SECURITY

EXPERIENCE

WORKING SYSTEM

KNOWLEDGE

DATA

INFORMATION

INNOVATION

COOPERATION

COMMITMENT

MOBILITY

TRANSPARENCY

OPERATION

TESTING

RELIABILITY

SHARING

NETWORK

INTEGRATION

EXCHANGE

PIONEERING

The beginning of the SAFE story: background

Freedom of movement is one of the fundamental rights under the European Union Treaty. In order to ensure it, the Mobile **Citizens' social security rights** must be guaranteed, especially when **moving from one Member State to work in another**.

However, under the EU law, there is no unified European social security system. Each Member State is responsible for its own social security system. Therefore, the European legislation provides rules for the **coordination** of these national social security systems to ensure that the rights of the citizens are safeguarded in case they decide to exercise their freedom of movement. Modernised coordination applies in the EU since 1 May 2010. It includes the following consolidated regulations: Regulation (EC) No 883/2004 and Implementing Regulation (EC) No 987/2009.

In accordance with these Regulations, all Member States will be required, after the end of a transitional period, to exchange information electronically by using a common secure network, when dealing with citizens' claim.

In order to ensure an effective application of the Regulations by the Member States, National Social Security Institutions need to exchange with each other information on the person concerned, such as his insurance history records, certificates concerning health care.

This goal will be achieved through the Electronic Exchange of Social Security Information: EESSI.

The challenge was set.

EESSI has been developed by the European Commission pursuant to:

- Regulation (EC) No 883/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the coordination of social security systems
- Implementing Regulation (EC) No 987/2009

Article 78.1 of Regulation No. 883/2004

“MS shall progressively use new technologies for the exchange, access and processing of the data required to apply this Regulation and the Implementing Regulation. The European Commission shall lend its support to activities of common interest as soon as the MS have established such data-processing services.”

Article 4.2 of Regulation No. 987/2009

“The transmission of data between the institutions or the liaison bodies shall be carried out by electronic means either directly or indirectly through the access points under a common secure framework that can guarantee the confidentiality and protection of exchanges of data.”

(Source: Confluence Portal / EESSI Collaboration Space / EESSI (Stakeholders Space) / EESSI at a Glance / What is EESSI)

EESSI - Electronic Exchange of Social Security Information

The EESSI Program is an EU project concerning the design, test, and release of a European communication System **between the National Social Security Institutions of 32 countries** (the 28 European Union countries plus Switzerland, Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein). The main aim of the **EESSI System is to ensure a rapid exchange of social security information regarding individuals that exercise their right to free movement within the EU.**

Once implemented, the EESSI ICT system shall connect Member States' Institutions in charge of social security coordination and allow them to exchange data electronically, making these exchanges of information more efficient, rapid and correct, in comparison to today's paper-based data exchange. **For the citizens, this system will lead to an essential improvement of the services, as it will accelerate and make the actual payment of social security benefits more accurate.**

Besides the benefits of the system, EESSI brought with it a **significant number of challenges at a European level**, where a common ground had to be identified, in order to capture, accommodate and implement a **central solution** to address various business and technical needs existing at national level. Furthermore, in order to implement a technical, business and operational institutional framework, Member States are required to make significant efforts and investments, **to make EESSI a reality.**

A path bringing EESSI closer to its end users.



Data exchange will take place between competent Institutions of all participating countries in the benefits governed by the **Regulations on social security coordination**, namely:

- sickness, maternity and equivalent paternity benefits;
- old-age pensions, pre-retirement and invalidity benefits;
- survivors' benefits and death grants;
- unemployment benefits;
- family benefits;
- benefits in respect of accidents at work and occupational diseases.

(Source: Confluence Portal / EESSI Collaboration Space / EESSI (Stakeholders Space) / EESSI at a Glance / What is EESSI)

The purpose of EESSI is to strengthen the protection of citizens' rights by enabling the electronic exchange of personal social security information of migrant workers in the EU among Member States' competent Institutions.

The aim is that the paper forms currently used for communication between Institutions should be superseded by EESSI. The electronic exchanges in EESSI will notably:

- facilitate and speed up the decision making for the calculation and payment of social security benefits;
- allow a more efficient verification of data;
- provide a more flexible and user-friendly interface between different systems;
- provide a collection of statistical data on European exchanges.

(Source: Confluence Portal / EESSI Collaboration Space / EESSI (Stakeholders Space) / EESSI at a Glance / What is EESSI)

The Call for Proposal for EESSI Pool of Excellence

The EESSI Program is mainly based on the **partnership between the Member States and the Commission**. The involvement of the testing countries in bringing feedback, organizing discussions and making suggestions had proven to be a fundamental contribution to the improvement of requirements and specifications of the EESSI system.

One of the most important lessons learned in the first years of EESSI, in fact, was the need for a platform of discussions, sharing of best practices and preparation of proposals in order to facilitate the gathering of input directly from the wide and diverse audience of end-users of the project.

Building upon experience, it was proposed to put a stable framework in place, an environment for organizing contributions from EESSI stakeholders in a more structured way and with resources being made available to those involved, as long as the activities envisaged had a strong trans-national component.

Consequently, with the aim of engaging a qualified and representative group of Member States' Social Security Institutions, as the main EESSI end-users, in June 2013, the European Commission - DG Employment of Social Affairs and Inclusion (DG EMPL) published the "EESSI Pool of Excellence Call for Proposal" no. VP/2013/007 requiring a Consortium composed of at least 10 EU Member States, for a period of 4 years and 10 Million of EU funding.

The objective of the Call was to establish a **Framework Partnership Agreement** with multiple beneficiaries for the setting-up and implementation of an **EESSI Pool of Excellence**, to allow all the participating countries to:

- develop common tools, share experience, lesson learned, best practices;
- collect and share direct feedback from a user perspective;
- strengthen their own national competencies related to EESSI.

The call for excellence had begun.

“SAFE’s contribution to EESSI was successful in fulfilling its activities with regards to supporting EESSI development timelines. SAFE assisted with external testing of various iterations of pilot builds, including the PRR of the EESSI solution on behalf of MSs, in association with the central EESSI team.”

“SAFE was in a position to test the business elements of the solution, including looking at data modeling. Changes and bugs were identified throughout the process, which were analyzed by the central EESSI team and this meant that, as a group of MSs and the Commission, recommendations for sign off on elements of the EESSI solution were carried out.”

“We came to understand very well how to integrate some National Applications (Applicable Legislation, Pension systems) with the EESSI infrastructure, also thinking to a National Gateway. We analyzed the different solutions given from the RINA layers, studying the Pro & Cons, and imagining a real exchange in a real environment.”

“SAFE was the arm of the EESSI Project, permitting to test the solutions in a real environment, instead of a laboratory environment; also thanks to this, the Commission was able to exploit the business and technical experiences of all the Partners involved, in their own countries, either technical either business related, along with different constraints encountered in different realities.”

Answering the call

SAFE Consortium. Foundation and organization.

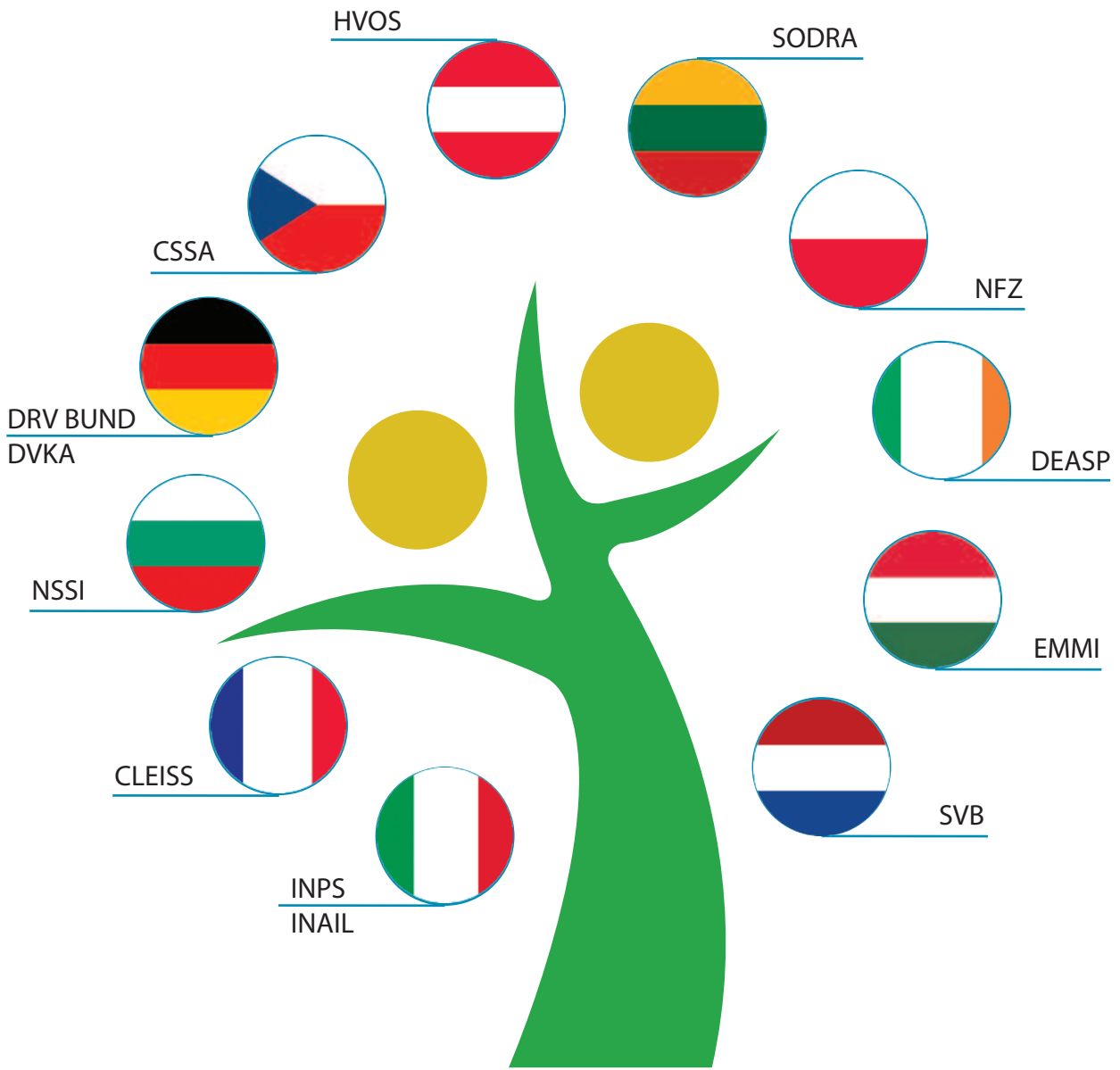
With the initiative of INPS, a number of Institutions from different MSs agreed on creation of a Consortium and started to prepare the relevant documents. **INPS**, as the **leading Institute of a Consortium composed by 13 Social Security Agencies** (listed below), presented the **Project SAFE** for the Call “EESSI Pool of Excellence”, by the deadline of August 9, 2013. The **Framework Partnership Agreement (FPA)** was signed on September 27, 2013, and the **Internal Cooperation Agreement (ICA)** on March 20, 2014.

The SAFE Consortium represents 11 Countries and the 13 SAFE Partners Agencies, which deliver services to over a population of 300 million, that corresponds to about 60% of European citizens. Additionally, being a geographically diverse set of Member State Agencies, it ensures that a large variety of different social and demographic models can be addressed. The organizational structure of the Consortium comprised of a Management Board (MB) and a Technical Board (TB). The SAFE Management Board composed of all Institutions ensures the steering of the SAFE activities. It is assisted by the SAFE Technical Board that prepares the MB decisions through a more detailed analysis of the aspects. For every year, an additional Specific Agreement between the EC and the Consortium, e.g. INPS in role of the Coordinator, was signed to specify detailed actions and budget.

SAFE started to work on

The Composition of SAFE Consortium

Acronyms	Country	Institution
INPS	IT	Italian Social Security Institute
CLEISS	FR	French Centre for European and International Liaisons for Social Security
CSSA	CZ	Czech Social Security Administration
DRV BUND	DE	German Pension Fund
DEASP	IE	Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection
DVKA	DE	National Association Health Insurance Funds, German Liaison Agency Health Insurance – International
HVOS	AT	Main Association of Austrian Social Security Institutions
INAIL	IT	National Institute for Insurance against Work Accidents
NFZ	PL	National Health Fund
EMMI	HU	Ministry of Human Capacities
NSSI	BG	National Social Security Institute
SODRA	LT	State Social Insurance Fund Board Under the Ministry of Social Security and Labor of Lithuania
SVB	NL	Social Insurance Bank



SAFE

“What inspired us since the beginning was the very idea to become part of a team of experts committed in supporting DG EMPL in the implementation of EESSI; with SAFE we had the opportunity and the commitment to consider the entire Europe as one single working space. In this framework cooperation between the Member States has been the key.”

“During the years of working with SAFE, I greatly appreciated the smooth deployment of the activities despite the difficulties encountered in managing the overall complexity that the SAFE project had to face in its path. The challenge was not only about technological issues: we had to increase the coordination and communication amongst all the parties involved; we learned that different environments in all our separate Institutions bring their own dynamics and realised that harmonizing this complexity took time out of the Project schedule.”

“One of the most difficult challenges was to connect the project's provided software with our Agency's system. We also learned that even testing can be extremely difficult, especially when technical specifications are not always completely compliant with the actual business cases and needs. The testing of the BUC's and SED's taught us a lot about the procedures to be followed in EESSI.”



“The Dry Runs were another good example of the importance of cooperation even in this case, with the exchange of message in a Lab environment, using full stack RINA and simulating cases quite similar to the real experience, a large amount of cooperation was achieved. The Partners have performed a lot of work in the interest of the whole EESSI Community.”

SAFE: objectives and methodology

EESSI is a complex project spanning over 32 countries. Expertise is fragmented, and it has been difficult to share experiences and issues across country boundaries. **By bringing together a diverse group of Member State Agencies, the SAFE Consortium was able to work across these boundaries to provide both advice and guidance on resolving issues and facilitating the exchange of ideas and best practices.**

SAFE's project objectives are, therefore, strictly connected with the implementation of the EESSI System and support EESSI in the following areas:

- improvement of citizens' services, accelerating and making more accurate and timely the actual payment of social security benefits to the mobile citizen;
- administrative modernization, in order to facilitate exchange between Institutions and support clerks' work;
- simplification, closing the gap between national and international technical environments.

SAFE ensures that all Member State Agencies have the opportunity to share their views and benefit from the **exchanging of experiences**. **A key part of the SAFE project was devoted to show Member State Institutions how to best integrate EESSI into their existing processes and at the lowest cost.**

To do this, Member State Institutions require support with:

- **Technical integration** of EESSI with legal systems;
- **Best practice processes**;
- **Processes to capture common issues, benefits and learning.**

While all Member State Institutions have had specific local issues, there are also many common problems where solutions can be found in other Agencies under the SAFE Consortium, which can be exploited by others. Creating a network of expertise under this framework has allowed this to happen. Additionally, the SAFE Consortium has provided an **aggregation point for common problems across Member State Agencies of all sizes, with deployment issues as well.**



Approach and Methodology

The SAFE methodology used to operatively support its objectives is based on a set of activities structured in Work Packages (see page 12), which accompanies the **implementation of processes** at a national and international level and on the following basic principles:

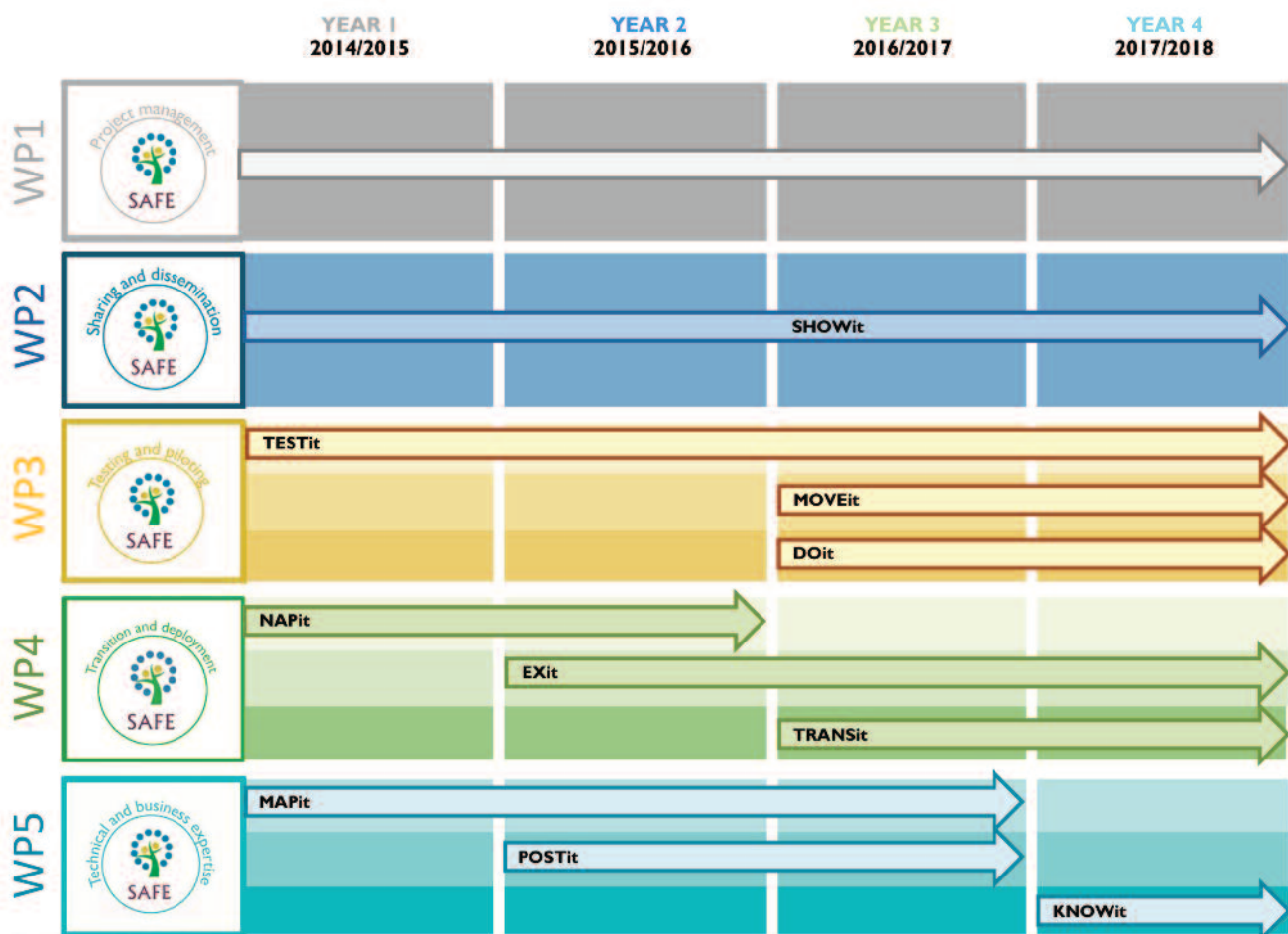
- **from a business to technological approach;**
- **a structured and phased implementation;**
- **a clear separation of functionality and responsibilities among participants;**
- **defined business procedures and technology architecture.**

SAFE: organization and activities

SAFE is based on the execution of five Work Packages (WPs) which are specified for every year in an Annual Plan form and based on a specific agreement for the concrete period. SAFE Consortium was to apply every year and fulfill original conditions given by the Commission.

WPs consisted on specific projects, which have partially changed depending on the EC requests and Partners proposals. Each WP had a Leader and each project had its own Project Manager. Also role of Partners' participation in particular projects differentiated (active, observer, non-active). Governance and management was a crucial issue from the very beginning and uneasy task for all stakeholders involved, Coordinator, Partners, EC.

A CHRONOLOGICAL OVERVIEW OF SAFE SEQUENTIAL PHASES (WORK PACKAGES AND PROJECTS)



WPI and WP2 activities supported the other three technical Work Packages described with details about the different projects included in the following pages.

WPI – Project Management

Since 2014, the activities related to WPI have been focusing on the constitution of the Consortium governance model. The project management in the Consortium has focused on **leadership** and the **coordination of the other WPs**, as well as on the **administrative aspects of the project**.

Management always acted in close cooperation with the SAFE Consortium Management Bodies, in order to monitor that the work plan respected the priorities of the EESSI Program, with proposals of suitable adjustments and to enhance the coordination and alignment of the SAFE activities with the activities carried out at a central level by DG EMPL and with the decision of the other EESSI governance bodies. The project management ensured the required **quality and financial control process** for the SAFE deliverables and that all **strategic decision making** required at SAFE level was taking place in an optimum way.

WP2 – Sharing and dissemination

The SAFE Project paves the way towards full and efficient cooperation between social security institutions across the EU to consistently deliver EESSI Project. “The **communication strategy**, therefore, aims to cover a wide variety of aspects (technology, business, operational, institutional) and has been set in the EESSI-SAFE Joint Communication Plan”.

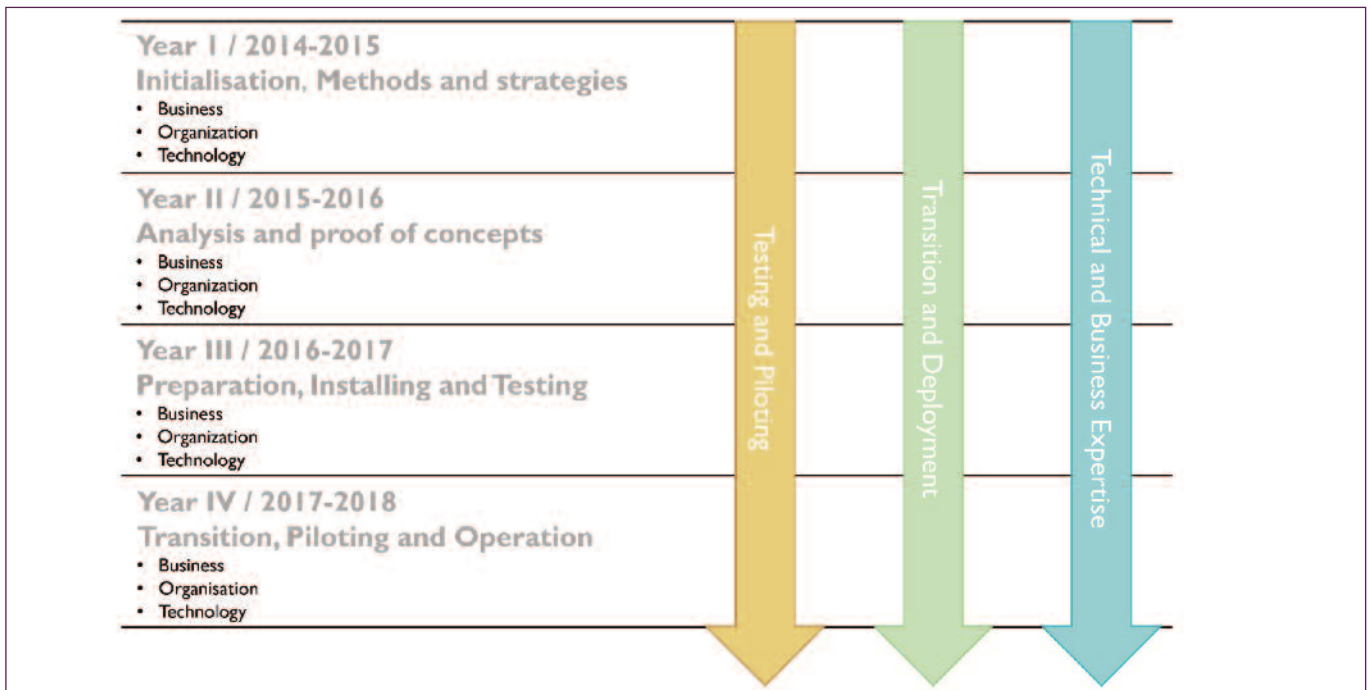
Since 2014, the activities for WP2 have been **focusing on sharing information about all WPs activities among SAFE Partners**, providing high re-usability and applicability of all the best practices among the Consortium Partners and DG EMPL. The **WP2 includes the SHOWit Project**, which aimed at the **development of SAFE Portal and at enhancing its functionalities to support the SAFE projects activities**, as well as **building up and updating the SAFE Consortium Workspace in Confluence for the dissemination** of SAFE results to the EESSI community. It also provides support to Partners in promoting surveys for the gathering and analysis of outcomes. SHOWit Project improved the availability of information on the SAFE’s activities, results, highlights to the EESSI stakeholders also by updating the **SAFE Portal Private Workspace**, accessible to DG EMPL Project Officers.

For more detailed information about **SAFE Activities and Results** please refer to the **SAFE Consortium Workspace in Confluence** following this path:

EESSI>EESSI Governance Bodies>SAFEConsortiumWorkspace>SAFE Consortium Activities and Results **SAFE Consortium – Activities and Results**.

SAFE: phased approach and project activities

The integrated approach ensured by the SAFE Consortium was developed in the four action years of the Framework Partnership Agreement, as indicated in the figure below.



Furthermore, in order to ensure a flexible approach to find solution related to the main issues regarding EESSI, some projects began in different period implementing specific objectives and tasks for each.

WP3 – Testing and piloting

The task of this workstream is to organize and support business-technical tests and pilot systems for electronic data exchange in Europe. All activities are structured to support a **phased approach towards an operational system**. WP3 has collected, processed, structured and disseminated the results of the testing and piloted exercises to the EESSI governance bodies, allowing them to make informed decisions to launch of the EESSI system or alternatively apply corrective measures. This is why the testing activities took place in close collaboration with the DG EMPL EESSI team, in alignment with the methodology and approach that has been chosen for the central EESSI Project.

The WP related to these activities included, during the 4 action years, the following projects.

- TESTit - the project carried out activities from 2014 to 2017, which aimed to determine if the system developed by DG EMPL met the Regulations, business requirements and definition of standard test scenarios for tests and pilots (PB1, PB2, PB2+). In the 2016-2017 the testing activity was focused on PB3 and on the Acceptance Test, finalized to certificate that EESSI Production Ready Release as fit-for-purpose.
- MOVEit - since 2016, the project aimed to identify potential RINA (Reference Implementation for National Applications) deployment scenarios at a national level. WP3 was successful at identifying the scenarios for the usage of RINA and also tested these scenarios.
- DOit - since 2016, the project focused on the integration of EESSI components project planning and in extending piloting activities, in order to guarantee gradual movement to the Transition Process.

WP4 – Transition and deployment

The task of this workstream is **piloting the transition** from paper to electronic of the EESSI system and providing **institutional and operational adjustments with trans-national benefits**. WP4 provided a forum that supported, performed analysis, identified common problems and generated **ideas and solutions** for the EESSI deployment strategy at national levels, the readiness for live operation in EESSI IT system, and the business, operational and institutional change for EESSI.

The WP4 focusing on these activities included three projects.

- **EXit** - the project started at the beginning of 2015 action year and was carried out until 2017 in close collaboration with DG EMPL. The **mission of the EXit** project has been to carry out, assist and coordinate **Dry Run activities** as well as to gather experiences and lessons learned from these activities which primarily have been focused on verifying that the defined European business processes are in line with the needs of the European Social Security coordination activity in accordance with the EU regulations. **The project contributed to the approval of BUCs by the EESSI Administrative Commission**. To this end, the EXit project **provided the expertise to carry out activities in order to validate, from a business and operational perspective, the data items and processes to be used in the exchanges** (as designed by the SEDs Ad hoc groups) and **supported the real cases run by clerks who are working for Social Security Institutions in the Member States**.
- **NAPit** - the project launched a Survey for National Application categorization, among SAFE Partner Agencies in 2014. The results of the NAPit Survey were presented to the EESSI Technical Commission and have been published in Confluence>SAFE Consortium Workspace>Contents for dissemination>Survey.
- **TRANSit** - the project started in 2016 on the basis of the results of the NAPit project. TRANSit activities focused on **evaluation of possible integration scenarios within the SAFE community; definition of requirements and subsequent prioritization; definition of integration scenarios in a phased approach; preparation procedures, technology, organization and business/data for early adaptors; creation of checklists for preparation, transition and organization**.

WP5 – Technical and Business expertise

The task of this WP is to provide **expertise, advice, expert knowledge** on topics related to **information architecture** to be proposed to the **central EESSI Project and each MS for the EESSI implementation**. Since 2014, the activities for the WP5 have been focused on **establishing a platform of expertise for defining and publishing data structures for the EESSI environment** by coordinating tasks for **information modeling in SAFE and aligning activities in engineering, testing and piloting**. The activities related to information modeling supported the message exchange between European Social Security Institutions according to a **set of SED and BUCs definitions**. The aim of WP5 has been to define and publish data structures for the EESSI environment, coordinate and align activities for information modeling and for cost reimbursement BUCs.

The WP focused on Technical expertise included the following projects.

- **MAPit** - from 2014 to 2016 the project has worked on data and process modeling and utilized the platform of expertise already established in the first year.
- **POSTit** - from 2014 to 2016 the project worked on the analysis of statistical indicators and established a platform of expertise.
- **KNOWit** - in 2017 this project started and focused on the **Institution Repository and pilot-related activities**. The Institution Repository and the **business document header** were objects of analysis. The project supported the **EESSI model for transition into operation** by executing tests, proof of concepts and pilots, in close cooperation with DG EMPL. KNOWit documented the lessons learned from this activity also **proposing enhancements to the supporting documentation elaborated by DG EMPL**. Additionally, it generated **expertise for the processing of data from the repository in terms of addressing and routing of electronic documents in EESSI**.

SAFE: the “magic tree” has risen

One of the most relevant outcomes of the SAFE Project was to present the detailed test results of the external testing of the EESSI Production Ready Release (PRR). The SAFE Partners concluded that PRR external testing has been carried out in the planned timeline and that it has achieved its targeted objectives and required scope.

The EESSI Administrative Commission endorsed the decision of the EC on EESSI being fit-for-purpose on June 27, 2017, based on the results of PRR internal and external testing. This allows for EESSI exchanges through National Implementation activities as of July 3, 2017, subject to conditions. Consequently, the Production Ready Release software was released by DG EMPL Transition Team, announcing the start of the National Implementation Period.

SAFE Project achieved an important result, a step forward an ambitious goal: making EESSI a reality. The new European system for the Electronic Exchange of Social Security Information will allow for a direct, reliable and confidential communication between Social Security Institutions. Exchanges will become faster, receiving Institutions will no longer have to deal with illegible, erroneous or incomplete forms and citizens will ultimately benefit from a more efficient calculation of their benefits.

An important step ahead towards a better life for European citizens and the future of Europe.

We walked the road.

We tested the ground.

We learned the best route.

Now, follow us.

SAFE Results in Confluence

The list of the relevant SAFE Deliverables produced during the four Action Years, to be disseminated in the EESSI Community in Confluence, are available in

[EESSI>EESSI Governance Bodies>SAFE Consortium Workspace> Contents for Dissemination>Results](#).

Other SAFE Contents for Dissemination are available under [Content for dissemination](#):

- [Articles](#) (interviews to SAFE Project Managers)
- [News](#)
- [Results](#)
- [Surveys](#)

In [SAFE Consortium Workspace](#) will be available also presentations, FAQs and other content produced for the SAFE Final Event, in the [Final Event page](#). Furthermore, in the page [SAFE Support Package will be published](#) the Hypertext of the main SAFE Project outcomes that have been collected, providing indications in the Abstracts about Who, When and How to use each deliverable in the Transition Period, referring to the Transition Keys indicated by DG EMPL Transition Team in the EESSI Webcasts (held in September 2017).

[EESSI>EESSI Governance Bodies>SAFE Consortium Workspace>SAFE Consortium – Activities and Results](#)).



Mobility is the basis of existence.

*Outside us, in the endless blow of wind, in the flow of waters.
Inside us, in our blood pulse, in the rhythm of breathing.
We always moved, since our birth, and even before it.
Where life is, mobility is part of it, and yet it is not enough.*

Exchange is the very essence of life.

*In the exchange between cells, at the route of evolution.
In energy itself, which is based on an exchange of sub-atomic particles.
Exchange has always driven human civilization and economy.
Today it lies at the heart of the **digital world** we live in.
A world more interconnected, plugged, tracked than ever before.
With great opportunities, greater challenges come too.*

*For institutions and complex organizations,
Data exchange is the next big challenge, for the stakes are high indeed:
social security and inclusion, administrative efficiency, working mobility:
these are some of the issues related to the **challenge of data exchange.***

*To face it, the **European Commission** gave life to **EESSI**,
a unique system allowing the exchange of electronic data
between Social Security Agencies of different Member States.
To move from the use of paper documents, and improve social benefits.*

The SAFE Project was initiated as the EESSI Pool of Excellence.

*SAFE is the lab where new solutions are tested.
SAFE is the pathfinder, always looking for a new road to be open.
DG EMPL planted a seed into the heart of EESSI.
Now the magic tree of SAFE has risen. Follow its trail.*

Social Agencies for Future Europe.

*Mobility is life.
Exchange is SAFE.*



INPS - IT



SODRA - LT



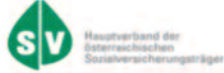
DRV BUND - DE



NSSI - BG



CLEISS - FR



HVOS - AT



EMMI - HU



SVB - NL



CSSA - CZ



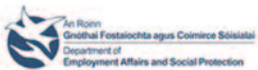
GKV - Spitzenverband DVKA - DE



NFZ - PL



INAIL - IT



DEASP - IE



SAFE

**Social Agencies for
Future Europe**



This is a EU funded project
EUROPEAN COMMISSION DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion
Employment and Social Legislation, Social Dialogue
Free Movement of Workers Coordination of Social Security Schemes

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