

Press Release

Date: 5th December 2016

European microfinance sector reached outstanding gross microloan portfolio of EUR 2.5 billion in 2015, serving 747,265 active borrowers.

Brussels/Warsaw 5th December – The European Microfinance Network (EMN) and the Microfinance Centre (MFC) are proud to announce the launch of the “**Microfinance in Europe: A Survey of EMN-MFC members**” Report. This seventh edition of the Report on microfinance in Europe provides an overview of the development of the two networks’ members in terms of the main institutional characteristics, the microloan portfolio, and the social and financial performance for the period 2014-2015¹.

The Report gives a sound image of the **sector’s heterogeneity** relating to the institutional model, the size and the level of specialisation in microlending. The social goals pursued by microfinance institutions (MFIs) are also diverse, while showing a **primary focus on financial inclusion and job creation**.

The Report highlights an **increase of the scale of the sector both in terms of the total volume and the number of microloans disbursed**. In 2015, the MFIs surveyed disbursed a total of 552,834 loans (+12% compared to 2014) with a total volume of almost EUR 1.6 billion (+16%).

Non-financial services emerge as a key element of microfinance provision in Europe. In fact, more than half of the MFIs surveyed follow an integrated approach allowing for the provision of financial products (primarily business and personal microloans, savings and business loans) and non-financial services. According to the Report, last year the **MFIs canvassed reached 205,943 clients with their non-financial services** (principally financial education and business development services).

As regards the **promotion of entrepreneurship and job creation**, the MFIs surveyed have continuously supported microenterprises, start-ups, social enterprises and self-employed people. In 2015, the number of **active borrowers supported by business microloans reached a total of 402,365** (+8%).

“The results of this edition show that demand has never been higher for Microfinance in Europe. Additionally, the industry is improving its institutional capacity to meet this demand. Overall, the financial performance data collected shows an increasingly sustainable sector”, says **Patrick Sapy, EMN President**.

Making reference to the 7th edition of the Report, **Cristian Jurma, MFC President**, adds that *“This data shows that microfinance in Europe is gradually being consolidated as an essential tool of social policy for the promotion of self-employment, microenterprise support and the fight against social and financial exclusion. Going beyond the figures, there are in fact men and women who are willing to take control of their futures with the help of microfinance institutions”*.

For more information:

Download the [publication](#) and [infographic](#)

There is still time to [register for the webinar](#) on the presentation of the key results from the report, which will take place on 6 December 2016 from 12 pm to 12.40 pm.

¹ The Report is based on data collected by EMN and MFC from of 149 MFIs across 22 European countries. MFIs surveyed are exclusively members of EMN and MFC or members of National Networks affiliated with EMN.

About

The [European Microfinance Network's \(EMN\)](#) mission is to build up universal and open access to appropriate financial and complementary support services suited to society's needs at affordable prices allowing people to deploy their talents in order to create wealth and value while having a positive social impact. EMN is empowering its members to become acknowledged actors and partners in the financial sector that reach out to a large number of enterprising people who, in turn, create jobs and contribute to sustainable growth. EMN primarily focusses its activities in the European Union and EFTA/EEA member states.

The [Microfinance Centre's \(MFC\)](#) mission is to contribute to poverty reduction and the development of human potential by promoting a socially-oriented and sustainable microfinance sector that provides adequate financial and non-financial services to a large number of poor families and micro-entrepreneurs. MFC primarily focusses its activities in Central and Eastern Europe and in the Commonwealth of Independent States.

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