

# FUNDS & GRANTS: SOCIAL INTEGRATION AND RIGHTS RELATED PROJECTS

Coordinated by Prof. Diana Kopeva, UNWE



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Erasmus+ Programme  
of the European Union



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**Scientific Coordinator: Diana Kopeva, UNWE, Bulgaria**

**Authors:**

**Diana Kopeva, UNWE, Bulgaria**  
**Nikolay Shterev, UNWE, Bulgaria**  
**Iliya Kerezhev, UNWE, Bulgaria**  
**Savvatu Tsolakidou, NKUA, Greece**  
**Theodora Gazi, NKUA, Greece**  
**Bart Pierre H. Leyen, VUB, Belgium**  
**Abel Alan Diaz Gonzales, Maastricht University, The Netherlands**  
**Tirşe Erbaysal Filibeli, BAU, Turkey**  
**Yasemin Giritli Inceoğlu, BAU, Turkey**  
**Berna Balcı, BAU, Turkey**  
**Yağmur Çenberli, BAU, Turkey**

Ebook design and pagination: **Kremena Koeva**

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*Berna Balci*

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# FUNDS & GRANTS: SOCIAL INTEGRATION AND RIGHTS RELATED PROJECTS

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## INTRODUCTION

The key aim of this book is to present the existing programmes and funding schemes which finance projects targeting vulnerable groups, and to equip students with a solid and comprehensive understanding of the financial instruments and increasing flows that the EU has put in place to support integration policies for vulnerable groups. In a very systematic way were presented EU funds, programs and their main characteristics. The book is based on a pedagogical approach comprising a detailed overview, analysis and assessment of the EU funding landscape related to integration policies. The e-book is an Intellectual Output 6 of ERASMUS+ project *“Common curricula for diversity: education in media and integration of vulnerable groups- ERMIScom”*. The e-book includes thirteen interrelated topics. The e-book will be used as main reading source for MSc students. The topics are designed and developed to cover a course of 39 teaching hours. The following distribution of the workload of this course is suggested:

- Time spent in class: 3 hours per week / 39 hours per semester /13 teaching weeks per semester
- Time allocated for course readings: 2 hours per week / 26 hours per semester
- Time allocated for cases: 2 hours per week / 26 hours per semester
- Time allocated for preparing the “course project”: 40 hours
- Time allocated for preparing/revising for examinations: 40 hours
- Total hours for this Course: **171 hours**
- **ECTS: 8ECTS/course**

The UNWE the leader of this module is committed to support the organization of this module, and the teachers, trainers and researchers of the partners involved (Metropolia, NKUA, BAU and VUB). Different chapters are written by researchers from partner institutions.

## **Indicative topics in the book are:**

- The policy drivers of the EU funds
- Main types of EU funding
- Main thematic and geographical funding areas
- The objectives, target groups, eligible actions, application procedure and management structure of each individual fund, programme or initiative
- Familiarization with the methodologies for the evaluation of the use of the EU funds with a focus on the following dimensions:
  - How effectively the funds are supporting the respective EU policy goals?
  - What is the key EU added value provided by their implementation?
  - If their use is cost-efficient and coherent?
- Cases and examples of best practices and projects financed from different international institutions and organisations

## **Element of Innovation**

The book is not limiting itself in a formal presentation of the design, mechanisms and implementation arrangements of the EU funds but is seeking, through an interdisciplinary approach, to develop the students' capacities in critically reviewing and assessing their contribution to addressing the needs and challenges they have been designed for.

## **Expected Impact**

The main expected outcome of the book is that students' skills and competences to understand, to analyze and to assess the EU financial programmes and initiatives are enhanced. The expected impact is that the capacities of the organizations and countries involved in the project, to manage, evaluate the migration/asylum related EU funds as well as to communicate relevant information on them, are reinforced

## **Transferability potential**

An important element of the book is to promote a common understanding among the students as regards the shared opportunities and challenges related to the use of the EU funds in support of the EU migration, asylum and integration policies.

## CHAPTER 1.

### EU BUDGET. SOURCES OF EU FUNDING

*DIANA KOPEVA, ILIYA KEREZIEV*

#### Introduction

This chapter will outline the methods and guiding principles used to create the EU budget, the management and implementation modes of funding, types of financing, creation of the various funds used to finance various projects with the aim of carrying out EU policies in the various socioeconomic spheres and achieving predetermined objectives in the various fields at the national and regional levels, as well as the main EU funds

#### 1. EU Budget

The budget of the European Union is determined in the founding treaties of the union: Treaty of Lisbon (or Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union) and Maastricht Treaty (or Treaty establishing the EU). The institutions of the EU administer the implementation of legislation by the member countries and for this purpose they have a budget which for 2023 is 186.6 billion euros<sup>1</sup>, which is 1.12% of the combined GDP of all member countries. Each year's budget is part of a long-term spending plan called the 'financial framework'. The framework is a seven-year framework, with the current one covering the period 2007-2013. It allows the EU to effectively plan spending programs for several years ahead. The annual budget is determined in the context of the seven-year financial frameworks of the Council of the European Union, i.e. by the representatives of the member states, and by the directly elected European Parliament. The European Commission submits the budget proposal to the Parliament and is also responsible for its implementation. A very substantial part of the budget, and in particular agricultural and cohesion expenditure, is implemented jointly with the Member States. Depending on the spending schemes, national administrations may be responsible for drawing up spending strategies, selecting beneficiaries and projects and making payments.

The EU's annual budget sets out all the revenue and expenditure of the European Union for a year. It ensures the funding of EU policies and programs in line with EU policy priorities and legal obligations.

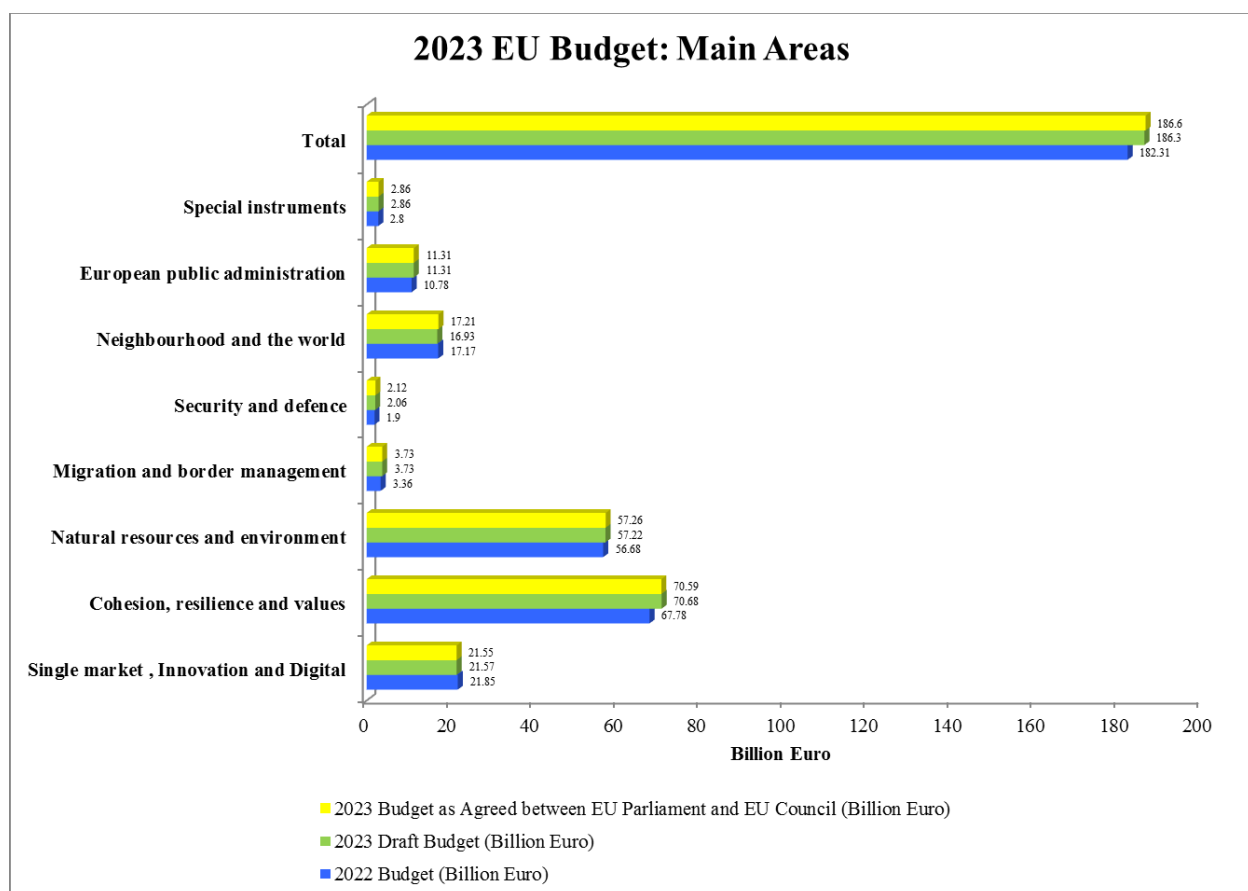
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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/infographics/2023-eu-budget-main-areas/>

The EU budget is formed by the taxes paid by every European and should be spent on things that serve the public interest.

76% of the EU budget is formed on the basis of contributions from national budgets of the member states (the contributions are determined based on gross national income of the country, which means that as much as it is the stronger the country's economy, that much more it contributes to the EU budget). Customs duties on goods that the EU imports form up to 12% of the budget. Value added tax, or VAT, amounts to 11% of the EU budget. European countries contribute 1/3 of 1% of their total VAT revenue.<sup>2</sup>

On 14 November 2022, the Council and the European Parliament reached an agreement on the EU budget for 2023, which clearly reflects the main political priorities of the EU. Total liabilities are set at EUR 186.6 billion. The total amount of payments amounted to EUR 168.6 billion. Obligations undertaken Commitments are legally binding promises to spend funds on activities that are carried out over several years.<sup>3</sup>



Source <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/infographics/2023-eu-budget-main-areas/>

<sup>2</sup> <https://bankwatch.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/07/EU-peoplesguide-BG.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/qanda\\_22\\_3474](https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/qanda_22_3474)



Three EU institutions participate in the procedure for adopting the EU's annual budgets: the European Parliament, the Council of the European Union and the European Commission. The process starts in February of the previous year, when the Council and Parliament adopt their guidelines. The European Commission then submits a draft proposal to the Council and Parliament, usually in May. Between July and September, the Council defines and adopts its position, after which Parliament has one month to approve or amend it. The EU's annual budget is usually adopted by the end of the previous year. In the event that no agreement is reached, the new budget follows the "conditional twelfth" rule: this means that an amount no greater than one twelfth of the previous year's budget can be spent each month.

The budget for 2023 aims to boost the recovery from the coronavirus pandemic, to put Europe on the path towards a sustainable future, to protect and create jobs, and to strengthen the Union's strategic autonomy. This is expressed in tangible support for people in need in Europe and its neighbourhood, companies and hard-hit sectors, reinforcement of the single market and investments in future-oriented sectors. Additional proposals to finance the impact of the war in Ukraine both externally and internally will be tabled later in the year, on the basis of a more precise assessment of the needs.

The combined EU budget 2023 and NextGenerationEU will make available some €300 billion in funding to help rebuild and modernise our continent, fostering the green and digital transitions, and making sure we create a stronger and more resilient Europe, which plays an active role in the world.

In parallel, the EU budget will continue to support Europe's political priorities, whose contribution to a sustainable recovery is more relevant than ever. The Commission remains committed to the six headline ambitions set out by President von der Leyen: the European Green Deal; a Europe fit for the digital age; an economy that works for all; promoting our European way of life; a stronger Europe in the world and a new push for democracy. The budget for 2023 will enable the Commission to deliver on all of these priorities.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/qanda\\_22\\_3474](https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/qanda_22_3474)

## 2. Types of financing

EU funding comes in many different forms<sup>5</sup>:

- Grants – partly funded by the EU and partly from other sources – that usually follow public announcements known as calls for proposals
- Subsidies managed by national and regional authorities
- Loans, guarantees and equity as forms of financial assistance to support EU policies and programmes
- Prizes to winners of Horizon 2020 contests.

### 2.1. Grants

Grants are awarded to finance projects that contribute to EU policies. Grants can be awarded in a variety of areas: from scientific research or education to humanitarian aid. Grants are awarded to public and private organizations and, exceptionally, to individuals. Grants are a form of additional funding. Normally the EU does not fund projects 100%. In other words, the project will be co-financed by the respective beneficiary organization. Therefore, when beneficiary organizations implement projects through grants, they partially finance their projects. Examples of EU-funded projects are available on the EU website EU Results (1). Grants are awarded through calls for proposals. The European Commission uses calls for proposals to advertise funding opportunities and to explain how to apply for them. Another way to access funding is through awards.

The European Union (EU) issues grants to businesses, civil society organisations and government bodies in order to achieve the goals it has set for its various policy fields. For example, the EU wishes to use its structural funds to reduce differences in wealth between regions and between the various member states.

Types of grants:

- **Competitive grants.** They are based on the quality and review assessment of the proposed project. Competitive grants are awarded through a process in which one plan and budget a project, write up a proposal to apply, and submit it to the funder. Competitive awardees are chosen by a team of reviewers who read the grant proposal and evaluate the project to determine if it is a good fit for the funding programme/scheme. The outcome of a competitive awarding process is not predetermined, and there are a lot of rules and regulations in place to keep the awarding process fair and equitable.

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<sup>5</sup> <https://business.gov.nl/financing-your-business/subsidies/>

- **Formula Grants**, The awardees are predetermined. Unlike a competitive grants, formula grants are awarded to recipients who are predetermined, and the term “formula” refers to the way the grant funding is mathematically allocated to recipients. The recipient should meet certain criteria to be considered for awarding. Usually this type of grants is relevant for state agency, state and regional bodies and institutions to implement at national, regional or local level EU and national policies and objectives. In most cases these grants are awarded for public education, culture, improving health and transport infrastructure. For example: reconstruction and modernisation of National Art Gallery Kvadrat 500, Sofia, Bulgaria. The awardee was Ministry of Culture. The project was financed under the Operational programme (national) Regional Development 2007-2013.
- **Continuation Grants/Pass through Funding**. As Renewal of an Existing Grant Continuation grants offer current award recipients the option to extend their existing discretionary program funding. If you have completed year one of a three-year funded project, you may have to apply for a continuation award for any subsequent years. Essentially, these grants extend funding past the initial budget period. These awards are typically non-competitive, but that is not always the case, and you may have to compete against new applicants for funding depending on the program.
- **Pass-through grants**. Funds accumulated by a government body to a state agency or institution that are then transferred to other state agencies, units of local government, or other eligible groups per the award eligibility terms. The state agency or institution is referred to as the "*prime recipient*" of the pass-through funds. The secondary recipients are referred to as "*subrecipients*". The prime recipient issues the subawards as competitive or noncompetitive as dictated by the prime award terms and authorizing legislation.

## 2.2. Credits and Loans

Loans and credits are different finance mechanisms. While a loan provides all the money requested in one go at the time it is issued, in the case of a credit, the bank provides the customer with an amount of money, which can be used as required, using the entire amount borrowed, part of it or none at all.

A loan is a financial product that allows a user to access a fixed amount of money at the outset of the transaction, with the condition that this amount, plus the agreed interest, be returned within a specified period. The loan is repaid in regular instalments. The main characteristics of a financial loan include:

- The transaction has a pre-determined life span.

- Once all the capital has been repaid through the payment of the instalments (monthly, quarterly, half-yearly...), the operation is concluded without the possibility of accessing more money, unless a new loan is arranged.
- Interest is charged on the total amount of money borrowed.
- Loans have a longer term, usually of years.

A credit is a more flexible form of finance that allows you to access the amount of money loaned, according to your needs at any given time. The credit sets a maximum limit of money, which the customer can use in part or in full. The customer may use all the money provided, part of it or none at all. We review the main characteristics of a credit that distinguish it from a loan:

- Interest on credits is usually higher than on a loan
- Interest is only paid on the amount used, although there may be a minimum fee payable on the undrawn balance
- As the money is returned, more will become available, provided that the limit is not exceeded
- Unlike the loan, the credit is usually renewed each year in order to allow the customer to continue to use this credit facility whenever necessary

In EU funding, project beneficiaries often face a situation of time lag between execution of project activities and payment for them, and receipt of next project budget instalment. In that case credits are usually used to cover the gap between receipts and payments, to deal with specific periods of lack of liquidity or for specific purchases. Loans, on the other hand, are often used to finance the purchase of goods or services.

The project beneficiaries are applying for credit /or loan before credit institution/banks as a regular clients, In some EU member states are established special credit institutions that provide favourable conditions (lower interest rate, longer grace period, etc.). Such example is Fund FLAG (Bulgaria). **FUND FLAG<sup>6</sup>** was established in March 2007 as an instrument of the central government policy for regional development. The mission of the Fund is to support Bulgarian municipalities and public companies for extending and developing of local infrastructure, providing public services and creating sustainable local authorities. The fund has established itself as a preferred partner for successful implementation of infrastructure projects and also implementation of local government programs.

Its aim is to provide financial assistance to municipalities for absorption of as much funds as possible from the Structural Funds and the Cohesion Fund of the EU. The contribution of FLAG involves coverage of as many municipalities as possible, located across the whole territory of the country, by creating conditions for maximum absorption of the funds from all operational programs, under which the

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<sup>6</sup> <https://www.flag-bg.com/en/>

municipalities are beneficiaries. As of 01 January 2023 the fund reported 1 386 funded projects; 2 052 903 471 approved loans /BGN; 7 709 121 044 BGN total value of projects.

FLAG's principal activity is to provide support to Bulgarian municipalities, associations and entities with municipal participation in the process of successful project implementation. The main targets of the projects include activities for modernization and expansion of municipal infrastructure and creation of sustainable local authorities.

FLAG grant loans to beneficiaries, which implement projects, financed by EU funds or other multi-donor arrangements:

- Bridge loan – provides circulating capital for eligible costs payments on projects with financial support from EU.
- Loans that provide own contribution to projects for necessary co-financing by the beneficiary, additional non-recoverable costs and VAT for project realization, financing and refinancing to financial corrections and etc.

Advantages of FLAG's lending

- Simplified applying procedure and short terms request processing;
- Support for municipalities with different financial ratios and creditworthiness;
- Flexibility on loan products with the specific financial products and budgetary resources of municipalities;
- Competitive interest rates;
- An expert team and experience in working with financial instruments;
- Support for municipalities for administrative capacity increase;
- Attract private funding for public project implementation;
- Technical support at each stage of managing and implementation process of a project.

## **2.3. Subsidies**

Subsidies and other types of funding are managed directly by national governments in the EU, not the European Commission. For example, subsidies for agriculture are granted to support land- business owners.

With a subsidy, one receives financial support from, for example, the national government, the province, or a municipality. This financial support can take various forms. Sometimes one receives money, but it is also possible that one has to pay less tax, or that one receives vouchers, with which one can, for example, hire an advisor.

Within the EU subsidies might be found in following areas:

- Environment and training
- Research and Innovation
- Accommodation and security
- Environment and energy
- Arts and culture
- International projects
- Care

## **2.4. Awards**

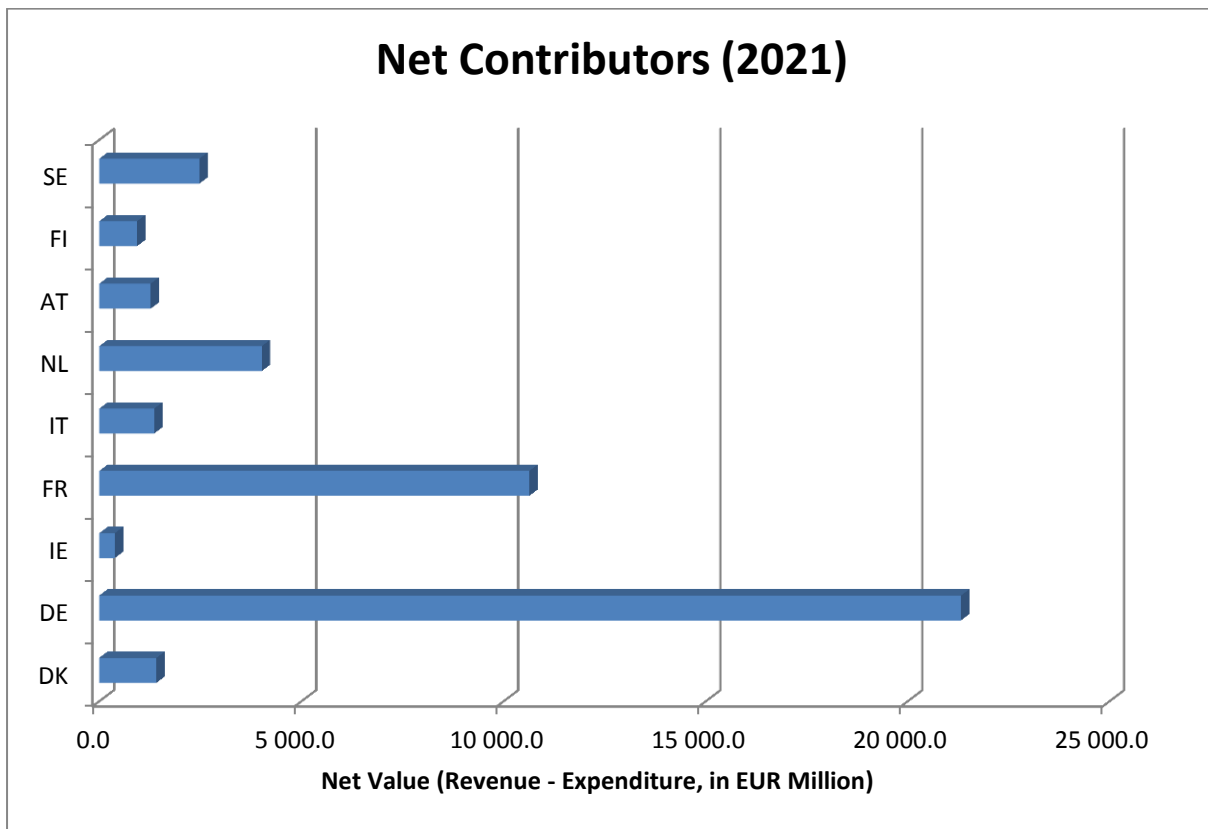
The prizes are the rewards for the winners of competitions in line with Horizon 2020 (4). They are also called incentive awards or incentive awards.

## **3. EU Member states – role in EU Budget**

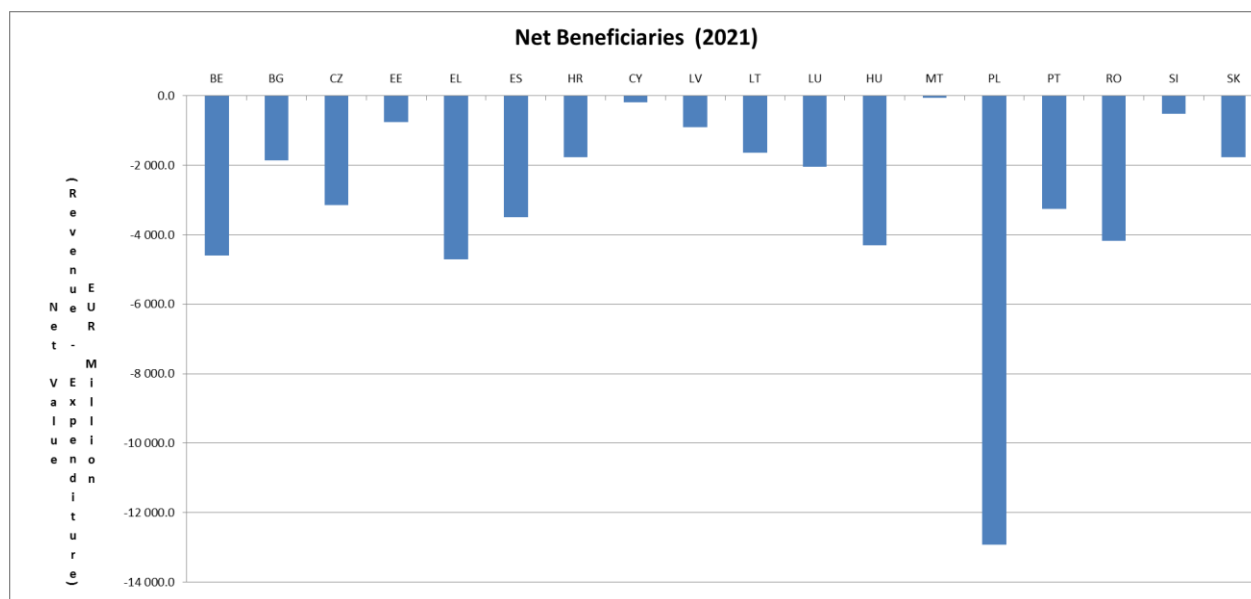
Within the EU, the member states are grouped into two groups - *net donors and net users* of funds/beneficiaries. Accordingly, in 2021 nine states paid more into the EU budget than they received from it; they were thus net contributors. Eighteen states were net recipients. If we first compare the absolute amounts, we see that Germany was the largest net contributor in 2021 with an amount of 21.4 billion euro. The biggest net beneficiary is Poland – receiving more 12918 EUR million than its contribution to the EU budget.

The table below shows these two groups based on 2021 information.





Source: [https://commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/eu-budget/long-term-eu-budget/2021-2027/spending-and-revenue\\_en](https://commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/eu-budget/long-term-eu-budget/2021-2027/spending-and-revenue_en)



Source: [https://commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/eu-budget/long-term-eu-budget/2021-2027/spending-and-revenue\\_en](https://commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/eu-budget/long-term-eu-budget/2021-2027/spending-and-revenue_en)

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4. Financing your B

## CHAPTER 2.

### EU FUNDING AND MANAGEMENT MODES

*DIANA KOPEVA, ILIYA KEREZIEV*

#### Introduction

In different EU programmes are applied one of three implementation modes: direct management, shared management and indirect management. The chapters aims to present the content of each of these three modes and to provide students with basic knowledge about their correct use, in which cases is implemented one or another mode, strengths and weaknesses of each mode, how these modes reflect on project implementation later on.

#### 1. Management and implementation modes

Depending on the nature of the funding, all EU-funded programs fall into one of three types of implementation modes:

##### 1.1. Direct management

EU funding is managed directly by the European Commission (usually around 20% of the budget is managed under this mode). The allocation of direct funding capital is managed by the European Institutions. There are two types of funding available: *grants and contracts*. Grants are given to specific projects that relate to EU policies, usually following a public announcement known as a call for proposals. Contracts are issued by EU institutions to buy services, goods or works that they need for their operations – such as studies, training, conference organisation or IT equipment.

In direct management, the European Commission is directly responsible for the whole process and all steps in a programme's implementation, respectively:

- launching the calls for proposals
- evaluating submitted proposals
- signing grant agreements
- monitoring project implementation
- assessing the results
- making payments

These tasks are carried out by the Commission's departments at its headquarters, in the EU Delegation or through EU Executive Agencies; there are no third parties. Programmes implemented in direct management account for around 20% of the EU Budget 2021-2027.

An example of a programme run directly by the Commission is the programme for the Competitiveness of Enterprises and Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (COSME), where the main objective is to support the creation and expansion of SMEs. If an applicant is an entrepreneur, looking for financial backing from the EU, the contact and managing department would then be the European Innovation Council and SMEs Executive Agency, which runs COSME.

Calls for proposals under direct management are published on the [Funding and Tenders Portal \(SEDIA\)](#) [Funding & tenders \(europa.eu\)](#)

A big part of the funds from *Next Generation EU*, the temporary recovery instrument, will also be implemented in direct management mode, notably the *Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF)* – which will make €723.8 billion in loans and grants available to support reforms and investments undertaken by Member States.

Due to its exceptional nature, the RRF implementation will follow specific procedures. Funds will be disbursed directly to the Member States based on the progress in the implementation of national recovery and resilience plans.

The plans should effectively address challenges identified in the European Semester, particularly the country-specific recommendations adopted by the Council. The plans should also include measures to address the challenges and reap the benefits of the green and digital transitions.

## **1.2. Shared management**

Under this mode the European Commission and national authorities jointly manage the funding (around 70% of the budget). In shared management, both the European Commission and national authorities in Member States, such as ministries and public institutions, are in charge of running a particular programme. Around 70% of EU programmes are run this way.

For instance, if you are a farmer anywhere in the EU, and have a project to start growing organic tomatoes, you would be eligible to apply for funds under the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP). For that, you would have to go through your country's Ministry of Agriculture, or an equivalent institution, which would be in charge of managing the funds for your project on behalf of the EU.

The Member States' administrations (at national, regional and local level) choose which projects to finance and take responsibility for operational management.

Working together with the Member States, the Commission makes sure that the projects are successfully concluded, and the money is well spent.

The national portals are websites set up by Member States to inform citizens about the implementation of Union funds in their countries during the 2021-2027 funding. Each country has its own national website portal, which covers implementation of

- [European Regional Development Fund \(ERDF\)](#)
- [European Social Fund Plus \(ESF+\)](#)
- [Cohesion Fund \(CF\)](#)
- [Just Transition Fund \(JTF\)](#)
- [European Maritime, Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund \(EMFAF\)](#)
- [Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund \(AMIF\)](#)
- [Internal Security Fund \(ISF\)](#)
- [Instrument for Financial Support for Border Management and Visa Policy \(BMVI\)](#)

The management of these funds at a national level is done in collaboration with the European Commission and national public authorities. Over time, in particular during the 2014-2020 period, these portals have become national single entry points for EU funds, providing access to all programmes in a country as well.

The national website portals and the programme websites offer up to date information on upcoming funding opportunities, namely which regions are covered by funding calls, who can apply, the amount of funding allocated to a call, programme and EU policy objectives, and timeline. These websites also offer useful information for applicants and beneficiaries whose projects have been selected for support. Success stories, highlighted projects, guidelines to apply to funding calls, information about trainings and other useful information is presented here (in national languages) and can serve as inspiration for aspiring project beneficiaries.

The national website portals is given in table below<sup>7</sup>.

|             |   |
|-------------|---|
| Austria     | <a href="https://www.oerok.gv.at/eu-fonds-2021-2027">https://www.oerok.gv.at/eu-fonds-2021-2027</a>   |
| Belgium     | <a href="https://www.europeinbelgium.be/fr/">https://www.europeinbelgium.be/fr/</a>   |
| Bulgaria    | <a href="https://www.eufunds.bg/bg">https://www.eufunds.bg/bg</a>   |
| Cyprus      | <a href="https://eufunds.com.cy/">https://eufunds.com.cy/</a>   |
| Czechia     | <a href="https://www.dotaceeu.cz/cs/uvod">https://www.dotaceeu.cz/cs/uvod</a>   |
| Germany     | Under development   |
| Denmark     | <a href="https://eufonde.dk/">https://eufonde.dk/</a>   |
| Estonia     | <a href="https://www.rtk.ee/">https://www.rtk.ee/</a>   |
| Spain       | <a href="https://www.fondoseuropeos.hacienda.gob.es/sitios/dgfc/es-ES/eaw_tb_FEDER/Paginas/eaw_tb_FEDER.aspx">https://www.fondoseuropeos.hacienda.gob.es/sitios/dgfc/es-ES/eaw_tb_FEDER/Paginas/eaw_tb_FEDER.aspx</a> |
| Finland     | <a href="https://www.eurahoitusneuvonta.fi/etusivu">https://www.eurahoitusneuvonta.fi/etusivu</a>   |
| France      | <a href="https://www.europe-en-france.gouv.fr/fr">https://www.europe-en-france.gouv.fr/fr</a>   |
| Greece      | <a href="http://www.espa.gr">www.espa.gr</a>  |
| Croatia     | <a href="http://www.strukturnifondovi.hr/">http://www.strukturnifondovi.hr/</a>   |
| Hungary     | <a href="https://www.palyazat.gov.hu/">https://www.palyazat.gov.hu/</a>   |
| Ireland     | <a href="https://www.eufunds.ie/">https://www.eufunds.ie/</a>   |
| Italy       | <a href="https://opencoesione.gov.it/it/">https://opencoesione.gov.it/it/</a>   |
| Lithuania   | Under development   |
| Luxembourg  | <a href="https://fonds-europeens.public.lu/fr.html">https://fonds-europeens.public.lu/fr.html</a>   |
| Latvia      | Under development   |
| Malta       | <a href="https://splashpage.gov.mt/">https://splashpage.gov.mt/</a> (under development)   |
| Netherlands | <a href="https://www.europaomdehoek.nl/">https://www.europaomdehoek.nl/</a>   |

<sup>7</sup> [https://commission.europa.eu/funding-tenders/find-funding/funding-management-mode/national-single-portals\\_en](https://commission.europa.eu/funding-tenders/find-funding/funding-management-mode/national-single-portals_en)



|          |   |
|----------|---|
| Poland   | <a href="https://www.funduszeuropejskie.gov.pl/">https://www.funduszeuropejskie.gov.pl/</a> |
| Portugal | <a href="https://portugal2030.pt/">https://portugal2030.pt/</a>                             |
| Romania  | <a href="https://www.fonduri-ue.ro/">https://www.fonduri-ue.ro/</a>                         |
| Sweden   | <a href="https://eufonder.se/">https://eufonder.se/</a>                                     |
| Slovenia | <a href="https://www.evropskasredstva.si/">https://www.evropskasredstva.si/</a>             |
| Slovakia | <a href="https://www.eurofondy.gov.sk/">https://www.eurofondy.gov.sk/</a>                   |

### 1.3. Indirect management

EU and other international organisations and institutions are partnering and collaborating in certain areas through combining resources and funds. Under Indirect management funding is managed by partner organisations or other authorities inside or outside the EU (around 10% of the budget). Some funding programmes are implemented by national authorities either inside or outside the EU, international organisations, or development agencies of EU countries. The majority of the EU budget allocated to humanitarian aid and international development, for instance, is implemented under this mode.

Examples include the financial support to fight Ebola outbreak in West Africa and the earthquake in Nepal in 2015. Programmes implemented under indirect management account for around 10% of the overall EU budget.

Under this management mode, the Commission delegates budget execution tasks to different types of implementing partners, for example

- Third countries or the bodies they have designated:

#### **International organisations such as**

the United Nations (UN) family

the World Bank

the International Monetary Fund (IMF)

the European Investment Bank (EIB) and the European Investment Fund (EIF)

**Decentralised agencies** contribute to the implementation of EU policies by performing technical and scientific tasks. They support cooperation between the EU and national governments by pooling technical and specialist expertise from both the EU institutions and national authorities. Examples include such as

the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC)

the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA)

the European Border and Coast Guard Agency (Frontex)

[European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights](#) (FRA)

[European Medicines Agency](#) (EMA)

[European Institute for Gender Equality](#) (EIGE)

[Single Resolution Board](#) (SRB)

[European Asylum Support Office](#) (EASO)

**Public-private partnerships**, including:

Joint Undertakings such as Initiative on Innovative Medicines,

Shift2Rail

European High Performance Computing (EuroHPC)

Bio-based Industries initiative

Clean Sky 2

Electronic Components and Systems for European Leadership

Fuel Cells and Hydrogen Joint Undertaking

Fusion for Energy

Initiative on Innovative Medicines

SESAR

**Member States Bodies/National Bodies** - these are organisations active in the field of development and cooperation and with which the Commission has signed a framework agreement **such as**

Erasmus+ national agencies,

Member States' development agencies

National Promotional Banks

the Agence Française de Développement (AFD)

the Agenzia Italiana per la Cooperazione allo Sviluppo (AICS)

the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ)  
GmbH

the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida)

Application process is not unified. Each call for proposals or tenders has its own criteria, requirements and steps. Your chosen call will guide you through the application process.

After one has determined his eligibility by fulfilling the criteria indicated in the specific call, he might need to register in a specific data base– the call guidelines will specify whether and how you need to do that. It might be necessary to find a partner.

Project preparation and submission will take a while, so it is necessary to project development to begin well in advance. All the documents and templates for the project application and that are needed to use will be listed in the guidelines for the chosen call – the key point is to follow them precisely and closely. If it is not done the contracting authority might disqualify the proposal as inadmissible.

In order to get EU funding, one needs to follow certain rules and procedures. This is inevitable – we need to make sure that every euro is spent in a transparent and correct way, to the benefit of EU citizens. However, the EU is also constantly working to simplify and modernise its budgetary rules and to make sure people can access EU funding to finance their ideas.

To be considered, one application needs to be complete, concise, and submitted on time through the electronic submission system.

If you apply for funds managed by an implementing partner under indirect management, you will need to comply with the application process set up by this implementing partner that will act as contracting authority. You will need to check

on the website of the implementing partner the specific requirements for the application process.

Entities or persons wishing to work under indirect management need to fall into specific categories defined in the Financial Regulations, which frames the use of the Union budget. Before being allowed to do so, they also need to carry out an ex ante assessment of their systems, rules and procedures to ensure that the EU fund they will be awarded will be safely managed.

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4. [https://commission.europa.eu/funding-tenders/find-funding/funding-management-mode/national-single-portals\\_en](https://commission.europa.eu/funding-tenders/find-funding/funding-management-mode/national-single-portals_en)

## CHAPTER 3

### EU FUNDING FOR GROWTH AND SOCIAL COHESION

*SAVVATOU TSOLAKIDO*

#### Aim

The EU funds for growth and Social Cohesion are the financial tools that contribute to the implementation of the European Union (EU) Strategy and policies under the shared management of the European Structural Investment Funds. The aim of this chapter is to provide an overview of EU ESIFs and other Funds and Programmes created to face structural changes and disparities between Member States (MS). These funds are provided by specific Regulation and the management and implementation rules are the same in all MS. A specific Monitoring Committee consisting of representatives of the EU and representatives of the MS had responsibility for the management, the implementation and the monitoring of the funds. As of 2000 each MS designated Management Authorities responsible to manage each Operational Programme of the National Strategic Reference Framework (NSRF).

The NSRF of each MS is negotiated for approval with the relevant directorates of the European Commission and the implementation and the monitoring are the responsibility of the MS. The European Commission's relevant evaluation and control services monitor the efficiency of the funding and the impact on specific policies according to each of the Operational Programmes.

A literature review demonstrates that many competitive programmes were created and funded by the different general directorates of the European Commission as a response to specific needs or policy developments and were abolished or incorporated into new programmes. Vulnerability is not the primary goal and objective of the competitive programmes but is inherent in many other goals that target different population groups. The main goal is the integration, social cohesion, and wellbeing of all European citizens.

The adoption of specific measures for equal opportunities for vulnerable groups has led to the creation of Community initiatives such as Euroform, NOW, Interreg, Leader and others and to the adoption of new funds such as the European Globalization Adjustment Fund (EGF), the Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived (FEAD).

In this chapter the evolution of the Structural Funds and their objectives per programming period, selected Community Initiatives and the Funds for specific mission will be presented. The European competitive programmes will be presented in the next chapter.

## Expected Learning Outcomes

The students will:

1. Recognize the existing EU Funds and grants for cohesion and growth
2. Recognize the European Structural Investment Funds (ESIFs) mainly during the new programming period 2021-2027
3. Recognize the European Initiatives and other funds for vulnerable groups
4. Learn with what procedures the ESIFs, the Community Initiatives and other funds are designated and implemented in Member States

## Keywords

The ESIFs, European Social Fund (ESF), European Regional Fund (ERDF), Cohesion Fund (CF), Community Initiative, European Globalization Adjustment fund (EGF), European Aid Fund for the Most Deprived (FEAD), Just Transition Fund (JTF), European Union Solidarity Fund (EUSF), Asylum, Migration, and Integration Fund.

## 1. Introduction

After the end of the second World War on the 8<sup>th</sup> May 1945 Europe was devastated. Millions of people were dead or displaced, and an important part was extremely poor because of the long period of the war. Industrial and agricultural infrastructures were also destroyed, and the economic system of several European countries was disintegrating. The Schuman Declaration encouraged the establishment of the European Coal and Steel Community (9 May 1950) and the founding Treaties of the European Union signed in Rome on 25 March 1957, by the 6 founding countries were signed the establishment of the European Economic Community (EEC) and the European Atomic Energy Community (Euratom). The decades from 1950s and 1960s had been periods of restructuring and growth characterized by high employment, but in the late 1960s there was a growing concern over whether there were jobs for everyone. In 1957 there were 70 million employed with only 2.6 million unemployed which meant an unemployment rate of just over 3.5%. The situation was not the same in all European countries. Italy for example, accounted for nearly two-thirds of the EEC's jobless with almost 1.7 million people out of work (European Commission, 2007).



The Treaty of Rome establishing the European Economic Community provided a considerable number of measures to eliminate social inequalities, by setting up the first of the European Structural Investment Funds (ESIFs), the European Social Fund (ESF) which has as its legal basis the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (art.162, 163, 164, 174, 175, 177 and 178). Some 65 years later, it remains the most important European tool for investing in people, with specific focus on improving employment and education opportunities, the situation of the most vulnerable people and at risk of poverty, on combating discrimination in the labour market, on enhancing skills and lifelong learning and reinforce the efficiency of public administration so that citizens receive better services across all of Europe. In 1962 the Common Agricultural policy (CAP) was introduced to secure food supplies and in 1975 the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) was created which highlighted in the launching of the European regional policy. The last of the funds called European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIFs)<sup>8</sup> is the European Fisheries Fund (EFF) which came into force in 2007. For the programming period 2014-2020 the EFF enlarged its activities on the maritime sector (European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF) supporting the implementation of the reformed Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) and the EU Integrated Maritime Policy.

The objectives of these Funds, the management and implementation rules are provided by Regulations issued through the ordinary legislative procedure, and they are directly implemented by the MS. Each Fund is supported by the respective public service and the ESIFs are financed and implemented under the shared management mode. Thus the European Commission (and the respective Directorate General) jointly manages the funding with the nominated National Authorities.

The Community Initiatives started as a continuation of the PETRA programme. During 1987-1993 the Commission adopted a five-year action programme for the vocational training of young people and their preparation for adult and working life (PETRA). To complement this action, on 1990 a new Community Initiative was established in support of transnational vocational training measures named EUROFORM. Member States had the possibility to promote transnational partnerships between public or private bodies aiming to integrate the European dimension in vocational training, to promote skills and advance adjustment to

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<sup>8</sup> The ESIFs consist of five funds: European Regional Development Fund (ERDF); European Social Fund (ESF); Cohesion Fund (CF); European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD); European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF). They are the five financial tools set up to implement the regional policy of the European Union aiming to reduce regional disparities in income, wealth, and opportunities.

technological changes. Other initiatives and programmes such as EUROTECNET, FORCE, LEDA, ERGO strengthened education, vocational training and contributed in a complementary way to the co-financed actions under the Structural Funds.

During the period 1990-1993 the total budget of the Structural Funds was estimated at 300 million ECU. At the same period, on 18 December 1990 the Commission decided to establish an initiative promoting equal opportunities for women (NOW) in the field of employment and vocational training within the framework of the third medium-term programme on equal opportunities (1991-1995). The planification, the management and the implementation mode of the Community Initiatives were the same as the Structural Funds. This type of European Initiatives continue to play an important role and are funded under the rules of the Structural Funds. Some of the flagship Community Initiatives are Equal, Leader, Urban. Interreg.

To meet the challenges of the new decade because of major structural changes in the world trade patterns due to globalization, the EU created a new fund the European Globalization Adjustment Fund (EGF) as of 2006 to support people losing their jobs. The European Globalization Adjustment Fund for Displaced Workers (EGF) is acting nowadays as a special EU instrument to express EU solidarity with European workers or the self-employed who were displaced due to restructuring, and to help them find new jobs by improving the skills and employability of this target group. On the same scope, during the programming period 2014- 2020, other funds were created to cover needs of specific target groups.

The European Aid Fund for the Most Deprived (FEAD) supports an open membership network for people aiding the most deprived in Europe (distribution of food, clothing - and other necessary items of individual use, e.g., shoes, soap and shampoo, guidance and support to people to get out of poverty). Established in 2016 the FEAD continues within the next programming period with a number of amendments made to this Regulation in response to the COVID-19 outbreak and growing needs.

Another important fund for the period 2014 – 2020 supporting national and EU initiatives to assist with the efficient management of migration flows is the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF). The AMIF seeks to develop a common Union approach to asylum, migration and integration. It merged three other existing funds the European Refugee Fund (ERF), the European Integration Fund (EIF) and the Return Fund (EF).

The Employment and Social Innovation (EaSI) programme is a financing instrument at EU level to promote a high level of quality and sustainable employment, guaranteeing adequate and decent social protection, combating social exclusion and poverty and improving working conditions. The EaSI is managed directly by the European Commission. It brings together three EU programmes managed separately between 2007 and 2013: PROGRESS, EURES and Progress Microfinance and for the period 2021 – 2027 it will become a strand under the European Social Fund Plus (ESF+).

As a result, the different interventions of EU financing in a shared management procedure could be organized as outlined in the following table:

### **Overview of EU funding for Cohesion, Growth, Innovation, and External Cooperation Programmes**

|   |   |
|---|---|
| European Structural Investment Funds (ESIFs)      | European Social Fund (ESF)<br>European Regional Development Fund (ERDF);<br>Cohesion Fund (CF)<br>European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD)<br>European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF)   |
| Community Initiatives to meet specific challenges | NOW, EQUAL (gender equality, mainstreamed actions for gender equality, equal opportunities for all)<br>LEADER (for regional/local development)<br>URBAN. URBACT (for sustainable urban development)<br>INTERREG, I, II, III (Interregional cooperation cooperation) |
| Other Funds for Cohesion and Growth               | European Globalization Adjustment Fund (EGF)<br>The European Aid Fund for the Most Deprived (FEAD)<br>The Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF)   |
| Competitive European Programmes <sup>9</sup>      | Erasmus+<br>Horizon 2020<br>Europe for Citizens Programme<br>Rights, Equality and Citizenship Programme<br>MEDIA<br>LIFE, and others  |

<sup>9</sup>These EU Programmes will be presented in the next chapter.

These fundings and grants are defined and coordinated after the Lisbon Treaty through a Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF)<sup>10</sup> and meeting the objectives of the commonly developed European strategy. For the period 2014 – 2020, the priorities and objectives of the different funds were corresponding to the EUROPE 2020 strategy for a Smart, Sustainable and Inclusive Growth in Europe. For the new programming period 2021-2027, the Multiannual Financial Framework and the Instrument Next Generation EU will support the recovery plan for Europe by structural investment funding, allocations per MS for other Initiatives, Funds and Competitive Programmes to meet the priorities of the European Pillar for Social Rights, the European Green Deal, Europe for the digital age, a stronger Europe in the World and promoting the European way of life and democracy<sup>11</sup>.

## 2. General description of EU funding for Growth and Social Cohesion

### 2.1. The ESIFs for cohesion and growth

The five main Funds (ESIFs- European Structural Investment Funds)<sup>12</sup> work together to support economic development across all EU countries, in line with the objectives of the Europe 2020 strategy<sup>13</sup> from 2010 to 2020 for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth. In order to deliver on this objective, five ambitious targets have been set, covering employment, research and development, climate change and energy sustainability, education, and the fight against poverty and social exclusion and these targets were negotiated by each MS and monitored by the European Semester<sup>14</sup>. The European Semester held in May of each year is the mechanism for integrated surveillance and coordination of economic and employment policies across the European Union. It is composed of the heads of MS along with the President of the European Council and the President of the European Commission. The High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy also takes part at the meetings. Based on the Annual Sustainable Growth Survey (ASGS), the National Reform Programmes (NRPs) and the Stability/Convergence Programme (NSP), the publication of streamlined country reports, the Commission proceed with a proposal to the Council to adopt Country-Specific Recommendations (CSRs). The CSRs address the key issues identified in the country reports, and where relevant the in-depth reviews, for which policy

<sup>10</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/info/strategy/eu-budget/long-term-eu-budget/2021-2027/documents\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/info/strategy/eu-budget/long-term-eu-budget/2021-2027/documents_en)

<sup>11</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/info/strategy/priorities-2019-2024\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/info/strategy/priorities-2019-2024_en)

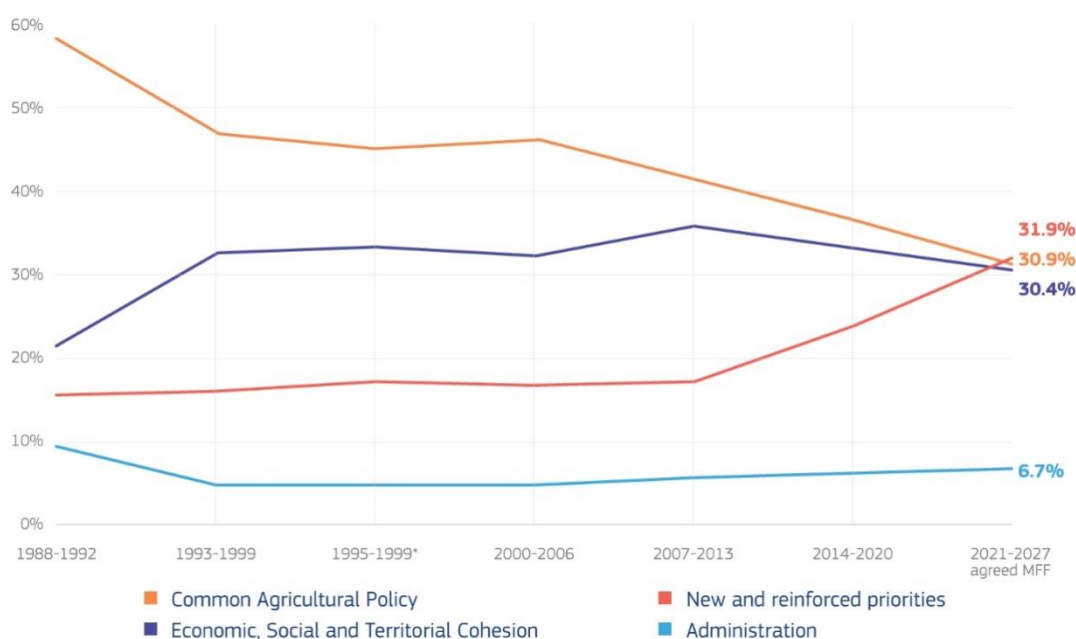
<sup>12</sup> European Social Fund (ESF), European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), Cohesion Fund (CF), European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) & European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF)

<sup>13</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/regional\\_policy/en/policy/what/glossary/e/europe-2020-strategy#:~:text=Europe%202020%20is%20the%20EU's,against%20poverty%20and%20social%20exclusion.](https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/en/policy/what/glossary/e/europe-2020-strategy#:~:text=Europe%202020%20is%20the%20EU's,against%20poverty%20and%20social%20exclusion.)

<sup>14</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/info/business-economy-euro/economic-and-fiscal-policy-coordination/eu-economic-governance-monitoring-prevention-correction/european-semester\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/info/business-economy-euro/economic-and-fiscal-policy-coordination/eu-economic-governance-monitoring-prevention-correction/european-semester_en)

action are required. Then the MS take into account these recommendations to prepare the national semester and propose the national budget which is agreed in December by the national parliaments.

**Figure 1. Share of the main policy areas in the Multiannual Financial Frameworks<sup>15</sup>**



For the new programming period 2021-2027, the Multiannual Financial Framework and the Recovery and Resilience Facility<sup>16</sup> known as NextGenerationEU will support the recovery plan for Europe by structural investment funding, allocations per MS for other Initiatives, Funds and Competitive Programmes to meet the priorities of the European Pillar for Social Rights, the European Green Deal, Europe for the digital age, a stronger Europe in the World and promoting the European way of life and democracy<sup>17</sup>.

<sup>15</sup>[https://ec.europa.eu/info/strategy/eu-budget/long-term-eu-budget/2021-2027/whats-new\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/info/strategy/eu-budget/long-term-eu-budget/2021-2027/whats-new_en)

<sup>16</sup> Regulation (EU) 2021/241 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 12 February 2021 establishing the Recovery and Resilience Facility

<sup>17</sup>[https://ec.europa.eu/info/strategy/priorities-2019-2024\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/info/strategy/priorities-2019-2024_en)

For the new programming period 2021-2027, the EU long-term budget, together with the NextGenerationEU recovery instrument, amounts to €2.018 trillion in current prices (the 2021-2027 multiannual financial framework, made up of €1.211 trillion in current prices and the Next generation EU of €806.9 billion). This unique agreed budget will contribute to face economic and social damage caused by the economic crisis and the coronavirus pandemic as of 2019 and will aid the transition towards a modern and more sustainable Europe.

### **3. Priorities per Funding source for the programming period 2021-2027. Regulations and rules of implementation**

#### **a. The ESIFs**

The ESF, coming into force 1 July 2021, the ESF+ Regulation<sup>18</sup> will support the implementation of the European Pillar of Social Rights<sup>19</sup>, jointly proclaimed by the Council, the European Parliament and the Commission as the EU's target to respond to social challenges in Europe by supporting actions on employment, education & skills and social inclusion. Actions from recovering from the current pandemic to meeting the EU's targets for employment, social inclusion, education and climate are also funding priorities. With a budget of over €99 billion (current prices) for the 2021-2027 period, the ESF+<sup>20</sup> and having integrated the former European Social Fund (ESF), the Youth Employment Initiative (YEI), the Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived (FEAD) and the EU Programme for Employment and Social Innovation (EaSI), will invest in the following priority areas:

- Supporting young people who have been particularly affected by the COVID-19 crisis - ESF+ resources will help these young people find a qualification, a good quality job, and improve their education and training
- Helping children in need by allocating ESF+ resources to targeted actions to combat child poverty, and supporting the most vulnerable in society suffering from job losses and income reductions, including providing food and basic material assistance to the most deprived
- Reskilling and upskilling people for the transition to a green and digital economy.
- Capacity building for social partners and civil society organisations.
- Transnational cooperation for promoting social innovation across the EU.

<sup>18</sup><https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=OJ:L:2021:231:FULL&from=cEN>

<sup>19</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/info/strategy/priorities-2019-2024/economy-works-people/jobs-growth-and-investment/european-pillar-social-rights/european-pillar-social-rights-20-principles\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/info/strategy/priorities-2019-2024/economy-works-people/jobs-growth-and-investment/european-pillar-social-rights/european-pillar-social-rights-20-principles_en)

<sup>20</sup> Regulation (EU) 2021/1056 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 June 2021 establishing the Just Transition Fund



- Direct support to social innovation through the Employment and Social Innovation (EaSI) strand.

The implementation of the European Pillar of Social Rights with 20 principles, organized in three chapters (Chapter I: Equal opportunities and access to the labour market, Chapter II: Fair working conditions, Chapter III: Social protection and Inclusion) are the strategic guidelines for a strong social Europe, fair, inclusive, and with opportunities for all. The Commission has already presented several actions based on each principle of the Pillar, with additional actions planned to further strengthen social rights in the EU.

## **b. The Cohesion Policy in Europe**

**The European Regional Development Fund (ERDF)**, the Cohesion Fund (CF), the ESF+ together with and the Just Transition Fund (JTF), support the Cohesion Policy in Europe. The 2021-2027 EU funds allocated to Cohesion Policy amount to EUR 392 billion and with the national co-financing, about half a trillion euro are available to finance programmes in the EU regions and countries. The ERDF and ESF+ are allocated in three categories of regions (less developed, more developed, in transition). Some countries benefit from the Cohesion Fund, some regions with specific needs receive dedicated funding (outermost regions and sparsely populated), and all countries benefit from the Just Transition Fund. The cohesion policy supports five policy objectives:

1. a more competitive and smarter Europe
2. a greener, low-carbon transitioning towards a net zero carbon economy
3. a more connected Europe by enhancing mobility
4. a more social and inclusive Europe
5. Europe closer to citizens by fostering the sustainable and integrated development of all types of territories

The ERDF supports more the first two objectives (green and digital transition) and contributes to the other objectives. The priority of the ERDF, together with the Cohesion Fund is to contribute to strengthening economic, social and territorial cohesion in the European Union and to correct imbalances between countries and regions. From the EUR 392 billion budget, direct funding of national and regional jobs and growth projects amounts to another EUR 369 billion. This funding is allocated to the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), the European Social Fund+ (ESF+), the Cohesion fund and the Just Transition Fund. An amount of EUR 11.3 billion was transferred to the Connecting Europe Facility and EUR 2.5 billion will be used for financial instruments and technical assistance to support programmes.

The separate ERDF and ESF+ initial allocations by fund, by category of region, per country, for the year 2021, are presented in the Table:

| Goal | Fund      | Category of region / strand | Country / EU | Year | EU Allocation in EUR (current prices) | EU allocation in M EUR (current prices) | Shared manag. mode | Budget source |
|------|-----------|-----------------------------|--------------|------|---------------------------------------|---|--------------------|---------------|
| IJG  | ERDF/ESF+ | more developed              | Belgium      | 2021 | 136,138,011                           | 136.1                                   | Shared manag.      | MFF           |
| IJG  | ERDF/ESF+ | more developed              | Czechia      | 2021 | 10,971,738                            | 11                                      | Shared manag.      | MFF           |
| IJG  | ERDF/ESF+ | more developed              | Denmark      | 2021 | 24,008,301                            | 24                                      | Shared manag.      | MFF           |
| IJG  | ERDF/ESF+ | more developed              | Germany      | 2021 | 1,073,168,382                         | 1,073.2                                 | Shared manag.      | MFF           |
| IJG  | ERDF/ESF+ | more developed              | Ireland      | 2021 | 87,724,857                            | 87.7                                    | Shared manag.      | MFF           |
| IJG  | ERDF/ESF+ | more developed              | Spain        | 2021 | 591,538,423                           | 591.5                                   | Shared manag.      | MFF           |
| IJG  | ERDF/ESF+ | more developed              | France       | 2021 | 304,137,597                           | 304.1                                   | Shared manag.      | MFF           |
| IJG  | ERDF/ESF+ | more developed              | Italy        | 2021 | 1,282,274,194                         | 1,282.3                                 | Shared manag.      | MFF           |
| IJG  | ERDF/ESF+ | more developed              | Lithuania    | 2021 | 5,752,956                             | 5.8                                     | Shared manag.      | MFF           |
| IJG  | ERDF/ESF+ | more developed              | Luxembourg   | 2021 | 3,989,430                             | 4                                       | Shared manag.      | MFF           |
| IJG  | ERDF/ESF+ | more developed              | Hungary      | 2021 | 13,330,693                            | 13.3                                    | Shared manag.      | MFF           |
| IJG  | ERDF/ESF+ | more developed              | Netherlands  | 2021 | 98,249,847                            | 98.2                                    | Shared manag.      | MFF           |
| IJG  | ERDF/ESF+ | more developed              | Austria      | 2021 | 118,980,882                           | 119                                     | Shared manag.      | MFF           |

Funding under ERDF and ESF+ is provided according to whether the EU's 240 designated regions are classified as less developed, in transition or more developed under the NUTS 2 system.

**The Cohesion Fund**, created by the Regulation (EU) 2021/1058 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 June 2021 on the European Regional Development Fund and on the Cohesion Fund, which is common for the ERDF, supports policy objectives 2 and 3 to Member States with a gross national income (GNI) per capita below 90% EU-27 average to strengthen the economic, social and territorial cohesion of the EU. For the 2021-2027 period, the Cohesion Fund concerns Bulgaria, Czechia, Estonia, Greece, Croatia, Cyprus, Latvia, Lithuania, Hungary, Malta, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia and 37% of the



overall financial allocation of the Cohesion Fund is expected to contribute to climate objectives.

**The Just Transition Fund (JTF)** created by the Regulation (EU) 2021/1056 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 June 2021 establishing the Just Transition Fund, is a new instrument and it supports actions for implementation of the European Green Deal ([European Green Deal](#)) aiming at achieving the EU climate-neutrality by 2050. Actions supported focusses on productive investments in small and medium-sized enterprises, research and innovation activities, environmental rehabilitation, clean energy, up- and reskilling of workers, job-search assistance and active inclusion of jobseekers, transformation of existing carbon-intensive installations when these investments lead to substantial emission cuts and job protection. The MS should prepare strategic Territorial Just Transition Plans (TJTP) - identifying the eligible territories that are expected to be the most negatively impacted by the climate transition. The TJTP must be prepared together with the relevant internal partners, in dialogue with the Commission, and by ensuring they are consistent with the smart specialisation strategies and the National Energy and Climate Plans.

The **European Territorial Cooperation Regulation**, issued by Regulation (EU) 2021/1059 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 June 2021 on specific provisions for the European territorial cooperation goal (Interreg) supported by the European Regional Development Fund and external financing instruments. This Regulation provides the continuation of the Interreg Programme for the new programming period with a view to strengthening cooperation between Member States and their regions inside the Union and between Member States, their regions and third countries, partner countries, other territories or overseas countries and territories (OCTs), or regional integration and cooperation organisations. It finances<sup>21</sup> cross-border cooperation, transnational cooperation over larger transnational territories, interregional cooperation to reinforce the effectiveness of cohesion policy (exchange of experiences, innovative approaches and capacity to support Interreg, URBACT AND INTERACT best practices, analysis of development trends in relation to the aims of territorial cohesion (the 'ESPON programme') and other actions)

A thematic concentration rule is designated in the Regulations and the MS can make choices in their Partnership agreements at national level when negotiating with the respective Directorate Generals of each fund. For sustainable urban

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<sup>21</sup>Interreg Programme 2021-2027

<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A32021R1059>

development at least 8% of the ERDF resources should be invested for jobs and growth goal.

The last two of the Structural Funds, the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) finances the EU's contribution to rural development programmes (RDPs) and growth on this sector and the European Maritime, Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund (EMFAF) supports the EU common fisheries policy (CFP), the EU maritime policy and the EU agenda for international ocean governance.

### **c. The other Funds**

**The European Globalisation Adjustment Fund (EGF)**, issued by the Regulation (EU) 2021/691 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 28 April 2021 on the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund for Displaced Workers (EGF) and repealing Regulation (EU) No 1309/2013, supports<sup>22</sup> a flexible instrument to support workers who lose their jobs due to large scale restructuring events and to help them to find other jobs as quickly as possible. The Union should continue to provide specific, one-off support to facilitate the reintegration into decent and sustainable employment of displaced workers in areas, sectors, territories, or labour markets suffering a shock of serious economic disruption as noted in the new regulation. The mobilisation of the EGF should be based only on the significant impact of a restructuring event. The European Monitoring Centre on Change, based in the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions in Dublin, assists the Commission and the MS with qualitative and quantitative analyses on globalisation, technological and environmental changes, restructuring and the use of the EGF.

**The Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived (FEAD)**, for the period 2014-2020, is implemented by designated National Authority/ies responsible to distribute aid through cooperating organizations, local authorities or usually non-governmental organizations (NGOs). EU countries had the choice to give assistance such as food or basic material assistance, or a combination of both. They could also buy food and other items and distribute them to partner organizations, or to finance organizations to make their own purchases of the items. Organizations could also reach out to other contractors locally to distribute easily the aid. During the current programming period it was inserted in ESF+.

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<sup>22</sup>EGF 2021-2027 <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32021R0691&from=EN>

**The European Union Solidarity Fund (EUSF)** was set up to respond to major natural disasters and express European solidarity to disaster-stricken regions within Europe. The Fund was created as a response to physical disasters covering a range of different catastrophic events including floods, forest fires, earthquakes and for interventions for health emergencies. The EUSF was set up under Council Regulation (EC) 2012/2002 in response to the disastrous flooding that affected central Europe in the summer of 2002. Proposals are submitted by countries for grants to cover restoration works, temporary accommodation of affected population, protection of cultural heritage, rapid assistance and medical assistance, health emergency when a disaster occurs. The 2020 reform of the EUSF, published by the amending Regulation (EU) 2020/461<sup>23</sup> of the European Parliament and of the Council entered into force on 30 March 2020, focus on intervention in response to the COVID-19 crisis. The scope of the fund was extended to cover public health emergencies and the advanced payments increased from the EU to the MS.

**The Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF)**<sup>24</sup> established by (EU) 2021/1147 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 7 July 2021, with a total of EUR 9.9 billion for the new programming period 2021-2027, gives specific attention to emergency assistance and the relocation mechanism during the new programming period. It also aims to further boost national capacities and improve procedures for migration management, enhance solidarity and responsibility shared between Member States. It finances actions to ensure a common set of rules for legal migration and returns, provide support and services for vulnerable groups, aid for resettlement, humanitarian admission and transfers of applicants and beneficiaries of international protection, support measures to promote legal migration, and integrations measure tailored to the needs of third-country nationals and early integration programmes focusing on education, language, and other training. It also finances infrastructures for the reception society, assistance for voluntary returns and reintegration and actions for cooperation with third countries on asylum and legal migration.

Flexibility rules are adopted by the regulations of different funds to face unpredictable situations such as the pandemic or physical disasters. For the AMIF a Thematic Facility is provided and with this instrument, funds can be allocated to

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<sup>23</sup>EUSF: Regulation (EU) 2020/461 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 March 2020 amending Council Regulation (EC) No 2012/2002 in order to provide financial assistance to Member States and to countries negotiating their accession to the Union that are seriously affected by a major public health emergency, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex:32020R0461>

<sup>24</sup>Regulation (EU) 2021/1147 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 7 July 2021 establishing the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund in <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A32021R1147>

emerging or unforeseen needs and steered towards the changing EU priorities and evolving challenges.

### 1.3: Implementation at Member States level

#### **Structural Investments Funds**

EU Member States are responsible for the implementation of the Structural Funds and the Community Initiatives after the agreement of the National Strategic Reference Framework (NSRF). The NSRF constitutes the development programme of a MS which succeeded the 3rd CSF (Community Support Framework) applied in the 2000-2006 period. The CSF and nowadays the NSRF is agreed by the EU, and it is implemented through Sectoral Operational Programmes (OPs), Regional OPs and European Territorial Cooperation Programmes cofinanced by the Cohesion Funds (ESF, ERDF and Cohesion Fund). A thematic concentration rule is designated in the Regulations and the MS can make choices in their Partnership agreements as mentioned before and for sustainable urban development at least 8% of the ERDF resources should be invested for jobs and growth goal.

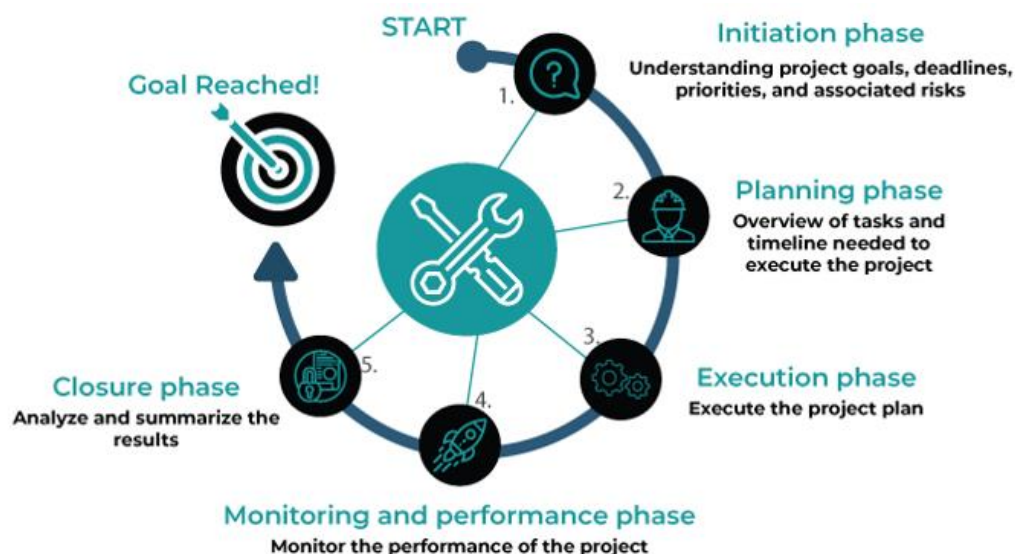
The European Commission in accordance with the MS, designates national or regional Managing Authorities according to the shared management principle. This means that the European Commission only supervises the implementation of funds, but the Member State takes responsibility for the management. For example, in the case of the European Structural and Investment Funds, the calls for proposals are published by the national or regional managing authorities on the basis of operational programmes, which outline the investment strategy of each fund or priority. In a specific link of the European Commission side, dedicated on regional policy, everyone can find the Managing Authority per Structural fund and per country for the previous and the current programming period by visiting: [https://ec.europa.eu/regional\\_policy/en/atlas/managing-authorities/](https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/en/atlas/managing-authorities/)).

As regards the other funds (e.g., EGF, EUSF, AMIF) specific rules per fund are provided in the Regulation. The European Managing Service is appointed in the Regulation and the MS have to designate in their NSRF the respective Agencies or Managing Authorities. For example, the AMIF is implemented under shared, direct or indirect management, the largest share is allocated to the national programmes

under the Thematic Facility (resettlement and humanitarian admission, transfers of beneficiaries of/applicants for international protection) and direct EU management of actions (Emergency Assistance, support for local and regional authorities in integration) with calls for proposals and indirect management for Union Actions and Emergency Assistance implemented through international organizations. For the Thematic Facility, Work Programmes defining the priorities and objectives are approved by the European Commission.

### Implementation at national level: project life cycle management

The implementation of the Ops or other EU fundings and grants are distributed to beneficiaries by call for proposals and selection of applications for funding for a certain period. The calls can be published more than once during the programming period. The implementation of the selected actions by the beneficiaries follows the “Project life cycle Management” containing the initiation phase, the project design or planning, the execution phase (who does what, when and how), monitoring, control and dissemination of results and the closure phase. This approach designed for every project is applied for all EU programmes and funds. The graph below demonstrates the different phases of implementation:



Source: Invensis, Brown, L.(2021) in <https://www.invensislearning.com/blog/5-phases-project-management-lifecycle/>

### 1.4: Monitoring, evaluation, and dissemination of results at national and European level

The measures for monitoring, evaluation, and dissemination of results of every funding (shared, direct, indirect) is provided in the approved Regulation of each of



the ESIFs or the other Funds and Initiatives. For the ESIFs, Monitoring Committees are appointed to check the use of each fund, chaired by the relevant Managing Authority of each Operational Programme (OP) and comprise regional, economic and social partners. The main task of the Monitoring Committee is to assess the effectiveness and quality of each OP, approve financing criteria, follow up the specific targets, examine the results of implementation, propose revisions and changes related to the financial management. For the other Funds the appointed national services are responsible for the monitoring of the implemented actions.

Regarding the evaluation, the Regulation provides clear division of tasks between the Member States and the Commission. MS are expected to finalize by end June 2029 an evaluation for each programme, to assess its impact and the Commission will conduct a mid-term evaluation by the end of 2024 and a retrospective evaluation by the end of 2031.

Regarding the EU control system for the new programming period only one audit authority is provided in order to avoid duplications of controls. Each Management Authority is responsible for the accounting function and should submit expenses via SFC portal<sup>25</sup> to the Commission.

Communication and dissemination of results is a very important aspect of the implementation procedure. Each OP or Programme includes a communication approach with objectives, target audiences, channels, budget, and indicators. The communication strategy and appointed communication officers operating during 2014-2020 will continue functioning during the new programming period 2021-2027, including the communication networks.

## 1.5: Summary

The Treaty of Rome establishing the European Economic Community provided a considerable number of measures to eliminate social inequalities, by setting up the first of the European Structural Investment Funds and the European Social Fund. Some 65 years later, it remains the most important European tool for investing in people, with specific focus on improving employment and education opportunities, the situation of the most vulnerable people and at risk of poverty, on combating discrimination in the labour market, on enhancing skills and lifelong learning and reinforce the efficiency of public administration so that citizens receive better services across all Europe.

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<sup>25</sup> <https://ec.europa.eu/sfc/en>

The ESIFs, the Community Initiatives and the specific Funds adopted together with the Competitive Programmes, were and continue to be, important tools that allow the European Union to be at the heart of developments and to cope effectively with the challenges posed by an international environment characterized by uncertainty, complexity and ambiguity.

In the context of the COVID-19 crisis, the Recovery and Resilience Facility known with the logo NextGenerationEU, is the tool adopted to face the pandemic crisis and together with all coordinated funds will transform the EU Member States economies. It will create opportunities and jobs for all inside Europe and it is an example for more cohesion and sustainable growth in Europe for all its citizens

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## CHAPTER 4.

### EU COMPETITIVE PROGRAMMES AND OTHER INTERNATIONAL FUNDS

*SAVVATOU TSOLAKIDOU*

#### Aim

The Competitive Programs are financial tools that contribute to the implementation of the key European Union (EU) policies. The aim of this chapter is to provide an overview of EU Competitive Programmes<sup>26</sup> which are financed directly by the European Union's budget and how they contribute to the support of vulnerable groups. As a rule, these programmes are transnational, which means that the participation of partners, more than one from local, national, European and from third pre ascension countries, <sup>27</sup> is required for the submission and implementation of a proposal. Competitive proposals are submitted for approval directly to the European Commission, without the intervention of the Institutions of the member state or in some cases to the commonly appointed management agencies at national level for each of the Programme. The proposals submitted compete with proposals from all member states at the EU level and for specific strands at national level according to the rules of each Programme. A literature review demonstrates that many competitive programmes were created and funded from the different general directions of the European Union as a response to specific needs of or policies developments and were abolished or incorporated into new ones. Vulnerability it isn't tackled as the main priority of the different Competitive Programmes. Vulnerability is not the primary goal and objective of competing programs but is inherent in many other goals that concern different population groups. The main goal is the integration, social cohesion, and wellbeing of all European citizens.

#### Expected Learning Outcomes

The students will:

1. Recognize the existing EU Competitive Programmes during the programming period 2021-2027 and the funds of International Organisations to support vulnerable groups and protect the human rights
2. Recognize which are the objectives and the key actions of selected EU

<sup>26</sup> <https://www.fundingprogrammesportal.gov.cy/en/program-major-category/eu-competitive-programmes/>

<sup>27</sup> Albania, Montenegro, north Macedonia, Serbia, Turkey

## Competitive Programmes

3. Perceive which funding to use according to the target group and the specific interest of the Organization
4. Learn with what procedures each program is implemented

## Keywords

Competitive Programmes, International Funds, Cofounded Programmes, dissemination, evaluation, partnership, Erasmus+, Horizon Europe, Creative Europe, Citizens, Equality, Rights and Values (CERV).

## 1: Introduction

A literature review on financed Competitive Programmes demonstrates that many of them were created and funded from different general directions of the European Union as a response to specific needs of or policies developments and were abolished or incorporated into new ones. Vulnerability it isn't tackled as the main priority of the different Competitive Programmes. Vulnerability is not the primary goal and objective of competing programs but is inherent in many other goals that concern different population groups. The main goal is the integration, social cohesion, and wellbeing of all European citizens.

Nowadays and for the programming period 2021-2027, forty-three (43) Competitives Programmes are listed in a specific **“Funding Programmes Portal”** created by the Directorate General for “European Programmes, Coordination and Development (DG EPCD)”. The Portal acts as a central point (one stop shop) that provides information on all types of funding and in all thematic areas. These programmes plays a key role to empower and increase the European and national policies in a variety of different policy fields and contribute to the understanding of the “Acquis Communautaire” in the fields of democracy, fundamental rights and freedoms, education, research, youth, vulnerable groups, culture, etc., fields that are recognized as the pre-eminent judicial pillar of any future architecture.

## 2: Definition of Competitive Programmes vs Cofounded Programmes from EU Structural and Investment Funds (ESIFs)

The EU's competitive programs are horizontal financial tools set to promote European policies. The Competitive Programmes are funded directly by the EU budget with the scope to implement EU policies, with no specific allocations to Member States. The European Commission issues call for tenders and invites

possible beneficiaries (organizations, partnerships, persons) for submission of proposals two or three times per year and the beneficiaries submit their proposals for approval directly to the Commission, without the intervention by the Member State.

The Co-financed Programmes are funded by EU funds pre-allocated to Member States as well as national resources. These co-financed programmes are implemented through national programming documents formulated on the basis of both the priorities of EU policies as well as the corresponding development needs, and priorities identified at national level. The cofounded programmes are cofinanced by using funds of the Structural Investment Funds according to the Regulations delivered by each programming period of seven years.

Under the Competitive Programs, the calls for proposals are issued and managed by the competent Services of the European Commission or in specific cases, some of the European Programme strands can be managed by the national faucal point, or the nominated National Agency of each of the programme. Potential beneficiaries / eligible entities submit their proposals for approval directly to the Commission. These proposals are evaluated on a competitive basis with proposals from all the Member States and the best ones are selected for funding. It is often necessary for proposals to be transnational i.e. to be prepared and submitted jointly by partners from more than one Member States, in order to ensure the European added value from the implementation of the project/ investment.

In the case of the Co-financed Programmes of Structural Funds<sup>28</sup>, the Programmes are managed by the competent authorities by implementing the programmes according to the EU Regulations and the Common Management regulation of each programming period. The European Commission has the right to scrutiny the National strategic Framework co financed by the structural funds and the respective Operational programs per policy area. The management of the co-financed programmes is held by the Member State via the appointment of Management Authorities for each Operational Programme (O.P). The eligibility rules follow the national legislation, and the implementation, dissemination and evaluations activities are described in each Operational Programme.

The EU, to help stakeholders, sets for most programs one national contact point, which it offers guidance on the actions covered for funding from the program, informs about the open and expected invitations, and assist in finding partners and in completing the application. For the effective utilization of European programs,

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<sup>28</sup> Structural Funds: European social fund (ESF), European Regional and Development Fund (ERDF), Cohesion Fund (CF), European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD); European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF).

was created from DG EPCD<sup>29</sup> the Information Portal, which offers timely information, guidance, and networking.

### **3: Different types of programmes: at EU level, and at National level**

Some of the 43 Indicative examples of Competitive Programmes presented in the Funding Programmes Portal of DG EPCD are the following:

1. Citizens, Equality, Rights and Values (CERV) (2021-2027)
2. COST – European Cooperation in Science and Technology
3. Creative Europe (CREA)
4. Digital Europe Programme
5. Erasmus+ Programme
6. EU Anti-Fraud Programme
7. EU4 Health Programme 2021-2027
8. European Defence Fund (EDF)
9. Horizon Europe (2021-2027)
10. Innovation Fund (2021-2027)
11. Internal Security Fund (2021-2027)
12. Interregional Innovation Investments Instrument (I3)
13. Justice Programme
14. LIFE: ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE ACTION
15. Single Market Programme (SMP) (2021-2027)
16. Union Civil Protection Mechanism

The above programmes are not implemented with the same procedures. Some of the pillars of each of them could be implemented by a competitive selection of granted projects at EU level and other pillars at national level via the National managing agency of each Programme.

The content of each funding program depends on the specifications of the call for projects which can take place at European or National level and on the specific focus on the priorities and the objective to which the applicant wishes to focus for funding. His proposal should be based on selected pillars of the EU competitive Programme according to the goals and experience of his/her organization and the different types of activities related with specific and eligible target groups.

A short presentation of some of the above Competitive Programmes such as

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<sup>29</sup> Directorate General for European Programmes, Coordination and Development (DG EPCD)

Erasmus+, Horizon Europe, Media, and CERV will follow. These programmes are implemented for many years and provide added value in many fields of EU's policy and consequently at national level as the implementation is in most of the case developed by a European partnership.

### 3.1. ERASMUS+

Education was formally recognized as an area of EU competency in the Member States as of 1992 through the Maastricht Treaty. The Treaty of Lisbon did not change the provisions on the role of the EU in education and training. Although higher education was outside European laws and regulations until 1992, the access to it was not according to the European Court of Justice's ruling in the Gravier judgement in 1985, which paved the way to open the Treaty of Rome (EEC Treaty). The Article 50 of the Treaty, focused on the young workers Exchange programmes (mobility) of young workers, of pupils of vocational training schools. The first Erasmus programme in higher education adopted in 1987, continues to assume a central role within the overarching architecture of the Erasmus+ flagship EU programme investing in education, training, youth and sports, combining previously separate sectoral and cross-cutting policies in the areas of higher education, school education, vocational education and training, adult learning, youth and sport.

Erasmus+ has always been a very popular and extremely competitive programme. It has become a trademark for increased intra-European but also international mobility. It improved the level of education and training of European citizens and developed a sense of belonging to the EU, offering tangible action for cooperation and mobility. Reinforced Erasmus+ cooperation made the programme more inclusive. It established automatic mutual recognition of degrees and learning periods across Member States. The programme aligned skills developments in education and training with the needs of the labour market, boosted the innovation capacity of education, making education widely accessible and more inclusive. The wider geographical outreach of Erasmus+, increased the participation of free movement and education exchange between European countries and the world, impacting on education content at international level with EU standards and eligibility criteria.

Directorate-General for Education and Culture (DG EAC) is responsible for the education and culture policy of the European Union. The DG is responsible for a series of programmes that contribute to the preservation of European values and prosperity and the participation of citizens in European integration. DG EAC with the contribution of the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA), and a series of National Agencies in Programme countries, and a series

of National Offices in some Partner countries manage the entire Programme.

For the new programming period 2021-2027 with a total budget of € 2,849,010,543. Erasmus+ strengthens its efforts to increase the opportunities offered to more participants and to a wider range of organisations, focusing on its qualitative impact and contributing to more inclusive and cohesive, greener and digitally fit societies. It has integrated all older programmes for education & lifelong learning (Youth Exchanges Programmes, Erasmus, Comenius, Leonardo, Jean Monnet, Grundvig, Youth in Action) and has incorporated older programmes on education and lifelong learning. The general objective of the new Programme is to support under a multicultural and digital environment the educational, professional and personal development of people in education, training, youth and sport, in order to contribute sustainable growth, quality jobs, social cohesion, driving innovation, as well as to strengthen European identity. Furthermore, it promotes learning mobility, active participation and cooperation, inclusion and equity, excellence, creativity, and innovation at the level of organisations and policies in the field of education and training of individuals groups, of sport staff and among young people. It also offers mobility and cooperation opportunities in higher education, vocational education and training, school education (including early childhood education and care), adult education, youth and sport.

There are four overarching priorities under the Erasmus+ implementation in 2021: (1) Inclusion and Diversity, (2) Environment and fight against climate change, (3) Digital Transformation and (4) Participation in democratic life. To achieve its objectives, the Erasmus+ Programme implements the following Actions:

### **Key Action 1: Learning Mobility of Individuals**

These Actions are expected to bring positive and long-lasting effects on the participants and participating organisations involved, as well as on the policy systems in which such activities are framed. Learning mobility opportunities aim to encourage the mobility of students, staff, trainees, apprentices' youth workers and young people. The role of the organisations in this process is to organize these opportunities for individuals. The benefits for the organisations include an increased capacity to operate at an international level, improved management skills, access to more funding opportunities and projects, increased ability to prepare, manage, and follow-up projects, a more attractive portfolio of opportunities for students and staff at participating organisations, the opportunity to develop innovative projects with partners from around the world. Vulnerable groups, disabled people, unemployed and long-term unemployed people, youth workers are a priority on the selection procedure of projects.

In the long run, the combined effect of the several thousands of projects supported



under this Key Action is expected to have an impact on the systems of education, training and youth in the participating countries, thus stimulating policy reforms and attracting new resources for mobility opportunities in Europe and beyond. Under Key Action 1 the Mobility projects are supported depending on the profile of participants involved as presented in the table below.

**Table 1: Education field and activities under Key Action 1\_ Learning Mobility**

| <b>Fields</b>                    | <b>Target group</b>  | <b>Activities and learning outputs</b>   |
|----------------------------------|--|--|
| Education and Training           | Higher education students and staff, VET learners and staff, School pupils and staff, adult education learners and staff | Mobility projects<br>Transnational Mobility projects   |
| In the field of Youth            | Young people and youth workers   | Mobility projects that give non-formal and informal learning opportunities   |
| Non-formal and informal learning | Young people   | Acquisition of competencies that contribute to the personal and socio-educational development of youth.  |
| Discover EU Inclusion Action     | Organisations and informal groups of young people  | Mobility to one to five young people, 18 years old, with fewer opportunities from the same country gather for a short period to travel through Europe. |

The development of skills, the new organisational practices, the learning activities are meant to have a significantly positive impact on young people as well as on the organisations involved. And with the new initiative **DiscoverEU Inclusion Action** acting for the first time from 2021 promote Organisations and informal groups of

young people the chance to learn about Europe, discover Europe's opportunities on education and intercultural dialogue between them and foster their sense of belonging to the EU.

**Key Action 2: Cooperation among organisations and institutions**, enhance Strategic Partnerships in the field of education, training and youth are collaborative projects allowing organisations to improve provision, tackle common issues and share innovative practice. One organization of the partnership lead the project and manage the activities and funding on behalf of the partnership. Different sizes of partnership are possible so that smaller organisations can get involved. Vulnerability is a priority and a lot of projects tackle themes that affects vulnerable groups.

**Table 2. Actions supported by Key Action 2: Cooperation among organisations and institutions**

| ACTIONS                      | ACTIVITIES AND OUTPUTS   |
|------------------------------|--|
| PARTNERSHIPS FOR COOPERATION | Partnerships Cooperation to increase the quality, to develop and reinforce networks of partners working in different subjects according to their expertise, boosting internationalisation of their activities and through exchanging or developing new practices and methods as well as sharing and confronting ideas. Small-scale Partnerships are designed to widen access to the programme to small-scale actors and individuals in the fields of school education, adult education, vocational education and training, youth, and sport. |
| PARTNERSHIPS FOR EXCELLENCE  | Centres for Vocational Excellence, enables VET institutions to rapidly adapt skills provision to evolving economic and social needs, including the digital and green transitions. They provide opportunities for initial training, continuing up-skilling and reskilling of adults in the context of the green and digital transitions. Teachers Academy, offer the opportunity to create European partnerships of teacher education and training providers (multilingualism, language awareness, cultural diversity).                       |
| THE ERASMUS MUNDUS           | Lot 1: Erasmus Mundus Joint Masters (EMJM), aims to enhance the attractiveness and excellence of European  |



|  |   |
|--|---|
| ACTIONS  | <p>higher education</p> <p>Lot 2: Erasmus Mundus Design Measures (EMDM) to encourage the development of new, innovative, high-level integrated transnational study programmes at Master level.</p>  |
| PARTNERSHIPS FOR INNOVATION                        | <p>Alliances for Innovation, sectoral or cross-sectoral activities, which should be adaptable to future knowledge developments across the EU (digital skills, transition to a circular and greener economy, education and training curricula to meet emerging professional needs for green skills and sustainable development.</p> <p>Forward-looking projects, aim to identify, develop, test and/or assess innovative policy approaches that have the potential of becoming mainstream, thus improving education and training systems. It also supports quality, modernisation and responsiveness of higher education in third countries for socio-economic recovery, growth and prosperity and reacting to recent trends, in particular economic globalisation but also the recent decline in human development, fragility, and rising social, economic and environmental inequalities exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic.</p> |
| CAPACITY BUILDING IN THE FIELD OF VET (EU level)   | <p>International cooperation projects based on multilateral partnerships between organisations active in the field of Vocational Education and Training (VET) to support accessibility, and responsiveness of VET institutions and systems in third countries.</p>  |
| CAPACITY BUILDING IN THE FIELD OF SPORT (EU level) | <p>International cooperation projects based on multilateral partnerships between organisations active in the field of sport in Programme and Third countries to support sport activities and policies as a vehicle to promote values as well as an educational tool to promote the personal and social development of individuals and build more cohesive communities.</p>  |
| CAPACITY BUILDING PROJECTS IN THE FIELD OF YOUTH   | <p>International cooperation projects based on multilateral partnerships between organisations active in the field of youth in Programme and third countries not associated to the Programme. They aim to support international cooperation and policy dialogue in the field of youth and</p>   |

|   |  |
|---|--|
| (EU level)                                      | non-formal learning, as a driver of sustainable socio-economic development and well-being of youth organisations and young people.   |
| NOT-FOR-PROFIT EUROPEAN SPORT EVENTS (EU level) | This Action aims to support the organisation of sport events with a European dimension in different fields such as: Volunteering in sport, social inclusion through sport, fight against discrimination in sport, including gender equality, Encouraging the participation in sport and physical activity for a Healthy Lifestyle, implementation of the European Weeks of Sport, etc. |

Depending on the field addressed and the type of applicant, these actions are managed either by the National Agencies or by the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA).

**Key action 3: Support to policy development and cooperation**, supports the European Youth Together action, (targeting both youth organisations at grass root level and larger organisations), supporting partnerships across borders. It also promotes the implementation of the EU policy agenda on education, training, youth and sport, including sectoral agendas for higher education, vocational education and training, schools and adult learning, and in particular by facilitating the governance and functioning of the Open Methods of Coordination. Conferences and other events in all level of education and cooperation with international organisations with highly recognised expertise and analytical capacity (such as the OECD and the Council of Europe), to strengthen the impact and added value of policies in the fields of education, training, youth and sport are also financed.

**Key Action 4: Jean Monnet Actions**, aim at promoting excellence in teaching and research in the field of European Union studies worldwide. It improves the dialogue between the academic world and policymakers with key activities that include courses, research, conferences, networking activities, and publications in the field of EU studies. The applications are submitted directly to the European Commission.

**Key Action 5: Sport Actions**, focusses to grassroots sport and actions are implemented as Collaborative Partnerships, Small Collaborative Partnerships and Not-for-profit European sport events. As from 2017, the European Week of Sport will take place from 23 to 30 September. Apart from the activities organised by the European Commission, Member States will organize national activities and coordinate local ones.

### 3.2. HORIZON EUROPE

Horizon Europe is the EU's key funding programme for research and innovation with a budget of €95.5 billion. It tackles climate change, helps to achieve the UN's Sustainable Development Goals and boosts the EU's competitiveness and growth. The programme facilitates collaboration and strengthens the impact of research and innovation in developing, supporting and implementing EU policies while tackling global challenges. It supports creating and better dispersing of excellent knowledge and technologies. It creates jobs, fully engages the EU's talent pool, boosts economic growth, promotes industrial competitiveness and optimises investment impact within a strengthened European Research Area.

Legal entities from the EU and associated countries can participate.



**PILLAR 1: Excellent Science Pillar**, aims to increase the EU's global scientific competitiveness. It supports frontier research projects, funds fellowships for experienced researchers, doctoral training networks and exchanges through Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions and invests in world-class research infrastructures.

**PILLAR 2: Global Challenges and European Industrial Competitiveness Pillar**, supports research relating to societal challenges and reinforces technological and industrial capacities through clusters.

**PILLAR 3: Innovative Europe Pillar**, aims to make Europe a frontrunner in market-creating innovation via the European Innovation Council. It also helps to develop the overall EU innovation landscape through the European Institute of Innovation and Technology which fosters integration of the knowledge triangle of education, research, and innovation.

**HORIZONTAL PILLAR, for widening Participation and Strengthening the**

**European Research Area (ERA)** by increasing support to the EU Member States in their efforts to make the most of their national research and innovation potential, fostering closer collaborations and spreading excellence.

In the following link are presented the different national contact points per country:

<https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/portal/screen/support/ncp>

### 3.3. CREATIVE EUROPE

Creative Europe is the European Commission's programme to support the culture and audiovisual sectors by providing funding for cultural and creative organisations, cinemas and films. The programme has a budget of € 2.44 billion (2021-2027). The main objectives are to safeguard, develop and promote European cultural and linguistic diversity and heritage and to increase the competitiveness and economic potential of the cultural and creative sectors, in particular the audiovisual sector. Support for a greener, more digital and more inclusive recovery of these sectors is a priority.

The programme is divided into 3 strands and the proposals are selected in national and European level according to the calls for proposals.

| STRANDS                      | ACTIVITIES  |
|------------------------------|---|
| <b>CULTURE strand</b>        | Support to cultural and creative sectors such as: architecture, cultural heritage, design, literature and publishing, music and performing arts and funding of European cooperation projects, European platforms, European networks, Circulation of European literary works, I-Portunus: mobility for artists and professionals, Pan-European Cultural Entities<br><br>Cooperation and exchanges among cultural organisations and artists within Europe and beyond are also promoted. |
| <b>MEDIA strand</b>          | Support to the European film and audiovisual industries to develop, distribute and promote European works, taking into account today's digital environment. Cooperation across the value chain of the audiovisual industry at EU level, cooperation among the different parts of the audiovisual value-chain. Main priorities of the 2021-2027 are structured around 4 clusters: <i>Content, Business, Audience and Policy support and awareness raising</i>                          |
| <b>CROSS SECTORAL strand</b> | This strand aims at reinforcing collaboration between different cultural and creative sectors, to help them address the common challenges they face and find innovative new   |

For the first time, Creative Europe offers funding to the news media sector in order to promote media literacy, pluralism and media freedom, as well as activities to help the sector adjust to the structural and technological changes it faces. In 2021, Creative Europe launched a call for proposals on journalism partnerships. The action aims to promote sector-wide, cross-border collaboration among news media professionals in Europe, stimulate sharing of best practices for collaborative business transformation, encourage journalistic collaboration by developing standards, new business models, training programmes, funding schemes and other activities that aim to uphold quality journalism.

In the following link are presented the different national contact points per country:

<https://ec.europa.eu/culture/resources/creative-europe-desks>

### 3.4. Citizens, Equality, Rights and Values (CERV)

CERV programme aims to protect and promote Union rights and values as enshrined in the EU Treaties and the Charter of Fundamental Rights and has a budget of € 1,55 billion. It will contribute to sustain and further develop open, rights-based, democratic, equal and inclusive societies based on the rule of law.

The programme sets out four specific objectives such as: (i) to promote equality and rights, including gender equality, anti-discrimination and the rights of children, (ii) to promote citizens engagement and participation in the democratic life of the EU and to raise awareness of the common European history, (iii) to fight violence, notably against children and women and (iv) to protect and promote EU values.

In the following link are presented the different national contact points per country:

[https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/default/files/cerv\\_contact\\_points\\_2021-2022\\_november2021\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/default/files/cerv_contact_points_2021-2022_november2021_en.pdf)

## 4: Management, Implementation and Monitoring procedures of Competitive Programmes

Each call for proposals of the Competitive Programmes has its own criteria, requirements and steps for selection, implementation, dissemination, and quality assurance of the financed projects. The call for projects, the specific guides addressed to the applicants contribute to the development of projects. For being eligible, the applicant has to fulfill the criteria indicated in the specific call. It



might also need to register in a specific data base – the call guidelines will specify whether and how must be done. The call for proposals is implemented at EU level for all international activities, most Horizon projects and some of the Media and Life programmes.

The eligible bodies / potential beneficiaries for funding are defined within each Call for Proposals. Depending on the subject / scope of the Call, potential beneficiaries may be natural persons (e.g., Mobility programs, Discover Europe, etc.), legal entities or both, including, where appropriate, businesses or non-profit organizations, unemployed or employees, governmental or non-governmental bodies, research and academic institutions, organized groups etc.

Most EU-funded projects involve collaboration between organisations from different EU countries or associated countries. A number of search services are available for finding suitable partners. Each applicant is free to find their partners and create the Partnership, but there are various partner search services that can help so to find organisations wanting to participate in proposals. The partner search tool<sup>30</sup> helps applicant to find partners for a project among the many participants of past EU projects. Applicant will be able to select organisations based on their profile or their previous participation. Depending on the funding programme concerned, national contact points also provide partner search services, offering detailed partner profiles and active partnership requests.

To be considered, an application needs to be complete, concise, and submitted on time through the electronic submission system<sup>31</sup>. The Regulation<sup>32</sup> of each of the EU Competitive Programme designate the Management, financing, monitoring and control system of each of the financed project.

EU funded programmes are implemented in one of three ways:

- direct management: the application process must go through the Funding and Tenders portal
- shared management: the Member States' administrations are in charge of the selection and award procedures, and of the monitoring and management, including payments.
- indirect management: an implementing partner will act as contracting authority. Applicant needs to check on the website of the implementing partner the specific requirements for the application process.

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<sup>30</sup> <https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/portal/screen/how-to-participate/partner-search>

<sup>31</sup> <https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/portal/screen/home>

<sup>32</sup> E.g. Erasmus+ (2021-2027): Regulation (EU) 2021/817 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 May 2021 establishing Erasmus+: the Union Programme for education and training, youth and sport and repealing Regulation (EU) No 1288/2013

- a. A selected project of a beneficiary organization consists of four stages: planning, preparation, implementation and follow-up.
1. **Identification and initiation of a problem**, need or opportunity that the beneficiary can address with the project idea in the context of the call. He must identify the key activities and the main outcomes that can be expected from the project, map the relevant stakeholders and potential partners, formulate the project's objective(s), ensure the project's alignment to the participating organisations' strategic objectives and undertake some initial planning to get the project off to a good start, and put together the information required to continue to the next phase etc.
  2. **Preparation, design and planning**, need to specify the project scope and appropriate approach, outline clearly the methodology proposed ensuring consistency between project objectives and activities, decide on a schedule for the tasks involved, estimate the necessary resources and develop the detail of the project e.g. needs assessment; define objectives and impact indicators (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound), identify project and learning outcomes, the development of work programme, activity formats (Work Packages), expected impact, estimated overall budget, preparing a project implementation plan, dissemination and evaluation plan. Creation of project management committee, and others for quality control, reporting and dissemination of results and quality assurance of the projects are necessary.
  3. **Implementation and monitoring of activities**: carrying out the project implementation according to plans fulfilling requirements for reporting and communication; monitoring ongoing activities and assessing project performance against project plans; identifying and taking corrective action to address deviations from plans and to address issues and risks; identifying non-conformities with the set quality standards and taking corrective actions etc.
  4. **Review and impact assessment**: assessing project performance against project objectives and implementation plans, evaluation of the activities and their impact at different levels, sharing and use of the project's results.

Dissemination and evaluation of results of a project are essential and mandatory phase and take place during the full life cycle of a project. The dissemination activities (newsletters, use of social media, conferences, webpages, etc.) increase the project visibility, promotes examples of good practice that may be useful to future applicant, increases the visibility of the partners, enables the creation of future partnerships, and increases the visibility of the Erasmus+ program. Evaluation is also important and indispensable element of each activity implemented under any competitive Programme and the focus is to ascertain whether the overall outcomes or positive changes resulting from any given activity, or policy have been achieved and to learn from this information in order to develop and improve activities in the future.

## **b. Monitoring and Managing bodies of Competitive Programmes at EU and National level**

As mentioned, to be financed for a Competitive European Programme, applications are submitted directly to the European Commission or to the National Agencies, depending of the Action and the particular call.

The Erasmus+ programme is managed by the European Commission (the EU's executive body), the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA), a series of National Agencies in Programme countries, and a series of National Offices in some Partner countries. The role of each management bodies is defined in the Regulation of the Programme (EU/ 2021/817). The European Commission handles the overall management of the Programme, the EACEA oversees managing the "centralised" elements of the Programme and together with DG EAC carry out studies and research, as well as managing and financing the other bodies and networks supported by Erasmus+. The National Agencies appointed each EU country, manage specific pillars of the Programme as noticed in the program's Regulation. These Agencies support beneficiaries from the application stage to the end of a project. In the following links are presented the national agencies & offices points per country: <https://erasmus-plus.ec.europa.eu/national-agencies>, and

<https://erasmus-plus.ec.europa.eu/national-erasmus-offices>

For the 2021-2027 period, EACEA manages key parts of the following programmes on behalf of the European Commission: Erasmus+, Creative Europe, European Solidarity Corp , Citizens, Equality, Rights and Values (CERV), Pilot Projects and Preparatory Actions (PPAs).

Applications for the rest Competitive Programmes are submitted directly to the European Commission.

## **5: Funds and grants of International Organizations**

International organizations were established by formal political agreements between countries, and they are recognized by law in their member countries. Their goal is to facilitate cooperation and coordination among member nations on different issues. Some of the most important international Organisations are the United Nations (UN), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the World Health Organization (WHO), the Council of Europe, the office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the United Nations Education Scientific & Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the International Labour Organization (ILO) and many others acting globally or focusing in areas where specific problems are emerging.



Having different types, acting as international governmental organizations (IGOs) and international nongovernmental organizations (INGOs) and in recent years, multinational corporations (MNCs) have an impact on the citizens, the transformation of the policies and the resolution of complex and difficult problems. These Organisations are funded by financial contributions of the participating countries and or private source. One of their most important roles is to promote global initiatives aimed at reducing inequalities, protect human rights, promote integration, and facilitate the development of sustainable development goals established by the United Nations in 2015 under the title of "Reduce inequality within and among countries". Some of them are the following: reduce income inequalities, promote universal social, economic and political inclusion; ensure equal opportunities and end discrimination; adopt fiscal and social policies that promotes equality; improved regulation of global financial markets and institutions; enhanced representation for developing countries in financial institutions; responsible and well-managed migration policies.

International Organisations with the functioning of local agencies are helping developing countries achieve economic security and establishing norms regarding the resolution of different problems and conflicts (e.g., refugee/migration flows, environmental protection, childcare, women trafficking, Roma integration, public health, etc.).

Some flagship initiative and programmes funded by International Organisations all over the world are presented in the table below:

| <b>Intern. Organization</b>           | <b>Indicative Programmes-Priorities</b>   | <b>Areas of activities</b>  |
|---------------------------------------|---|---|
| The United Nations (UN) <sup>33</sup> | <p>6 Thematic Pillars (2018-2021)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Enhance equality and counter discrimination (Agenda 2030)</li> <li>- Increase international human Rights mechanisms</li> <li>- Strengthen the law for Human Rights violations</li> <li>- Enhance participation and protecting civic</li> </ul> | <p>UN works with partners to widen the constituency for human rights worldwide</p> <p>Give assistance to States and National Human Rights Institutions</p> <p>Specific fields: women, children, refugee/migrants, disabled and other vulnerable groups.</p> |

<sup>33</sup> UN

[https://www.ohchr.org/EN/pages/home.aspx?gclid=Cj0KCQiA6NOPBhCPARIsAHAY2zB4lQUrb7hCakzomkhsy8j8563\\_Qs-cJrfEIAPPqKD0aFoJmtj-\\_oaAlFcEALw\\_wcB](https://www.ohchr.org/EN/pages/home.aspx?gclid=Cj0KCQiA6NOPBhCPARIsAHAY2zB4lQUrb7hCakzomkhsy8j8563_Qs-cJrfEIAPPqKD0aFoJmtj-_oaAlFcEALw_wcB)



|   |  |   |
|---|--|---|
|   |  | Covid-19 virus works, Epidemiology, Public health, Diagnostics, Therapeutics, Vaccines, -Technologies and Societal responses.   |
| COUNCIL OF EUROPE_HUMAN RIGHTS ORGANIZATION | <p>Examples of programmes and grants</p> <p>HFII: Freedom of Expression and Freedom of the Media in Kosovo* - JUFREX2</p> <p>Horizontal Facility II: Preventing and Combating Trafficking in Human Beings in Bosnia and Herzegovina</p> <p>Building capacity at local level for the integration of Roma</p> <p>Support to the School of Political Studies in Tunisia</p> <p>Inclusive Schools: Making a difference for Roma children 2</p> | <p>Grants regarding the project budget. From 500 euros to 100.000 euros for year 2019.</p> <p>Grantees are municipalities, cities, and other entities.</p> <p>And the goal is to assist the grantee to implement his objectives and advance on policy issues and organization's values.</p> |

## 6. Summary

The EU adopted many Competing programmes since 1980. These programmes had always specific mission and goals. The priority was not only to contribute to the achievement of the key policies but at the same time to strengthen the openness of Europe to the third countries by promoting the “European Acquis”.

A better future for all is and it was the main priority since the financial crisis and the Competitive Programmes together with the European Structural investment Funds are the tools of development, economic growth, promotion of European

values, develop Europe as an area of freedom, security, justice, supporting the diversity and the integration of vulnerable groups.

After 2020 the EU will continue to improve its policies with new competitive programmes, and some examples were presented in this chapter, supporting a smarter, greener, connected and more Social Europe. Furthermore, the creation of a specific Directorate General to support countries, institution, citizens demonstrate the wiliness to combat fragmentation and formation of silos where programmes did not collaborate sufficiently. The new Competitives programmes (2021-2027) will contribute to modernize the existing policies, to develop global peace, stability, democracy and human rights in Europe and the world.

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## CHAPTER 5.

### NEXT GENERATION EU - EU RECOVERY PLAN

*SAVVATOU TSOLAKIDOU, THEODORA GAZI*

#### Aim

This chapter reviews the European Commission's response to stronger economic and social structures, following the COVID-19 pandemic crisis. "Next Generation EU" (NGEU) is a €750 billion package with the aim to address both the financial and social damage of the pandemic for the budget period 2021-2027. This chapter focuses on NGEU's third pillar social cohesion. It presents, the cohesion policy measures, funding and initiatives to achieve a balanced recovery from the socio-economic impact of COVID-19. Specifically, it presents the "Recovery Assistance for Cohesion and the Territories of Europe" (REACT-EU), the "European Social Fund Plus" (ESF+) and other sub-funds, i.e. the European Social Fund (ESF), the Youth Employment Initiative (YEI), the Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived (FEAD) and the EU Programme for Employment and Social Innovation (EaSI). Said initiatives focus on the access to the labour market, education opportunities and social inclusion of vulnerable groups.

#### Expected Learning Outcomes

1. To learn about the "Next Generation EU" and its provisions on social cohesion
2. To present the main funding programmes adopted by the EU to foster crisis repair capacities of member states on social inclusion and support of vulnerable groups
3. To learn about the initiatives on the access to the labour market, education opportunities and social inclusion.

#### Keywords

Next Generation EU; Recovery Plan; Covid-19 Response; European Social Fund; Social Inclusion

#### 1: Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic had an immense economic and social impact around the globe, as well as asymmetrical effects for member states. This situation called for the adoption of a coordinated response by the EU to build on stronger economic



and social structures and support member states in recovering more swiftly. “Next Generation EU” (NGEU) is the European Commission’s response following the pandemic crisis. NGEU got its name for being a fund oriented towards the future. In other words, it does not solely attempt to fix the consequences of the pandemic; it also invests in EU’s long-term future. The proposal made public by the European Commission on May 27, 2020 and adopted on February 11, 2021 is a €750 billion package to revive the economy and repair the financial and social damage caused by the coronavirus pandemic. These resources will be collected through the issue of bonds on the financial markets by the European Commission on behalf of the EU (Buti & Messori, 2020, p. 1).

Interestingly, this project has received criticism on being insufficient to address the economic consequences of the pandemic. In any case, it is notable that the EU Commission has decided to directly issue a mutual debt to redistribute and stabilise the economy. Specially, during the budget period 2021-2027, the EU will take out loans and repay them with member states’ contributions to low interest payments and sizeable principal amounts (not before 2028 and no later than 2058) (Picek, 2020).

Member States will develop national plans for recovery and resilience. Said plans include measures for the implementation of public investment and reforms, in addition to public schemes aimed at stimulating private investment. The 6 recognized EU priorities NGEU will focus on areas: the green transition; digital transformation; smart, sustainable and inclusive growth and jobs; social and territorial cohesion; health and resilience; policies for the next generation, including education and skills (Simmons + Simmons, 2021). In other words, NGUE is divided into 3 pillars. Specifically, the first is green transition; NGEU’s funding supports climate action, by introducing circular economy in buildings and infrastructure, developing renewable energy projects and optimising transport. The second pillar is digital transformation, i.e. the investment in better connectivity, such as 5G, cybersecurity and other new technologies. The last pillar is social cohesion; to promote a fair and inclusive recovery for all, NGEU focuses on the fight against unemployment and the development of digital skills (EUcalls, 2021). This chapter focuses on the third pillar, i.e. social cohesion and the presentation of the changes proposed.

## **2: The architecture of NGEU on social cohesion**

NGEU is a comprehensive recovery plan which recognises that a cohesion policy is necessary to achieve a balanced recovery from the socio-economic effects of the

pandemic. Under this scope, in this section we will examine the “Recovery Assistance for Cohesion and the Territories of Europe” (REACT-EU) and the “European Social Fund Plus” (ESF+). Both initiatives focus on accessing the labour market, advancing education and promoting the social inclusion of vulnerable groups (European Commission, n.d.).

First, one of the largest programmes under NGEU is **REACT-EU**. This initiative which includes €50.6 billion extends the crisis response and repair measures adopted by the Coronavirus Response Investment Initiative. In other words, REACT-EU serves as a bridge to EU’s long-term recovery plan and provides resources for projects to foster crisis repair capacities. To successfully implemented REACT-EU, 3 pillars have been spotted: the initiative’s strength (i.e. financial allocation), speed (i.e. use of programmes until 2023) and flexibility of the implementation rules. The allocation methodology considers the economic and social impact of the crisis on each state, by examining its unemployment rate and relative wealth. Consequently, REACT-EU’s resources focus on the less developed regions, meaning they are geographically targeted at areas where support is most needed, as an exceptional case and without prejudice to the normal cohesion policy allocations (European Commission, n.d.).

Second, coming into force 1 July 2021, the “**European Social Fund Plus**” (ESF+) supports the implementation of the European Pillar of Social Rights, jointly proclaimed by the Council, the European Parliament and the Commission as a compass for resolving social challenges across member states. To be more specific, ESF+ invests in people and contributes to EU’s employment, social, education and skills policies, including structural reforms in these areas. It recognises that COVID-19 set obstacles in labour market participation, challenged educational and health systems and increased inequalities. For this reason, ESF+ supports economic, territorial and social cohesion across the EU, reducing disparities between regions. ESF+ integrates the former European Social Fund (ESF), the Youth Employment Initiative (YEI), the Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived (FEAD) and the EU Programme for Employment and Social Innovation (EaSI), allowing funding to be used efficiently. It is a co-financed programme, meaning that the EU allocation must be matched by national funding; however, the co-financing rate varies by region (European Commission, n.d.).

Specifically, **the European Social Fund (ESF)** promotes the respect of human rights, including gender equality and non-discrimination, in addition to embodying the principles of the European Pillar for Social Rights. ESF funds activities related to employment, education and social inclusion. ESF not only supports policy

implementation and national reforms, but also actions which reduce unemployment, promote equal opportunities in education and improve social inclusion. Its focus is the active social inclusion of people at risk of poverty, third-country nationals and marginalised communities, such as Roma people. Moreover, ESF seeks to address material deprivation, by promoting the equal access of citizens to quality services and the modernisation of national social protection systems (European Commission, n.d.).

Moreover, another initiative of ESF+ is the **Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived** (FEAD). Indeed, FEAD is a crucial element for persons to also benefit from ESF, since addressing basic needs is often a precondition to access the labour market or follow a training course. FEAD's aim is to support persons' first steps out of poverty and social exclusion. Specifically, through FEAD, member states provide food, clothing and other essential material assistance, such as to shoes, soap and shampoo to deprived populations. EU countries select the type of assistance to be provided (i.e. food or basic material assistance, or a combination of both), based on their needs. National authorities can supply food and goods to partner organisations (i.e. public bodies or NGOS selected by national authorities based on objective and transparent criteria) or directly fund them to purchase and distribute them. In any case, it should be clarified that material assistance requires the implementation of social inclusion measures and non-material assistance (to support their integration into society) (European Commission, 2020).

As for the **Youth Employment Initiative** (YEI), it is complementary to other actions undertaken at national level. For 2021-2027, YEI was integrated into the European Social Fund Plus (ESF+), preserving its focus on youth employment. Specifically, YEI ensures that young people receive targeted support in member states. Typically, YEI funds apprenticeships, traineeships, job placements and education opportunities. All Member States have to invest an appropriate amount of their ESF+ resources to targeted actions and structural reforms to support youth employment, education and training. Moreover, Member States with a higher rate of young people aged 15 to 29 not in employment, education or training should devote at least 12,5% of the ESF+ resources to youth (European Commission, n.d.).

Finally, the **Employment and Social Innovation** (EaSI) is a financing programme to promote gender equality, sustainable employment, adequate social protection and working conditions. Its objectives are to (European Commission, n.d.):

- Strengthen ownership of EU objectives in the areas of employment, social affairs and inclusion.

- Support the development of adequate social protection systems and labour market policies.
- Modernise EU legislation and ensure its effective application.
- Promote geographical mobility and boost employment opportunities by developing an open labour market.
- Increase the availability and accessibility of microfinance for vulnerable groups and micro-enterprises, and increase access to finance for social enterprises.

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## CHAPTER 6.

### STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION OF EU FUNDS AND GRANTS

*SAVVATOU TSOLAKIDOU, THEODORA GAZI*

#### Aim

The aim of this chapter is to provide a definition of the Strategic communication used by the different EU funds and giving an overview of the communication and dissemination plans applied to communicate to all stakeholders and citizens about the results of the different financing instruments. of by EU funds and Grants. Specific reference will be given to the provisions of communication measures in the regulations of ESIFs and the Competitive Programmes for the programming period 2014 -2017 and especially for the new programming period 2021-2027 for transparency and dissemination of results to a broader transnational and international audience. Examples of dissemination strategies and communications plans at national level will be also presented focusing on the EU requirements for transparency, information, and dissemination of best practices.

#### Expected Learning Outcomes

The students will:

- Learn the definition of strategic communication and why it is important as a strategy to be included in the Regulations of the EU Funds and Grants
- Recognize the strategic communication measures and rules at European and national level
- Understand the European and national requirements for transparency, communication and dissemination of results and best practices.

#### Keywords

Strategic Communication, Communication plan, transparency, dissemination

## 1: Defining Strategic communication

Strategic communication is referred as new developing subfield within Communication. It emphasizes on strategy rather than on specific measures and tactics as well as its focus on communications understood holistically. Strategic communication according to Hallahan and al. (2007) is defined as “the purposeful use of communication by an organization to fulfill its mission. Strategic Communication identifies key concepts, including audience analysis, goal setting, and message strategy. The term strategic has been most often used in the context of management and decision-making power and it encompass “participatory communication practices” in which power relations are less one-sided. The long-term strategic planning of organizations or of different projects developed by stakeholders is an important characteristic which need to be tackled by professional communicators to align the organizational strategy with effective communications planning, campaigns, and other communication initiatives.

Strategic Communication refers to a set of coordinated actions, messages, images, and other forms of signaling or engagement intended to inform, persuade, and influence selected audiences or target groups according to their needs or the needs of the policy planned for specific target groups or to support national or European policy objectives (e.g., women, unemployed young people, handicap people, etc.). Strategic communication is integrated to the strategic management approach as it tends to achieve specific, measurable, and agreed objectives which are required to mobilize the audiences affected with attractive and efficient communication content and at the same time succeed the engagement and participation of the different audiences (Paul, 2010; Frandsen & Johansen, 2017).

Other definition of strategic communication focuses on strategy within corporate communication in urging that stronger links be built between the “what” and the “how” of content being communicated to stakeholders (Steyn, 2003) and others determines the flow of information among managers, employees and clients. An efficient communication strategy overcome the bottlenecks or other blockages and permit to monitor the implementation procedure of an organizational strategic plan by avoiding “silos” and permitting the common understanding of goals, objectives, and policy measures.

Communication Toolbox, strategic communications plans, communication campaigns are designed by communicators taking into consideration the strategic goals of each organization, EU fund, or EU project and the need of the referred audience by adopting clear communication goals, measurables objectives, communication channels, appropriate resources and coherent communications



activities (press releases, press conferences, toolkits, videos and short films, short documentaries, blog posts, social media campaigns, key messages, and others promotional activities).

## **2: Strategic communication and transparency principle in EU Funds and Grants**

The principle of transparency is required for all EU funds and Grants. The meaning of transparency principle is that any recipient of EU fund must be published on the website of the Commission, the Web sides of the relevant Management Authorities or Programme Executive National Agencies. This information is addressed to the public in a concise, accurate and understandable way followed by appropriate visualization guide. This must follow the provision on communication strategies and dissemination of results included in the Regulations of each fund or competitive programme and the information included in every call for applicants and programme guides.

Transparency implies openness, communication, and accountability in every phase of the implementation of the funds and grants. It means that specific provision is included in the Regulations not only for the EU institution but also at Member states level and Beneficiaries level. The implementation and the monitoring procedures at the lowest level should provide information for the citizens to understand what actions are performed by the European funding.

The information on funding may be published in any appropriate website of the relevant fund or programme, the Official Journal of the European Union if needed, the Management Authorities of the relevant OPs and the National Agencies of the Competitive programmes. Reference should be made on the name and locality of the beneficiary, the amount of grant awarded and the nature and purpose of the award. TA minimal publicity of each grant project at local level is also required using the visibility guidelines of each programme.

Beneficiaries of ESIFs cofinanced projects or projects in the framework of Competitive programs must clearly acknowledge the European Union's support in all communications or publications, in whatever form or whatever medium, including the Internet and the social media, or on the occasion of activities for which the grant is used. This must be done according to the provisions included in the strategic communication plan of the ESIFs which is in line with the global MS development plan at national level and the grant agreements with the partners of the coordinator of a competitive project. If these provisions are not fully complied with, the beneficiary's grant may be reduced.

## 2.1. Communication strategies in the ESIF Funds 2014-2020

The strategic communication of supporting policies, achievement and good practices of the European Investment Structural Funds and the European Competitive Programmes at European level contribute to the effective implementation of the European strategies in different policy areas. Already from the beginning of the programming period 2007-2013, it was mentioned that “experience has shown that the citizens of the European Union are not sufficiently aware of the role of the Community in financing programs and during the programming period 2007-2013, both the Regulation and the relevant Annex, specify a further and systematize the application of the terms of information and communication and set a framework of obligations for all those involved in the implementation. of cofinanced actions”. The citizens, the stakeholders per programme and the specific target groups that are affected by each of the funds and grants it is a fundamental right. The communication strategy ensures transparency of the use of the funds, increases the awareness raising on the policy objectives and contribute to the active participation of all players to meet the cohesion policy objectives and to address the new challenges in different policy areas.

During the programming period, 2014-2020, the Common Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 December 2013 laying down common provisions on the ESIFs (European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund, the Cohesion Fund, the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development and the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund) in article 116, make reference to a common Communication strategy which shall be drawn by the Member states and by each Operational Programme(OP). As mentioned in this article, *“The communication strategy shall take into account the size of the operational programme or programmes concerned, in accordance with the principle of proportionality...and shall include the elements set out in Annex XII. The communication strategy shall be submitted to the monitoring committee for approval .... no later than six months after the adoption of the operational programme or programmes concerned. Where a common communication strategy is drawn up for several operational programmes... the Member State may designate one monitoring committee to be responsible, in consultation with the other relevant monitoring committees, for the approval of the common communication strategy and for the approval of any subsequent amendments of that strategy. Where necessary, the Member State or managing authorities may amend the communication strategy during the programming period”*.

Regarding the monitoring of the Communication Plan the managing authority shall inform the monitoring committee or committees responsible at least once a year on

the progress in the implementation of the communication strategy and on its analysis of the results of that implementation as well as on the information and communication activities and measures to enhance visibility of the Funds that are planned for the following year. The monitoring committee shall give an opinion on the activities and measures planned for the following year, including on ways to increase the effectiveness of communication activities aimed at the public. For this reason, in Article 117 of the same Regulation *“Information and communication officers and their networks is provided, and each Member State shall designate an information and communication officer to coordinate information and communication actions in relation to one or more Funds, including relevant programmes under the European territorial cooperation goal, and shall inform the Commission accordingly”*. The communication officer was responsible for the coordination of the national network of Fund communicators, each OP had his communication officer and the exchange of information on the results of the implementation of the communication strategies, was ensured and also the exchange of experience and good practices between M.S. The networks met once a year to debate and assess the effectiveness of the information and communication measures and propose recommendations to enhance the outreach and impact of communication activities and to raise awareness about the results and added value of those activities.

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measures and propose recommendations to enhance the outreach and impact of communication activities and to raise awareness about the results and added value of those activities.

The new Regulation (EU) 2021/1060 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 June 2021-2027<sup>35</sup> of the ESIFs, in paragraph 38 provides dissemination of results of the evaluation of the Funds and their impact to be public. In paragraph 39, *“Programme authorities, beneficiaries and stakeholders in Member States should raise awareness of the achievements of Union funding and inform the general public accordingly”*. It is also underlining the point that *“Transparency, communication and visibility activities are essential in making Union action visible on the ground and should be based on true, accurate and updated information”* The paragraph 40 address the obligations of the Management Authorities *“to publish structured information on selected operations and beneficiaries on the website of the programme providing support to the operation, while taking account of requirements for data protection of personal data”*

## **2.2. Communication strategies to maximize impact of Competitive programmes**

The regulation of Competitive programmes such as Erasmus+ 2014-2020, Regulation 1288/2013<sup>36</sup> and article 22, provides Communication and dissemination measures applied in cooperation with Member States, and ensuring the dissemination of information, publicity and follow-up with regard to all actions and activities supported under the Programme, as well as the dissemination of the results of the previous Lifelong Learning, Youth in Action and Erasmus Mundus programmes. The results and impacts obtained are properly communicated and disseminated. All actors should use the visibility rules and the brand name 'Erasmus+' for the purpose of communication and dissemination of information relating to the Programme and at national level other rules could be added as the use of the identity card of the Executive Agency. The scope of the communication strategy and the dissemination of results *“is crucial to ensure impact at different levels and depending on the action, applicants for funding under Erasmus+ are*

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<sup>35</sup> Regulation (EU) 2021/1060 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 June 2021 laying down common provisions on the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund Plus, the Cohesion Fund, the Just Transition Fund and the European Maritime, Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund and financial rules for those and for the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund, the Internal Security Fund and the Instrument for Financial Support for Border Management and Visa Policy

<sup>36</sup> REGULATION (EU) No 1288/2013 OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL of 11 December 2013 establishing 'Erasmus+: the Union programme for education, training, youth and sport and repealing Decisions No 1719/2006/EC, No 1720/2006/EC and No 1298/2008/EC

*required to plan their communication activities to share information about their project and results during and beyond the project life cycle”.*

For designing a good communication and dissemination plan, according to the regulation applicants need to take into consideration the communication objectives, the audience or target group, the channels, and activities to reach the target audience, the project results, the effective work plan, the change in needs of the target audience or group as well as development in policy and procedure. Also, Key performance indicators (KPIs) are used during the implementation of the communication and dissemination plan and Erasmus+ Open Access Requirement for educational materials developed by the financing of the projects should be accessible without limitations by the public.

The same rules regarding information and dissemination of results are included in the regulations of other competing programs such as Horizon 2020, Media, and others.

As example, the new regulation for Horizon Europe 2021-2027<sup>37</sup> in the paragraph 34 is provided that the programme *“should seek synergies with other Union programmes, from their design and strategic planning, to project selection, management, communication, dissemination and exploitation of results, monitoring, auditing and governance”*. Additionally in paragraph 85 is provided that *“rules governing the exploitation and dissemination of results should be laid down to ensure that beneficiaries protect, exploit, disseminate and provide access to those results as appropriate. More emphasis should be placed on to exploiting those results, and the Commission should identify and help maximise opportunities for beneficiaries to exploit results, in the Union. The exploitation of results should take into consideration the principles of the Programme”*

### **2:3. Communication strategies for the programming period 2021-2027: Responsibilities of the Member States**

The communication strategy is very important aspect of the implementation of the Cohesion policy in MS. The regulatory framework as presented in the previous section sets the minimum requirements under which programmes and projects communicate. The involvement of all actors (policy makers, stakeholders, project managers, project promoters) and their professionalism and expertise play an

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<sup>37</sup> Regulation (EU) 2021/695 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 28 April 2021 establishing Horizon Europe – the Framework Programme for Research and Innovation, laying down its rules for participation and dissemination, and repealing Regulations (EU) No 1290/2013 and (EU) No 1291/2013 (Text with EEA relevance)



important role of the efficient communicative ways, attractive to the clients and the final beneficiaries.

### **2.3.1. Communication provisions in ESIFs 2021-2027 at Management Authorities level**

A booklet created by the European Commission entitled “Communicating Cohesion policy in 2021-2027” points to possible ways to best communicate the funds during this new programming period. According to the regulation’s provisions, during the new programming period, Managing Authorities shall spell out the planned approach to communication in a dedicated section of the programme. MS shall ensure specific visibility to operations of strategic importance (Campaigns, inauguration events, media coverage of the projects, dissemination of information on the projects through the single portal/programmes’ website, development of communication material, leaflets) and the emblem of the European Union shall be prominently featured on all communication materials alongside the statement “(Co-) funded by the European Union” spelled out in full. The statement does not make reference to the specific fund. Apart from the EU emblem, no other visual identity or logo must be used to highlight the support from the EU.

Comparing to the previous programming period (2014-2020) providing the network of Communication officers, during this programming period MS shall appoint ***“a single national communication coordinator for all funds”***. The role of the communication coordinator in coordinating the visibility measures across the programmes is explicitly recognized and the Commission shall maintain a single network for all funds comprising communication coordinators and programme communication officers.

The Management Authorities have the responsibility to set up a website with information about the programme, within six months of its approval and to ensure the publishing on the programme website, or on the single national website portal, a timetable of the planned and published calls for proposals. The timetable should be updated at least three times a year. List of operations must be updated every four months to apply the transparency principle.

Regarding the responsibilities of the Beneficiaries, for operations of strategic importance or above €10m, beneficiaries shall organise a communication event or activity involving the Commission and the Managing Authority. Beneficiaries not complying with visibility obligations will face financial corrections of up to 3% of the support received. Where several operations are taking place at the same location one plaque or billboard shall be displayed.



Regarding reporting obligations of the MS, they shall provide to the Commission information on the implementation of communication and visibility actions of programmes for the preparation of the annual review meeting. Monitoring Committees of the Ops are responsible to “*shall examine the implementation of communication and visibility actions*”.

### **2.3.2. Communications provisions of Competitive programmes at national and project level**

#### **At European and national level**

Erasmus+ 2021 Programme Guide contains information on the grants awarded in line with the principle of transparency and information on the recipients of the Union funds which must be published on the website of the Commission and/or the Executive Agency EACEA and/or the National Agencies. The name and locality of the beneficiary, the amount of grant awarded, the nature and purpose are some of the information published. Specific measures are taken to protect personal data.

#### **At the project level**

The visibility identity card is important and the sharing of project results and project impact. Beneficiaries must clearly acknowledge the European Union's support otherwise the beneficiary's grant may be reduced.

In the case of Partnerships, a dissemination Committee is an effective solution to coordinate all the communication efforts and communication content of the Consortium (press releases, newsletters, articles, websites, presence in the social media, reposting in each of the partners communication channels, media reports). The creation of a dissemination database to register all the dissemination activities of the partners by regular reports during the life cycle of the project is needed. The engagement of local communities by asking them to participate and complete questionnaires, evaluation of dissemination activities or other actions give feedback for amelioration of the future developments.

The use of a logo of the project and the relevant logos of the EU programme and the National Agency's should be applied.

## **3: The added value of the Communication strategies**

The communications activities both in Structural Investment funds and competitive programmes and projects, are designed strategically and in line with the European

and national priorities. The communications plans reinforce the relations and the development of innovations between the partners of the consortium in case where it is applied or in national level by local users of the different services. A continues feedback from the audience is ensured with the implementation of the communication strategies and reinforce the task of the communicators to participate on the redesign or amelioration of the outpouts of actions/or project. The share of results helps all the partners to try new research, learning and teaching approaches and the continues exchange of knowledge and results contribute to a common understanding.

The agreed communication plans allow all the participants or the actors of a programme or a project to interact in a positive way and ensures that everyone involved has adequate information to communicate about it, maintaining consistency and prevent ambiguity and complexity. The effective and consistent communication based on agreed communications plans are valuable for the stakeholders to achieve their objectives, to obtain pluralism and achieve result which could improve the effectiveness and the efficiency of the programmes or projects.

The application of rules regarding the final deliverables of partnership project and the use of Open license and Open Educational Resources' (OER) contribute to the developed of a broader audience and have a learning impact to a large audience

## Indicative Examples of Logos, European emblems, Identity cards of projects

### *Multiannual Partnership Agreement 2021-2027, example of Greece*



### *Competitive Programmes: Erasmus+, Horizon Europe*





EUROPEAN UNION

#HorizonEU

March 2023

Horizon Europe must attract the best researchers and the most innovative companies to maximize its impact and achieve its ambitious scientific, societal and economic objectives. This calls for easy access, fair and transparent selection processes, smooth grant management and the valorisation of R&I results...

Mariya Gabriel Commissioner for Innovation, Research, Culture, Education and Youth

## PARTICIPATION IN HORIZON EUROPE

### COMPETITIVE, FAIR, TRANSPARENT AND EASY TO ACCESS

Horizon Europe removes unnecessary red tape, so that taking part in EU research and innovation will become easier than ever before.

#### Keeping it simple

Horizon Europe will offer:

- A stable **legal framework** with simplified rules and procedures
- **Digital administration** in a single platform where all information is available:
  - The Funding and Tenders Portal, a one-stop shop for finding opportunities and managing all interactions.
- A fair, transparent and objective **evaluation of proposals**:
  - Three evaluation criteria: Excellence, Impact and Quality of Implementation.
  - Careful choice of expert evaluators: Expertise first, but also geographical, gender and industry, academia diversity.
  - Adapted to new features such as EU missions and the European Innovation Council.

## At Project level



Logo of the project      Logo of the National Agency      Logo of the Programme

Title of the Erasmus + project, Universities Partnerships: Common Curricula for Diversity: Education in Media and Integration of Vulnerable Groups.

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## CHAPTER 7.

### EU POLICY AND PROGRAM TARGETED VULNERABLE GROUPS, MIGRANTS AND REFUGEES

NIKOLAY STEREV

As the EU tries to find common decisions for the vulnerable groups, migrants and refugees, there is found a different approach in EU member states (Kronick, Jarvis and Kirmayer 2021]. In some cases, the National /Regional/ policy targeting migrants and refugees is result of political and legal basis and it is a glimmer of the social conditions and societal changes in the last 10 – 20 years. Thus, we could find reporting that explain a different definition of “migrant” and “refugee” that cause a different applicable policy instruments to foster their social inclusion and to prevent their economic and societal exclusion.

We will use German definitions that are based on the international law (Brenner and Lok, 2022):

- “migrants” are persons leaving their homeland on their own accord in search of better prospects in life (UN GA,1951);
- “refugees” are persons forced to flee their homeland as a result of external influences (e.g., persecution, war, conflict, or other crimes against humanity) (UN GA,1951).

The EU policy of vulnerable groups and its problems could be described with the Germans’ troubles with migrants and refugees. For example, although Germany’s health system has achieved universal health coverage, vulnerable groups, such as homeless citizens and undocumented or illegal migrants, still lack access to essential healthcare [Siegel and Busse 2018, Bozorgmehr, Dieterich and Ofe 2019]. Prior to 2015 and in order to reimburse healthcare costs, most German federal states required asylum applicants within the initial 15-month period to first contact their local social welfare office to obtain a treatment voucher (Behandlungsschein) prior to be treated by a medical provider. From 2015 onwards, increasingly more German federal states opted to introduce an electronic health care system to replace these treatment vouchers.

**But, what is the EU Policy on vulnerable groups?**

In order to harmonize the EU policy, the European Commission presented the new EU Action Plan on Integration and Inclusion (2021-2027). This Action Plan covers



different measures to incentivise and to support national, regional and local authorities in their efforts to promote integration of vulnerable groups. It includes:

- Inclusive education and training;
- Improving employment opportunities and skills recognition;
- Promoting access to health services;
- Access to adequate and affordable housing.

In general, EU funding for vulnerable groups' integration could be accessed through two main channels:

- Centralized funding by the European Commission(EC). In most cases, these funds can be used only to put in place transnational projects on integration, involving partners from different EU countries;
- Decentralized funding through national or regional bodies in each EU country. The funded projects are part of national programmes or operational programmes, which are prepared by EU countries on the basis of national needs and objectives and priorities set out at EU level and approved by the European Commission.



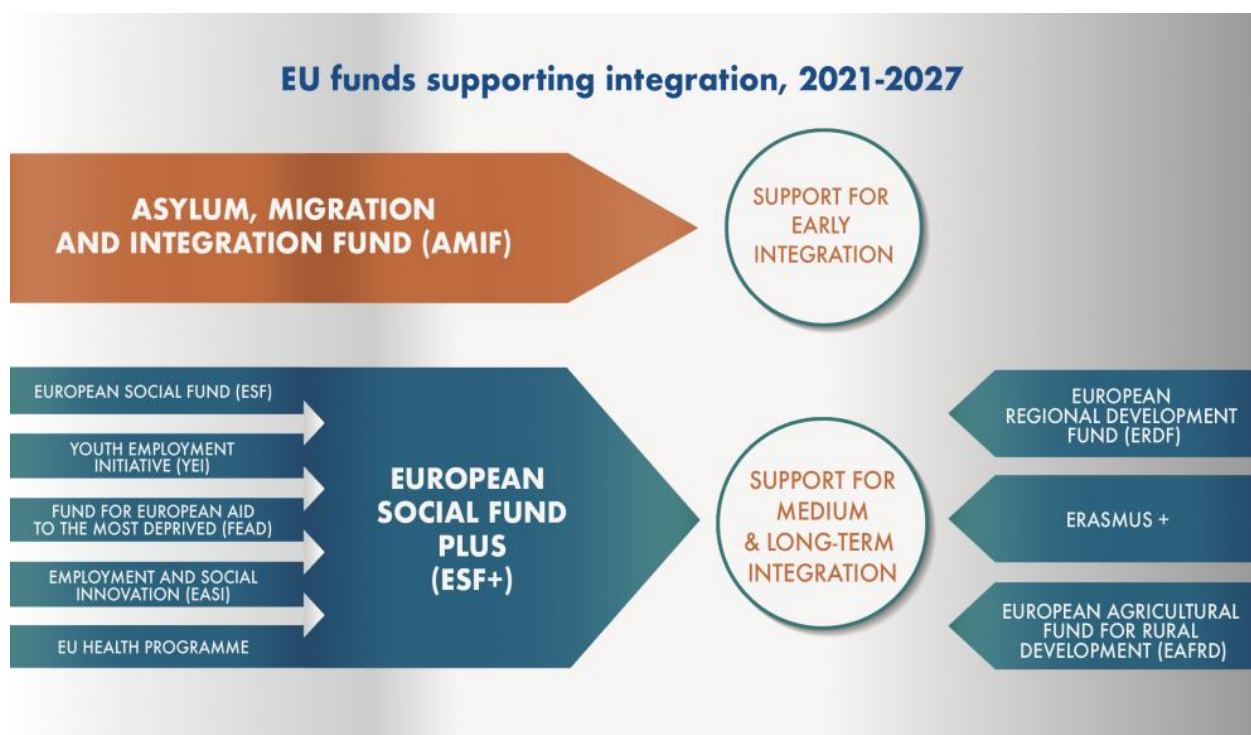
Source: [How do EU funds for integration work? | European Website on Integration \(europa.eu\)](https://europa.eu/european-commission/en/eu-funds-integration)

**Figure 1.** Different channels of EU Funds for integration of vulnerable groups

Some initiatives that are found to support integrations are:

- Networks and networking initiatives:
  - European Integration Network;
  - Urban academy on integration;

- EU Cities against Radicalisation initiative;
- European Migration Forum.
- **Funds:**
  - Asylum and Migration Fund: the fund amounts to €9.9 billion, compared to €3.137 billion over the previous 2014-2020 period. The fund is mostly administered through the EU countries' national programmes which address their specific needs. Additionally, in a new effort to involve local authorities, funding can also be allocated to local and regional authorities implementing integration support measures. On the other hand, the part of the fund that is directly managed by the EC allows for the financing of transnational projects.;
  - European Social Fund Plus: total budget of €99.3 billion for the 2021-2027 period, is the EU's main instrument for investment in building a more social and inclusive Europe. It is a key source of financing for medium- and long-term integration initiatives created to support employment and contribute to a fair and socially inclusive society. ESF+ required EU Member States to allocate at least 25% of their resources to promoting social inclusion.



Source: [EU funds for migrant integration 2021-2027 | European Website on Integration \(europa.eu\)](https://european-website-on-integration.europa.eu/)

**Figure 2. EU Funds for integration of vulnerable groups**

Centralised funds used the next measures:

- Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund

For the years 2021-27, the overall Home Affairs budget amounts to EUR 29 billion. The largest part of these resources consists of three Home Affairs Funds and the remainder (EUR 10.7 billion) is reserved for the funding of the Home Affairs Agencies.

With an overall budget of EUR 9.9 billion, the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund, will finance actions in the field of asylum, legal migration and integration, return and countering irregular migration.

Member States will implement the largest share of the allocation through multiannual national programmes. In addition to this, the Commission will also implement actions of particular EU added-value - the Union actions.

Two calls are found:

- Information and awareness raising campaigns on the risks of irregular migration in third countries and within Europe /AMIF-2022-TF1-AG-INFO/. Total budget is 8 mln. EUR.

EU support to five and up to 15 projects of information and awareness raising campaigns in the area of migration in third countries of origin and transit along the main migratory routes towards the EU, in particular, the Eastern, Central and Western Mediterranean routes, the Western Balkans route and the Silk route. Third countries of particular interest are Algeria, Bangladesh, Gambia, Iraq, Morocco, Niger, Nigeria, Pakistan, Senegal, Tunisia and Turkey. Regional campaigns targeting more than one third countries along the migratory routes would be welcome. These projects should focus on preventing irregular migration and the risks of migrant smuggling in particular, while the campaigns in third countries may be complemented by components in Europe that focus on engaging the target audiences' network connections.

### **Objective:**

- The general objective of the call is to contribute to the change of perceptions and behaviour of third country nationals pondering to irregularly migrate to the EU and of key influencers of their decisions (e.g. families, religious or community leaders, teachers, returning migrants, providers of services facilitating migration).

Actions should pursue the following **specific objectives**:

- to provide trusted, factual, balanced information on the risks of irregular migration – during the journey (dangers of migrating irregularly) and after arrival (hardship of living in the EU irregularly and return), as well as on relevant legal alternatives of migration and on available economic opportunities in the country or region of origin;

- to empower credible voices in countering migrant smugglers' and diasporas' narratives on irregular migration and narratives on living irregularly in the EU;
  - to strengthen multi-stakeholder cooperation between actors, such as civil society organisations, researchers, media outlets, local state actors, diaspora and where relevant other stakeholders;
  - to enhance the sustainability of communication activities and results of the campaign.
- assistance, support and integration of third country national victims of trafficking in human beings /AMIF-2022-AG-CALL-THB/. Total budget is 4 mln. EUR.

Co-finance transnational measures to enhance the integration of the victims in the host country, taking into account their specific needs and circumstances, as well as victims among vulnerable groups.

**Objective:**

- Enhance the integration of the victims in the host country, taking into account their specific needs and circumstances, as well as victims among vulnerable groups, thereby contributing to the AMIF specific objective 3.2 (b) to strengthen and develop legal migration to the Member States in accordance with their economic and social needs, and to promote and contribute to the effective integration and social inclusion of third-country nationals

**Scope:**

This call will support concrete transnational measures aiming to enhance the integration of the victims in the host country, taking into account their specific needs and circumstances, as well as victims among vulnerable groups.

- **European Social Fund +**

- EURES Targeted Mobility Scheme (ESF-2022-EURES-TMS). Total budget is 12 mln. EUR

URES TMS is designed to support the development of actions for the work placement of EU/EEA (Norway and Iceland) jobseekers over 18 years, including the most vulnerable (e.g. unemployed and long-term unemployed, low-skilled people and in general those loosely attached to the labour market), helping them to find a job opportunity in another EU/EEA country (Norway, Iceland) in particular in economic sectors with hard-to-fill vacancies. The granted projects shall provide customised employment services, facilitating jobseekers to address mobility obstacles.

The action being strongly result-oriented, it should contribute to:

- address labour market needs;
- improve the conditions for jobseekers and workers to exercise their right of freedom of movement across the EU and to address labour markets' imbalances and, labour and skills shortages.
- enhance the service catalogue of the EURES organisations;
- foster public-private partnerships within EURES

Activities under this call should also contribute to the 2023 European Year of Skills and to the 30th anniversary of EURES in 2024.

Decentralized funds are mainly managed by the National operational programs. The given funds differ at the 27 EU Member States.

**Table 1.** Funding opportunities for integration in 27 EU Member States

|          | <b>The Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF)</b>  | <b>The European Social Fund (ESF)</b>   |
|----------|---|---|
| Austria  | The allocation for Austria under AMIF is €94.61 million. About 45% of this amount is allocated to integration.  | The ESF has contributed over € 442 million to Austria over the 2014-2020 period through the <a href="#">Operational Programme Employment Austria</a> . Around €270 million will go to promoting social inclusion and combating poverty. |
| Belgium  | The total allocation for Belgium under AMIF over the 2014-2020 period is €179,2 million. Out of this amount, 32% is allocated to asylum and 29,5% to legal migration and integration. | The ESF is contributing over €973 million to Belgium over the 2014-2020 period. The funds are divided into different regional operational programmes.   |
| Bulgaria | No information  | A budget of €2.625 million is allocated for Bulgaria for the 2021 - 2027. Out of this, 25% will be directed specifically to social inclusion measures, including migrant integration.   |
| Croatia  | EU has provided €27,662,317 in funding under AMIF to Croatia for the 2014-2020 period. Out of this, 40% was   | The operational programme " <a href="#">Efficient Human Resources</a> " aims to contribute to creating jobs and strengthening social  |

|                | <b>The Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF)</b>  | <b>The European Social Fund (ESF)</b>  |
|----------------|---|--|
|                | allocated to asylum and 25% to legal migration and integration  | cohesion in Croatia. Funds from ESF make up over €1.4 billion  |
| Cyprus         | he national allocation for Cyprus under AMIF for the 2014-20 period was €39,105,838. Out of it, 31% was allocated to asylum, 25% to integration and 36% to return activities. | No information   |
| Czech Republic | The allocation for Czechia AMIF for the 2014-2020 period is €51,224,740. Of this amount, 16% is allocated to asylum and 55% - to integration                                  | For the 2021-2027 period, ESF+ is contributing €2.4 billion through two operational programmes that collectively provide €4 billion in funding. Social inclusion is the thematic priority of both / perational Programme Employment Plus (OPZ+) and the Operational Programme Jan Amos Komensky (OP VVV) operational programmes. |
| Denmark        | Not operated  | The ESF allocates a total of nearly €400 million for the 2014-2020 period  |
| Estonia        | The national allocation for Estonia under AMIF is €15,5 million   | The amount committed to Estonia under ESF reached a total of €682.2 million by 2019 and includes funding for social inclusion.   |
| Finland        | The <a href="#">national allocation</a> for Finland under AMIF for the 2014-2020 period is €26 million, with 42.4% earmarked for integration.                                 | Over the 2014-2020 period, the EU is contributing over €518 million through the ESF under two operational programmes with a combined total budget of over €2.58 billion. Operational Programme <a href="#">Entrepreneurship and Skills</a> devotes one-fifth of its ESF funds to social  |



|  |                                       |
|--|---------------------------------------|
| <b>The Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF)</b> | <b>The European Social Fund (ESF)</b> |
|--|---------------------------------------|

inclusion, reducing poverty and combating discrimination. Operational Programme [Sustainable Growth and Jobs](#) allocates nearly 8% of funding to fighting social exclusion.

France

With a [financial envelope](#) of € 302,277,520,

The ESF will contribute €6.027 billion for France over the period 2014-2020, of which €1.634 billion will be dedicated to fighting poverty and promoting inclusion

Germany

a total of approximately €1.5 billion is expected to be available through AMIF for relevant projects over the 2021-2027 funding period, as well as €500 million for measures under the fund's thematic facility (resettlement and admission for humanitarian reasons, resettlement of persons in need of protection from one EU country to another).

A total of around €2.3 billion will be made available in Germany

Greece

The national allocation for Greece under AMIF for 2014-2020 is €328,265,644.

Funds from the ESF in Greece are divided among 17 different operational programmes, most of which regional. The operational programme [Human Resources Development, Education and Lifelong Learning Operational Programme](#) provides over €2 billion of ESF funding (out of a total package of around €3.3 billion) to increase employment and decrease the number of people at risk of



## The Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF)

## The European Social Fund (ESF)

|           |   |  |
|-----------|---|--|
|           |   | poverty and social exclusion.  |
| Hungary   | The allocation for Hungary under AMIF for the 2014-2020 period is €34,5 million     | The ESF is contributing over €4.6 billion to Hungary over the 2014-2020 period through <a href="#">5 different operational programmes</a> , 4 of which prioritise social inclusion.  |
| Ireland   | No information  | <a href="#">The Programme for Employability, Inclusion and Learning</a> is the only ESF programme in Ireland for the 2014 - 2020 period. It covers three areas: gender equality, the integration and employment of migrants, Garda youth diversion projects. |
| Italy     | The national allocation for Italy under AMIF is <a href="#">over €394 million</a> . | The EU is contributing nearly €10.2 billion to support employment, education, youth, <a href="#">social inclusion</a> and other areas of social well-being through the ESF over the 2014-2020  |
| Latvia    | Latvia's indicative initial allocation for 2021-2027 under AMIF is €31,212,016.     | Around € 205.8 million in ERDF funding have been earmarked for the employment and social inclusion activities under the 2021-2027 EU Structural Funds and Cohesion Fund Action Programme.  |
| Lithuania | The basic national allocation for Lithuania under AMIF is €68.4 million.            | The Lithuanian multi-fund operational programme aims to boost Lithuania's economic development, as well as to tackle a number of issues including social exclusion. The ESF contributes with over €1 billion, of which                                       |

|  |                                       |  |
|--|---------------------------------------|--|
| <b>The Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF)</b> | <b>The European Social Fund (ESF)</b> |  |
|--|---------------------------------------|--|

close to 10% is dedicated to facilitating social inclusion with focus on the educational system.

Luxembourg

The national allocation for Luxembourg under AMIF is €15,765,578.

Parallel to national investments, ESF contributes with over €20 million to the Luxembourg operational programme targeting the most disadvantaged groups and aiming to boost employment growth in the country. In terms of integration, ESF funds in Luxembourg focus on providing education and vocational training to disadvantaged groups, including migrants, in light of increasing their employability.

Malta

The national allocation for Malta under AMIF during the 2014 to 2020 period is €20,873,236. Excluding technical assistance, approximately 70% of AMIF funding is allocated to asylum, 21% - to integration, 8% - to return and 1% - to solidarity.

Funds committed under ESF in Malta for the 2014-2020 period reached a total of €132 million in 2019, with €42.3 million allocated to social inclusion measures.

Netherlands

The new AMIF programme for the Netherlands for the period 2021-2027 is being [prepared](#).

The EU is contributing over €510 million through the ESF to the [Netherlands Operational Programme ESF 2014-2020](#). Over 70% of the total budget will support inclusion through education and employment.

Poland

The allocation for Poland under AMIF was nearly €115.5 million over the 2014-

The EU contributed over €12.9 billion to Poland through the ESF over the

### **The Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF)**

2020 period. About 18% is allocated to asylum and 57% - to integration.

### **The European Social Fund (ESF)**

2014-2020 period. Of this amount, around €4.2 billion went to the operational programme [Knowledge Education Development](#) for systemic measures on the national level to address challenges in the fields of employment, social inclusion, health, education and public administration.

Portugal

The [allocation](#) for Portugal under AMIF is €75,860,651 over the 2014-2020 period

he ESF contributes over €7.3 billion to Portugal during the 2014-2020 period. Of this amount, nearly €1.8 billion is devoted to [operational programme Social Inclusion and Employment](#), which promotes social inclusion and combats poverty and discrimination.

Romania

[The allocation for Romania under AMIF](#) is €50,310,877 million.

Under the operational programme Human Capital, €940 million is designated to social inclusion and fighting poverty out of a total funding package of over €4 billion under ESF.

Slovakia

AMIF allocated €16.1 million to Slovakia over the 2014-2020 period, with 36.6% dedicated to integration=

The EU contributed over €2 billion through the ESF to Slovakia over the 2014-2020 period. Nearly €1.8 billion of this total is under [operational programme Human Resources](#) to create jobs and strengthen social cohesion.

Slovenia

The allocation for Slovenia under AMIF is €18,327,477 over the 2014-2020 period. 22% of this amount is allocated to asylum and 35%

As part of [operational programme "Implementation of the EU Cohesion Policy"](#), the ESF is contributing €718,769,595 to Slovenia.

|        | <b>The Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF)</b>                                     | <b>The European Social Fund (ESF)</b>   |
|--------|--|---|
|        | to legal migration and integration.  | One focus of this operational programme is to reduce the number of people at risk of poverty and social exclusion.  |
| Spain  | The national allocation for Spain under the AMIF fund for 2014-2020 amounts to €427,413,936. | ESF supports operational programs across different Spanish communities that include funds designated to social inclusion.   |
| Sweden | The Swedish AMIF programme aims at ensuring "a long-term sustainable migration policy        | The ESF contributed approximately €723 million to Sweden over the 2014-2020 period. A priority of the ESF in Sweden is to reduce unemployment and exclusion, to strengthen Sweden's long-term supply of skills and growth and to increase cohesion within the EU. The most important priority for the forthcoming Social Fund program (ESF+) will be Programme Area A which will be allocated the largest proportion of funds. Efforts for this will be divided into 5 different thematic target areas: economic vulnerability, establishment in the labor market, re-entry into the labour market, unstable position in the labour market, and stable position in the labour market. |

**Source:** [EU funds available at national level | European Website on Integration \(europa.eu\)](#)

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## CHAPTER 8.

# EU PROGRAMMES FOR EMPLOYMENT AND SOCIAL INCLUSION

**BART PIERRE H LEYEN;**

## INTRODUCTION

The aim of this chapter is to give insights into the diverse EU programmes about employment and social inclusion throughout the years since the foundations of the EU. This chapter explains what different EU funding schemes existed in the history of the EU. We will elaborate on how the EU introduced an employment strategy, how the EU wanted to create the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world, how the EU needed to develop a strategy to overcome the challenges of the financial crisis, how to create a set of principles for a strong social Europe that is fair, inclusive, and full of opportunity. Finally how to further evolve the post-pandemic EU into a smart, sustainable, and inclusive society

The students will:

- Understand the key objectives and implementation of the European Employment Strategy;
- Understand the key objectives and implementation of the Lisbon Strategy;
- Understand the key objectives and implementation of the Europe 2020 Strategy;
- Name the principles of the European Pillar of Social Rights;
- Understand the key objectives and implementation Multidimensional Financial Framework.

As long ago as since the 1950s, workers in the European Coal and Steel Community were benefiting from ‘readaptation aid’. This aid was granted to workers in the coal and steel sectors whose jobs were threatened by industrial restructuring. Also since the foundation of the European Union with the Maastricht Treaty in 1992, employment was never ignored. To ensure social and employment protection a protocol and an agreement were annexed to the 1992 treaty. But it wasn’t until 1997 with the Treaty of Amsterdam that a set of common objectives for employment policy was created with the European employment strategy (EES). This was the beginning of a formal employment policy that contributed to soft coordination among the member states.



Nowadays article 3(3) of the Treaty on European Union and Articles 8-10, 145-150, 156-159 and 162-164 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU) describe and guarantee employment policy in the EU. Among the important principles, objectives, and activities mentioned in the TFEU is the promotion of a high level of employment through the development of a coordinated strategy, particularly concerning the creation of a skilled, trained, and adaptable workforce, and labor markets responsive to economic change. According to the horizontal clause in Article 9 TFEU, the objective of a high level of employment must be taken into consideration in the definition and implementation of EU policies and activities.

## **2: EUROPEAN EMPLOYMENT STRATEGY (EES)**

The EES dates back to 1997, with the Treaty of Amsterdam the EU Member States established a set of common objectives and targets for employment policy, however, its main aim is the creation of more and better jobs throughout the EU. The idea was to draw up multiannual programmes for employment (MAPs) and to provide the Commission with reports on their implementation. These reports describe the main measures taken by the governments to apply for their multiannual programmes over the previous twelve months, assess, in certain cases, the impact of those measures on employment, and announce major changes or new initiatives in this field.

Nowadays the EES is responsible for a large portfolio of employment-related policy fields eg. Employment Package, Inclusion of non-EU migrants, Youth employment support, Social economy and inclusive entrepreneurship, Long-term unemployment, Rights at work, Undeclared work, Restructuring, Flexicurity, Public employment services, Employment Committee, Mutual Learning programme, and the European Employment Policy Observatory.

The EES now constitutes part of the Europe 2020 growth strategy and it is implemented through the European semester. The European Semester is the framework for integrated surveillance and coordination of economic and employment policies across the European Union. Since its introduction in 2011, it has become a well-established forum for discussing EU countries' fiscal, economic, and employment policy challenges under a common annual timeline.

The implementation of the EES - supported by the work of the Employment committee<sup>38</sup> involves the following four steps of the European Semester:

Employment guidelines are common priorities and targets for employment policies proposed by the Commission, agreed upon by national governments, and adopted by the EU Council;

The Joint employment report (JER) is based on (a) the assessment of the employment situation in Europe (b) the implementation of the Employment Guidelines and (c) an assessment of the Scoreboard of key employment and social indicators. It is published by Commission and adopted by the EU Council;

National Reform Programmes (NRPs) are submitted by national governments and analysed by the Commission for compliance with Europe 2020. (database – NRPs before 2011);

Based on the assessment of the NRPs the Commission publishes a series of Country reports, analysing Member States' economic policies and issues with Country-specific recommendations.

The EES aimed to target three aspects, (1) to increase the legitimacy of community-level action by respecting to a greater degree the diversity of national industrial relations and labor market systems, (2) to improve the efficiency of Social Europe: by combining two basic rule-making methods (legislative and contractual), and (3) to serve as a catalyst for the efficiency of national employment policies.

### **3: EMPLOYMENT POLICIES DURING THE LISBON STRATEGY**

The aim of the Lisbon Strategy, launched in March 2000 by the EU heads of state and government, was to make Europe "the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world, capable of sustainable economic growth with more and better jobs and greater social cohesion".

In 2000, the strategy was based on economic and social pillars. One year later, at the European Summit in Gothenburg, a third pillar has been added: the environmental dimension. The underlying idea was that only a common action could lead to success, but several competencies were actually at the national level, not the European one. The Lisbon Strategy then adopted the Open Method Coordination to provide a common framework for coordinated actions to be taken

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<sup>38</sup> The Employment Committee (EMCO) was created in 2000, and is the advisory committee for Employment and Social Affairs Ministers in the Employment and Social Affairs Council (EPSCO) to promote the coordination of employment and labour market policies both at European and national level.

at the Member states' level. Ten years (2000-2010) were set to reach the main target, with yearly monitoring to be carried out by the Spring European Council. Key concepts of the Lisbon Strategy include the knowledge economy, innovation, techno-economic paradigms, technology governance, and the Open Method of Coordination.

The Lisbon objectives in terms of employment, as expressed in the European Employment Strategy, cover the three overarching objectives of full employment, improving quality and productivity at work, and strengthening social cohesion. This means in particular:

- An overall employment rate of 70% in 2010 (67% in 2005);
- A female employment rate of 60% in 2010 (57% in 2005);
- An employment rate for older workers (aged 55-64) of 50% in 2010;
- An increase until 2010 by five years in the average age at which people leave the labor market;

Availability of childcare by 2010 for 90% of the children between 3 years old and compulsory school age, and 33% of the children less than 3 years old.

In 2004, when a mid-term evaluation of the Lisbon Strategy was started, the outcome of the strategy proved to deceive. A task force chaired by former Dutch Prime Minister Wim Kok was then appointed by the Council to work out the proposal on how to relaunch the strategy. This process led to a revised Lisbon Strategy which was agreed upon at the Spring Council on 25-26 March 2005. The renewed Lisbon strategy focused on growth and jobs and a three-year cycle was set out for more focused and effective action. Integrated Guidelines were set by the Spring European Council in 2005, guiding the microeconomic, macroeconomic, and employment levels. Within those guidelines, the 2006 Spring European Council agreed on the following areas for priority action:

- Investing more in knowledge and innovation
- Unlocking business potential, especially for SMEs
- Increasing employment opportunities for priority categories
- Climate change and energy policy for Europe

However the declarations of the Lisbon strategy were deemed unrealistic and these new measures were not able to reach the predetermined marks, because in essence the approach to reach the goals was not changed. One of the reasons why the Lisbon Strategy failed is because of its non-binding nature of the strategy. The appraisal of the Lisbon strategy took place in 2010 when the new Europe 2020 strategy was launched.

#### 4: EMPLOYMENT POLICIES DURING THE EUROPE 2020 STRATEGY

Because of the financial crisis, several years of economic and social progress were whipped out. It also exposed weaknesses in Europe's economy. On the other hand, the world is evolving, and new challenges are surfacing like pressure on resources, aging, and globalization. The EU had to look ahead, to be a Union the EU needed to develop a strategy to overcome the challenges and evolve the EU into a smart, sustainable and inclusive while delivering high levels of employment, productivity, and social cohesion. Europe 2020 puts forward three mutually reinforcing priorities:

Smart growth: developing an economy based on knowledge and innovation;

Sustainable growth: promoting a more resource-efficient, greener, and more competitive economy;

Inclusive growth: fostering a high-employment economy delivering social and territorial cohesion.

The EU defined where it wants to be by 2020. To this end, the Commission proposed the following EU headline targets:

- 75 % of the population aged 20-64 should be employed;
- 3% of the EU's GDP should be invested in R&D;
- The "20/20/20" climate/energy targets should be met (including an increase to 30% of emissions reduction if the conditions are right);
- The share of early school leavers should be under 10% and at least 40% of the younger generation should have a tertiary degree;
- 20 million fewer people should be at risk of poverty.

These targets are interrelated and critical to the overall success. To ensure that each Member State tailors the Europe 2020 strategy to its particular situation, the Commission proposed that EU goals are translated into national targets and trajectories. The targets are representative of the three priorities of smart, sustainable, and inclusive growth but they are not exhaustive: a wide range of actions at national, EU, and international levels will be necessary to underpin them. The Commission puts forward seven flagship initiatives to catalyze progress under each priority theme:

Innovation Union: to improve framework conditions and access to finance for research and innovation to ensure that innovative ideas can be turned into products and services that create growth and jobs.

Youth on the move: to enhance the performance of education systems and facilitate the entry of young people into the labor market.

A digital agenda for Europe: to speed up the roll-out of high-speed internet and reap the benefits of a digital single market for households and firms.

Resource-efficient Europe: to help decouple economic growth from the use of resources, support the shift towards a low carbon economy, increase the use of renewable energy sources, modernize our transport sector and promote energy efficiency.

An industrial policy for the globalization era: to improve the business environment, notably for SMEs, and to support the development of a strong and sustainable industrial base able to compete globally.

An agenda for new skills and jobs: to modernize labor markets and empower people by developing their sets of skills throughout the lifecycle to increase labor participation and better match labor supply and demand, including through labor mobility.

European platform against poverty: to ensure social and territorial cohesion such that the benefits of growth and jobs are widely shared and people experiencing poverty and social exclusion are enabled to live in dignity and take an active part in society.

## **5. THE EUROPEAN PILLAR OF SOCIAL RIGHTS**

The European Parliament, the Council, and the Commission proclaimed the European Pillar of Social Rights in 2017 at the Gothenburg Summit. The Pillar sets out 20 key principles which represent the beacon guiding us towards a strong social Europe that is fair, inclusive, and full of opportunity in the 21st century.

The 20 principles of the European Pillar of Social Rights are the beacon guiding us toward a strong social Europe that is fair, inclusive, and full of opportunity. The Commission has already presented several actions based on each principle of the Pillar, with additional actions planned to further strengthen social rights in the EU. With the European Pillar of Social Rights Action Plan, the Commission has set out concrete initiatives to deliver on the European Pillar of Social Rights. The delivery of the Pillar is a joint effort by EU institutions, national, regional, and local

authorities, social partners, and civil society. The principles of the Pillar are divided into three chapters:

Chapter I: Equal opportunities and access to the labor market:

Education, training, and life-long learning;

Gender equality;

Equal opportunities;

Active support to employment.

Chapter II: Fair working conditions:

Secure and adaptable employment;

Wages;

Information about employment conditions and protection in case of dismissals;

Social dialogue and involvement of workers;

Work-life balance;

Healthy, safe, and well-adapted work environment and data protection.

Chapter III: Social protection and inclusion:

Childcare and support to children;

Social protection;

Unemployment benefits;

Minimum income;

Old age income and pensions;

Health care;

Inclusion of people with disabilities;

Long-term care;

Housing and assistance for the homeless;

Access to essential services.

## **6: THE MULTIDIMENSIONAL FINANCIAL FRAMEWORK (MFF)**

The European Council and the Council of the EU have a central role in the process of establishing the EU's long-term budget, which usually covers a period of five to seven years. Negotiations kick off a few years before the period covered by the new budget is due to start. The formal process begins with the presentation of the so-called multidimensional financial framework (MFF) package by the European Commission. The package includes, most notably:

- a multiannual financial framework regulation, which lays down how much the EU can spend;
- an own resources decision, which defines where EU revenue comes from.



The MFF for 2014-2020 enables the European Union to spend up to €959.51 billion in commitments and €908.40 billion in payments throughout its duration. Following the European Parliament's consent, on 17 December 2020, the Council adopted the regulation laying down the EU's MFF for 2021-2027. The regulation provides for a long-term EU budget of €1 074.3 billion for the EU27 in 2018 prices, including the integration of the European Development Fund. Together with the Next Generation EU recovery instrument of €750 billion, it will allow the EU to provide an unprecedented €1.8 trillion of funding over the coming years to support recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic and the EU's long-term priorities across different policy areas.

Most of the sectoral EU funding programmes are expected to be adopted in early 2021 and will apply retroactively from the beginning of 2021. For the implementation of the Next Generation EU recovery instrument, the EU's own resources decision had to be approved by all member states following their constitutional requirements. The long-term budget will cover seven spending areas. It will provide the framework for the funding of almost 40 EU spending programmes in the next seven-year period. The next part will sketch some of the existing funding programmes together with their aim that is being funded by the MFF.

### **Horizon Europe**

Horizon Europe with a budget of EUR 95.5 Billion is the EU's key funding programme for research and innovation. It tackles climate change, helps to achieve the UN's Sustainable Development Goals, and boosts the EU's competitiveness and growth. The programme facilitates collaboration and strengthens the impact of research and innovation in developing, supporting, and implementing EU policies while tackling global challenges. It supports the creation and better diffusion of excellent knowledge and technologies. It creates jobs, fully engages the EU's talent pool, boosts economic growth, promotes industrial competitiveness, and optimizes investment impact within a strengthened European Research Area. The duration of the programme is 2021-2027.

Horizon Europe incorporates research and innovation missions to increase the effectiveness of funding by pursuing clearly defined targets. The Commission engaged policy experts to develop studies, case studies, and reports on how a mission-oriented policy approach will work. Five missions have been identified:

Adaptation to Climate Change: support at least 150 European regions and communities to become climate resilient by 2030;

Cancer: working with Europe's Beating Cancer Plan to improve the lives of more than 3 million people by 2030 through prevention, cure, and solutions to live longer and better;

Restore our Ocean and Waters by 2030;

100 Climate-Neutral and Smart Cities by 2030;

A Soil Deal for Europe: 100 living labs and lighthouses to lead the transition towards healthy soils by 2030.

### **European Regional Development Fund**

The European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) with a budget of EUR 226.05 billion provides funding to public and private bodies in all EU regions to reduce economic, social, and territorial disparities. The ERDF is delivered under shared management. In shared management, both the European Commission and national authorities in the Member States, such as ministries and public institutions, are in charge of running a particular program. Local authorities call for projects adapted to their specific needs.

The Fund supports investments through dedicated national or regional programmes. In 2021-2027, the fund will enable investments to make Europe and its regions:

- More competitive and smarter, through innovation and support to small and medium-sized businesses (SMEs), as well as digitization and digital connectivity;
- Greener, low-carbon, and resilient;
- More connected by enhancing mobility;
- More social, supporting effective and inclusive employment, education, skills, social inclusion, and equal access to healthcare, as well as enhancing the role of culture and sustainable tourism;
- Closer to citizens, supporting locally-led development and sustainable urban development across the EU.

### **Recovery and Resilience Facility**

The Recovery and Resilience Facility with a budget of EUR 723.8 billion is the key instrument at the heart of NextGenerationEU to help the EU emerge stronger and more resilient from the current crisis. As part of a wide-ranging response, the aim of the Recovery and Resilience Facility is to mitigate the economic and social impact of the coronavirus pandemic and make European economies and societies

more sustainable, resilient, and better prepared for the challenges and opportunities of the green and digital transitions. The Facility is structured around six pillars: green transition; digital transformation; economic cohesion, productivity, and competitiveness; social and territorial cohesion; health, economic, social, and institutional resilience; policies for the next generation.

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- green transition;
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- policies for the next generation.

### **Rural development programmes**

The common agricultural policy supports the vibrancy and economic viability of rural areas through funding and actions that support rural development. EU countries implement the European agricultural fund with a budget of EUR 95.5 billion for rural development (EAFRD) funding through rural development programmes (RDPs). RDPs are co-financed by national budgets and may be prepared on either a national or regional basis. While the European Commission approves and monitors RDPs, decisions regarding the selection of projects and the granting of payments are handled by national and regional managing authorities.

Each rural development program must work towards at least four of the six priorities of the EAFRD:

- fostering knowledge transfer and innovation in agriculture, forestry, and rural areas;
- enhancing the viability and competitiveness of all types of agriculture, and promoting innovative farm technologies and sustainable forest management;
- promoting food chain organization, animal welfare, and risk management in agriculture;
- promoting resource efficiency and supporting the shift toward a low-carbon and climate-resilient economy in the agriculture, food, and forestry sectors;
- restoring, preserving, and enhancing ecosystems related to agriculture and forestry;
- promoting social inclusion, poverty reduction, and economic development in rural areas.

## **European Social Fund+**

The European Social Fund Plus (ESF+) with a budget of EUR 99.26 billion is the European Union (EU)'s main instrument for investing in people. The Fund is one of the cornerstones of EU socio-economic recovery from the coronavirus pandemic. The pandemic has reversed gains in labor participation, challenged educational and health systems, and increased inequalities. The ESF+ will be one of the key EU instruments helping Member States to address these challenges. As part of the cohesion policy, the ESF+ will also continue its mission to support economic, territorial, and social cohesion in the EU – reducing disparities between the Member States and regions. ESF+ is a combination of four earlier funds from the period 2014-2020: the European Social Fund (ESF), the Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived (FEAD) the Youth Employment Initiative, and the European Programme for Employment and Social Innovation (EaSI).

ESF+ will invest in the following priority areas:

- Supporting young people who have been particularly affected by the COVID-19 crisis - ESF+ resources will help these young people find a qualification, a good quality job, and improve their education and training;
- Helping children in need by allocating ESF+ resources to targeted actions to combat child poverty, and supporting the most vulnerable in society suffering from job losses and income reductions, including providing food and basic material assistance to the most deprived ;
- Reskilling and upskilling people for the transition to a green and digital economy;
- Capacity building for social partners and civil society organizations;
- Transnational cooperation for promoting social innovation across the EU;
- Direct support to social innovation through the Employment and Social Innovation (EaSI) strand.

## **Cohesion fund**

The Cohesion Fund (CF) with a budget of EUR 48.03 billion focuses on investments in countries where the gross national income (GNI) per inhabitant is less than 90% of the EU average. The objective of the fund is to reduce the economic and social gap between and within those countries. For the next long-term EU budget of 2021 – 2027, the Commission proposes to modernize the Cohesion Policy, which is the EU's main investment policy and one of its most concrete expressions of solidarity. Countries that receive support from the fund can get up to 85% of their costs covered.

The Cohesion Fund will support the following thematic objectives by the development needs and growth potential set out in the Partnership Agreement:

- supporting the shift towards a low-carbon economy in all sectors;
- promoting climate change adaptation, risk prevention, and management;
- preserving and protecting the environment and promoting resource efficiency;
- promoting sustainable transport and removing bottlenecks in key network infrastructures;
- enhancing institutional capacity of public authorities and stakeholders and efficient public administration through actions to strengthen the institutional capacity and the efficiency of public administrations and public services related to the implementation of the Cohesion Fund.

## 6: CONCLUSION

The EU rules make it easy for EU citizens to work in another EU country and protect their social security rights when moving within Europe. Because of the European employment strategy, EU countries established a set of common objectives and targets for employment policy, to create more and better jobs throughout the EU. The EU also wants to safeguard social rights and support fair and well-functioning labor markets and welfare systems through the 20 key principles of the European Pillar of Social Rights. The EU employment legislation guarantees minimum levels of protection that apply to everyone living and working in the EU. The right skills help individuals to adjust to these changes and ensure their well-being while contributing to society, productivity, and economic growth.

## Websites

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## **CHAPTER 9.**

### **EU PROGRAMS AND GRANTS FOR MIGRANTS AND REFUGEES**

**YAĞMUR ÇENBERLİ & YASEMIN GIRITLI İNCEOĞLU**

In this chapter to guide academics, researchers and civil society who work on vulnerable groups, specialized especially on developing projects about migrants and refugees, call for European Union Programs and Grants which had been completed, were searched on the [EU database](#). Six different calls had been chosen, summarized and collected in this chapter to give variable aspects of these kinds of programs for developing future projects. These are Science4Refugees, Migrants' Health, MSCA for Researchers at Risk, Human Dynamics of Climate Change, Assistance, Support and Integration of Third-country National Victims of Trafficking Human Beings, Information and Awareness Raising Campaigns on the Risks of Irregular Migration in Third Countries within Europe.

#### **1. SCIENCE4REFUGEES – SUPPORT TO HIGHLY SKILLED REFUGEE SCIENTISTS**

Many immigrants do not only leave their loved ones behind, but also they have to drop out of their education. Therefore, being able to continue their studies is equally significant as access to basic needs. Due to the diverse educational level among asylum seekers and refugees, Science4Refugees intended to provide support for those of who wish to continue their education and/or start a career in a host country. According to the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees in Germany 20 percent of the asylum seekers and refugees attended the university and a certain portion of the recently-arrived hold a higher education degree aspiring to move forward with their studies. Therefore, this project call targeted the organisations that have established initiatives (existing for minimum two years) to assist refugee

researchers and scientists to adjust their skills and employability in the European job market.

The objective of the project is to scale up existing initiatives and bring them to a European level for the purpose of the integration of those scientists into Europe's research system in order to enhance their employability and skills in the European job market.

The eligibility conditions are explained in the [part B](#) and [part C](#) of the Horizon 2020 – Work Programme 2016-2017 General Annexes.

Expected outcome of the project is to provide financial and employability support to initiatives that support the integration of refugees into their new employment setting and culture, and to prepare refugees for the highly competitive and highly skilled job market. The project expects to increase the visibility of these initiatives through the use of the EURAXESS Portal for dissemination and through offering EU coordination support. Besides, the medium-term goal is to raise the amount of highly skilled scientists and researchers who are ready to enter the European labour market.

The budget for the action is 1,000,000 EUR.

There are four projects funded under this call: [BRiDGE – Bridge for Researchers in Danger Going to Europe](#), [Guiding Refugees via European Exchange and Training](#), [Science4Refugees in Aegean Archipelago](#) and [Welcoming Syrian Refugees to Istanbul University: Improving Capacity and Knowledge Sharing](#).

## **2. MIGRANTS' HEALTH: BEST PRACTICES IN CARE PROVISION FOR VULNERABLE MIGRANTS AND REFUGEES**

Most of the time the need for food and shelter takes precedence over health, however health of the migrants, refugees and asylum seekers is as much of significance as the other basic needs of life, especially when considering their rough journey to reach a safe country. For this reason, planning and organizing health facilities in the host countries that cater to the necessities of the vulnerable migrants and refugees are of great importance. Community-based health clinics, which are important facilities to create health-promoting places, could offer a solution to this issue. The hubs do not only empower healthcare but also support health workers' reorientation. Within this action the following activities can be carried out:

- i) In order to create integrated, holistic and community based care approaches gathering information through surveys on the physical and mental health status of vulnerable migrants and examining the existing evidence.
- ii) Identification of the best practices and tools of community-based health care models that serve vulnerable migrants in both the EU and non-EU countries.
- iii) Mapping the legal, organisational and institutional environment in the EU, assessing the capacity and feasibility of the introduction of the integrated, community-based approaches.
- iv) Piloting test and the evaluation of the comparative models in the selected EU member states – economic analysis of comparative practices included.
- v) With collaboration with the health ministries, experts and non-governmental and health professionals' organisations of the EU member states creating a network on mental health (especially for those migrants and refugees who suffer from the post-traumatic stress) could be pursued in order to develop materials and recommendations on mental health care and medical documentation in intercultural refugee populations as well as to ensure the training of health and social professionals to notice mental disorders.

An eligibility criterion is defined as the legally established organisations, public authorities, public sector bodies, particularly research and health institutions, universities and higher education establishments. Eligible countries are the EU Member States, Iceland and Norway. The maximum duration of the project is determined as 36 months and the compliance of the applications with the eligibility criteria were evaluated based on the application content. For more information on the eligibility the section 6 of the [Call document](#) could be further examined.

Expected outcome of this action was to address the best practices in care provision for vulnerable migrants and refugees (children, older persons and pregnant women included) by concentrating on the psycho-social aspects, acute and chronic diseases as well as communicable diseases.

The allocated budget was 4 500 000 EUR. In the call it is stated that the maximum rate for EU co-financing was 60 percent, however this rate could increase up to 80 percent if a proposal met the criteria for exceptional utility described in Annex VII. Annex II also included the eligibility, exclusion, selection and award criteria for the project grant.

Three projects were accepted to be funded, which are [Strengthen Community Based Care to minimize health inequalities and improve the integration of](#)

[vulnerable migrants and refugees into local communities](#), [Models to engage Vulnerable Migrants and Refugees in their health, through Community Empowerment and Learning Alliance](#) and [Operational Refugee and Migrant Maternal Approach](#).

### 3. MSCA FOR RESEARCHERS AT RISK

One of the challenging factors for the host countries is to integrate scholars and researchers who have to seek asylum. Since they all come from different backgrounds and work culture, EU finds it important to actively involve those who can contribute to science. Under the Horizon 2020 Framework Programme, “MSCA for researchers at risk” focuses on the effectiveness of existing measures in European and national research and innovation (R&I) programmes and on the improvement of the recommendations for policy-makers in order to provide assistance to researchers at risk to continue their scientific career in Europe, to find suitable employment with their field of expertise and to help their integration to the society in Europe. Researchers at risk is defined as researchers who are either at risk in their origin countries (due to discrimination, persecution, suffering and/or violence), or currently seeking refuge out of these reasons or have recently found refuge in Europe.

The condition of the funding was the requirement of a consortium of organisations with (i) experiences in supporting researchers at risk and (ii) knowledge of related European and national R&I funding programmes. In order to increase the visibility of the R&I programmes to the potential beneficiaries, it was advised that training schemes for researchers at risk, in line with the recommendations in the Report of the Independent High Level Group on growing the impact of EU Research & Innovation Programmes should be taken into consideration intensively. Thus, building the consortium with the cooperation of related networks and helping to create lasting networks in Europe are in the centre of this work. This project call encouraged additional collaboration and peer-learning activities of existing networks and organisations as well.

The objective of this action is to facilitate trans-national co-operation between European and national initiatives and programmes in support of researchers at risk, with a view to identifying and sharing good practices and raising the general standard of support to applicants, taking into account the diversity of actors.

The criteria for eligibility can be found in the [Horizon 2020 Work Programme 2018-2022 General Annexes: Annex A](#). Also, within the scope of this action a proposal can be considered eligible for the Marie Skłodowska-Curie actions if it

adheres to the eligibility conditions. For more information on this criteria, please visit [Horizon 2020 Work Programme 2018-2020 3. Marie Skłodowska-Curie actions](#).

Expected outcomes of this project were as the following;

- An improved, sustainable and professionalised support network for researchers at risk across Europe, facilitating access to Horizon 2020 calls, creating level playing field for applicants to MSCA and other R&I programmes, and raising the average quality of submitted proposals.
- A more consistent and sustained level of preparedness for supporting researchers at risk in Europe.

The budget of this action was 1,500,000 EUR.

Only one project was funded under this topic: [Initiative to Support, Promote, and Integrate Researchers@Risk in Europe](#) coordinated by National University of Ireland Maynooth. The duration of this project was between 1 September 2019 and 31 August 2022 and also funded under “EXCELLENT SCIENCE – Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions”. Experts in research and innovation as well as EU policymakers were included in the project. By preparing guidance and training to the researchers, the project aimed to facilitate access to EU and national funds in addition to presenting an overview of the researchers’ skills to employers.

#### **4. HUMAN DYNAMICS OF CLIMATE CHANGE**

This project call puts emphasis on the impact of climate change on migration all around the world, which indicates that the climate change does not only mean damaging the nature by humans, but also means harming vulnerable populations in different parts of the Earth. Human Dynamics of climate change draws attention to the effect of the climate change on the populations in particular of the less developed countries such as in Africa. It is estimated that one of the most determinant factors of the population migration might be the climate change from Africa to Europe. Therefore, the importance of studying the socio-economic and geophysical data to build comprehensive policies stands before us.

Within this perspective, the action was divided into two sub-topics:

- a) Climate services for Africa: Actions should design climate services for Africa in the following areas (at least two of those): food security, water, health, energy, infrastructure and land use through studying the available

climate data in Copernicus and relevant sources such as GEOSS. The actions under this sub-topic should create tools that present end-user engagement, consultation and participation which can improve planning and implementation of climate adaptation strategies in Africa. The activities of similar organisations should be addressed (i.e. Global Framework for Climate Services, Copernicus) as well as the EU-Africa Research and Innovation Partnership on Climate Change and Sustainable Energy and cooperation with them is highly encouraged in order to provide added value.

- b) Climate and human migration: The actions that fall under this category need to describe and evaluate drivers concerning climate change that has an impact on human migration and displacement patterns. By using multidisciplinary approach these actions should explain climate parameters, come up with analytical methodologies and present how all these factors have effect on human migration patterns, taking into consideration of the probability of migration/forced displacement and design adaptation solutions that can support the alleviation of the migration pressures at the source. In addition to these, actions also should create guidelines and policy recommendations for the European Agenda on Migration. They can also benefit from the local knowledge and information by building relations with civil society organisations and citizen groups.

International cooperation for both of the sub-topics is encouraged in accordance with the strategy for EU international cooperation in research and innovation (COM (2012) 497).

In order to tackle with the complex challenges of this subject, such as gender issues, the inclusion of social sciences and humanities disciplines in the research is considered as necessary. The commission stated that proposals asked for a contribution from the EU of between EUR 5 million and EUR 7 million would allow this specific challenge to be addressed appropriately. Nevertheless, this does not rule out submission and selection of proposals requesting other amounts.

The objective of this action is to make use of the wealth of available socio-economic and geophysical data to better understand the patterns behind the human dynamics of climate change in terms of climate services and human migration, particularly in Africa, in order to develop appropriate policy responses.

Criteria for eligibility are explained in detail in [Annex A](#) of the Horizon 2020 Work Programme. A member of non-EU/non-Associated Countries that are not automatically eligible for funding made specific provisions to make funding available for their participants in Horizon 2020 projects. The [Online Manual](#) could be visited for further information on the criteria for eligibility.



In addition to this eligibility criteria, specific eligibility conditions apply to sub-topic a): Due to the specific challenge of this topic, in addition to the minimum number of participants stated in the General Annexes, proposals applying for sub-topic a) need to include at least three participants from at least two different countries.

Expected outcomes of this action is to offer better policies for climate adaptation in partner countries and Europe; to support international scientific assessments such as the IPCC Assessment Reports; to contribute to stronger adaptive capacity and climate resilience. On the other hand, the cross-cutting priorities are gender, international cooperation, open innovation, RRI and socio-economic science and humanities.

The budget was planned as 23,000,000 EUR.

[Co-production of Climate Services for East Africa](#), [DOWN2EARTH: Translation of climate information into multilevel decision support for social adaptation, policy development, and resilience to water scarcity in the Horn of Africa Drylands](#), [Full-value chain Optimised Climate User-centric Services for Southern Africa: FOCUS-Africa](#) and [Linking Climate Change, Habitability and Social Tipping Points: Scenarios for Climate Migration](#) are the projects received funding under this action. Even though this call was closed in 2019, those projects have started in 2020 and will end in 2024.

## **5. ASSISTANCE, SUPPORT AND INTEGRATION OF THIRD COUNTRY NATIONAL VICTIMS OF TRAFFICKING HUMAN BEINGS**

Immigrants and refugees as a vulnerable group in the host countries involve their own victims and vulnerable individuals within their own communities. In particular, women and children need more support and assistance due to the higher ratio of the likelihood of their victimization. This action was designed to provide necessary support to improve the integration of the victims in the host country, taking consideration of their need and circumstances as well as victims among vulnerable groups.

The EU Strategy on fighting against trafficking in human beings 2021-2025 holds the protection and empowerment of the victims, in particular women and children, as the top priority. Due to the challenges regarding to the support, assistance and protection of victims, the opportunities to rebuild their lives are quite

limited which brings the need for development of sustainable solutions such as inclusion into the labour market. The anti-trafficking strategy demonstrates that social, economic and educational measures are crucial for victims to re-integrate into the society.

The objective of this action is to enhance the integration of the victims in the host country, taking into account their specific needs and circumstances, as well as victims among vulnerable groups, thereby contributing to the AMIF specific objective 3.2 (b) to strengthen and develop legal migration to the Member States in accordance with their economic and social needs, and to promote and contribute to the effective integration and social inclusion of third-country nationals.

Eligibility criteria for this call is for the applicants to be legal entities such as public bodies or non-profit-making private entities and to be established in one of the eligible countries (EU Member States [including overseas countries and territories, excluding Denmark] and countries associated to the AMIF or countries which are in ongoing negotiations for an association agreement and where the agreement enters into force before grant signature. More detailed information on eligibility could be found in the chapter 6 of the [Call document](#).

Expected outcome is to co-finance transnational measures to enhance the integration of the victims in the host country, taking into account their specific needs and circumstances, as well as among vulnerable groups.

The budget stated as 4,000,000 EUR. However, this action restricts the project budget (maximum grant amount) range between EUR 500,000 and EUR 800,000 per project.

## **6. INFORMATION AND AWARENESS RAISING CAMPAIGNS ON THE RISKS OF IRREGULAR MIGRATION IN THIRD COUNTRIES WITHIN EUROPE**

So far, the ways in which to integrate immigrants and refugees as vulnerable groups to the society in the host countries have been discussed through different EU-funded actions. However, communicating the struggles those vulnerable groups face on a daily basis and raising awareness have almost equal significance for a successful integration policy. The scope of this action is to create effective communication campaign projects in order to raise awareness on the risks of irregular migration in third countries within Europe. The projects are expected to

deliver the followings: an inception report that provides the results from the targeted preparatory analysis accomplished to create the tailored communication strategy; a tailored communication strategy document that defines the geographical scope, audience segmentation, selection of topics and messages, plan for the use of tailored media, social media and any appropriate communication channels, detailed plan for the roll-out of the campaign; a monitoring and evaluation methodology document that frames a theory of change, a results framework and the planned data collection methods; the content of the information and awareness raising campaigns that contains products and services designed, produced and disseminated during the campaign; quarterly monitoring reports that consists of the implementation, contingencies and adjustment measures and progress towards the accomplishment of the proposed key performance indicators; a mid-term progress report that uses the standard form; and a final report that presents the results as well as the observations from the monitoring and evaluation of the project.

The general objective of this action is to contribute to the change of perceptions and behaviour of third country nationals considering the irregular migration to the EU as well as of key influencers of their decisions (i.e. families, religious or community leaders, teachers, returning migrants, providers of services facilitating migration). The action also underlines some specific objectives to be accomplished:

- i) To provide trusted, factual, balanced information on the risks of irregular migration – during the journey (dangers of migrating irregularly) and after arrival (hardship of living in the EU irregularly and return), as well as on relevant legal alternatives of migration and on available economic opportunities in the country or region of origin;
- ii) To empower credible voices in countering migrant smugglers' and diasporas' narratives on irregular migration and narratives on living irregularly in the EU;
- iii) To strengthen multi-stakeholder cooperation between actors, such as civil society organisations, researchers, media outlets, local state actors, diaspora and other relevant stakeholders;
- iv) To enhance the sustainability of communication activities and results of the campaign.

The action also noted that the proposals that only concentrated on diaspora in the EU Member States and do not involve third countries would be rejected.

The eligibility criteria were explained in detail in the chapter 6 of the [Call document](#). The applicants must belong to one of those categories in the following; legal entities, public bodies or non-profit-making private entities and must be established in one of the eligible countries (i.e. EU Member States and countries

associated to the AMIF or countries which are in ongoing negotiations for an association agreement and where the agreement enters into force before grant signature).

Expected outcomes are as the following; EU support to five and up to 15 projects of information and awareness raising campaigns in the area of migration in third countries of origin and transit along the main migratory routes towards the EU, in particular, the Eastern, Central and Western Mediterranean routes, the Western Balkans route and the Silk route. Third countries of particular interest are Algeria, Bangladesh, Gambia, Iraq, Morocco, Niger, Nigeria, Pakistan, Senegal, Tunisia and Turkey. Regional campaigns that target more than one third countries along the migratory routes would be admitted. These projects should concentrate on the prevention of irregular migration and the risks of migrant smuggling, while the campaigns in third countries may be supported by components in Europe that focus on engaging the target audiences' network connections. The budget of this call is 8,000,000 EUR.

## **CONCLUSION**

For developing useful projects for vulnerable groups, first, researchers should determine need of these groups and society, and then researchers should design the project and put forward the aim of the project. Via doing so, researchers could foresee expected outcomes and those outcomes might be beneficial for all.

## **PRACTICE 1**

Via looking at the calls exemplified in this chapter, try to write a call on refugees and migrants with your group members.

## **PRACTICE 2**

Via looking at the calls exemplified in this chapter, try to develop a project on refugees and migrants with your group members.

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## **CHAPTER 10.**

# **EU PROGRAMMES FOR ECONOMIC INCLUSION AND SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOOD OF VULNERABLE GROUPS**

**ABEL DIAZ GONZALEZ**

## **INTRODUCTION**

This chapter focuses on providing an overview of the different funding schemes, initiatives and programs at the EU level, that are meant to benefit and provide opportunities for vulnerable groups. It is our ambition to illustrate and discuss in detail the different programmes covering economic inclusion and sustainable livelihood for people that are living in vulnerable conditions, including refugees, the poor and people with disabilities.

Expected Learning Outcomes

1. To learn about the EU programs embedded in the multiannual financial framework 2021 to 2027 that tackles the economic inclusion and sustainable livelihood of vulnerable groups;
2. To understand the targets, scope and limitations of such programs, including assigned budgets, duration, and application procedures;
3. To learn how to identify suitable opportunities and request further support to apply when possible.

We have been hit very hard by an unprecedented pandemic. This has impacted our economic and social dimension, with yet unmeasurable consequences. Rapidly after we learned about the lethal power of COVID 19, the EU and other powerful countries started to work together to safeguard the life of millions of people. Responses included the adaptations of a hospital with increased capacity especial in Intensive Care Units, big investment in R&D for vaccine developments and support for unemployed people, especially for those who were forced to stay at home due to severe lockdowns.

If we have a closer look, many of these measures leave behind those in vulnerable conditions. Many vulnerable groups are not covered by healthcare systems, remain undocumented or without access to social security benefits and aid provided by the government as they don't fall under the specific category of groups, including citizens or people with formal employment contracts. Although these conditions will hardly change, the new framework program, fully focused on recovery and

resilience, opens new possibilities for the most vulnerable to benefit from different grants and other funding schemes, to gain economic inclusion and a more sustainable livelihood.

The NextGeneration EU framework program has an unprecedented response that will contribute to the improvement of the social and economic challenges posed by the pandemic (Commission & Budget, 2021). This multiannual financial framework (2021 -2027) has set a budget of 1.211 trillion to recover the EU regions, including the different target groups ranging from companies, researchers, students, farmers and vulnerable people, as well as cooperating with neighbours countries. The program has increased a 31.9% budget in investment that are mainly allocated in fundamental dimensions, such as research, education, border protection and sustainable energy and agriculture. This program will benefit EU countries and their vulnerable population. From the total allocated budget, more than 408 billion are distributed through grants. In the following section, we explain how these grants can facilitate the economic and sustainable inclusion of the vulnerable in the EU.

## **1 OVERVIEW OF EU PROGRAMS FOR ECONOMIC INCLUSION AND SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOOD OF VULNERABLE GROUPS**

In this section, we provide an overview of the different programs that are available for the next years (2021 – 2027) that facilitates funding opportunities, mainly through grants, for the economic inclusion of vulnerable population across the EU. Some of these programs are at the EU level, while others are managed at the national level, thus competition can be more manageable and the success rate for proposals can be also high. To preserve the integrity of information, we have taken most of the description text from the official EU sources (Commission & Budget, 2021).

### **ERASMUS+ <sup>39</sup>**

Erasmus + is one of the most comprehensive programs in the field of education across Europe. The total budget for this program is EUR 24.57 billion and its main objective is to support education, training, youth and sport in Europe. The E+ program promotes learning mobility for individuals and

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<sup>39</sup> <https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/>

groups, along with cooperation, quality, inclusion and equity, excellence, creativity and innovation. It promotes non-formal and informal learning mobility, active participation in education and sport among young people and learning mobility of sports staff.

Several projects can be submitted under the Erasmus+ type of projects. These include Cooperation (amongst mainly educational institutions), capacity building, student exchanges between universities, networking and policy support for organisations, and reforms in education, training, youth and sport. Vulnerable people can benefit extensively from projects that are being led by universities and that mainly are targeting the support, training and integration of these populations.

Through the E+ programs and grants, several groups can be targeted, including students, researchers and academics, universities and other organisations working in the field of higher education in the EU, and the partner countries. Once an institution or consortium is selected for funding, the activities are implemented through direct management and indirect management with the support of the Erasmus+ EU national agencies. Funding is disbursed in the form of grants, prizes and procurements.

### **CREATIVE EUROPE<sup>40</sup>**

The total budget for this program is EUR 1.84 billion. Creative Europe focuses on optimising the potential of Europe's cultural and creative sectors by offering opportunities for operators to develop technologically and artistically through innovative trans-border initiatives. To exchange, co-produce and distribute European works and make them accessible to a wide and diverse audience. To do so, this program provides support to the cultural and creative sectors.

Within the Creative Europe program, we find the MEDIA subprogramme, which is designed to support European film and other audiovisual industries. It provides funding for the development, promotion and distribution of European works within Europe and beyond. It also contributes to boosting European talents through training programmes, as well as with contributing to film education, heritage and audience development. The 'Culture' subprogramme is designed to support cultural sector initiatives and promote cross-border cooperation, platforms, networking and literary translation. The cross-sectoral strand is designed to exploit the potential for collaboration among different cultural and creative sectors (including news media) and to address the common challenges they face. This is a great opportunity for

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<sup>40</sup> <https://ec.europa.eu/culture/creative-europe>

vulnerable and marginalized people to show their great talent and benefit from greater exposure, support and inclusive integration to the EU scene.

Under Creative Europe, projects can include actions promoting excellence in the field of culture; projects aimed at developing innovative audiovisual content; support to the news media sector, fostering pluralism, cross-border collaboration and promotion of media literacy. In order to increase the visibility of Europe's cultural and audiovisual sectors, the European Commission rewards achievement, highlights excellence and raises awareness of Europe's culture and heritage through various awards. The targeted group includes the media, artists, cultural and creative organisations within the EU and beyond, the film and music industries and networks, etc.

The programme is managed directly by the Commission and the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (formerly the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency). Funds are disbursed in the form of grants, prizes and procurements. The Creative Europe desks contribute to the programme's implementation

## **EUROPEAN AGRICULTURAL FUND FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT** <sup>41</sup>

The total budget for this fund is EUR 87.44 billion (before transfers between the common agricultural policy pillars), + EUR 8.07 billion from NextGenerationEU. This fund focuses on supporting the transition towards a fully sustainable agricultural sector and the development of vibrant rural areas.

This program is particularly interesting for those vulnerable groups living in rural areas in Europe. The European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) finances the common agricultural policy's contribution to the EU's rural development objectives: improving the competitiveness of agriculture, encouraging sustainable management of natural resources and climate action, and achieving balanced socio-economic development of rural areas and communities.

There are several types of projects that can be funded through this program. The EAFRD assists farmers and inhabitants of rural areas to increase sustainability and competitiveness, including through the following: boosting the use of digital and technological tools; actions to improve the attractiveness of rural areas both for living and for job creation; support for innovation and diversification of on-farm activities; village revitalisation; protection of the environment and biodiversity; and actions aimed at restoring, preserving and enhancing ecosystems related to

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<sup>41</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/info/food-farming-fisheries/key-policies/common-agricultural-policy/rural-development\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/info/food-farming-fisheries/key-policies/common-agricultural-policy/rural-development_en)

agriculture and forestry, with a positive impact on biodiversity, soil, water and air. Beneficiaries of this program include EU farmers and rural stakeholders. The EAFRD is primarily implemented under shared management with the Member States

### **EUROPEAN AGRICULTURAL GUARANTEE FUND** <sup>42</sup>

The total budget for this program is EUR 291.09 billion (before transfers between the common agricultural policy pillars). This fund focuses on supporting viable farm income and resilience across the EU to enhance food security through the common agricultural policy. To contribute to meeting EU environment and climate objectives via greening (until 2022) and via eco-schemes and conditionality from 2023. Achieving a higher level of environmental ambition, addressing climate change and the protection of natural resources and biodiversity are priorities in the future common agricultural policy which will enter into force in 2023.

The European Agricultural Guarantee Fund (EAGF) supports EU farmers through different payment schemes. It also funds measures to support and stabilise agricultural markets, including public intervention buying, private storage aid, sector-specific exceptional support measures; the EU school fruit, vegetables and milk scheme; information and promotion actions; etc.

Projects funded through this framework are mainly supporting EU farmers through different payment schemes, including a basic payment scheme, a payment for sustainable farming methods (under 'green direct payments', 30 % of direct payments are targeted at practices beneficial for the environment and climate), and a payment for young farmers. All payments are subject to compliance with EU rules on food safety, environmental protection and animal welfare. They are crucial for keeping farmers in business, as farming incomes are significantly below the average income in the EU. Beneficiaries of this program include EU farmers and rural stakeholders. The EAGF is primarily implemented under shared management with the Member States

### **ASYLUM, MIGRATION AND INTEGRATION FUND** <sup>43</sup>

The budget of this fund is set at EUR 9.88 billion. Its main objective is to contribute to the efficient management of migration and to the implementation,

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<sup>42</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/info/food-farming-fisheries/key-policies/common-agricultural-policy\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/info/food-farming-fisheries/key-policies/common-agricultural-policy_en)

<sup>43</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/financing/funding\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/financing/funding_en)

strengthening and development of the common policy on asylum and the common immigration policy, in line with the relevant provisions of the EU acquis and fully respecting the international obligations of the EU and the Member States arising from international agreements to which they are parties.

This program highly benefits the economic inclusion of vulnerable groups. The fund strengthens and develops all aspects of the Common European Asylum System (including its external dimension) along with legal migration to Member States, promotes the integration and social inclusion of non-EU country nationals and initial reintegration into non-EU countries, enhances return and readmission along with solidarity and fair sharing of responsibility between Member States and counters illegal immigration.

It covers a wide range of initiatives, such as the improvement of accommodation and reception services for asylum seekers, information measures and campaigns in non-EU countries on legal migration channels, education and language training for non-EU country nationals, specialised support for vulnerable persons, unaccompanied children and victims of trafficking; information exchange and cooperation between EU Member States; and training. This program benefits State and federal authorities, local public bodies, non-governmental organisations, humanitarian organisations, private and public law companies, and education and research organisations. The fund is managed under direct, indirect and shared management. The resources are allocated to the national programmes under shared management and to a thematic facility to be used for specific actions. Funding is disbursed in the form of grants and procurements

## **2 WHERE TO FIND SUPPORT AND FURTHER INFORMATION**

In order to apply and benefit from most of these programs, beneficiaries would mostly need to have the support or representation of a hosting institution (universities, cooperatives, NGO's, etc). Applying to one of the grants and programs as an individual is more complex, competitive and with a very low success rate. Several national and regional offices provide regularly info sessions and guidance for applications and procedures. There are also hundreds of EU Direct Information Centres<sup>44</sup> where applicants and organizations can request more information and support on their applications. Sometimes, these applications are submitted through the national chapters and offices. Due to the ongoing pandemic, we have seen that most of the info sessions are being held online, as well as more help has been made available through online desks. This is quite beneficial, as

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<sup>44</sup> [https://europa.eu/european-union/contact\\_en](https://europa.eu/european-union/contact_en)



applicants can get in direct contact with support officers to clarify questions and get more detailed information.

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## CHAPTER 11.

### BEST PRACTICES OF PROJECTS FOR VULNERABLE GROUPS

NIKOLAY STEREV

In this chapter are presented four cases of best practices of projects focused on vulnerable groups. They give different perspective of how problems related to vulnerable groups are solved in given places. These cases might be used as an example for future projects. Students are expected to discuss if these projects might be implemented in their countries, and/or for other vulnerable groups.

#### CASE STUDY 1. THE LEARNING TO LIVE AND WORK TOGETHER

By Smith, A., Rubio-Rico, L., McClelland, G.T. et al. Co-designing and piloting an Integrated Digital Literacy and Language Toolkit for vulnerable migrant students in higher education. *Educ Inf Technol* 27, 6847–6867 (2022). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10639-021-10845-0>

**The Learning to Live and Work Together project (L2L)**, framed in the 2018 Erasmus+ call for proposals for the key action known as Cooperation for Innovation and the Exchange of Good Practices – Strategic Partnerships for Higher Education. Conducted over three years (Sept 2018 - Aug 2021). It has been led by the University of Bradford, UK, in partnership with University College Cork, Ireland and the Universities of Savonia, Finland; Mariboru, Slovenia; and Rovira i Virgili University (URV) in Tarragona, Spain.

In order to foster intercultural understanding and mutual benefit for all students involved, the L2L project aimed to produce an integrated digital literacy and language toolkit, a digital multi-media platform web-hub and a bespoke mobile application for vulnerable migrant students.

This Toolkit was created to provide vulnerable migrant students with the language and digital literacy skills required for successful study at higher education institutions in the European Union. Using the ASSURE instructional design model, the UDL and the JISC Digital Capability framework allows for a clear structure which encompasses the use of technology for teaching and learning, focuses on learner needs and adheres to priority issues of inclusion and diversity. With all three models underpinning its development, the Toolkit offers a well-structured, flexible, interactive experience adopting varied methods of representation and options for engagement to encourage independent and networked learning.

A further consideration was the use of technology, recognised as a valid strategy to facilitate refugees' access to, and success in, higher education, even in circumstances of minimal technological infrastructure (Halkic & Arnold, 2019). Hence, the format of the Toolkit and its open access publication. Despite the advantages of technology as a support for learning, navigating and studying through the virtual campus of universities has a specific culture. As such, it requires advanced skills recognised as a difficulty for the access and success of refugee university students (Bajwa et al., 2017). This has guided the content and objectives aimed at developing the digital literacy of the students targeted by this toolkit which presuppose a basic level of technological skills.

## **CASE STUDY 2. GREECE, STRENGTHENING OF THE GREEK HEALTH SYSTEM (CORONA VIRUS/COVID-19)**

Elena Riza, Eleni Kakalou, Evangelia Nitsa, Ioannis Hodges-Mameletzis, Paraskevi Goggolidou, Agis Terzidis, Eleni Cardoso, Karl Philipp Puchner, Zisimos Solomos, Anastasia Pikouli, Eleni-Panagiota Stoupa, Christina Kakalou, Evika Karamagioli, and Emmanouil Pikoulis, 2021, Appraisal of a Contact Tracing Training Program for COVID-19 in Greece Focusing on Vulnerable Populations, *Int. J. Environ. Res. Public Health* 2021, 18, 9257. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph18179257>

In an effort to advocate for effective contact tracing for COVID-19 case contacts in vulnerable population groups in Greece, the scientific team of the postgraduate program of Global Health- Disaster Medicine (Medical School National and Kapodistrian University of Athens-NKUA), with the financial support of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), under the project 'Greece, Strengthening of the Greek Health System (Corona Virus/COVID-19)' with PR. NO. 7F-10589.01 launched a two day structured training program for professionals who could be incorporated into the SARS-CoV-2 national contact tracing activities in the country, as their training has put emphasis on the specific needs of vulnerable and hard-to-reach populations.

The work presented in this paper aims to capture the potential for providing skills to professionals working with hard-to-reach populations that can support the optimisation of contact tracing efforts during a public health crisis, as is the case with COVID-19. Our work highlights the high level of satisfaction of the training from professionals working with vulnerable groups, as it is evident that such opportunities are limited, and in reality, lacking. Through the provision of such relevant training and the information on satisfaction, usefulness at work and sustainability, we identify the need to include vulnerable population groups in national disease prevention plans and for professionals to be trained accordingly. During the current pandemic, surveillance, monitoring of the virus spread and contact tracing in vulnerable groups was very limited [47]. Our next steps are to use

the successful completion of the evaluation of this training course to advocate for further inclusion of trained professionals in the national contact tracing activities and to monitor such an implementation. As there has been no nationally coordinated activity among hard-to-reach communities, we have no actual evidence on how effective the contact tracing training could be in such populations residing in Greece. Nonetheless, our evaluation of the training curriculum suggests that the inclusion of such trained professionals in the national contact tracing efforts would be of a public health advantage to health authorities and in pandemic control. Our present work will serve as an advocacy tool to create a network of trained contact tracers and to incorporate them in the national planning strategy for contact tracing. The evidence that contact tracing programmes for vulnerable populations are positively evaluated by health professionals will help to safeguard the health of these communities in times of health crises and will provide the basis for their incorporation in nationally organised activities. Modules on communication skills, cultural competence, social support services and ethical issues were greatly appreciated by our trainees, namely health professionals working in hospitals or primary health care. Health workers in Greece, evidently, lack any such training in their professional and academic curricula, whereas the majority of trainees stated that the course could be a sustainable with great added value for the society.

### CASE STUDY 3. AUSTRIAN PROJECT MORE

[https://ec.europa.eu/migrant-integration/integration-practice/more\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/migrant-integration/integration-practice/more_en)

In the face of the 2015/2016 European migrant crisis, universities in Austria launched project *MORE* to provide a space for reflection for refugees and displaced persons, wherein they can also find out whether university studies are an option for their future. Irrespective of basic needs such as shelter, food and medical care, **refugees require spaces to develop opportunities for the future**. This is especially true for the youth who have lost access to (higher) education by fleeing their country: without support they might grow up to be part of a 'lost' generation.

MORE is aimed at people who were forced to flee their countries of origin, regardless of whether they are still awaiting their asylum decisions or have already been recognised as refugees.

- **The initiative offers orientation regarding possible study at public universities, and assistance with academic integration.**
- The courses provided cover various academic and artistic fields, as well as training in the German language.
- MORE students **may be able to later enrol in a degree programme or to continue one.**
- The language of instruction is either German or English.

- There is a **buddy system in place which helps students with the day to day needs.**
- Admission requires proof of the right of residence in Austria.

***MORE* students profit from the project not only academically (achieving a very high level of German language skills, access to other university programmes and studies), but also personally, through successful integration, including gaining many new friendships with Austrian and international students. At the same time they are often enabled to access the Austrian labour market, including with gainful employment.**

#### **CASE 4: HOPE SOLIDARITY FUND IN ITALY**

From 2014 to 2019, the “Hope” solidarity fund provided multiple inclusion opportunities to asylum seekers hosted in the national first-line reception system. Created by a network of local associations active in the first-line reception system (CAS), the fund aims to foster asylum seekers’ autonomy and inclusion from an economic and professional point of view.

The main beneficiaries of the “Hope” solidarity fund are the asylum seekers hosted in the first-line reception system. Local enterprises and training institutions can also be included as indirect beneficiaries, as through the initiative they gain a more specialised workforce. Local communities benefit indirectly too, from the broader social cohesion that the fund facilitates.

The “Hope” solidarity fund was financed through the allocation of a daily quota for each asylum seeker hosted within the reception programmes (between 0.50 and 1.00 euro per day per person, depending on the period). In addition, school classes, parish groups, and citizens contributed financially to the creation and sustainability of the fund.

The fund was used to finance the following measures addressed to hosted asylum seekers:

- Work grants: asylum seekers were offered the possibility to undertake three-month vocational training. In addition to acquiring specific professional skills, the trainee received a monthly remuneration of 500€;
- Vocational training opportunities: through active collaboration with different training institutions (more than 25), numerous vocational courses were set up for asylum seekers, giving them the possibility of strengthening their professional skills;
- Support contribution: a sum of 250 euros was paid to asylum seekers leaving the first-line reception system in order to provide them with economic support to pursue their inclusion paths;

- Housing contribution: the fund provided up to a maximum of 1 200 euros for the payment of rent during a person's initial months, and for the security deposit required to secure a regular rental contract.

The fund raised 1 380 265 euros by 30 April 2019. Between 2014 and 2019, 2 328 asylum seekers (of whom 34% were from Nigeria; 11% from Gambia; 8% from Ghana, 7% from Ivory Coast and Mali; 5% from Bangladesh, Senegal, Guinea Conakry, and Pakistan; 2% from Guinea, Sierra Leone, Cameroon, Burkina Faso; and less than 1% from Guinea Bissau, Morocco, Togo, Niger, Benin, Liberia, Eritrea, Tunisia, Iraq, Iran, Libya, Sudan, Egypt, Somalia, and Syria) were able to benefit from this money. In particular, the fund provided: 761 work grants; 1 219 vocational training opportunities; 295 support contributions; 53 housing contributions.



## CHAPTER 12.

### BEST PRACTICES OF PROJECTS FOR VULNERABLE GROUPS

**BERNA BALCI, TIRŞE ERBAYSAL FILIBELI**

Defining vulnerable groups is hard and complicated since it depends on social, economic, and political conditions in different countries. However, all around the world, almost in all countries there are two common vulnerable groups which are children and women. For this reason, in this chapter, it had been focused on several projects that are funded by European Commission and it is aimed to present an overview of projects established between 2013 and 2022, and completed up until this day, took children and women, children and immigrants/refugees into their focus. The scope of the article covers the description and objectives of the programs, eligibility criteria for the projects that aim to apply for the calls, expected outcomes of the projects and budget saved to run the projects.

#### 1. THE PROJECTS FOCUSED ON GENDER EQUALITY AND CHILDREN

##### 1.1. User behavior and mobility patterns in the context of major societal trends

Cases of best examples and good practices of projects of European Structural Investments Funds includes several different topics from education, networking, innovation, health to public services. One of the oldest projects observed within the time frame considered in the article dates back to 2013. The project opened in scope of the call titled as “User behavior and mobility patterns in the context of major societal trends” (European Commission<sup>1</sup>, 2022) which was established as a Horizon 2020 Framework Program, takes a fresh look at mobility as part of the overall changing lifestyles of various population groups across Europe. Based on collaboration with other leading experts in the field in Europe, multidisciplinary intelligence coordination provides a strong platform for reinterpreting our understanding of Europeans' "mobility mindsets." One of the most important aspects of the project is that it considers the factors that influence user behavior in relation to the use of private and public transportation, including all modes of transportation as well as "new modes" such as car sharing, bike

sharing, and tram-trains. In order to gain insight into the relationships between socioeconomic conditions and mobility attitudes, the analysis should take into account the characteristics and specific needs of the various user groups (elderly, young, single parents, women, employed and unemployed, immigrants, etc.). A total of 1 million 755 thousand Euros was spent for the project, which was organized between December 1, 2014 and May 31, 2017. 36 projects realized under this topic were as follows: “After the Violence: Ensuring Child Rights Based Protection and Support to children who are victims of domestic violence, during and after their stay at women shelters in Sweden”, “Building Efforts for Children On the Move in Europe through Systemic Approaches, Facilitation and Expertise”, “Beyond Digital Violence: Capacity Building for Relevant Professionals Working with Children and Young People Who Experienced Sexualised Violence Using Digital Media”, “Consent Education for Young People aged 12 - 20 years to Prevent Gender Based Violence”, “Innovation to foster critical thinking tackling gender-based violence on youth affective sexual relationships”, “Develop Approaches and Tools to End online teen dating violence”, “DeStalk: a crosscutting strategy for detecting and removing stalkerware in intimate relationships”, “Enhancing the Capacity to combat child abuse through an Integral training and Protocol for childcare professionals”, “Multiplying Educational Capacities to Combat Sexual Violence Against Children”, “Tackling and responding to online gender based violence through a pioneering e-helpline for reporting GBV online and empowering women, girls and LGBTIQ+ persons and professionals”, “Early Network-based Action Against violent Behaviours to Leverage victim Empowerment”, “Free 2 Link”, “UnitED to prevent IPV/DV Femicide in Europe”, “Free from sexism and sexual harassment at school”, “Breaking the Cycle of Gender-Based Violence against Women and Children in Bulgaria”, “Hidden at Work: Labour and sexual exploitation and harassment of women in the (private) work sphere”, “KID\_ACTIONS – Kick-off preventIng and responDing to children and AdolescenT cyberbullyIng through innovative mOnitoring and educatioNal technologies”, “Free Migrant Women from GBV through identification and access to specialized support services”, “NEVER AGAIN. Developing an innovative training methodology to prevent and combat the risk of secondary victimization of women victims of violence”, “Promote reSPECt and Tolerance”.

## **1.2. ERA-NET Cofund – Promoting Gender equality in H2020 and the ERA**

The majority of the research budget in many European countries and at the European level is allocated in the form of grants. As a result, grant allocation and access to funding are critical components of scientific performance and career

advancement. According to She Figures 2015, while gender gaps in funding success rates were narrowing at the EU level, men continue to outperform women. More research is needed to better understand the remaining institutional barriers that contribute to the persistence of gender disparities in research funding, as well as the policy changes required to remove such barriers. To evaluate these types of researches, European Union opened up the call “Science with and for Society” under the topic of “ERA-NET Cofund – Promoting Gender equality in H2020 and the ERA” (European Commission<sup>2</sup>, 2022) to overcome the challenge of improving on all these points and advance towards completing the European Research Area in the field of gender equality in research and innovation. European Union member countries and a number of non-EU/non-Associated Countries that are not automatically eligible for funding have made specific provisions for making funding available for their participants in Horizon 2020 projects. The ERA-NET Cofund action is expected to improve overall research productivity by strengthening the development of gender equality measures in research and innovation across the EU. It will improve the implementation of research and innovation programs as well as the monitoring of gender equality policies through mutual learning. The ERA-NET Cofund action will assist in overcoming country disparities and implementing appropriate conditions for equal opportunities in the participating countries' research programs. It will promote greater collaboration and resource pooling among regional, national, and EU-wide research programs. It will contribute to the implementation of the ERA Roadmap's gender priority by mobilizing and scaling up funding from Member States and Associated Countries. The budget of the ERA-NET project realized as 98 million Euros.

### **1.3. Call for proposals to prevent and combat all forms of violence against children, young people and women**

One of the example of the programs that focused on the vulnerable groups is carried through under the call titled as “Call for proposals to prevent and combat all forms of violence against children, young people and women” (European Commission<sup>3</sup>, 2022) and become a source of funding of 28 projects was opened to call at 31st of January, 2019. The Rights, Equality, and Citizenship Program's annual work program for 2019 aimed to contribute to the further development of an area in which equality and human rights as enshrined in the Treaty on European Union, the Treaty on the Functioning of the Union, the Charter, and the international human rights conventions to which the EU has acceded are promoted, protected, and effectively implemented. The funds will be used to promote non-discrimination, combat racism, xenophobia, and homophobia, protect the rights of people with disabilities, promote gender equality, prevent violence against children,

young people, and women, protect the rights of the child, ensure the protection of personal data, improve the exercise of rights derived from EU citizenship, and enforce consumers' rights. Members of the European Union, including their overseas departments, Iceland, and the Republic of Serbia are eligible for the program. The applicant and its partners must be public or private organizations legally established in one of the program's participating countries, or international organizations. Profit-seeking organizations may only apply in collaboration with public bodies or private non-profit organizations. Entities affiliated with a beneficiary and linked third parties are not considered project participants under the REC program unless they are included as partners in the proposal. Aside from that, the project can be national or transnational, the application must be submitted by a partnership that includes at least two organizations that are actively involved in the implementation of the proposed action, and the EU grant requested cannot be less than 75.000 Euros. There is no upper limit. Expected outcomes are; prevention / protection and/or support of victims of domestic violence; protection and support for victims of gender-based violence amongst particularly vulnerable groups; prevention of and responses to sexual harassment; preventing and combating violence against children. Total budget spend over the projects accomplished to have this grant was 33 million Euros.

#### **1.4. Centre of excellence on inclusive gender equality in Research & Innovation**

The HORIZON-RIA HORIZON Research and Innovation Actions published a call for projects providing green and digital twin transitions under the topic “Centre of excellence on inclusive gender equality in Research & Innovation” (European Commission<sup>4</sup>, 2022). For the EU to put its scientific knowledge to use and meet these challenges, a new level of ambition is required that better connects R&I with the economy, as well as with education and training. The following objectives are likely to be covered in the proposals:

- Create a sustainable European Center of Excellence and think tank to advance and disseminate knowledge on inclusive gender equality policies in research and development, focusing on three levels of inclusiveness: the intersectional level, which takes into account how different social categories, such as social origin, disability, and sexual orientation and gender identity (LGBTIQ issues), intersect; the sectoral level, which better addresses innovation and the privilege This Center should include professionals from many Member States, including expanding countries, and could operate as a single unit or as the core center and network of hubs in several Member States.

- Develop a stronger Community of Practice on gender equality and diversity in R&I organizations, including R&I performing and funding organizations, and offer expertise and support to Member States, R&I organizations, and the European Commission in the design, implementation, and evaluation of institutional change through inclusive gender equality plans, including through the design and delivery of tailored training activities on inclusive gender equality in R&I.
- Assist in developing new indicators, such as intersectionality, and collecting data on gender equality in R&I across all of Europe. The information gathered should also include details on how gender equality plans are adopted and carried out in EU Member States and Associated Countries, and it should contribute to the publication.

The Work Program General Annexes' Annex B lists the eligible nations. Several non-EU/non-associated nations that are not automatically qualified for funding have put in place specific rules to make funding available for their participants in Horizon Europe projects. Expected results included improving and reforming the EU R&I system, prioritizing investments and reforms, realizing the recovery, and implementing the twin transitions. Deepen the ERA, coordinate national and regional R&I programs by pooling national resources and contributing to the alignment of national research and innovation policies, improve knowledge for policymaking about the networking patterns of research support staff and research management, and create synergies between research & innovation and higher education.

Under the topic of the social and economic integration of migrant women, the “Transnational actions on asylum, migration, and integration” call opened on the 30th of July 2019. The European Union’s objective to constitute an area of freedom, security and justice should be achieved, inter alia, through common measures framing a policy on asylum and immigration, based on solidarity between Member States, which is fair towards third countries and their nationals. The projects which aim at supporting actions to contribute to the efficient management of migration flows and the implementation, strengthening and development of a common Union approach to asylum and immigration were selected to be supported by the EU. There were five different projects funded in the scope of the program titled as; “Approaches To valorize the High ENtrepreneuriAl potential of migrant women to contribute to their social and economic integration”, “Development of inclusivE iNteGratiOn pAths 4 miGrant womEn/ ENGAGE”, “Enhancing social integration and employability of Migrant Mothers”, “RIDE – Reach inclusion through Digital Empowerment for migrant women”, “WOMEN4INTEGRATION: from neighborhoods to Europe”.



According to the most recent ERA progress report, the institutional transformation strategy executed through gender equality plans has had very beneficial effects on many research institutions and has been a catalyst at the national and EU levels. However, there is variation in how gender equality plans are implemented across the EU, and there are still structural hurdles in R&I institutions that need to be removed. Objectives of the project should be as follows:

- Techniques for exchanging and putting into use effective techniques and resources that are suited to the requirements of specific organizations for the creation of inclusive GEPs.
- Assistance in enhancing their networking, particularly with pre-existing Communities of Practice, in the area of gender equality and inclusivity.
- Activities like site visits, in-person or online training, workshops, outreach and dissemination efforts, and capacity-building initiatives.
- The implementation of specific measures aimed at opening institutions to intersectionality and diversity, including the inclusion of intersectional sex and gender analysis in R&I content, in less developed institutions.

The Work Program General Annexes' Annex B lists the eligible nations. Several non-EU/non-associated nations that are not automatically qualified for funding have put in place specific rules to make funding available for their participants in Horizon Europe projects. The following anticipated outcomes are predicted to be impact by projects:

- Implementing inclusive gender equality strategies will help less developed institutions improve their reputation, attractiveness, inclusion, and research excellence.
- Transform organizations within the European Research Area to promote inclusive gender equality (ERA).

### **1.5. The Digital Europe Program**

On February 22, 2022, the European Union issued a call for short-term digital training within the framework of “The Digital Europe Program” (European Commission<sup>5</sup>, 2022). This action aims to provide the present workforce with the opportunity to obtain training that reflects the most recent advancements in critical capability areas, such as HPC, cyber security, AI, and other new technologies. These technologies develop at such a rapid rate that it is necessary for everyone, including those who are already employed, to maintain their digital abilities. With this investment, more men and women will be able to create, develop, and implement digital solutions across the economy. The project intends to increase the current training and retraining options available to the current workforce. The



applicants (beneficiaries and affiliated entities) must be legal entities (public or private bodies), established in one of the eligible countries, listed EEA countries, countries associated with the Digital Europe Program, or countries that are currently undergoing association agreement negotiations and where the association agreement enters into force before the grant signature in order to be eligible. Between market demands and what is available in terms of advanced digital technology-related skills in the EU, a sizable and structural gap exists. According to the European Investment Bank (EIB), the biggest barrier to new business investment is a lack of qualified personnel. Additionally, 53percent of businesses find it challenging to obtain ICT specialists. Only 65% of the workforce today has digital literacy that is considered to be "above basic." This discourages the adoption of cutting-edge digital technologies. In order to meet the needs of both workers and job seekers who need to up skill, the initiative intends to increase the training offer. The available call budget is 25 million Euros. This budget might be increased by a maximum 20 percent.

### **1.6. Pilot European Innovation Gender and Diversity Index**

The European Innovation Council is concerned about the insufficient variety of talent in the tech industry because it is commonly identified as a problem that can impede the performance and expansion of creative start-ups and scale-ups. High levels of diversity at the executive level, which also includes diversity in socioeconomic status and disability, have been shown to be critical for efficient decision-making. In particular, high diversity in terms of gender and ethnicity has been correlated with the higher financial performance of private ventures. In response to the ScaleUp Europe report's recommendations and to increase the accessibility of all talent, particularly female talent, to the EIC portfolio of projects and businesses and the EU innovation eco-system, the EIC is working to create a "Pilot European Innovation Gender and Diversity Index" (European Commission<sup>6</sup>, 2022) as part of the Horizon Europe Framework Program on 5th of April, 2022. The program's goals are to make it possible to identify gender and diversity gaps, devise pertinent solutions, track progress, and make better-informed investment decisions. It also aims to promote diversity at all levels throughout the innovation ecosystem. Any legal entity, regardless of its place of establishment, as well as legal entities from non-affiliated third countries or international organizations, is eligible to participate as long as the requirements outlined in the Rules for Participation, as well as any additional requirements outlined in the particular call or topic, have been satisfied. The applicants must be based in one of the eligible nations—Member States, nations connected to Horizon Europe, and low- and middle-income third nations—in order to qualify for funding. The estimated total

budget for Next Generation EU was 436.000 and for Horizon Europe was 1,274,590 Euros.

### **1.7. The Women in the Blue Economy**

The Women in the Blue Economy (European Commission<sup>7</sup>, 2022) project call opened on May 17, 2022, to meet with the projects' focus on at least three industries in order to mainstream and expand best practices and activities, from industries where data is already available and actions have already been taken in terms of gender equality to industries where data availability and actions are still limited. The proposal's main goals are to increase women's participation and representation in the various sectors of the sustainable blue economy, to better understand and gather data on women's contributions to the blue economy so that gender equality can be effectively promoted and mainstreamed, to advance gender equality in the blue economy, including by encouraging girls to pursue blue careers from an early age, and to advance gender equality in general. The applicants (beneficiaries and related entities) must be formed in one of the eligible nations, such as EU Member States, including overseas countries and territories, and must be legal entities (public or private bodies) (OCTs). The available call budget is 2,500,000 Euros. This budget might be increased by a maximum of 20 percent. The initiatives are anticipated to contribute to a greater knowledge of gender data across the sustainable blue economy in the EU, including, if possible, data on education and training. Priorities of the project include increased visibility, awareness, and recognition of women's role and participation across sustainable blue economy sectors as well as enhanced gender diversity in society as a whole. The project's outcomes include the dissemination of best practices across sustainable blue economy sectors and across European regions to advance gender equality in maritime sectors. In order to support women in the sustainable blue economy, the projects are anticipated to enhance knowledge of the employment and career prospects available to them in this sector and to foster networking opportunities.

### **1.8. Women Tech EU Elevating the scalability potential of European business**

“Women Tech EU - Elevating the scalability potential of European business” (European Commission<sup>8</sup>, 2022) opened on the 21st of June, 2022 under the

Horizon Europe Framework Program aims at strengthening and expanding cooperation between innovation players to better support the next generation of innovative companies whose solutions will lead the shift towards a more competitive EU and a more sustainable, inclusive, and resilient world. The outcomes of the project are anticipated to support deep tech innovation as the cornerstone of a contemporary, knowledge-driven, resource-efficient, competitive economy and to promote female leadership in the deep tech sector in order to create more equitable, inclusive, and prosperous innovation ecosystems in Europe. Several non-EU/non-associated nations that are not automatically qualified for funding have put in place specific rules to make funding available for their participants in Horizon Europe projects. The budget for Horizon Europe from 2021 to 2027 will be approximately €95.5 billion. This includes a reinforcement of 4.6 billion Euros and 5.4 billion Euros from NextGenerationEU, which will help the recovery and strengthen the EU's future resilience.

## **2. The Projects Focused on Immigrants / Refugees**

### **2.1. Migrants' health:**

Best practices in care provision for vulnerable migrants and refugees on 4 March, 2016 a health program designed for the third time with the topic of “Migrants’ health: Best practices in care provision for vulnerable migrants and refugees” (European Commission<sup>9</sup>, 2022) to support activities in view of the development of community-based care models to improve health care access of vulnerable migrants and refugees. It aims to identify innovative ways of reducing inequalities in access to health services and promotes social inclusion by supporting access to social, community/homecare, cultural, or recreational services by facilitating the transition from institutional to community-based care and integrated services. Community-based health clinics (hubs) provide an opportunity to create healthy environments. These care models can also help to reorient specialists to become general practitioners, thereby strengthening healthcare in primary care settings. This action will focus on compiled best practices in the provision of care for vulnerable migrants and refugees (including pregnant women, children, and the elderly), with a focus on psychosocial aspects, acute and chronic diseases, including communicable diseases. The program's specific goals are to promote health, prevent diseases, and foster supportive environments for healthy lifestyles: identify, disseminate, and promote the adoption of evidence-based and good practices for cost-effective health promotion and disease prevention measures by addressing key lifestyle-related risk factors with a focus on the added value for the Union. The total budget for project co-financing was estimated to be 13 million Euros. The

current call had a maximum of 9 million Euros. Grant applications submitted by legal entities are eligible. Applicants must be legally established organizations, public authorities, and public sector bodies, specifically research and health institutions, universities, and higher education institutions. The program only accepted applications from entities based in EU member states, Iceland, or Norway. Countries that have a bilateral agreement with the European Union in accordance with Article 6 of Regulation (EU) No 282/2014 on the establishment of a third Health Program for the Union's health action (2014-2020) were also accepted.

## **2.2. International protection of refugees in a comparative perspective**

Under the call of migration and topic of “International protection of refugees in a comparative perspective” (European Commission<sup>10</sup>, 2022), European Union asks applicants to develop a research and innovation action on 6th of November 2018. While global governance structures benefit policy areas such as development and trade, a global refugee governance regime is still in its infancy. The challenge is to protect international law standards on the treatment of asylum seekers and internally displaced people, address imbalances in responsibility sharing, and ensure the EU plays a key role globally while also aligning reform of its common asylum system to feed into the emerging regime of global asylum governance. By evaluating the process, discourses, and outcomes of the planned refugee compact, the action will significantly advance the knowledge base on global migration and asylum governance. The action will assist European policymakers in identifying appropriate engagement strategies in the process leading to the implementation of the global refugee compact. They will also contribute to the EU's reform of its common asylum system. European Union member countries and a number of non-EU/non-Associated Countries that are not automatically eligible for funding have made specific provisions for funding Horizon 2020 project participants. The Commission believes that proposals requesting an EU contribution of 3 million Euros would allow this specific challenge to be addressed appropriately. This does not, however, preclude the submission and selection of proposals requesting different amounts.

## **2.3. Support to Ukrainian displaced people and the Ukrainian Cultural and Creative Sectors**

Creative Europe Program opened up a call under the topic of “Support to Ukrainian displaced people and the Ukrainian Cultural and Creative Sectors” (European Commission<sup>11</sup>, 2022) to help the Ukrainian cultural and creative organizations, as

well as artists and professionals. In the short term, the program aims to help Ukrainian artists and cultural organizations create and showcase their art and works in Ukraine and in Creative Europe participating countries, as well as to help Ukrainians displaced by the war, particularly children, have access to culture and/or facilitate their integration into their new communities through culture in Ukraine or Creative Europe participating countries. In this context, adequate consideration should be given to the effects of the war on mental health. The program's medium-term goal is to prepare the Ukrainian cultural sectors for post-war recovery through needs assessments, capacity building, and investment planning, as well as to prepare and train Ukrainian cultural heritage professionals in the protection of Ukrainian cultural heritage from risks. Proposals must be submitted by a consortium of at least two applicants (beneficiaries; not affiliated entities). At least one organization should be established in Ukraine and at least one organization took place in another Creative Europe participating country. The total budget was decided to be 4 million Euros for projects focusing on short-term objectives and 1 million Euros for projects focusing on medium-term objectives.

## **Conclusion**

To develop projects for vulnerable groups, first, researchers should determine need of these groups and society, and then design the project and put forward the aim of the project. In that way researchers could foresee expected outcomes and those outcomes might be beneficial for all.

## **PRACTICE 1**

Through reading projects exemplified in this chapter, try to develop a project on the representation of women for empowering female experts in media outlets.

## **PRACTICE 2**

Through reading projects exemplified in this chapter, try to develop a project on the developing digital media literacy of refugee children.

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## **CHAPTER 13.**

# **BEST PRACTICES OF PROJECTS FOR VULNERABLE GROUPS FUNDED BY UNITED NATIONS**

**BERNA BALCI**

In this chapter, it is aimed to present an overview of projects established between 2013 and 2022, funded by all types of United Nation funds, used worldwide for the benefits of vulnerable groups which consist of children and women, immigrants/refugees into their focus. The scope of the article covers the description and objectives of the programs, eligibility criteria for the projects that aim to apply for the calls, expected outcomes of the projects and budget saved to run the projects.

### **1. Projects Funded by United Nations Development Program (UNDP)**

In between years of 2012 and 2017, 171 projects that place gender equality and children into their focal point in several layers, actualized with the contribution of 293.6 billion dollar budget. 169 projects focused on refugees, accepted by UNDP with a total amount of 2.04 billion dollars (UNDP1, 2022). Some of the projects selected according to the priorities, which puts women, children or refugees on the main focus, to the scope and effect and the budget that had the highest total amount, as follows:

#### **1.1. Autorité De L'Etat (State Authority)**

Autorité De L'Etat, The Authority is the one that brings the most comprehensive and high-budget large-scale projects to life among the projects accepted and supported by UNDP. The project, which started on January 1, 2013 and lasted until December 31, 2020, experiences its most active years in 2015, within the framework of the regulations made in the Democratic Republic of Congo. The sub-projects of the roof project that consider the advantage of different women and children at different phase focus levels are as follows (UNDP2, 2022):

- Preparatory phase project of the Integrated Justice Program to ensure effective support for the judicial system of the Democratic Republic of Congo,

- A sub-project that aims to support participatory local development (local planning, public finance of ETDs),
- Support project for the team of Experts in the implementation of the joint communiqué between the Government of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and the United Nations on the fight against sexual violence in times of conflict,
- A pilot project aims to fight against impunity for serious violations of human rights and international humanitarian law, including gender-based sexual violence, in the Democratic Republic of Congo,
- The program of the Government and the United Nations for the Support of Justice (PPAJ) in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC),
- A joint program to fight impunity, support victims of gender-based violence and empower women in eastern DRC,
- Reform project of the Congolese National Police. Support for the implementation of the reform of the Congolese National Police through the strengthening of the operational capacities of the PNC.

Total amount of the project actualized as 44.22 million dollar after 7 years of application of the program.

## **1.2. Inclusive Participation and Effective Contribution of Women in Process of Economic and Political Empowerment in Africa RP 2014-17**

The project was created to strengthen the capacity of AUC/RECs to monitor the ratification, domestication, and implementation of gender-related legal instruments, as well as to use an evidence-based approach to gender equality and women's empowerment (UNDP3, 2022). The program, which started the first projects on January 1, 2015, and the completion of the project will take place on March 31, 2024; aims to improve the capacity of the African Union Commission (AUC) / Regional Economic Communities (RECs) to monitor the approval, domestication and application of gender-related legal instruments. The Addis Ababa-based project covers applications in various parts of Africa. The fund required for the project, which will cost a total of 9.71 million dollars, is covered by the donations of 4.4 million dollars from Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development, 3.5 million dollars from United Nations Development Pro, 1.77 million dollars from Mptfo-Spotlight Initiative Fund (Sif00) and 487 thousand dollars from Government Of Norway.

### **1.3. Strengthening Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment**

The project aims to strengthen the representation and participation of women in public decision-making processes and make them more inclusive (UNDP4, 2022). It has engaged community structures to transform negative traditions that limit the rights of women and girls in Somalia. The implementing agency is the United Nations Development Program. The project, which started on January 1, 2015, ends in December 2022. The project worked with NGOs in Mogadishu, Jubaland, Puntland and Galmudug on a media campaign that identified women's interest in a revised constitution. With media spot messages, 20,000 people were reached. 5 dialogues were held on the role of women in peace, reconciliation and prevention of violence and extremism. More than 360 women leaders, peace practitioners and activists participated in the FMS capitals Puntland, Galmudug, SWS, Jubaland and Hirshabelle. 100 female political candidates were trained and their capacities developed. The media supported the voices of female political candidates and promoted gender-sensitive reporting. Women's political participation at the federal level increased from 14% to 24% in 2018 after the last elections. Total amount of budget spend for the project was actualized as 9.15 million dollar.

### **1.4. Abandon Female Genital Mutilation & Empower Families**

The Abandonment of Female Genital Mutilation & Empowerment of families Joint Programme Project aims to continue addressing FGM within the context of a larger Family Empowerment Package (UNDP5, 2022). The project, which started its first activities on August 15, 2009, ended on December 31, 2019 and was completed in a total of 10 years. Activities such as training public personnel, making demographic maps of the people living in the village, preparing television spots and organizing edutainment events, preparing and distributing a series of publications against female genital mutilation in the country where 91 percent of women between the ages of 15-49 are circumcised were organized within the scope of the project. Of the total 5.68 million dollars required for the realization of the project, 4.76 million dollars came from the European Economic Community, 713 thousand dollars from the Social and Legal Empowerment of Egyptian Women, 144 thousand dollars from the Egypt United Nations Development Fund for Women, 39 thousand dollars from the United Nations. Funded from Nations Development Pro, \$24,000 from the Government of Netherlands and \$1,200 from the Egy United Nations Population Fund.

## **1.5. Supporting Lebanese Hosting Communities**

The project aims to support to economic recovery, community security and social cohesion in Lebanese communities affected by the Syrian Crisis (UNDP6, 2022). The program, which has started on 19th of March 2012, will end on 30th of June 2023. The Project aims to promote stability, particularly in areas affected by the Syrian crisis, by improving livelihood and service delivery in a conflict-sensitive manner. The main accomplishment was the successful implementation of 64 projects in the sectors of livelihoods and social stability, which benefited 90 communities and 1 cluster. The interventions reached a total of 163,028 Lebanese beneficiaries and 113,154 Syrian beneficiaries. Furthermore, the project was able to respond to the COVID-19's health and socioeconomic impact by rehabilitating and equipping 8 government-led isolation centers with the goal of containing the virus's spread, particularly in vulnerable areas; and supporting 193 SMEs and 88 cooperatives. Finally, in response to the Beirut Blast, UNDP was involved in activities to assist families and businesses that had been severely impacted by the explosion.

## **2. Projects Funded by The United Nations Refugee Agency (UNHCR)**

The UNHCR is almost entirely funded by voluntary contributions, with 85 percent coming from governments and the European Union. Other intergovernmental organizations and pooled funding mechanisms contribute 3%, while the private sector, which includes foundations, corporations, and the general public, contributes 11%. Furthermore, UNHCR receives a 1% subsidy from the UN budget for administrative costs and accepts in-kind contributions such as tents, medicines, and trucks (UNHCR, 2022). UNHCR was established in 1950 with a meager annual budget of \$300,000 USD. However, as our work and size have expanded, so have our costs. Their annual budget increased to more than \$1 billion in the early 1990s and is expected to reach a new high of \$9.15 billion in 2021. UNHCR carries out its own projects with its own team in the countries where it operates, with the number of employees approaching 19 thousand as of 2021. 91% of these employees consist of people working in the field. UNHCR works in 137 countries and territories, with personnel based in a mixture of regional and branch offices and sub and field offices.

### 3. Projects Funded by UNICEF

UNICEF carries out the organization of the project; fieldwork and annual activity targets at the institutional level by collecting donations instead of providing funds for outsource projects (UNICEF1, 2022). Total contributions to UNICEF in 2021 were \$8.1 billion. The government, inter-governmental and inter-organizational partners, as well as Global Program Partnerships, contributed the most money: \$5.9 billion. In terms of contributions received, our top three resource partners in 2021 were the governments of the United States of America (US\$884 million), Germany (US\$868 million), and the European Union (US\$585 million). The private sector contributed \$2 billion (from National Committees, individual donors, NGOs, foundations, and others). The top three private sector partners were the National Committees of the United States (US\$475 million), Japan (US\$187 million), and Germany (US\$145 million). These and other types of funding helped UNICEF to establish some of the achievements as follows (UNICEF2, 2022):

- UNICEF led the procurement and delivery of COVID-19 vaccines as the procurement coordinator for the COVAX Facility. COVAX will have delivered 958 million doses (including donated doses) to 144 countries by 2021.
- Providing services to prevent stunting and other forms of malnutrition to nearly 336 million children, up 38% from 2020.
- Despite pandemic-related service disruptions, UNICEF reached 154 million children with life-saving screening for severe wasting using simplified, community-level approaches, and treated nearly 5.5 million children.
- Reaching 64% of women in the 50 focus countries of the Every Newborn Action Plan with at least four antenatal care visits and 65% of women with postnatal care
- Providing education to 48.6 million out-of-school children, including 6.4 million children on the move and 31.7 million in humanitarian settings.
- Providing prevention and care interventions to 7.6 million adolescent girls at risk of child marriage through joint programming with UNFPA, up from 2.1 million in 2017.
- Reaching ambitious targets by expanding access to safe water and basic sanitation for 69.9 million people and basic sanitation for 59.6 million people between 2018 and 2021.

- Advocating for the release of detained children, which resulted in a major policy breakthrough. Over 45,000 children have been released from detention since the outbreak began in 84 countries.
- Global advocacy on vaccines, education, mental health, water, climate, and nutrition, as well as child protection in humanitarian situations, has resulted in positive policy change and action in 92% of the intended countries.
- In 153 countries, UNICEF is responding to 483 new and ongoing humanitarian crises.
- Purchasing supplies and services worth \$7.2 billion from nearly 11,150 suppliers.

#### **4. Projects Funded by United Nations of Population Fund (UNFPA)**

UNFPA works in over 150 countries and territories that house the vast majority of the world's population. Its mission is to ensure that every pregnancy is desired, every childbirth is safe, and young people reach their full potential. UNFPA collaborates with governments, civil society, and other organizations to advance its mission, guided by the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) Program of Action of 1994. UNFPA broadens its work by collaborating with civil society, academic institutions, and the private sector. It established a Civil Society Advisory Panel in 2013 to foster dialogue with organizations, networks, and partners about programming and policies. UNFPA also meets with parliamentarians on a regular basis to assess progress in implementing the ICPD Program of Action. UNFPA also participates in and manages a number of pooled funding mechanisms at the national, regional, and global levels, including Joint Programs and Multi-Donor Trust Funds (UNFPA1, 2022). Joint Program funds spent with the sister foundations or third parties such as FAO, IOM, UNAIDS, UNICEF, UNWOMEN, WHO (UNFPA2, 2022).

#### **5. Projects Funded by United Nations Human Settlements Program (UN-Habitat)**

The United Nations General Assembly has charged the United Nations Human Settlements Program (UN-Habitat) with promoting socially and environmentally sustainable towns and cities. UN-Habitat is the UN system's focal point for all urbanization and human settlement issues (UN-Habitat1, 2022). Of the total revenues of 58.36 million dollars in 2022, including the United Nations revenues,



3.03 million dollars was obtained from Africa, 22.34 million dollars from Asia Pacific, 7.87 million dollars from Latin America and the Caribbean, 8.9 million dollars from Western Europe and other countries (UN-Habitat2, 2022). UN-Habitat is uniquely positioned to ensure women's inclusion in the rapid urbanization process with the help of Her City, which is a project, established by UN-Habitat to provide benefit to women at potential various areas as follows (UN-Habitat3, 2022):

- Increased financial independence through more diverse employment opportunities,
- Easier access to education at various levels,
- Improved access to healthcare,
- More chances to socialize outside the home,
- More opportunities to serve in community or political leadership roles,
- More opportunities to reshape traditional gender roles.

## **6. Projects Funded by UNWOMEN**

Gender is present in all human development and human rights issues. UN Women focuses on priority areas that are critical to women's equality and have the potential to accelerate progress across the board. UNWOMEN focuses on 8 key topics titled as, Women's leadership and political participation, economic empowerment, ending violence against women, peace and security, humanitarian action, governance and national planning, youth and gender equality, women and girls with disabilities, the 2030 agenda for sustainable development, HIV and AIDS (UNWOMEN1, 2022). Through two funds, "the Fund for Gender Equality" and "the UN Trust Fund to End Violence Against Women," UN Women provides grants to government agencies and civil society groups to fuel innovative, high-impact programs. The Fund for Gender Equality is a multi-donor initiative dedicated to programs that increase women's economic opportunities and/or political participation at the local and national levels. The UN Trust Fund, which is managed by UN Women on behalf of the UN system, works to end all forms of gender-based violence that undermine women's rights around the world (UNWOMEN2, 2022).

The United Nations Trust Fund to End Violence Against Women (UN Trust Fund) provides grants to initiatives that demonstrate that violence against women and girls can be systematically addressed, reduced, and eventually eliminated. The UN Trust Fund has awarded USD 198 million to 609 initiatives in 140 countries and territories since its inception in 1996 by UN General Assembly Resolution 50/166. In 2020, it managed a grant portfolio of 150 projects in 71 countries and territories aimed at preventing and responding to violence against women and girls (UNWOMEN3, 2022). The Fund for Gender Equality (FGE) has one overarching goal: to assist national, women-led civil society organizations in achieving women's economic and political empowerment and the SDGs (SDGs). The Fund is a one-of-a-kind global grant-making model based on the principles of accessibility, trust, and women's ownership. It transforms funding from a variety of donors into high-impact initiatives led by women-led organizations, investing in their ideas and abilities to pursue interventions focused on the most vulnerable women and girls, with 97% of its projects involving at least one vulnerable group and 70% involving two or more. Since its inception in 2009, the Fund has helped 131 organizations strengthen their capacities and awarded USD 65 million in grants to 121 projects in 80 countries. Projects directly improved the lives of 570,000 people and benefited millions more through long-term policy changes (UNWOMEN4, 2022).

## **PRACTICE 1**

Please check UN programs listed above and develop a project with your group members on a vulnerable group in your country

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## CONTRIBUTORS – Authors of Different Chapters



**Diana Kopeva** is a full time professor at the University of National and World Economy (UNWE), Sofia, Bulgaria. She gives lectures on Project Management, Strategic Management, Entrepreneurship, Social Entrepreneurship, Business Planning. She has more than 100 scientific publications, based on her research interests. She is one of the leading researchers in the area of business economics and entrepreneurship in Bulgaria. Her research interests are in the field of start-ups, corporate social responsibility (CSR) and circular economy. She participated in numerous projects (national and international).

Professor Diana Kopeva has more than 100 publications and has participated in more than 25 international projects. She has been a keynote speaker on different international conferences and has been appointed as guest lector in different universities worldwide



**Dr. Savvathou Tsolakidou** is currently working as Laboratory and Teaching staff at the Department of Communication and Media Studies of the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens (NKUA) and as Consultant Professor at the Hellenic Open University in the postgraduate programme “Adult Education”. She studied Sociology and French Literature and she worked at the Hellenic Ministry of Education, the National Centre for Public Administration, and the European Commission as National Detached Expert. Her research interests focus on lifelong learning and Communication, organizational communication, European studies, European social policy and capacity building and skills. She is the Scientific Coordinator and Project manager of the ERMIScom university partnership project funded by IKY, the Greek National Agency for the Erasmus+ programme.



**Prof. Nikolay Shterev** Nikolay Sterev is full professor at University of National and World Economy – Sofia. He is Head of Industrial Business Department and his main interests cover: industrial development, industrial growth, regenerative economy, Industry 4.0 and Industry 5.0 and others. He has PhD in marketing management and habilitation in marketing leadership. He is chairman of the (Bulgarian) Association of Professors in Economics and Management of Industry (APIUI) and chairman of Organization Committee of Industrial Growth Conferences. Professor Nikolay Sterev has published more than 100 publications and has participated in more than 25 international projects. He has been a keynote speaker on different international conferences and has been appointed as guest lecturers in different universities worldwide.



**Dr. Iliya Kerezhev** is a Chief Assistant Professor at the Department of Management, University of National and World Economy (UNWE), Sofia, Bulgaria. He teaches subjects as Foundations of Management, Small Business Management, Strategic Management and Management of Family Business. His research interests include entrepreneurship, strategic management, managing growing SMEs and family business development. In 2010 he has defended doctoral dissertation on a subject "Managing growing technology-based SMEs". As a member of different research teams at UNWE, he has participated in

several national and international research and training projects in the area of entrepreneurship and small business development.



**Theodora Gazi** is a post-doctoral researcher in private international and refugee law at the University of Athens. She has published journal articles on human rights, data protection and asylum law, as well as an academic book on the international protection of vulnerable groups in crisis conditions. Theodora is also working as a lawyer for international non-governmental organisations which support the humanitarian response in Greece.



**Professor Dr. Yasemin Giritli İnceoğlu** is a visiting professor at London School of Economics, Media and Communication Department in 2022-2023 academi year. She is also a member of the UNESCO International Clearinghouse on Children and Violence on the Screen and of the American Biography Institute. Yasemin was a visiting scholar at Columbia University (1994) and at the Salzburg Seminar (2003), at New Delhi University Media Studies Center (2014), at EUI-European University Institute (2017) and at Birkbeck, University of London (2020-2021). She took place in many projects and has published several books: *The Persuasion Process in Communications: With Some Examples of the Political Campaigns* (1997); *Media and Society, Women in the Media and Women Journalists* (2002); *International Media* (2004); *A Guide to Media and Children* (2008); *Text Analysis* (2009); *Women and their Body in the Spiral of Femininity, Sexuality and Violence* (2010), *Hate Speech and Hate Crimes* (2012) *Minorities, The Other and Media* (2014), *Internet and Street* (2015) *News Readings* (2016), *Journalism ‘a Peacekeeping Agent’ at the Time of Conflict* (2018), *LGBTI+ Individuals and Media* (2019) *Covid Diaries* (2021) *Pandemics, Neoliberalism and*



Media (2021). Her areas of studies are media criticism and media coverage of hate speech towards minorities and the other Others. She conducts courses such as Alternative Media and Journalism Rights, Communication Ethics, Theories and Models of Communication and Media Criticism.



**Bart Leyen** is a Ph.D. student at the Vrije Universiteit Brussel in Belgium (VUB). His research focuses on building entrepreneurial ecosystems for social entrepreneurs. Bart is an educational assistant at the VUB department of Social sciences & Sovay Business school as well, assisting in courses about entrepreneurship, social entrepreneurship, CSR, and research methods. Additional to teaching he supervises bachelor and master theses. Currently, Bart is involved in the coordination of ELANET, an Erasmus+ capacity building with partners in Europe and Latin America. He is also involved as a volunteer in the investment committee of Entrepreneurs for Entrepreneurs, a Belgian organization that manages an acceleration fund and helps African social entrepreneurs get investment-ready. Bart also has extensive knowledge of web design and IT project management.



**Abel Diaz Gonzalez** is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Organization, Strategy and Entrepreneurship at the School of Business Economics, Maastricht University. He holds a PhD in Business Economics from the Vrije Universiteit Brussels (VUB).

His research focuses on ecosystems for social entrepreneurs, and their supportive function and mechanisms. Part of his research is dedicated to investigating the supportive role and interaction of universities' main stakeholders, processes and activities within and across the ecosystems of social entrepreneurs. Abel has conducted field research in Bolivia, Ecuador, Colombia, and Belgium. His research has been presented at different international conferences such as the Academy of Management (AoM), the International Association for Business and Society (IABS), the New Business Models Conference, and the Social Entrepreneurship Summit.

Abel has acted as a reviewer at various conferences and for journals. He is involved in special issues in peer review journals and has acted as editor of book series in the field of Social Entrepreneurship. Abel is also part of the leadership of different international associations: New Business Models (Conference Chair 2023); International Association for Business and Society (Representative at Large); Social Entrepreneurship Summit (Co-founder and Co-organizer).

Prior to his appointment at UM, Abel was a visiting professor at the Department of Business and a postdoctoral fellow at the Chair of Social Entrepreneurship at the Vrije Universiteit Brussels (Belgium), where he supervised master theses and co-supervised doctoral students. He also was an adjunct professor of social entrepreneurship at the Brussels School of Governance. He has been actively involved in the coordination of large international projects (Europe, Africa, Latin America) focused on capacity building at universities in the field of social entrepreneurship, funded by the European Commission and VLIR UOS.



**Tirşe Erbaysal Filibeli** is an associate professor of media and communications. She received her M.A. degree and Ph.D. from Galatasaray University in Media and Communication Studies. In 2018 she co-edited *“Journalism a Peacekeeping Agent at the Time of Conflict”* and in 2020 She edited *“Information Nightmare: Fake News, Manipulation and Post-truth Politics in the Digital Age”*. Since 2016 she is working as a researcher in the country team of Turkey for Media Pluralism Monitor Project of Centre for Media Pluralism and Freedom (CMPF). In 2016, she worked as a special rapporteur for Hrant Dink Foundation, Asulis Discourse, Dialogue, Democracy Laboratory and contributed the report entitled “A new Discourse, Dialogue and Democracy against Discrimination”. She is the country team leader of the ongoing Erasmus+ Project titled “Ermiscom Common Curricula for Diversity in Media and Integration of Vulnerable Groups”. Her research interests focus on algorithmic manipulation and computational propaganda, big data and data privacy, information disorder and fact-checking, disinformation/misinformation about minorities and othering in the post-truth era, populism, hate speech and peace studies. She has been working as the chair of the Department of New Media at Bahçeşehir University since 2018.



**Berna BALCI** is a digital media expert at the Faculty of Communication at Bahçeşehir University and Ph.D. candidate at Advertising and Public Relations Doctorate Program of Bahçeşehir University. She has completed her undergraduate degree in Economics at Marmara University, and master's degree in Advertising and Brand Communication Management at Bahçeşehir University. Balci's academic interests include digital media, cognitive effects of media consumption, gratifications, desire, pleasure, and other

motivational effects of digital media user experience. In professional life since 2004, Berna works for different agencies and national media as author to designer at several campaigns for eight years. In 2013 she started to work at Bahçeşehir University as a corporate communication coordinator to manage the communication of the sub brands. She is still managing the social and digital media platforms of Bahçeşehir University of Faculty of Communication.



**Yağmur Çenberli** is a PhD candidate and research assistant in the Communication Faculty at Bahçeşehir University in Istanbul, Turkey. She holds a bachelor's degree in Media and Communications Systems and M.A. degree in International Political Economy at Istanbul Bilgi University where she completed her dissertation thesis on political economy of communication and alternative media in Turkey. She is also a member of the research team in Turkey for the EU project Media Pluralism Monitor by Centre for Media Pluralism and Media Freedom. Her research focuses on critical political economy of communication and the internet, telecommunications, alternative media, media philosophy, freedom of expression and the press.