

Direct EU Grants

Direct EU programmes are managed by the European Council. This implies that upon the distribution of the allocations, national quotas are disregarded; member states can only obtain funding resources gained by applicants.

ERASMUS+

The European Union's Erasmus+ 2014-2020 framework programme¹ joins currently running initiatives in the fields of education, training, youth and sport. The overall budget of the 7 year programme is EUR 14.7 billion. Its goal is to:

- develop key competences and skills, especially focusing on skills important to the labour market and social cohesion, primarily by mobility in education, as well as stimulating cooperation between education and training institutions and businesses;
- encourage quality and innovation in education and training institutions, primarily by focusing on international cooperation and involving actors outside the scope of education and training;
- support policy reforms and modernisation of education and training systems, primarily by stimulating policy cooperation, effective use of EU tools facilitating transparency and recognition of qualifications, as well as sharing best practices;
- develop language education (both learning and teaching) and encourage linguistic diversity and intercultural sensibility.

The overall budget of the 7 year programme is EUR 14.7 billion.

Grants can be obtained by the following three key activities, as well as further two main thematic fields:

1st key activity: Learning mobility of individuals

The programme will enable European higher, vocational education students and staff to study abroad, follow a training course or gain work experience. In addition, opportunities are available for adult education organisations to send or receive staff for teaching and training, as well as to provide courses. The programme also supports voluntary service of youth workers in a foreign country.

¹ <https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/> - accessed: 6 April 2016

2nd key activity: innovation and good practices

The programme offers support in order to create and maintain transnational partnerships between education, training and youth institutions, and actors beyond the scope of these fields. The aim of the measure is to strengthen cooperation and to liquidate skill shortage experienced on the European labour market by easing transition from student life to employment.

Table 1. Call for proposals under the 2nd key activity

Call	Eligible applicants	Grant amount/ project	Partnership
Strategic Partnerships in the field of education, training and youth	higher education institutions, NGOs, SMEs, public body, social partners, etc.	max. 450 000 €	min. 3 partners from 3 countries
Knowledge Alliances	higher education institutions, NGOs, SMEs, public body, research institutes, etc.	max. 1 000 000 €	min. 6 partners from 3 countries
Sector Skills Alliances	social partners; labour ministries; employment services; research institutes, national statistics offices; SMEs; economic development agencies; chambers of commerce; etc.	max. 1 400 000 €	min. 6 partners from 3 countries
Capacity Building in the field of higher education	higher education institutions; any public or private organisation active in the labour market; etc.	max. 1 000 000 €	min. 4 partners from 2 countries

3. key activity: support for policy reform

Erasmus+ helps member state intentions aimed at modernising education, training and youth systems. The 3rd key activity strives to create a structured dialogue between young people and policy makers. Details of the call relevant for higher education institutions are summarized in Table 2.

Table 2. Call for proposals under the 3rd key activity

Call	Eligible applicants	Grant amount/ project	Partnership
Initiatives for policy innovation	public authorities, NGOs, research centres, chambers of commerce, etc.	max. 50 000 €	min. 3 partners from 3 countries

Jean Monnet programme

The Jean Monnet programme stimulates education and research activity in the field of EU studies. Initiatives within the programme encourage dialogue between scientists and policy makers, in order to strengthen EU policy control.

Table 3. Call for proposals under the 4th key activity

Call	Supported activities	Eligible applicants	Grant amount/ project
Jean Monnet Modules	Short teaching programmes on general, specific, or multiple disciplines in the field of EU studies.	higher education institutions	max. 30 000 €
Jean Monnet Chairs	Teaching posts with a specialisation in EU studies for university professors.	higher education institutions	max. 50 000 €
Jean Monnet Centres of Excellence	Developing the focal points of knowledge and skills on European Union affairs.	higher education institutions	max. 100 000 €
Jean Monnet Support to Associations	Establishment of interdisciplinary associations specialising in EU affairs.	any association of professors and researchers specialising in European Union Studies	max. 50 000 €
Jean Monnet Networks	Gathering information, exchanging practices, building knowledge on EU issues, and promoting EU integration.	higher education institutions (HEI) or other organisations active in the European integration area	max. 300 000 €
Jean Monnet Projects	Supporting innovation, knowledge-sharing, and communication on European issues.	higher education institutions (HEI) or other organisations active in the European integration area	max. 60 000 €

Sport

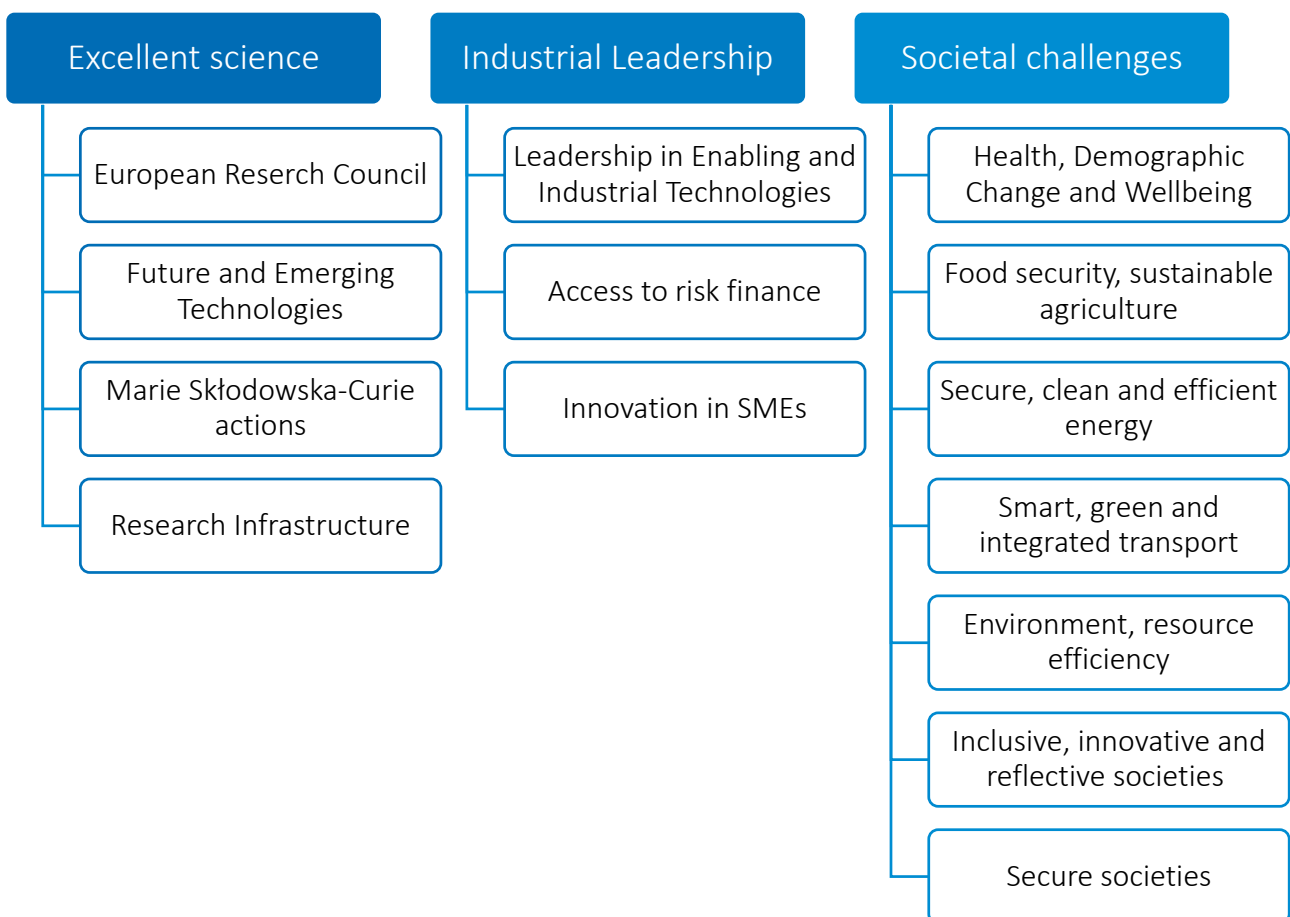
In the field of sport, projects aimed at developing and implementing joint activities to promote sport and physical activity, identify and implement innovative activities in the field of sport, and manage not-for-profit events to increase participation in sport.

Horizon2020

Horizon2020² is the EU’s research and innovation framework programme for the 2014-2020 period. It disposes of a nearly EUR 79 billion budget, which is the most significant allocation ever. The programme is one of the fundamental pillars of the Europe 2020 strategy’s flagship initiative called “*Innovative Union*”, which aims at stimulating the global competitiveness of the continent.

H2020 puts great emphasis on decreasing the gap between scientific breakthroughs and business opportunities, which is why it provides support to all phases of the innovation chain, from research to market recovery. The aim of the programme is to tackle social challenges and solve problems related to the EU community (e.g. health care, energy, transport).

Figure 1: Pillars of Horizon2020



² <https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/horizon2020/en> - accessed: : 6 April 2016

The programme constitutes of 3 pillars. “**Excellent science**” is aimed at strengthening the EU’s leading position in the field of scientific excellence in a global point of view. The pillar

- offers grants for talented and creative individual researchers;
- fosters scientific collaboration across disciplines on radically new, high-risk ideas and accelerate development of the most promising emerging areas of science and technology;
- supports excellent and innovative research training as well as attractive career and knowledge-exchange opportunities through cross-border and cross-sector mobility of researchers;
- supports the development of European research infrastructure.

The goal of programmes within the “**Leading industrial role**” pillar is to speed up development and innovation of a key technological sectors serving as basis for a competitive European economy, as well as support European SMEs. The pillar provides dedicated support for research, development and demonstration on ICT, nanotechnology, biotechnology, advanced manufacturing, etc. In addition it offers different financing opportunities for SMEs.

The third pillar, “**Social challenges**”, aims at solving the most relevant social problems that concern citizens, in the fields marked on the figure above. Granted projects will bring together resources and knowledge across different fields, technologies and disciplines, including social sciences and the humanities. This will cover activities from research to market with a new focus on innovation-related activities, such as piloting, demonstration, test-beds, and support for public procurement and market uptake.

Within the framework of the Horizon2020 Programme large, European-scale cooperation projects can be implemented with the participation of several partners from different sectors and member states. The average grant amount is 1-5 million €.

Transnational Programmes

Danube Transnational Programme

The European Commission has set up a new transnational cooperation programme for the 2014-2020 period on 18 December 2012, covering the same geographical area the EU Strategy for Danube Region has outlined in 2011. Eligible partners of the **Danube Transnational Programme**³ will be the following countries: Austria, Bulgaria, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Germany (only Baden-Württemberg and Bayern), Hungary, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia; Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Republic of Moldova, Montenegro, Serbia, part of Ukraine. The programme priorities are summarised in Table 4 below.

Table 4. Priority axes and specific goals of the Duna Danube Transnational Programme

Programme budget (EUR million)	Priority axes	Specific objectives
72.8	Innovative and socially responsible Danube region	Improve framework conditions for innovation
		Increase competences for business and social innovation
83.2	Environment and culture responsible Danube region	Strengthen transnational water management and flood risk prevention
		Foster sustainable use of natural and cultural heritage and resources
		Foster the restoration and management of ecological corridors
		Improve preparedness for environmental risk management
54.6	Better connected and energy responsible Danube region	Support environmentally-friendly and safe transport systems and balanced accessibility of urban and rural areas
		Improve energy security and energy efficiency
33.8	Well-governed Danube region	Improve institutional capacities to tackle major societal challenges
		Support to the governance and implementation of the EUSDR

³ <http://www.interreg-danube.eu/> - accessed: 4 April 2016

Central Europe Transnational Programme

The **Central Europe Transnational Programme**⁴ is supporting the regional cooperation of Central European countries for the 2014–2020 programming period. The programme will involve nine Central European countries (Austria, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia, Germany and Italy), from which Germany and Italy participates with selected regions only. Priorities of the Programme are summarized in Table 2.

Table 5. Priority axes and specific goals of the Central Europe Transnational Programme

Budget (million EUR)	Priority axes	Specific goal
83	Cooperating on innovation to make Central Europe more competitive	To improve sustainable linkages among actors of the innovation systems for strengthening regional innovation capacity in Central Europe
		To improve skills and entrepreneurial competences for advancing economic and social innovation in Central European regions
53	Cooperating on low carbon strategies in Central Europe	To develop and implement solutions for increasing energy efficiency and renewable energy usage in public infrastructures
		To improve territorially based low-carbon energy planning strategies and policies supporting climate change mitigation
		To improve capacities for mobility planning in functional urban areas to lower CO ₂ emissions
107	Cooperating on natural and cultural resources for sustainable growth in Central Europe	To improve integrated environmental management capacities for the protection and sustainable use of natural heritage and resources
		To improve capacities for the sustainable use of cultural heritage and resources
		To improve environmental management of functional urban areas to make them more liveable

⁴ <http://www.central2020.eu/> - accessed: 2 February 2016

Budget (million EUR)	Priority axes	Specific goal
36	Cooperating on transport to better connect Central Europe	To improve planning and coordination of regional passenger transport systems for better connections to national and European transport networks
		To improve coordination among freight transport stakeholders for increasing multimodal environmentally-friendly freight solutions

Both transnational cooperation programmes mainly supports soft actions, such as exchange of experience, knowledge transfer, planning and implementation of strategies, actions plans, learning interactions, etc. Small-scale investments can be covered by 7% of the total budget. Eligible applicants are public bodies and institutions, NGOs, chambers and professional associations, EGTCs, educational institutions, research centres etc. The consortium must consist of 10-12 partners from 5-6 programme countries. The average grant amount is EUR 1-5 million, the co-financing rate is 85%.

Slovenia-Hungary Cross-border Cooperation Programme

The Slovenia-Hungary CBC programme⁵ aims to create an attractive area for living, working, investing, undertaking through better capitalizing on existing natural and cultural assets in tourism and jointly addressing those common problems which call for common solutions at cross-border level. The programme area includes the following NUTS3 regions: Podravje, Pomurje region and Vas, Zala counties.

Table 5. Priority axes and specific goals of the Slovenia-Hungary Cross-border Cooperation Programme

Budget (million EUR)	Priority axes	Specific objectives	Eligible activities
11.7	Attractive Region	To increase attractiveness through the diversification and cross-border integration of the sustainable touristic offer in rural areas.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jointly developed plans and strategies for the sustainable utilization of cultural and natural heritage; Small scale investments regarding sustainable utilization of cultural and natural heritage;

⁵ <http://84.39.218.249/en2/> - accessed: 6 April 2016

Budget (million EUR)	Priority axes	Specific objectives	Eligible activities
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improving accessibility to cultural and natural heritage sites; • Awareness raising actions and/or campaigns; • Destination management, development of regional trademark and quality management systems, common branding and promotion, joint organization and participation in fairs and exhibitions, transfer of know-how; • Supporting diversification of quality cross-border tourism services; • Joint development of new, innovative tourism products and services; • Trainings and capacity building for the local entrepreneurs and/or employees; • Improvement of the usage of modern (communication) tools and promotion activities; • Establishment of organizations, partnership networks with cross-border relevance facilitating the creation and development of sustainable tourism products and services.
3.9	Cooperative Region	To increase cooperation capacity in order to reach a higher level of maturity in cross-border relations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cooperation may address different fields: • environmental protection, energy efficiency; • social services; • employment; • spatial planning, regional development; • accessibility, cross-border public transport; • civil protection and common risk prevention; • cultural cooperation.

Eligible applicants are local, regional public and state public administrations/institutions, state owned companies, NGOs, church institutions/organizations, chambers and professional associations, EGTCs, educational institutions, etc. Cooperation projects needs minimum 2 partners from the 2 sides of the border. The grant amount must be between EUR 20,000 and 2,000,000, the EU co-financing rate is 85%.

Central European Initiative (CEI)

The **Central European Initiative (CEI)**⁶ is a regional intergovernmental forum, that consists of 18 EU Member and also non-EU states. The Initiative aims at supporting European integration through enhancing cooperation and mutual dialogue between the member states by providing direct contribution to projects in the following areas:

1. Towards a Knowledge-based Society

- Research and Innovation
- Life-long Education and Training
- Information Society

2. Towards a Sustainable Economy and Development

- Transport, Logistics and Accessibility
- Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy
- Climate, Environment and Rural Development
- SMEs and Business Development

3. Towards an Inclusive Society

- Intercultural Cooperation
- Media
- Civil Society

The project support of the Central European Initiative can be used to implement soft programmes, such as managing events, implementation of training and educational activities, as well as to prepare strategies, concepts and studies in the field of cooperation. Any public and private legal entities established in one of the CEI member states are eligible for funding. During project assessment, priority is given to projects covering partnership with multiple member states. The grant amount per project is usually around EUR 15,000, 50% of which can be requested in advance. Co-financing rate is 50%.

⁶ <http://www.cei.int/> - accessed: 11 February 2016.