

## Summary of the Final Evaluation of the EU funds' 2014–2020 Programming Period Investment in Broadband Service Provision

<p>Objective, tasks and main results of the Evaluation</p>	<p>The purpose of this evaluation is to analyse the effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and sustainability of investments made under the European Union Funds 2014-2020 planning period's Specific Support Objective 2.1.1.: "Improving the accessibility of electronic communications infrastructure in rural areas." From the perspective of achieving target indicator values, the development of middle-mile infrastructure and the level of monitoring indicator achievement can generally be assessed as high.</p> <p>Both phases of the broadband project have successfully covered a significant portion of the identified white areas in the country (87.6%), and the infrastructure has been developed to a greater extent than initially planned. The project has improved the possibility of providing end-user connections in areas where it has been more economically viable from the perspective of commercial operators. The established infrastructure plays significant role in improving the availability and quality of mobile communication services.</p> <p>Although the Project investments have contributed to improving the achievement of EU strategic goals, experts believe that Latvia will not achieve the EU's set objectives - namely, gigabit network access for all European households and 5G coverage for all populated areas - without further significant public investments.</p>
<p>Main thematic areas of the Evaluation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Infrastructure improvements implemented under the Project</li> <li>- Actual benefits for digital economy needs from public investments in expanding broadband service coverage and network implementation</li> <li>- Achievement of goals and objectives set in planning documents, considering investments under 2.1.1. Specific Support Objective</li> <li>- Effectiveness of investments in achieving the objectives defined in 2.1.1 Specific Support Objective and national policy planning and regulatory document</li> <li>- Added value of investments in achieving EU-level strategic goals</li> </ul>
<p>Commissioner of the Evaluation</p>	<p>Ministry of Finance of the Republic of Latvia</p>
<p>Service Provider of the Evaluation</p>	<p>“SAFEGE Baltija”</p>

Year of Evaluation	2024
Funding of the Evaluation	34 340 <i>euro</i> Technical Assistance funds provided to the Ministry of Finance as the Managing Authority of European Union Funds in Latvia for the European Union Cohesion Policy Program during the planning period 2021-2027
Classification*	CPV code – 73210000-7 (Research consultancy services)
Territorial coverage	Latvia
Main target groups of the Evaluation	Electronic communication service providers, local government administrations
Methods used during the Evaluation:	
1) analysis of legal acts and policy planning documents	X
2) analysis of statistical data	X
3) secondary analysis of existing research data	X
4) conducting and analysing in-depth/expert interviews	X
5) conducting and analysing focus group discussions	
6) case studies	X
7) conducting quantitative survey and data analysis	X
8) other methods	Analysis of the Theory of Change, contribution analysis, analysis of 2.1.1. Specific Support Objective monitoring data, analysis of investment project experiences in other EU countries
Quantitative research methods	X
1) survey sampling method	systematic sampling
2) number of respondents	7
Qualitative research methods	
1) number of in-depth/expert interviews	14
2) number of focus group discussions	-

Analysis groups (segments) used	Development trends in the electronic communications sector; Data on territorial area in km <sup>2</sup> , mobile operator base stations, state/municipal institutions, educational institutions at the administrative territory level; Socio-economic data by region
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