



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

European Structural and Investment Funds

(Draft) Guidance for Beneficiaries

How to effectively access and use the ESI Funds and exploit complementarities  
with other instruments of relevant Union policies

## **Preamble:**

*The EU's multiannual financial framework for 2014-20 allows the new generation of EU spending programmes to be implemented as from 1 January 2014.*

*Regulation (EU) N°1303/2013<sup>1</sup> lays down common provisions applicable to the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), the European Social Fund (ESF), the Cohesion Fund (CF), the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) and the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF), which operate under a common framework (the 'European Structural and Investment' - 'ESI Funds'). It also lays down the provisions necessary to ensure the effectiveness of the ESI Funds and their coordination with one another and with other Union instruments.*

*Article 13 of the regulation invites the Commission to prepare guidance on how to effectively access and use the ESI Funds and on how to exploit complementarities with other instruments of relevant Union policies.*

*The Guidance for Beneficiaries builds on the Common Strategic Framework (Annex 1 of Regulation (EU) N°1303/2013) which provides the basis for better coordination between the ESI Funds and with other EU instruments.*

## **1. Introduction**

The European Union is committed to create more and better jobs and a socially inclusive society. These goals are at the core of the [Europe 2020](#) strategy for generating smart, sustainable and inclusive growth in the EU.

According to the Common Provision Regulation<sup>2</sup>, the ESI Funds shall provide support to deliver the Union strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth, as well as the Fund-specific missions pursuant to their Treaty-based objectives, including economic, social and territorial cohesion taking account of the relevant Europe 2020 Integrated Guidelines and the relevant country- specific recommendations.

The ESI Funds will contribute to achieve five targets<sup>3</sup> relating to employment, research and development, climate change and energy sustainability, education and fighting poverty and exclusion through supporting flagship initiatives<sup>4</sup>.

EU funding seems complex with a variety of programmes and instruments managed by different bodies under different rules; however, together with the adoption of the 2014-2020 multiannual financial framework and of the sectoral funding programmes, much has been

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<sup>1</sup> <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32013R1303>

<sup>2</sup> Art. 4 of the Regulation 1303/2013 (see link under footnote 1 above))

<sup>3</sup> More information about Europe 2020 targets: [http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/europe-2020-in-a-nutshell/targets/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/europe-2020-in-a-nutshell/targets/index_en.htm)

<sup>4</sup> Further information about EU2020 flagship initiatives: [http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/europe-2020-in-a-nutshell/flagship-initiatives/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/europe-2020-in-a-nutshell/flagship-initiatives/index_en.htm)

achieved in terms of making access to EU funds simpler for would-be beneficiaries. For instance, there are now simplified procedure to get reimbursement: single reimbursement rate for all participants to a research project ("one project-one funding rate") and a flat rate for indirect costs; shorter deadline for payments to beneficiaries (90 days) in cohesion policy; electronic systems for beneficiaries to submit data, to use existing databases and to store documents in cohesion policy; shorter duration to keep documents for audit purposes.

Over 75% of the EU budget is managed by the member countries themselves. This includes the ESI Funds - which finance regional policy, social and training programmes, as well as agriculture, forestry, rural development in general and fisheries. The rest are centrally managed by the European Commission, sometimes with the support of Executive Agencies.

Beneficiaries can be small and medium size businesses, large enterprises, non-governmental and civil society organisations, young people, researchers, farmers, fishermen, universities and public bodies.

Financial support can take the form of grants, prizes, contracts, repayable assistance and financial instruments<sup>5</sup>.

This guidance for beneficiaries is not meant to be an exhaustive repertoire of available EU funds<sup>6</sup>. Together with its on-line tool, it provides for each **thematic objective** identified in the ESI Funds Regulation an overview of complementary instruments available at Union level with detailed sources of information, examples of good practices for combining different streams of funds within and across policy areas, a description of relevant authorities and bodies involved in the management of each instrument as well as a checklist for potential beneficiaries to help them identify the most appropriate funding sources.

## 2. The ESI Funds – General principles

The management of ESI Funds is shared between the Commission and the Member States in accordance with the principle of subsidiarity. Therefore, the rules and conditions governing the use of the Funds are laid down partly in EU regulations and partly in national legislation and administrative provisions.

There are several criteria of eligibility:

- **Time period:** there are limits on the period during which operations and expenditure can take place;

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<sup>5</sup> Service, work and supply contracts finance by the EU budget (calls for tenders) are not the main subject of this guidance. More information on these can be found on: [http://ec.europa.eu/contracts\\_grants/contracts\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/contracts_grants/contracts_en.htm)

<sup>6</sup> The European Citizen Action Service (ECAS), supported by the European Commission, publishes a yearly "Guide to European Funding For the Non-profit Sector" including useful tips for gaining European funding and a comprehensive review of existing budget lines. E-mail: [info@ecas.org](mailto:info@ecas.org) – website: [www.ecas-citizens.eu](http://www.ecas-citizens.eu)

- **Scope of intervention:** there are restrictions on the types of activities that can be co-financed from the different ESI Funds;
- **Cost categories:** certain cost categories within eligible operations are excluded;
- **Geographical location of operations:** only certain areas are eligible for particular types of programmes or activities;
- **Durability of operations:** investments may have to be maintained for a minimum period after completion of the operation;
- **Types of beneficiaries:** only certain enterprises, bodies or economic actors are eligible for support under given measures (in particular in the context of the EAFRD and EMFF).

Member States are required to draw up and implement strategic plans with investment priorities covering the five ESI Funds. These are called **Partnership Agreements (PAs)**. Details of the objectives they intend to achieve with the available resources are further elaborated in national and/or regional **Operational Programmes (OPs)** ) or **Rural Development Programmes (RDPs)** for the EAFRD. The OPs are tailored to the socio-economic and environmental challenges in the country or region. In order to achieve greater impact, they must concentrate and may not use all the possible funding themes and models provided under the Regulations.

Investments under the **ERDF**<sup>7</sup> will be concentrated on **4 key priorities: innovation and research, the digital agenda, support for small and medium-sized businesses (SMEs) and the low-carbon economy**. Around **EUR 110 billion** will be dedicated to these sectors, of which at least EUR 23 billion will support energy efficiency projects and renewable energies. Around **EUR 66 billion** will be focused on **priority Trans-European transport links and key environmental infrastructure projects** through the CF.

There is no minimum size for projects. What counts is their European added value, their impact on employment, their innovative nature and whether they contribute to the region's economic competitiveness. Before applying for a grant, potential beneficiaries should check the investment priorities and selection criteria of the [operational programmes](#) in their region and country.

The ERDF will also support cross-border (tackling common challenges identified jointly in the border regions), transnational (actions conducive to integrated territorial development) and interregional cooperation (exchange of experience between regionals on thematic objectives and urban development) under the European Territorial Cooperation goal. This includes the

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<sup>7</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/regional\\_policy/thefunds/access/index\\_en.cfm](http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/thefunds/access/index_en.cfm)

possibility to cooperate with Union's neighbouring third countries, in synergy where applicable with the programmes established under the European Neighbourhood Instrument<sup>8</sup> and the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance<sup>9</sup>.

The **ESF** will focus its interventions on a limited number of priorities in order to ensure sufficient funding to make a real impact in addressing Member States' key challenges. It will support investments under 4 key priorities: employment; social inclusion; education, training and life-long learning; institutional capacity building. A critical mass of human capital investment will be ensured through a minimum guaranteed share of the ESF within the cohesion policy funding in each Member State. Together with the EUR 3 billion special allocation for the Youth Employment Initiative, this means that more than 80 billion € will be invested in Europe's people over the next 7 years. At least 20% of the Fund will be allocated to social inclusion which means that people in difficulties and those from disadvantaged groups will get more support to have the same opportunities as others to integrate into society. Promoting equality between women and men and equal opportunities for all without any discrimination will be integrated in all actions and also supported through specific initiatives. Greater support will be provided to social innovation and transnational cooperation to address social, employment and education needs.

The **EAFRD** is a funding mechanism under the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) and it has a budget of around **EUR 95.5 billion**. In line with Europe 2020 and the overall CAP, the rural development policy is revolved around three cross-cutting objectives which are the competitiveness of agriculture, the sustainable management of natural resources and climate action, and the balanced territorial development of rural areas. For the purposes of managing rural development policy through Rural Development Programmes (RDPs) these objectives are given more detailed expression through 6 key priorities including 1) knowledge transfer and innovation in agriculture, forestry, and rural areas, 2) enhancing the competitiveness of all types of agriculture and enhancing farm viability, 3) promoting food chain organisation and risk management in agriculture, 4) restoring, preserving and enhancing ecosystems dependent on agriculture and forestry, 5) promoting resource efficiency and supporting the shift toward a low-carbon and climate-resilient economy in agriculture, food and forestry sectors, and 6) promoting social inclusion, poverty reduction and economic development in rural areas.

The **EMFF** has a budget of around **EUR 5.5 billion**. The fund will help fishermen in their transition to sustainable fishing and support sustainable aquaculture. It will foster the implementation of the Common Fisheries Policy through improved collection of scientific data and fisheries control and enforcement. The EMFF will also support job creation and diversification in fisheries-dependent communities and promote the implementation of the Integrated Maritime Policy.

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<sup>8</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/how/finance/enpi\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/how/finance/enpi_en.htm)

<sup>9</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/instruments/overview/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/instruments/overview/index_en.htm)

The ESI Funds may be used to support **financial instruments**<sup>10</sup> implemented to support investments which are expected to be financially viable and do not give rise to sufficient funding from market sources. The financial instruments shall aim to enhance the leverage effect of Union spending by attracting additional resources from public and private investors. *Specific link to the guidance on financial instruments in ESIF programmes 2014-2020.* [http://ec.europa.eu/regional\\_policy/thefunds/fin\\_inst/pdf/fi\\_esif\\_2014\\_2020.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/thefunds/fin_inst/pdf/fi_esif_2014_2020.pdf)

**Managing/national authorities** designated by each Member State are responsible for managing the programmes. Together with monitoring committees, they are in charge of drawing up and applying selection procedures and criteria and for providing relevant information to potential beneficiaries such as specific requirements concerning the products or services to be delivered under an operation, the financing plan and the time-limit for execution. Managing/national authorities ensure that selected projects fall within the scope of the Funds concerned and can be attributed to a category of intervention or measure identified in the priorities of the programmes. They are also responsible for the financial management and control of the programmes.

Beneficiaries can find the contact details of relevant managing/national authorities by clicking on the following links:

ERDF/CF: [http://ec.europa.eu/regional\\_policy/manage/authority/authority\\_en.cfm](http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/manage/authority/authority_en.cfm)

ESF: <http://ec.europa.eu/esf/main.jsp?catId=45&langId=en>

EAFRD: [http://enrd.ec.europa.eu/general-info/whos-who/implementing-authorities/managing-authorities/en/managing-authorities\\_en.cfm](http://enrd.ec.europa.eu/general-info/whos-who/implementing-authorities/managing-authorities/en/managing-authorities_en.cfm)

EMFF: [http://ec.europa.eu/fisheries/cfp/eff/apply\\_for\\_funding/national\\_authorities.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/fisheries/cfp/eff/apply_for_funding/national_authorities.pdf)

### **Bringing the ESI Funds together:**

Without the right people with the right skills businesses cannot thrive and similarly without a successful businesses base there is limited employment or opportunities for career progression. Not only is the cumulative impact of ESI Funds felt across the local economy, but in practice there are a number of projects which have successfully and creatively used investment from different programmes.

#### **Training future "Jamie Oliver's"**

Fifteen Cornwall - successfully used both ERDF and ESF (Total: EUR 2.5 million) to kick-start the Jamie Oliver inspired training restaurant. It has used ESF to ensure that the programme took more young people than the profits from the restaurant alone could support, giving disadvantaged 16 to 24 year old the opportunity to train as chefs within

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<sup>10</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/regional\\_policy/thefunds/fin\\_inst/pdf/fi\\_esif\\_2014\\_2020.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/thefunds/fin_inst/pdf/fi_esif_2014_2020.pdf)

nationally-recognised 15-month intensive apprenticeship programme. The critically-acclaimed restaurant was built with financial backing from of the ERDF.

Since May 2006, the Fifteen Cornwall Apprenticeship Programme has enrolled more than 140 apprentices with 70% still cooking today. It also invests £1million per annum back into the local economy through a 70% local sourcing policy and has created 80 jobs in addition to the 86 apprenticeships so far completed. *(To add picture from RegioStars Awards 2014)*

### **Offshore wind farms and aquaculture**

It is generally accepted that the most promising avenue for increased marine aquaculture production is to move further offshore where the waters are cleaner and disturbance to near-coast activities less. Furthermore sharing facilities such as moorings and cabling with the growing number of offshore wind platforms could reduce costs for both activities. Setting up demonstrators could be supported by EMFF for the aquaculture producer and ERDF for the renewable energy component. Choosing suitable sites with favourable water depth, sediments, nutrients and minimisation of environmental impact and interference with other activities would benefit from directly managed activities under the integrated maritime policy component of the EMFF that aim to improve the availability and interoperability of marine data.

### **Joined-up social services: Innovative funding approach enables care for the elderly in rural Germany**

In Mecklenburg Lake District the region's Leader Local Action Group (LAG) was asked for help in funding a specialised residency for local people suffering from dementia. The project aimed to enable these rural residents to live together with their life partner within a safe and supportive environment. An old textile factory was converted into the Malchow Island residence for dementia care and the project investments helped to conserve this building which holds heritage value for the rural community. It took a cross-cutting project development approach and combined three different EU funding sources (EAFRD, ESF and ERDF) within a total of six grant approval decisions.

*(full description available on*  
[http://enrd.ec.europa.eu/app\\_templates/filedownload.cfm?id=6870210C-FBBC-B3CB-9E26-0AC8180AD504](http://enrd.ec.europa.eu/app_templates/filedownload.cfm?id=6870210C-FBBC-B3CB-9E26-0AC8180AD504)*)*

The above is an example of what a **Community-led local development (CLLD)**<sup>11</sup> initiative can achieve. It describes an approach that turns traditional “top down” development policy on its head. Under CLLD, local people take the reins and form a local partnership that designs and implements an integrated development strategy.

CLLD strategies often emanate from specific issues or problems of concern to a local community – like the decline of traditional industries such as fishing and farming, disaffected youth, climate change, or poor housing and services. The advantage of CLLD is that it allows for one or several issues to be considered and addressed in its local context, and for the mobilisation of all the relevant policies and actors. The strategy is designed to build on the community’s social, environmental and economic strengths or “assets” rather than simply compensate for its problems. For this, the partnership receives long-term funding - and they decide how it is spent.

Although the CLLD approach was originally developed in rural areas through support from EAFRD, and then applied in fisheries and coastal areas with EMFF funding, there is now an opportunity to extend it to fields normally dealt with by the ESF and ERDF.

In their Partnership Agreement, Member States have to indicate which funds they will use for CLLD, why they are using these Funds, in what types of areas they will be applied, and how the Funds will work together.

Another interesting way of bringing ESI Funds together is through an **integrated territorial investment (ITI)** approach. In particular where an urban development strategy or other territorial strategy/pact requires an integrated approach involving investments from the ESF, ERDF or Cohesion Fund that could be completed with the EAFRD or the EMFF. ITI initiatives would be mentioned in the relevant Operational Programmes.

### **3. Synergies and complementarities between ESI Funds and with other EU instruments**

The **principle of non-cumulative award** in the EU Financial Regulation only applies to Union grants awarded to the same action and the same beneficiary, under any management mode.

It is therefore possible to combine the resources of the ESI Funds and other EU instruments in a complementary way. This means using different funds for different actions (with separate cost statements/bills), which are carried out in a related or consecutive manner.

This is nonetheless without prejudice to the **co-financing principle**. Allowing national contributions or private investments to come, even partially, from ESI Funds would contradict the main objective of co-financing, i.e. the ability to leverage or to pool investments in

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<sup>11</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/regional\\_policy/sources/docgener/informat/2014/guidance\\_clld\\_local\\_actors.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/docgener/informat/2014/guidance_clld_local_actors.pdf)



addition to Union sources. This principle precludes the use of a Union funding instrument to substitute the non-Union contribution to another Union instrument.

ESI Funds act mainly at national and regional level, with some leeway towards trans-territorial activities. Horizon 2020 and other Union programmes and instruments are mainly centrally managed and often foster transnational projects. The same beneficiary can apply for different funding sources, for unrelated or complementary activities. The applications will be assessed on the basis of their own merit in accordance to the rules of each funding source.

In order to maximise the ESI Funds' contribution to the Union strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth (Europe 2020)<sup>12</sup>, **eleven thematic objectives (TO)** are defined under Article 9 of Regulation (EU) N°1303/2013. Other EU instruments also contribute to these thematic objectives and Member States are encouraged to foster synergies and effective coordination between all available instruments at European, national, regional and local level.

The following will give potential beneficiaries an overview of relevant EU instruments per thematic objective with appropriate links to main sources of information, as well as ideas on where synergies and complementarities can best be achieved.

### **3.1. Strengthening research, technological development and innovation (TO1)**

The EU research and innovation policies until 2020 are outlined in the “Innovation Union” flagship initiative of the Europe 2020 strategy<sup>13</sup>. It includes the entire innovation cycle from fundamental research to commercialisation.

Member States are asked to develop national and/or regional '**smart specialisation' strategies** through involving national or regional managing authorities and stakeholders such as universities and other higher education institutions, industry and social partners in an entrepreneurial discovery process. The authorities directly concerned by Horizon 2020 are closely associated with that process.

Smart specialisation strategies shall include:

(a) "Upstream actions" to prepare regional Research & Innovation (R&I) players to participate in Horizon 2020 ("stairways to excellence") to be developed, where necessary, through capacity- building.

(b) "Downstream actions" to provide the means to exploit and diffuse R&I results, stemming from Horizon 2020 and preceding programmes, into the market with particular emphasis on

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<sup>12</sup> Europe 2020 is the European Union's ten-year growth and jobs strategy that was launched in 2010.  
[http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/index_en.htm)

<sup>13</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/research/innovation-union/pdf/innovation-union-communication\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/research/innovation-union/pdf/innovation-union-communication_en.pdf)

creating an innovation-friendly environment for business and industry, including SMEs and in line with the priorities identified for the territories in the relevant smart specialisation strategy.

It is important to identify opportunities for joint financing of R&I infrastructures of European interest, the promotion of international collaboration, methodological support through peer reviews, exchange of good practice, and training throughout regions.

### **Synergies between ESI Funds**

The **ERDF** can enhance research and innovation infrastructure and capacities to develop R&I excellence, promote centres of excellence and business investment in R&I, developing links between enterprises, R&D centres and the higher education sector, in particular promoting investment in product and service development, technology transfer, social innovation, eco-innovation, public service applications, demand stimulation, networking, clusters and open innovation through smart specialisation, and support technological and applied research, pilot lines, early product validation actions, advanced manufacturing capabilities and first production, in particular in key enabling technologies and diffusion of general purpose technologies.

R&I project submitted to an operational programme will be judged on its likely contribution to the economic development of the Member State or region as well as on its scientific or technological quality.

The **ESF** can support the development of postgraduate studies, the training of researchers, networking activities and partnerships between higher education institutions, research and technological centres and enterprises.

The **EAFRD** can support the strengthening of links between agriculture, food production, forestry and R&I, knowledge transfer and investments in new technologies and in processing and marketing. In this context, a prominent role will be played by the European Innovation Partnership for agricultural productivity and sustainability, which will enhance the application of new, innovative practices in agriculture. The EAFRD can further support technological development of products, practices and techniques in agriculture, agri-food and forestry sectors. It could fund the creation of clusters and networks, co-operational activities involving research centres and/or innovative companies, support technological research and applied research, diffusion of technologies, etc.

The **EMFF** can support technological development and innovation in the fisheries and aquaculture sectors. The part of the EMFF which is directly managed by the Commission will support the deployment of technologies developed under EU research projects, as well as the development of a knowledge base on marine data. In this context there is much scope for synergies with other ESI Funds and Horizon 2020.

### **Synergies with other EU instruments**

**Horizon 2020** is the new EU Framework Programme for Research and Innovation. It supports the development of activities from idea to market with a focus on excellence projects, regardless of geographical location. It is divided into three pillars corresponding to its main priorities:

- Excellent Science
- Industrial Leadership
- Societal Challenges

The **Excellent Science** supports the world-class science in Europe, by developing, attracting and retaining research talent and supporting the development of the best research infrastructures.

Total funding for 2014-2020	€ million
European Research Council (ERC) Frontier research by the best individual teams	13 095
Future & emerging technologies Collaborative research to open new fields of innovation	2 696
Marie Skłodowska-Curie actions (MSCA) Opportunities for training and career development	6 162
Research infrastructures (including e-infrastructure) Ensuring access to world-class facilities	2 488

The **Industrial Leadership** supports key technologies, such as microelectronics, advanced manufacturing, etc. across existing and emerging sectors. It also aims at attracting more private investment into R&I and supporting the increase of innovative SMEs in Europe.

Total funding for 2014-2020	€ million
Leadership in enabling & industrial technologies (LEITs) (ICT, nanotechnologies, materials, biotechnology, manufacturing, space)	13 557
Access to risk finance Leveraging private finance & venture capital	2 842

Innovation in SMEs Fostering all forms of innovation in all types of SMEs	616
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The pillar of **Societal Challenges** supports R&I that target society and citizens (climate, environment, energy, transport, etc.). It supports the development of breakthrough solutions coming from multi-disciplinary collaborations, which include social sciences and humanities.

Total funding for 2014-2020	€ million
Health, demographic change & wellbeing	7 472
Food security, sustainable agriculture and forestry, marine/maritime/inland water research and the bioeconomy	3 851
Secure, clean & efficient energy	5 931
Smart, green & integrated transport	6 339
Climate action, environment, resource efficiency & raw materials	3 081
Inclusive, innovative & reflective societies	1 310
Secure societies	1 695

Specific objective '**Spreading excellence & widening participation**'

Total funding for 2014-2020	€ million
Spreading excellence & widening participation	816

Specific objective '**Science with and for society**'

Total funding for 2014-2020	€ million
Science with and for society	462

## How does Horizon 2020 work?

The Commission selects projects following **calls for proposals** with the support of independent evaluators/experts<sup>14</sup>. Project ideas have to be submitted by a certain deadline, comply with clearly defined themes and have the required partnership structure, usually trans-national. In other words, it is not possible to spontaneously apply to the Commission for assistance.

After the deadline, all proposals under a call will be examined to check their eligibility and to assess their quality. Funding will be awarded only for the best project proposals within the limits of the total available budget.

Horizon 2020 is open to any legal entity, regardless of its place of establishment/nationality, or international organisation, provided that the conditions laid down in Regulation (EU) No 1290/2013<sup>15</sup> have been met, together with any specific/restrictive conditions laid down in the relevant multiannual or annual work programme.

The minimum 3-country principle prevails<sup>16</sup> but grants for individual firms (SME instrument) or researchers (ERC, MSCA) are also made available.

The network of **National Contact Points** (NCPs)<sup>17</sup> is the main structure to provide guidance, practical information and assistance on all aspects of participation in Horizon 2020. To find a NCP: <http://erc.europa.eu/national-contact-points>

**Horizon 2020 area of interest:** <http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/horizon2020/find-your-area>

**The funding of the same project through several grants from Horizon 2020 and ESI Funds is allowed**, subject to the absence of double funding (H2020 and ESI Funds programme shall not cover the same expenditure item).

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<sup>14</sup> <http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/desktop/en/experts/index.html>

<sup>15</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/doc/call/h2020/common/1595113-h2020-rules-participation\\_oj\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/doc/call/h2020/common/1595113-h2020-rules-participation_oj_en.pdf)

<sup>16</sup> Three legal entities must join under a consortium agreement. Each of the three must be established in a different Member State or associated country. All three legal entities must be independent of each other.

<sup>17</sup> NCPs are national structures established and financed by governments of the 28 EU member states and the states associated to the framework programme. NCPs give personalised support on the spot and in applicants' own languages. The NCP systems can vary from one country to another from highly centralised to decentralised networks, and a number of very different actors, from ministries to universities, research centres and special agencies to private consulting companies.

The right to combine ESI Funds and H2020 does not waive the obligation to provide the necessary national/regional/private co-funding.

### **German Science Park has ideas (Finalist RegioStars Award 2009)**

Since the mid-1990s, the Science Park at Golm on the outskirts of Potsdam has developed into the largest and most important science and research centre in Brandenburg. It hosts three Max Planck Institutes, two Fraunhofer Gesellschaft Institutes, a business incubation centre (GO:IN) and many innovative enterprises.

GO:IN, which opened in 2007, provides ideal start-up conditions for new entrepreneurs with services such as conference rooms, joint marketing and coaching. More than 1.300 scientists are working at the science park which benefited from an ERDF contribution of EUR 74.3 million. Since its creation, many joint research projects have been funded under the EU funded successive research framework programmes (the predecessors of H2020).

More information: <http://www.wisspark.de/>

### **From research to sustainable European Marine Observation and Data network**

Successive Research Framework Programmes have developed tools for stewardship and distribution of marine data. These will be the foundations of a sustainable European Marine Observation and Data Network to be supported by the direct management component of the EMFF. The aim of the network is to develop a high quality marine data and knowledge base which various user groups can draw on, avoiding duplication of efforts.

**The European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT)**<sup>18</sup> aims to enhance Europe's ability to innovate. The EIT achieves its mission by fully integrating all three sides of the 'knowledge triangle', i.e. higher education, research and business, in Knowledge and Innovation Communities (KICs). By bringing together major players from all these dimensions to cooperate in the KICs, the EIT is able to promote innovation in Europe.

Three KICs were launched in 2010:

- Climate-KIC: **climate change mitigation and adaptation**
- EIT ICT Labs: **Information and Communication Technologies**

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<sup>18</sup> <http://eit.europa.eu/about-us/>

- KIC InnoEnergy: **sustainable energy**.

As established in the EIT's Strategic Innovation Agenda (SIA) and Horizon 2020, the two new KICs to be established in 2014 address the thematic fields of:

- **Innovation for healthy living and active ageing**
- **Raw materials: sustainable exploration, extraction, processing, recycling and substitution**

### **Useful links for further information:**

The **Participant Portal** was established as an Internet portal for the stakeholders of the EU research and innovation programmes. It provides potential beneficiaries a set of services to facilitate their participation in the programmes and related interactions with the Commission. Potential beneficiaries are encouraged to register with the portal to benefit fully from these services: <http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/desktop/en/support/about.html>

**Ideal-IST** is a partner search facility: <http://www.ideal-ist.eu/>

The guidance for policy-makers and implementing bodies "Enabling synergies between European Structural and Investment Funds, Horizon 2020 and other research, innovation and competitiveness-related Union programmes" is available on:

[http://ec.europa.eu/regional\\_policy/sources/docgener/guides/synergy/synergies\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/docgener/guides/synergy/synergies_en.pdf)

### **3.2. Enhancing access to, and use and quality of ICT (TO2)**

The availability of high-speed broadband Internet and access to digital service infrastructures are the building blocks of a modern Single Market allowing communication, services and business to grow.

The "**Digital Agenda for Europe**" **flagship**<sup>19</sup> is part of the "smart growth" pillar of the Europe 2020 strategy. It aims to reboot Europe's economy and help Europe's citizens and businesses to get the most out of digital technologies. Its objectives include:

- The creation of a digital single market, incl. on-line content development, facilitating e-commerce, use of e-signatures.
- Inter-operability of ICT services
- Fast and ultra-fast Internet access: "Next Generation Access" networks aiming to reach the EU high-speed Internet access targets.

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<sup>19</sup> <http://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/digital-agenda-europe>

- ICT research and innovation
- ICT-enabled benefits for EU society (e-government, e-health, e-procurement)

### **Synergies between ESI Funds**

The **ERDF** can help develop ICT products and services, extend broadband deployment and the roll-out of high-speed networks, support the adoption of emerging technologies and networks for the digital economy, and strengthen ICT applications for e-commerce, e-government, e-learning, e-inclusion, e-culture and e-health.

The **ESF** can support development of ICT skills and competences in work and ICT in public administration. It can fund the enhancement in accessibility, use and quality of information and communication technologies through digital literacy, e-learning, e-inclusion, e-skills and related entrepreneurial skills.

The **EAFRD** can support the provision of rural broadband as well as the ICT development in rural areas and of rural businesses, agriculture, agri-food industry and forestry. It can fund infrastructure investment, IT services and IT businesses in rural areas, all types of technological innovations in agriculture and forestry, IT systems in agri-food industry, clusters and networks, vocational training in ICT and the provision of specific ICT advisory services for rural SMEs and farmers, as well as ICT applications for e-government, e-inclusion, e-learning, e-culture, e-commerce, etc.

### **Synergies with other EU instruments**

**Connecting Europe Facility (CEF) - Digital** has a budget of EUR 1.14 billion, out of which EUR 170 million are for Broadband activities, while EUR 970 million are dedicated to Digital Service Infrastructures (DSIs) delivering networked cross-border services for citizens, businesses and public administrations.

Regulation (EU) No 1316/2013 establishing the CEF determines the conditions, methods and procedures for providing Union financial assistance to trans-European networks.<sup>20</sup> A work programme gives details on the calls for proposals and may contain additional specific rules on the submission of proposals<sup>21</sup>.

The European Commission has proposed under Regulation (EU) No 283/2014 a series of guidelines<sup>22</sup> identifying projects of common interest for the deployment of digital service infrastructures and high-speed broadband networks. Under this regulation:

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<sup>20</sup> <http://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/en/news/europe-infrastructure-package>

<sup>21</sup> <http://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/en/connecting-europe-facility>

<sup>22</sup> <https://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/en/news/cef-telecommunications-guidelines>



- (a) generic services, core service platforms and programme support actions shall be financed through grants and/or procurement;
- (b) actions in the field of broadband networks shall be financed through financial instruments.

Proposals shall be submitted by one or more Member States or, with the agreement of the Member States concerned, by international organisations, joint undertakings, or public or private undertakings or bodies established in Member States.

Where necessary in order to achieve the objectives of a given project of common interest and where their participation is duly justified, third countries and entities established in third countries may participate in actions contributing to projects of common interest.

In the telecommunications sector, the amount of Union financial assistance shall not exceed:

- (a) for actions in the field of generic services: 75 % of the eligible costs;
- (b) for horizontal actions including infrastructure mapping, twinning and technical assistance: 75 % of the eligible costs.

The core service platforms shall be typically funded by procurement. In exceptional cases, they may be funded by a grant covering up to 100 % of eligible costs, without prejudice to the co-financing principle.

The amount of financial assistance to be granted to the actions selected shall be modulated on the basis of a cost-benefit analysis of each project, the availability of Union budget resources and the need to maximise the leverage of Union funding.

Call for tenders or call for proposals can be directly accessed through <https://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/funding-opportunities>.

**INEA** (Innovation and Networks Executive Agency) will manage EU-supported projects established under the CEF<sup>23</sup>.

The ESI Funds will deliver the local and regional infrastructures and their linkages to the priority Union networks that will be financed through the CEF. There is no derogation from the non-cumulative principle in the regulations CEF, meaning that for these programmes a combination of funds (grants) within the same project is not possible.

The CEF will also provide **seed funding** for a limited number of broadband projects, together with the **European Investment Bank (EIB)**, as well as technical assistance. Projects that

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<sup>23</sup> <http://inea.ec.europa.eu/en/cef/cef.htm>

wish to benefit directly from CEF will need to demonstrate state-of-the-art technological solutions and represent either innovative business models or highly replicable solutions (including those which successfully combine grants and long term financing). The EIB will screen the projects and apply the "first come-first served" approach on the merit of CEF proposals (principle of excellence for projects to be financed).

**Financial instruments financed by CEF may be combined with grants funded from other EU sources.**

The selection of the most appropriate financing instrument shall take into account the revenue generating potential of the operation and its level of risk in order to make the most effective use of public funds. In the context of their evaluation of applications for support from the ESI Funds, Member States should have regard to the evaluations of operations relating to those that have been submitted for CEF but not selected, without prejudice to the final selection decision by the managing authority.

As a generic technology, Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is present in many areas of **Horizon 2020**. Therefore a guide was designed to help potential project proposers find ICT-related topics across the different parts of Horizon 2020 that can be found on <https://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/node/68342>.

In the H2020 work programme for 2014-2015, ICT-related topics are covered as follows:

- Advanced research to uncover radically new technological possibilities and ICT contributions to research and innovation are addressed in the ‘Excellent science’ part of the work programme, respectively under ‘Future and Emerging Technologies’, ‘European research infrastructures’(‘eInfrastructures’);
- Research and innovation activities on generic technologies either driven by industrial roadmaps or through a bottom up approach are addressed in the ‘Leadership in enabling and industrial technologies’ (LEIT) part of the work programme, under ‘Information and communication technologies’;
- Multi-disciplinary application-driven research and innovation leveraging ICT to tackle societal challenges are addressed in the different ‘Societal challenges’.

**Successful Scottish Uni brings ERDF, ESF and EU research funding together**

Under the 2007-2013 programming period, ERDF helped the University of Highlands & Islands (UHI) develop their research capacity and their Learning and IT Infrastructure while ESF helped them develop their course materials and curriculum and support non-traditional groups of learners.

The MERIKA (Marine Energy Research Innovation and Knowledge Accelerator) is an ambitious initiative by UHI aiming at turning the UHI Faculty of Science, Health and Engineering into a reference research and innovation hub for all of Europe on the theme of

marine energy. Funded by the EU Seventh Framework Programme (the predecessor of Horizon 2020), the MERIKA Project runs from 2014 to 2017.

### **3.3. Enhancing the competitiveness of Small- and Medium-size Enterprises (SMEs), of agricultural sector (for the EAFRD) and of the fishery and aquaculture sector (for the EMFF) (TO3)**

Cohesion Policy is one of the main support instruments for SME development and SMEs can be supported across many thematic objectives. As clarified in the Europe 2020 Strategy, guaranteeing full access to credit to SMEs is also crucial in order to enhance innovation and long term stability within the European Union.

The Common Agricultural Policy (with its Pillar II) is another main support instrument for SME development, in particular in agriculture, forestry and EU rural areas.

#### **Synergies between ESI Funds**

The **ERDF** will focus on promoting entrepreneurship including through business incubators, on developing new business models for SMEs and supporting the creation and the extension of advanced capacities for product and service development, and support the capacity of SMEs to grow in regional, national and international markets and to engage in innovation process.

The **ESF** will support self-employment and creation of innovative SMEs, adaptation of entrepreneurs and employees to change. It will promote social enterprises and social and solidarity economy. Additionally it will contribute to the competitiveness of SMEs through promoting adaptability of enterprises and workers and support bodies providing vocational education and training.

The **EAFRD** will target its funding towards all agricultural sectors, forestry businesses, rural micro- and small enterprises. It will encourage the development of co-operational activities between various businesses and stakeholders, networks and clusters, as well as stimulate innovation in agriculture via the European Innovation Partnership for agricultural productivity and sustainability. Its funding will also stimulate the positive SMEs' response to climate change and the environment by providing various types of targeted support including advisory services for the improvement of the economic and environmental performance as well as the climate friendliness and resilience of the enterprises.

The **EMFF** will support the competitiveness and viability of SMEs related to fisheries and aquaculture. Support can be granted for strengthening technological development and innovation, including increasing energy efficiency, and knowledge transfer. The EMFF can also finance advisory services providing advice on business and marketing strategies and environmental sustainability, as well as partnerships between fishermen and scientists. Support is also available for diversification and the improvement of safety and working conditions on fishing vessels.

## **Synergies with other EU instruments**

Complementarities and synergies are to be sought with **COSME**, the EU programme for the Competitiveness of Enterprises and Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) running from 2014 to 2020 with a planned budget of EUR 2.3 billion.

COSME will support SMEs in the following area: Better access to finance for Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs); Access to markets; Supporting entrepreneurs; More favourable conditions for business creation and growth.

**Access to finance for SMEs through:**

### ➤ **The Loan Guarantee Facility**

The COSME budget will fund guarantees and counter-guarantees for financial intermediaries (e.g. guarantee organisations, banks, leasing companies) to help them provide more loan and lease finance to SMEs. This facility will also include securitisation of SME debt finance portfolios.

By sharing the risk, the COSME guarantees will allow the financial intermediaries to expand the range of SMEs they can finance. This will facilitate access to debt finance for many SMEs who might otherwise not be able to raise the funding they need.

### ➤ **The Equity Facility for Growth**

The COSME budget will also be invested in funds that provide venture capital and mezzanine finance to expansion and growth-stage SMEs in particular those operating across borders.

The fund managers will operate on a commercial basis, to ensure that investments are focused on SMEs with the greatest growth potential.

The **Enterprise Europe Network** provides services encouraging the participation of SMEs in the COSME and Horizon 2020 programme as well as internationalisation services beyond the Single Market and inform SMEs on funding opportunities under the European Structural and Investment Funds: <http://een.ec.europa.eu/>

SMEs are also encouraged to participate across the whole **Horizon 2020 programme**. **Innovation in SME** is a forward looking complement to the ESI Funds, including the **SME instrument**, the support to the **EUREKA/Eurostars initiative** that provides funding for transnational collaborative projects of research-intensive SMEs and various actions that aim at developing and providing better innovation support services to SMEs.

Provided with about EUR 3 billion in funding over the period 2014-2020, the **SME Instrument** helps high-potential SMEs to develop groundbreaking innovative ideas for products, services or processes that are ready to face global market competition. The activities

that can be supported and calls for proposals are detailed in the 2014-2015 work programme<sup>24</sup>.

The **Industrial Leadership component of Horizon 2020** aims at attracting more private investment into R&I and supporting the increase of innovative SMEs in Europe. **Leadership in enabling & industrial technologies (LEITs) actions** focus on ICT, nanotechnologies, advanced materials, biotechnology, manufacturing and space. The activities that will be undertaken to implement the budget 2014-2015 are specified in a work programme<sup>25</sup>.

**Access to risk finance** encourages the leveraging private finance & venture capital. The activities that will be undertaken to implement the budget 2014-2015 are specified in a work programme<sup>26</sup>. Under 'Access to Risk Finance', Horizon 2020 will help companies and other types of organisation engaged in research and innovation (R&I) to gain easier access, via financial instruments, to loans, guarantees, counter-guarantees and hybrid, mezzanine and equity finance.

**Horizon 2020's financial instrument facilities will operate in conjunction with those under COSME.** To locate banks or funds that provide risk finance supported by the EU, visit: <http://access2eufinance.ec.europa.eu>

The [European Investment Bank \(EIB\)](#) and the [European Investment Fund \(EIF\)](#) will play an important role, as entrusted entities, in implementing each financial instrument facility on behalf of and in partnership with the European Commission.

**Creative Europe**<sup>27</sup> supports European cinema and the cultural and creative sectors, enabling them to increase their contribution to jobs and growth. It will support artists, cultural and audiovisual professionals and organisations in the performing arts, fine arts, publishing, film, TV, music, interdisciplinary arts, heritage, and the video games industry. The funding will allow them to operate across Europe, to reach new audiences and to develop the skills needed in the digital age. By helping European cultural works to reach audiences in other countries, the programme will also contribute to safeguarding cultural and linguistic diversity.

The programme consists of two sub-programmes; the [Culture sub-programme](#) to promote the culture sector, and the [MEDIA sub-programme](#) to support the audiovisual sector.

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<sup>24</sup> <http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/desktop/en/opportunities/h2020/calls/h2020-smeinst-1-2014.html>

<sup>25</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/data/ref/h2020/wp/2014\\_2015/main/h2020-wp1415-leit\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/data/ref/h2020/wp/2014_2015/main/h2020-wp1415-leit_en.pdf)

<sup>26</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/data/ref/h2020/wp/2014\\_2015/main/h2020-wp1415-finance\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/data/ref/h2020/wp/2014_2015/main/h2020-wp1415-finance_en.pdf)

<sup>27</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/culture/opportunities/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/culture/opportunities/index_en.htm)

Creative Europe will not be open to applications from individuals, but around 250 000 individual artists and cultural and audiovisual professionals will receive funding through **projects submitted by cultural organisations**. Virtually all of the projects receiving support will have a cross-border dimension.

A **financial guarantee facility** of up to EUR 750 million for **small businesses** active in the sector will also be established in 2016.

More information on the opportunities available under the Culture sub-programme is available on the site of the Education, Culture and Audiovisual Executive Agency (EACEA), implementing the programme: [http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/creative-europe\\_en](http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/creative-europe_en).

**Creative Europe Desks**<sup>28</sup> have been established in the Member States to provide support and guidance to projects initiators.

There is no derogation from the non-cumulative principle in the regulations on Creative Europe and COSME<sup>29</sup>, meaning that for these programmes a combination of funds within the same project is not possible.

Place-based ERDF can support SMEs active in the cultural and creative sector including for digitisation, while Creative Europe can support artists and cultural professionals to develop their skills, competences and know-how (e.g. encouraging adaptation to digital technologies, testing innovative approaches to audience development and testing of new business and management models).

**Financial instruments may be combined with grants, interest rate subsidies and guarantee fee subsidies.**

### **Further information:**

The new version of the of the **Beneficiary Register tool**<sup>30</sup>, released on 28 February 2014, includes a questionnaire that allows determining whether an organisation is an SME according to the EU Recommendation 2003/361/EC and thus whether it is eligible to apply for the funding of certain H2020 actions.

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<sup>28</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/culture/tools/creative-desks\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/culture/tools/creative-desks_en.htm)

<sup>29</sup> Note however that Art. 10(2) COSME regulation allows the following: "*The Enterprise Europe Network may also be used to deliver services on behalf of other Union programmes such as Horizon 2020. This may include dedicated advisory services encouraging SME participation in other Union programmes*". Some services directly delivered to SMEs by the Enterprise Europe Network partners might also be covered by objectives of OPs and could therefore possibly be separated and supported by ESIF grants and at ESIF conditions.

<sup>30</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/data/ref/h2020/grants\\_manual/lev/h2020-guide-lev\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/data/ref/h2020/grants_manual/lev/h2020-guide-lev_en.pdf)

### 3.4. Supporting the shift towards a low-carbon economy in all sectors (TO 4)

#### Synergies between ESI Funds

The ERDF, CF and EAFRD are the main ESI Funds expected to contribute to accelerating the implementation of EU legislation on renewable energy and energy efficiency.

The **ERDF** and **CF** will focus on energy efficiency and renewable energy use in public and residential buildings as well as in SMEs, renewable energy production, high-efficiency cogeneration, smart distribution grids and integrated low-carbon strategies and sustainable energy action plans for urban areas, including sustainable urban mobility. In addition, the ERDF can also support research and innovation in low-carbon technologies.

The **EAFRD** will support investments in conversion of buildings located inside or close to rural settlements which should help achieve further economic and environmentally-oriented efficiency gains, which could also lead to job creation and improved investments attractiveness of rural settlements. These can also include investments in renewable energy and energy savings. Investments in on-farm production and use of renewable energy, or in rural renewable energy infrastructure will also be supported.

The **EMFF** will support the improvement of energy efficiency of fishing vessels, through investments in equipment (e.g. fishing gear) or on board of vessels, as well as energy efficiency audits and schemes. Support is also available to increase resource efficiency in aquaculture.

The shift to a low-carbon economy will also require new skills are needed in the construction sector (e.g. for the building of low energy houses), in manufacturing industry (e.g. for low-emitting vehicles) or in the water management sector (e.g. water efficient irrigation methods in agriculture). The **ESF** could support investments by other ESI Funds under this objective by providing the basis for better understanding of tomorrow's demand for skills, offering training and education, and providing mechanisms to match supply to the demand for green skills.

#### **Impact housing (UK)**

**Impact Housing** led the GreenWays to Work programme in parallel with the ERDF housing improvements (notably a £7.5 million external wall insulation programme in West Cumbria). GreenWays to Work developed and provided various levels of training for the construction industry, Housing Association staff and residents, to raise awareness of energy issues, develop supplier capacity and support residents into work. Training has been a key success of this programme, particularly in external wall insulation and renewable energy installation techniques. Previous evidence from small businesses suggested that few training courses were provided by colleges or equipment manufacturers, as there was limited demand. The size of contracts awarded under ERDF, and the emphasis on generating local jobs, has given the training providers the confidence to develop and run suitable courses.



Similarly, a combination of **ERDF** and **EAFRD** could be used to promote the development and use of renewable sources of energy with support from ERDF for the installation of biomass or wood chips fuelled boilers and in parallel support from EAFRD to the supply chain in the wood or waste sectors, or to increase biomass-based agricultural production.

### **Crops full of energy**

Energy crops provide alternatives to fossil fuels and can contribute to the EU's climate change mitigation objectives. Under EAFRD a French local action group in Sud du Pays de Saint-Brieuc encourages farmers to consider energy crops as a 'green' opportunity for business diversification. One of these farmers received support to test the potential of growing miscanthus as a bio fuel, and his results have been inspiring. Referring to the project outcomes, he remarks that "miscanthus are simple to produce and require only limited inputs compared to other crops. Each year, a single hectare of this energy crop can absorb 36 tonnes of carbon dioxide. It can be used in chips or pellets for heat and can also be converted to ethanol."

## **Synergies with other EU Funds**

### **LIFE Sub-Programme for Climate**

LIFE is the only EU financial instrument specifically targeting the environment and climate change. The general objective of LIFE is to contribute to the implementation, updating and development of EU environmental policy and legislation. The LIFE Programme is run by the European Commission with assistance from the Executive Agency for SMEs (EASME). Applications for funding are made online using [e-proposal \(external link\)](#).

The LIFE sub-programme for Climate Action will support projects in the field of Climate Change Mitigation, Climate Change Adaptation, and Climate Governance and Information. Priorities are further detailed through Multiannual Work Programmes, the first one covering the 2014 to 2017 period, [can be found here](#).

There are several scenarios for synergies between ESI Funds and LIFE such as:

- Integrated projects which require LIFE grants to be combined with other funding sources for projects aimed at implementing climate policy European legislation, on a large territorial scale (e.g. regional, multi-regional, national). For example, a regional authority could design a regional low carbon strategy and submit a proposal for a LIFE Integrated Project. LIFE would support: awareness-raising among local managers and business, sharing of best practice between urban authorities and with other regions, involvement of stakeholders, and development of monitoring methods... The project could then draw on ERDF funds to provide the necessary infrastructure.
- Sequential projects where LIFE could support "pilot" projects: for example, an urban authority or SME could apply for a LIFE grant to develop or demonstrate carbon



accounting tools, or innovative energy efficiency solutions. Later these projects could be up-scaled and replicated through ESI Funds investments, or disseminated thanks to ESI-funded transnational networks (European Territorial Cooperation or Cross-Border programmes).

- ESI funds could support innovative projects (e.g. uptake of low carbon technology into local supply chains), with LIFE funding requested to support evaluation and dissemination activities ("demonstration" project) such as transferability studies or set-up of transnational networks.

### **Horizon 2020 "Secure, clean and efficient energy" and "Smart, green and integrated transport " research projects**

Horizon 2020 is managed centrally by the European Commission. Depending on the call for proposal, Directorate General for Energy, Directorate General for Transport, Directorate General for Transport and innovation, the Executive Research Agency or EASME are responsible for the programmes. For information and support, [National Contact Points](#) have been established in the Member States. More information on the selection process can be found in the [Participant Guide](#).

The objective of the Societal Challenge "**Secure, Clean and Efficient Energy**" is to allow the transition to a competitive energy system, through 7 specific research areas: reducing energy consumption and carbon footprint; low-cost, low-carbon electricity supply; alternative fuels and mobile energy sources; a single, smart European electricity grid; new knowledge and technologies; robust decision making and public engagement; and, market uptake of energy and ICT innovation. It has a budget of EUR 5931 million for 2014-2020, i.e. EUR 640 to 650 million a year (out of which approximately EUR 560 million allocated through calls for proposals).

The objective of the Societal Challenge "**Smart, green and integrated transport**" is to support the development of a resource efficient transport that respects the environment (Calls for proposal "Green vehicles") and a global leadership for the European transport industry (Calls for proposals "Small business and fast track innovation for transport"). It also aims at a better mobility, less congestion, more safety and security (Calls for proposals "Mobility for growth"). It has a budget of EUR 6 339 million for the 2014-2020 period.

For both societal challenges, their budgets, as well as the specific priorities and calls for proposals, are set for 2 years in Multiannual Work Programmes ([see the Work Programme for 2014-2015](#))

Joint projects between the ESI Funds and H2020 could be envisaged in the areas of market uptake of energy innovation for projects facilitating the energy policy implementation, preparing the ground for roll-out for investments, supporting capacity building and acting on public acceptance (e.g. fostering consumer engagement or green public procurement

behaviours). Project initiators, such as research centres, developing innovative or best-practice solutions with **ERDF** support could apply for these H2020 calls for proposals to facilitate their adoption and dissemination. H2020 support for market up-taking activities could also be combined with **ESF** funding for "green skills" training and education.

The funds could be also used sequentially for example if during the lifetime of an H2020 project (upstream / basic research), funding needs are identified in order to continue the activity, and notably to allow for the market introduction of an innovation idea or the implementation of a pilot project (downstream), ESI Funds could then provide the necessary funding to sustain the activity for example through the projects detailed below:

#### **Rural Innovation in Green Technology supported by EAFRD**

Supporting rural innovation is a cornerstone of rural development. An example of a LEADER project from a pig farm in France showed how such support can be used to improve energy efficiency in livestock sheds. An innovative design introduced a manure management system that reduces ammonia and thus the need for air-cleaning costs. Robust insulation was also installed to further improve the building's environmental footprint. Results led to energy savings of 99.6% for heating and 75% for ventilation.

#### **The ESF supported green jobs in Romania**

Romanian companies have teamed up in an ESF-supported project addressing people who have been laid off from the energy sector. The project 'From Restructuring to Employment' focused on around 100 people in south-eastern Romania. Given their qualifications and experience, they had the right background for job opportunities in the emerging renewable energy sector, so the project has identified opportunities and helped the job-seekers to acquire the additional skills they need to convert to the industries of the future.

#### **Connecting Europe Facility (CEF)**

The CEF will support key trans-European energy infrastructure "projects of common interest", i.e. priority corridors for the transport of electricity, gas and oil. The list of such projects of common interest [has been established by the European Commission in October 2013](#) and will be updated every two years. Proposals can be submitted by one or more Member State or, with the agreement of the Member States concerned, by and international organisation, joint undertakings, or public or private undertakings or bodies established in Member States.

CEF and ESIF funding are complementary as CEF supports energy infrastructure of European importance, while **ERDF**, **CF** and **EAFRD** can finance smart electricity distribution networks of local or regional importance.

### **3.5. Promoting climate change adaptation, risk prevention and management (TO 5)**

#### **Synergies between ESI Funds**

The **ERDF** and **CF** will focus on the development of strategies and action plans for adaptation to climate change and risk prevention and management plans at national, regional and local level, increased investment in adaptation to climate change and risk prevention and management, and the development of tools and increased investment disaster management systems, to facilitate disaster resilience and risk prevention and management for natural risks and to support societal responses to industrial risks

The **EAFRD** will support sustainable water management, including water efficiency, through creating on-farm water storage zones and support for water efficient cropping patterns, improved soil management through support for practices to prevent soil degradation and depletion of soil carbon stock and ensuring a high potential for adaptation to climate change and diseases, maintaining genetic diversity by supporting local crop varieties and livestock breeds and supporting preventive measures against fires, flooding and diseases.

The **ESF** can complement activities in this area through targeted education, training and up-skilling of the labour force with regard to risk prevention, risk management and adaptation to climate change.

Synergies are possible between the funds on climate change mitigation, environmental protection and resource efficiency but are also relevant for activities under other thematic objectives, such as innovation and technological development for adaptation to climate change, support for businesses in taking up adaptation measures and technology, and actions to reduce water pollution from agriculture, such as reducing the excessive use of fertilisers and pesticides.

#### **Synergies with other EU Funds**

##### **LIFE Sub-Programme for Climate**

LIFE is the only EU financial instrument specifically targeting the environment and climate change. The general objective of LIFE is to contribute to the implementation, updating and development of EU environmental policy and legislation. The LIFE Programme is run by the European Commission with assistance from the Executive Agency for SMEs (EASME). Applications for funding are made online using [e-proposal \(external link\)](#).

The LIFE sub-programme for Climate Action will support projects in the field of Climate Change Mitigation, Climate Change Adaptation, and Climate Governance and Information. Priorities are further detailed through Multiannual Work Programmes, the first one covering the 2014 to 2017 period, [can be found here](#)

## **Horizon 2020 "Food Security, sustainable agriculture and forestry, marine, maritime and inland water research and the bioeconomy" research projects**

Horizon 2020 is managed centrally by the European Commission. Depending on the call for proposal, Directorate General for Energy, Directorate General for Transport, Directorate General for Transport and innovation, the Executive Research Agency or EASME are responsible for the programmes. For information and support, [National Contact Points](#) have been established in the Member States. More information on the selection process can be found in the [Participant Guide](#).

The objective of the Societal Challenge "Food Security, sustainable agriculture and forestry, marine, maritime and inland water research and the bioeconomy" is to contribute to securing sufficient supplies of safe, healthy and high quality food and other bio-based products, by developing productive, sustainable and resource-efficient primary production systems, fostering related ecosystem services and the recovery of biological diversity, alongside competitive and low carbon supply chains. It has a budget of EUR 3 851,4 million, i.e. EUR 40 to 45 million a year. The budget as well as the specific priorities and calls for proposals are set for 2 years in Multiannual Work Programmes ([see the Work Programme for 2014-2015](#))

## **Civil Protection Financial Instrument**

The Civil Protection Financial Instrument aims at supporting and complementing the efforts of Member States for the protection, primarily of people, but also of the environment and property, including cultural heritage, in the event of natural and man-made disasters, acts of terrorism and technological, radiological or environmental accidents. The financial envelope allocated to the instrument under the 2014-20 financial framework amounts to EUR 455 million, out of which EUR 245 million will be dedicated to internal civil protection. Indicative annual amounts of EUR 18 million are available for actions within the EU, with approximately EUR 3.6 million earmarked for prevention projects, and EUR 3.6 million earmarked for preparedness<sup>31</sup> projects<sup>32</sup>. Work programmes will be published annually on [DG ECHO website](#), with useful guidance on the calls for proposals and tenders to be published. Calls for proposals for prevention and preparedness projects will be published annually.

It covers, among other things, disaster prevention and preparedness studies and projects, which are the areas of intervention most likely to find synergies with cohesion policy projects:

- **Prevention projects** aim at achieving a higher level of protection and resilience against disasters by preventing or reducing their effect. They can target the economics

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<sup>31</sup> Preparedness means a state of readiness and capability of human and material means, structures, communities and organisations enabling them to ensure an effective rapid response to a disaster, obtained as a result of action taken in advance.

<sup>32</sup> Figures from the 2014 Work Programme, subject to potential modification in forthcoming work programmes.

of investing in disaster risk prevention, the development of knowledge and experience on urban resilience strategies, or the governance of risk management practices.

- **Preparedness projects** aim at creating better prerequisites for and improve preparedness, as well as enhance awareness of civil protection and/or marine pollution professionals and volunteers in the field of disaster preparedness.

Projects supported can aim at studying, designing, developing, testing and implementing innovative practices, evaluating and improving existing ones, developing general guidelines, identifying and disseminating best practices, of setting up concrete improvement thanks to transnational cooperation.

The work of these projects could then be mainstreamed through the ESI Funds. For example new technologies are already improving the environmental footprint of traditional dykes. An EAFRD project using such technology in Germany's Rhine valley highlights how EU rural development funds can be used to provide eco-sensitive approaches to the delivery of flood-related environmental services. Under this project specific assistance for flood works was included in the Rural Development programme. EAFRD support has facilitated a more rapid implementation of the flood protection construction programme and this applies to the rehabilitation of existing dykes, the construction of new dykes, as well as to the construction of flood retention facilities like polders. The support was also used to relocate dykes as the measures are not only designed to protect against flooding, they also target the improvement of the ecosystem. Consideration of dyke upgrading measures now always includes the possibility of dyke relocations, in order to create, for example, additional natural wetlands.

### **Solidarity Fund**

The European Union Solidarity Fund (EUSF) was set up in 2002 to respond to major natural disasters and express European solidarity to disaster-stricken regions within Europe. Since its creation, it has been used for a range of different catastrophic events including floods, forest fires, earthquakes, storms and droughts. The EUSF supplements Member States' public expenditure for essential emergency operations in 4 main areas: a) immediate restoration to working order of infrastructure b) temporary accommodation and emergency services; c) immediate securing of prevention infrastructures and measures to protect the cultural heritage; d) cleaning up of disaster-stricken areas, including natural zones. The Fund is limited to non-insurable damage and does not compensate for private losses. Long-term action – such as lasting reconstruction, economic redevelopment and prevention – are not eligible for EUSF aid but could qualify for aid under the ESI Funds.

More information on EUSF: [http://ec.europa.eu/regional\\_policy/thefunds/solidarity/index\\_en.cfm](http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/thefunds/solidarity/index_en.cfm)

## **3.6. Preserving and protection the environment and promoting resource efficiency (TO 6)**

### **Synergies between ESI Funds**

The **ERDF** and **CF** will focus on investment in efficient water supply, waste-water treatment and water reuse, waste management and green infrastructure, including in Natura 2000 sites; investment in actions to reduce transport related air pollution, in particular retrofit or

replacement programmes for bus fleets, incentive schemes for cleaner transport, improved public transport infrastructure and promotion of alternative forms of transport.

In addition the **ERDF** will support investment in the diversification of local economies by protecting and enhancing cultural heritage and landscapes (both in rural and urban contexts); sustainable integrated urban development, including through sustainable urban drainage, soil descaling measures, rehabilitation of contaminated sites, and rehabilitation of cultural infrastructure.

The **EAFRD** will support restoration, preservation and enhancement of biodiversity, including Natura 2000 areas and farming systems with high nature values, and the state of European landscapes by promoting environmentally sound farming systems, including organic farming; establishing and maintaining wildlife zones in farm and forest areas; granting compensation to farmers and forest holders for economic disadvantages faced in Natura 2000 areas and designated wildlife corridors. **EAFRD** will also support increasing efficiency in the use of water by agriculture and improvements in water and soil quality including through contributing to the protection of soil from erosion, compaction, and loss of organic matter.

The **EMFF** will focus on supporting the transition to environmentally sustainable fisheries, in particular to ensure a balance between fishing capacity and available fishing resources and to avoid unwanted catches. The **EMFF** will invest in eco-innovation such as more selective fishing gear and other innovations reducing the impact of fisheries and aquaculture on the environment. Support is also available for aquaculture with a high level of environmental protection and providing environmental services. The **EMFF** will also finance better compliance with CFP rules, improved fisheries control and a better supply and coverage of scientific data for assessing the biological state of fish stocks.

The **ESF** can contribute to this thematic objective through the improvement of education and training systems necessary for the adaptation of skills and qualifications related to environment protection among workers, scientists, students, teachers and the unemployed. Besides training, **ESF** can also contribute to the creation of new jobs in sectors related to the environment or in the tourism sector, such as customer management in natural areas to improve the management of tourism. There is also potential to enhance funding for sectoral skills development in agriculture and fisheries through **EAFRD** and **EMFF**.

### **Green Belt around Vitoria (ES)**

The Green Belt of Vitoria is made up of a group of parks and areas with high ecological value surrounding the city, serving as a buffer zone and as "green lungs" between the urban area and the surrounding rural environment. The projects aims to provide a comprehensive solution to degraded spaces of high ecological value and promote their restoration and conservation, thus helping to meet public demand for outdoor recreational facilities.

The initiative has both direct and indirect implications for biodiversity skills and jobs, through training modules in maintenance of green areas, organic horticulture and gardening, and programmes for the long- term unemployed on Landscape adaptation. In addition to its Cohesion Fund grant, it secured **ESF** support for training and research programmes related to managing the Green Belt.

## Synergies with other EU Funds

### LIFE Sub-programme for Environment

The main synergies in the fields of environment and resource efficiency are likely to be between ESI Funds and **LIFE Sub-programme for Environment** as their priorities are similar. The LIFE sub-programme for Environment will support projects in the field of environment and resource efficiency, nature and biodiversity, and environmental governance and information. The LIFE Programme is run by the European Commission with assistance from the Executive Agency for SMEs (EASME). Applications for funding for traditional projects are made online using [e-proposal \(external link\)](#) while integrated projects will have to be submitted in hard copy directly to the European Commission. Priorities are further detailed through Multiannual Work Programmes, the first one covering the 2014 to 2017 period, [can be found here](#).

Both the ERDF/Cohesion Fund and LIFE, under its "Environment and resource efficiency" priority, may support investment in the waste and water sectors to meet the Union environmental acquis and to promote resource efficiency. Similarly, both funding streams can co-finance projects aiming at protecting biodiversity and natural heritage (LIFE "Nature and biodiversity" priority).

The complementary financing to LIFE integrated projects may come from any source, however, the main European Structural and Investments (ESI) Funds, namely rural development (EAFRD), cohesion/structural (ERDF and CF), and maritime (EMFF) funds, provide an important potential source of such finance. LIFE Integrated Projects allow the combining of ESI Funds and LIFE grants for projects aimed at implementing environment policy such as the Birds and Habitats Directives or the Waste and Air quality legislation, on a large territorial scale (e.g. regional, multi-regional, national).

For example, a River Basin authority has developed a River Basin Management Plan, as required by EU legislation, and submits a proposal for a LIFE Integrated Project. LIFE could finance the removal of obstacles for river connectivity to improve fish migration, the development of monitoring methods, awareness raising activities, partnerships, capacity building activities etc. ERDF/ EAFRD support could be requested to implement other complementary measures included in the same River Basin Management Plan such as compensations payments and infrastructure.

While not strictly Integrated Projects, there are some good examples of projects implemented in the past which made use of a combination of funds as indicated below.:

In Finland, the Lapland project aimed at helping the five largest protected areas in central Lapland (41 000 ha of mire, including 3 Natura 2000 Sites and important bird areas) so that ecotourism and recreational use can be organised on a sustainable basis. It combined LIFE+ (for planning: land acquisition, restoration, elaboration of a management plan) and ERDF for construction of the tourism infrastructure (support to small tourism entrepreneurs, hiking trails, bird watch towers, information signs, sleeping shelters...). Other projects combined funding following the same pattern: see for instance the [BirdLife project](#) in Slovenia.



A transnational network set-up with ERDF support under a European Territorial Cooperation could also engage in planning activities to design Integrated Management plans for protected areas that would then be eligible for LIFE support as an Integrated Project.

[The NATREG project](#), funded under the South-East Europe Programme, established a transnational and multi-sectoral cooperation network, which developed the Joint Strategy for Integrated Management of Protected Areas in the Adria – Alpes – Pannonia territory. It connected 6 protected areas with common trainings and knowledge transfer activities.

Local projects promoters could also combine these two funding streams by setting up parallel projects on a specific site with LIFE financing conservation (restoration, management...), and ERDF supporting promotion actions such as visitors' infrastructure or training of tourist professionals.

#### [Helping the recovery of the Iberian lynx.](#)

An initial LIFE+ project by Andalusia's regional government helped introduce a programme of actions to help test and clarify how best to launch a recovery plan for the species. A follow-up project, still funded under LIFE+ grants, set-up a coordinated package of in-situ conservation actions, including: improving habitat functionality by increasing the availability of natural prey and improving connectivity between habitat features; reintroducing and monitoring lynxes in carefully selected sites; addressing problems in 'black spot' areas where threats and risks to the species were particularly high; running awareness-raising campaigns to improve understanding of lynx conservation by local residents, businesses and visitors; and establishing leasing agreements with key stakeholders, such as hunters. In addition, the EARDF provided support for on-going, recurrent habitat management work, notably through payments made available to land users for managing their farms and forests in lynx-friendly ways. The ERDF co-financed high impact conservation actions, including vital captive breeding centres as well as visitor facilities and nature-tourism promotions. All of these elements fit together within a balanced integrated model as lynx reared in the ERDF's breeding centres are reintroduced into the habitats that now function more effectively thanks to the initial works by LIFE and recurrent inputs from the EAFRD. Similarly, visitors and businesses benefitting from the tourism investments rely on the habitat functionality to sustain the lynx population.



**Protection of submarine habitats in Andalusia** (project number: LIFE09 NAT/ES/000534; link: <http://www.lifeposidoniandalucia.es/en/index.aspx>):

The Posidonia oceanica submarine meadows of Andalucía provide unique ecosystem services: they improve the air that we breathe, protect the coast from erosion, grow fish, and their natural beauty attracts tourists. However, this ecosystem has been threatened due to pollution, boat anchoring, uncontrolled trawling or traditional local fishing and the expansion of exotic invasive species. This LIFE+ Nature project's main objective is to improve the conservation status of Posidonia oceanica meadows.

The EFF supported this LIFE+ project by providing supplementary financial assistance for the construction of artificial reefs and/or for demarcation buoys to mark the borders of the area.

### **HORIZON 2020 – Societal Challenge "Climate Action, Environment, Resource Efficiency and Raw Materials"**

Horizon 2020 is managed centrally by the European Commission. Depending on the call for proposal, Directorate General for Energy, Directorate General for Transport, Directorate General for Transport and innovation, the Executive Research Agency or EASME are responsible for the programmes. For information and support, [National Contact Points](#) have been established in the Member States. More information on the selection process can be found in the [Participant Guide](#).

The objective of the Societal Challenge **"Climate Action, Environment, Resource Efficiency and Raw Materials"** is to achieve a resource – and water – efficient and climate change resilient economy and society, the protection and sustainable management of natural resources and ecosystems, and a sustainable supply and use of raw materials, in order to meet the needs of a growing global population within the sustainable limits of the planet's natural resources and eco-systems. Actions under this Work Programme will therefore address gaps in the knowledge base needed to understand changes in the environment, identify the policies, methods and tools that would most effectively tackle these challenges, and support innovators and businesses to bring green solutions to the market. It has a budget of EUR 3 081 million, approximately EUR 350 to 400 million a year.

It is often the case that funding is available to a research organisation or company under the ESI Funds in order to take the first tentative steps in research or in developing an innovative technology or product. The conditions for granting such funding are usually relatively generous and flexible, especially in the least developed regions. This allows the research organisation or company to grow to the point where it can enter the more competitive environment of Horizon 2020 for research activities.

Equally, if during the lifetime of an H2020 project (upstream / basic research), funding needs are identified in order to continue the activity, and notably to allow for the market introduction of an innovation idea or the implementation of a pilot project (downstream), further H2020 funding may not be possible, given the very competitive nature of the process. ESI Funds could then provide the necessary funding to sustain the activity.

Joint projects could be set-up, with, for instance, ESI funding the waste infrastructure or management innovation used in H2020 evaluation studies.

## **Creative Europe**

ERDF<sup>33</sup> and CF can support projects aiming at conserving, protecting, promoting and developing natural and cultural heritage. This could include renovation of cultural buildings and infrastructures or culture tourism or education projects. Under the European Territorial Cooperation / Cross-Border programmes, synergies can be found with **Creative Europe**. Creative Europe is managed centrally through the Education Audiovisual and Communication Executive Agency. [Creative Europe Desks](#) have been established in the Member States to provide support and guidance to projects initiators.

Projects could be initiated under these programmes, with ERDF support requested for the renovation, protection and promotion of cultural heritage and the fostering of tourism opportunities. Creative Europe grants could then be requested to fund:

- transnational projects between cultural organizations involved, either for networking activities (experience and knowledge sharing, common studies...) : see for instance the [Four Corners heritage projects](#) (financed by ERDF under the South Baltic Programme)
- or cooperation projects (common tools for training, visitor guidance, awareness raising, joint exhibitions...) : see for instance the [SeaSide project](#) (financed by ERDF under the South Baltic Programme)

### **3.7. Promoting sustainable transport and removing bottlenecks in key network infrastructure (TO 7)**

The Trans-European Transport Networks (TEN-T) are a planned set of road, rail, air and water transport networks in Europe. As of January 2014, the European Union has a new transport infrastructure policy that connects the continent between East and West, North and South. This policy aims to close the gaps between Member States' transport networks, remove bottlenecks that still hamper the smooth functioning of the internal market and overcome technical barriers such as incompatible standards for railway traffic. It promotes and strengthens seamless transport chains for passenger and freight, while keeping up with future technological trends.

**ERDF and CF** can support investments to implement the TEN-T network, connecting secondary and tertiary nodes to TEN-T, environmentally-friendly transport systems, interoperable railway systems, and smart energy distribution, storage and transmission systems.

The **EAFRD** can complement investments made by the ERDF and the CF in major TEN-T networks by supporting local / rural transport infrastructure as well as transport services in

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<sup>33</sup> It should be noted that investment in the renovation of historical buildings or cultural heritage will only be an ERDF priority if it is part of an overall economic development strategy and provides direct socio-economic benefits to the territory (ex: positive impact on tourism or on crafts and traditional sectors of industry) or to a specific disadvantaged community.

rural areas. In agriculture, innovative low-carbon and energy-efficient transport technologies could also be supported.

Under the **Connecting Europe Facility (CEF)**<sup>34</sup> - **Transport**, EUR 26.25 billion will be made available to co-fund TEN-T projects. Of this amount, EUR 11.3 billion will be available only for projects in Member States eligible for the Cohesion Fund. The CEF finances projects of "common interest", i.e. high EU added value infrastructure projects within the framework of the TEN-T policy. It aims at removing bottlenecks, enhancing rail interoperability, bridging missing links and, in particular, improving cross-border sections, ensuring sustainable and efficient transport systems in the long run and the transition to innovative low-carbon and energy-efficient transport technologies, or optimising the integration and interconnection of transport modes. The funds are thus meant to be highly concentrated on a clearly limited set of projects of common interest.

CEF financial support takes primarily two forms:

- [grants](#), which are non-reimbursable investments from the EU budget; and
- [contributions to innovative financial instruments](#), developed together with entrusted financial institutions such as the European Investment Bank, such as: the [Marguerite Fund](#) , the [Loan Guarantee for TEN Transport](#)  (LGTT) and the [Project Bond Initiative](#) .

Beneficiaries are one or more Member States or, with the agreement of the Member State(s) concerned, other bodies. CEF is centrally managed by the Commission, assisted by the Innovation and Network Executive Agency (INEA), on the basis of [multiannual and annual work programmes](#) and of competitive calls for proposals. The [Connecting Europe Facility regulation](#)  sets out the rules for awarding EU financial support, priority projects and the maximum limits of EU co-financing per type of project. It also includes a pre-identified list of projects where most CEF investments will be placed.

Under **Horizon 2020**, the "Smart, Green and Integrated Transport"<sup>35</sup> component is allocated a budget of EUR 6.3 billion to support the development of a resource efficient transport that respects the environment and a global leadership for the European transport industry.

### **Synergies between the funds:**

CEF is a complementary instrument to the **ERDF/CF/EAFRD**. Investments from the ERDF/CF/EAFRD in regional connectivity to the TEN-T comprehensive and core network

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<sup>34</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/transport/themes/infrastructure/ten-t-guidelines/project-funding/cef\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/transport/themes/infrastructure/ten-t-guidelines/project-funding/cef_en.htm)

<sup>35</sup> <http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/horizon2020/en/h2020-section/smart-green-and-integrated-transport>

shall ensure that urban and rural areas benefit from the opportunities created by major networks. The Member States are therefore encouraged to define in advance under which support scheme individual TEN-T infrastructure projects should be implemented in order to allow a proper planning and an efficient investment of the financial amounts available.

- **Geographical synergies:**

The CEF concentrates on the pre-identified high EU added value projects, mainly on the TEN-T Core Network Corridors, as identified in Annex I to the CEF Regulation. These key infrastructure investments can be easily complemented by projects financed by ERDF/CF/EAFRD Fund located in other parts of the TEN-T core network, as well as on the comprehensive network.

Example: a project promoter requesting CEF grants for high EU added value projects of common interest can also apply for ESI Funds support:

- for the projects on other sections of the TEN-T core network not pre-identified in the Annex I to the CEF Regulation;
- for projects on the TEN-T comprehensive network;
- for the transport multimodal nodes connecting secondary infrastructure into TEN-T network.

#### **Baltic corridor**

On the North Sea – Baltic Core Network Corridor, a pre-identified project of constructing a new direct North-South railway line along the alignment Tallinn – Riga – Kaunas – Warsaw is listed that could benefit from CEF funding. The connection between the Rail Baltic line and the capital of Lithuania, Vilnius, is to be upgraded. As the Kaunas – Vilnius connection is also on the TEN-T core network, but it is not a missing link, cross-border or bottleneck project, it is a suitable candidate for ESI Funds financing.

- **Parallel projects in a common area: infrastructure supported by CEF and "soft" activities supported by ESI Funds**

Example: In parallel to core network infrastructure construction or innovation funded by the CEF, ESI Funds could support activities designed to promote inter-regional cooperation of stakeholders or to reduce the environmental impact of this infrastructure (such as the clean shipping initiatives developed in the Baltic Sea region).

From pre-feasibility study to

The pre-feasibility study for upgrading the current 1520 km cross-border Rail Baltica project was funded by the Cohesion Fund. Under the INTERREG program, ERDF supported the set-up of a network between regional stakeholders and actions aimed at raising the awareness of both the industry and the public. The cross-border section [Tartu-Valga railways reconstruction](#) (renewal of track in the Estonian part, upgrading tracks and reconstruction work at the Valga station) was then supported by a EUR 10.8 million TEN-T grant.

Finding innovative solutions for transport problems ranging from the "greening" of the moving material to integrated solutions for inter-modal transport, logistics, and urban and peri-urban mobility is a wide-spread societal need. This has also emerged as a field where many regions and Member States have identified their competitive advantages and potential research and innovation strengths, i.e. mobility related issues have emerged in the smart specialization as priority fields.

Hence, it is important that the take-up of such innovative solutions through public procurement and also the development of more targeted solutions for transport problems through research and development is promoted. If prioritized in the annual work programmes, **H2020** funding can help public authorities pool their demand for innovative goods and services and assist them to conduct the Pre-Commercial Procurement and Public procurement of innovative solutions and the often complex related procurement procedures.

H2020 can finance basic and applied research and innovation while ERDF or CF can support its implementation (the downstream / place-specific parts) to a pilot project.

**TIGER Project**, funded under **FP7**, is a Large Scale Integrated Collaborative Project for the development of Rail transport in competitive and co-modal freight logistics chains. TIGER stand for "Transit via Innovative Gateway concepts solving European-intermodal Rail needs" and has been developed by taking into consideration four basic European transport constraints:

- Substantial increase of freight mobility demand versus a constrained infrastructure and particularly the rail one.
- The Ports of entry into the Union, both North and South are congested due to difficulties of moving their traffic inland in an industrial way coherent with their traffic volumes.
- The environmental situation and climate changes are imposing transport solutions towards a more sustainable mobility. Modal shift is being encouraged.
- Costs and construction timings dictate that any infrastructure expansion will take at least a decade to produce its beneficial effects. It is therefore imperative that the best possible productivity is extracted from the available European infrastructures.

It was further demonstrated through 4 pilot projects (the TIGER DEMO initiative) financed

through the ERDF. <http://tigerproject.eu> and <http://www.tigerdemo-project.eu>.

### **Ferro Smart Grid to develop first railway energy management smart grid**

The project consists in developing the first smart grid for the energy management of the railway sector, which will integrate the actions of the trains that are connected to the grid as well as other passive consumers –infrastructure auxiliary installations and electric vehicles mainly– in order to obtain an efficient, safe and sustainable electric supply.

To achieve the objective of the project, an experimental demonstrator prototype of this grip was developed thanks to ERDF support. FP7 (under MERLIN project) supported the next stage of this project, with the aim to demonstrate the viability of integrated management systems to achieve a more sustainable and optimised energy usage in European electric railway systems. <http://www.spanishrailwaysnews.com/noticias.asp?not=437>

### **3.8. Promoting sustainable and quality employment and supporting labour mobility (TO 8)**

Tackling unemployment and the social consequences of the crisis is a major priority; improving the resilience of the labour market and investing in human capital are essential to help companies recruit and adapt, and to allow more people to become and remain active and take up opportunities. At the same time, Member States should do more to improve employability and support access to jobs or a return to the world of work, in particular for the long-term unemployed, older people and young people.

Within the context of the Europe 2020 Strategy, the European Union has agreed on an employment rate target for women and men of 75% for the 20-64 years age group by 2020. The Agenda on new skills for new jobs is one of the main Commission initiatives that will help the EU reach its employment target for 2020. The Agenda presents a set of concrete actions that will help stepping up reforms to improve flexibility and security in the labour market, equip people with the right skills for the jobs of today and tomorrow, improve the quality of jobs and ensure better working conditions and enhance the conditions for job creation.

#### **ESI Funds**

##### **ESF**

Under this thematic objective, Member States should focus on achieving their national employment targets by using the ESF to support the relevant policies. Actions supported by the ESF should aim at sustainable integration into employment by facilitating occupational and geographical mobility. Successful actions benefit from the creation of networks with employers and education institutes at the appropriate territorial levels and the development of

local employment initiatives. Implementing youth guarantees requires a strong cooperation with social partners, employment services and other labour market stakeholders, and education and training bodies. In particular cooperation with employers providing workplace learning places for young people is key.

## **EAFRD**

Apart from the widely developed investment support provided by the EAFRD, which often results in the maintenance of existing and the creation of new jobs, specific measures targeted towards vocational training and skills acquisition actions such as training courses, workshops and coaching, supplemented where necessary by demonstration activities and information actions, could be funded by the EAFRD. Support may also cover short-term farm and forest management exchanges as well as farm and forest visits. These support possibilities are for the benefit of persons engaged in the agricultural, food and forestry sector, land managers and SMEs operating in rural areas. Moreover, the possibility for support to advisory services, farm management and farm relief services additionally creates stimuli for the development of skilled labour and enhances the quality of employment. The EAFRD supports also the entry of young people into agriculture through schemes for setting up of young farmers

## **ERDF**

The **ERDF** can support the development of business incubators and investment support for self-employment, micro-enterprises and business creation, support employment-friendly growth through the development of endogenous potential as part of a territorial strategy for specific areas, including the conversion of declining industrial regions and enhancement of accessibility to, and development of, specific natural and cultural resources.

Support may also cover local development initiatives and aid for structures providing neighbourhood services to create jobs, where such actions are outside the ESF Regulation 1304/2013<sup>36</sup>

Finally, ETC support is possible under cross-border cooperation, for the promotion of sustainable and quality employment, supporting labour mobility by integrating cross-border labour markets, including cross-border mobility, joint local employment initiatives, information and advisory services and joint training.

### **Social day-care centre "Ziedugravas" in Latvia**

With the support of ERDF and ESF a new Social day-care centre "Ziedugravas" has been opened in Skrīveru region in Latvia. The day-care centre is providing temporary social care and has developed new alternative care services – development of social skills, learning and leisure services.

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<sup>36</sup> Regulation (EU) No 1304/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council



The ERDF (total cost EUR 300 183, of that ERDF 197 215) support was used for the reconstruction of the building (422 m<sup>2</sup>). The building has been adjusted to the needs of persons with disabilities: installation of an elevator and a sloping, as well new equipment was purchased and installed to ensure functioning of the day-care centre.

The ESF (total costs EUR 283 272, of that ESF 270 584) used for projects which aim to enhance the employability and integration into society of persons with disabilities, persons of retirement age, large families and single-parent families, children from low-income and deprived families, children with different types of addictions, children suffering from violence, as well psychoactive substances addicts and people with low labour market skills or insufficient social and functional skills.

Within the project a social rehabilitation program has been develop and mobile crews to provide home care were set up. Training for social care specialist was also supported.

By the end of 2013 the number of persons regularly using the services provided by the day-care social centre "Ziedugravas" has reached 162 persons. In addition, 523 persons have received support from the improved social rehabilitation programme.



### **Crèches (Ireland)**

The Obair Community Crèche, Newmarket-on-Fergus, Co. Clare received support from the ERDF and the ESF (EUR 708,066.00 in total) under the Southern and Eastern Regional Operational Programme 2000-2006 for its childcare facility. The funding was provided for a capital investment programme and for support of staffing costs. The Crèche operates three rooms catering for children of the ages three months to six years. The Obair Community Crèche is a non-profit organisation aiming to provide affordable, accessible, high quality and



safe childcare for the immediate and surrounding areas of Newmarket-on-Fergus.

The Knockanrawley Resource Centre, Tipperary Town, received support from the ERDF and the ESF (EUR 859,142 in total) under the Southern and Eastern Regional Operational Programme 2000-2006 for its childcare facility. The funding was provided for a capital investment programme and for support of staffing costs.

## **EaSI**

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 total budget is EUR 919 million.

EaSI includes three axes and will support:

- the modernisation of employment and social policies with the PROGRESS axis (61% of the total budget);
- job mobility with the EURES axis (18% of the total budget);
- access to micro-finance and social entrepreneurship with the Microfinance and Social Entrepreneurship axis (21% of the total budget).

The **PROGRESS axis** helps the EU and its countries to improve policies in three thematic areas: employment, in particular to fight youth unemployment; social protection, social inclusion and the reduction and prevention of poverty; working conditions.

The PROGRESS axis will develop and disseminate high-quality comparative analytical knowledge; facilitate effective and inclusive information-sharing, mutual learning and dialogue; provide financial support to test social and labour market policy innovations; provide organisations with financial support to increase their capacity to develop, promote and support the implementation of EU instruments and policies.

Beneficiaries can be all public and/or private bodies, actors and institutions, and in particular national, regional and local authorities; employment services; specialist bodies provided for under Union law; the social partners; non-governmental organisations; higher education institutions and research institutes; experts in evaluation and in impact assessment; national statistical offices; the media.

The **EURES axis** aims to strengthen EURES, a European job mobility network that provides information, guidance and recruitment/placement services to employers, jobseekers and any citizen wishing to take advantage of freedom of movement for workers. It will cover three thematic areas: transparency of job vacancies, job applications and any related information for

applicants and employers; development of services for the recruitment and placing of workers in employment; cross-border partnerships. The beneficiaries are national, regional and local authorities; employment services; social partner organisations and other interested parties.

The **Microfinance and Social Entrepreneurship axis** will support actions in two thematic areas: microcredit and microloans for vulnerable groups and micro-enterprises; social entrepreneurship. It will aim to increase access to, and the availability of, microfinance for vulnerable groups who want to set up or develop their business and micro-enterprises; build up the institutional capacity of microcredit providers; support the development of social enterprises, in particular by facilitating access to finance.

Beneficiaries are public and private bodies established at national, regional or local level and providing microcredit for persons and microenterprises and/or financing for social enterprises in the relevant countries.

Further information: <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1081&langId=en>

## **ERASMUS +**

The Erasmus+ programme supports actions in the fields of Education, Training, Youth and Sport for the period 2014-2020. Erasmus+ will provide opportunities for over 4 million Europeans to study, train, gain work experience and volunteer abroad. Erasmus+ will support transnational partnerships among Education, Training, and Youth institutions and organisations to foster cooperation and bridge the worlds of Education and work in order to tackle the skills gaps we are facing in Europe. It will also support national efforts to modernise Education, Training, and Youth systems. In the field of Sport, there will be support for grassroots projects and cross-border challenges such as combating match-fixing, doping, violence and racism. The total budget for the period 2014-2020 is EUR 14,7 billion.

The programme gives opportunities to students, trainees, staff and volunteers to spend a period abroad to increase their skills and employability.

## **Synergies/Complementarities**

There is no derogation from the non-cumulative principle in the regulations on EaSI and on Erasmus+, meaning that for these programmes, a combination of funds within the same project is not possible.

EaSI should complement other Union programmes, while acknowledging that each instrument should operate in accordance with its own specific procedures. With the aim of adding value and achieving substantial impact through Union funding, close synergies should be developed between EaSI, other Union programmes and the ESI Funds, especially the ESF, in the areas covered by the three axes. EaSI will aim in particular, through its PROGRESS axis, to support social and labour market policy innovations for providing innovative responses to social

needs at Member States level. It will support in particular the gathering of evidence on the feasibility of labour and social innovations that offer innovative policy responses to social needs, prior to being repeated on a larger scale, if the results prove convincing.

**Erasmus +** should complement actions, cooperation and tools consistent with the objectives of the Europe 2020 Strategy and its flagship initiatives, such as Youth on the Move and the Agenda for new skills and jobs. Moreover, the Programme will support policy priorities agreed at European level in the framework of the Open Methods of Coordination.

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

The objectives of the fund is to contribute to the efficient management of migration flows through support to the legal migration to the Member States in accordance with their social and economic needs and promotion of the effective integration of third-country nationals including beneficiaries of international protection. Since the scope of the AMIF is limited to the preparatory actions related to facilitate access to the labour market, ESI Funds can support wider actions of integration of the third-country nationals (considered as vulnerable group by the legal acts establishing the Funds) in the labour market.

Further information:

[http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/financing/fundings/funding-home-affairs-beyond-2013/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/financing/fundings/funding-home-affairs-beyond-2013/index_en.htm)

### **3.9. Promoting social inclusion, combating poverty and any discrimination (TO 9)**

The European platform against poverty and social exclusion is one of seven flagship initiatives of the Europe 2020 strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth. It is designed to help EU countries reach the headline target of lifting 20 million people out of poverty and social exclusion by 2020. The Europe 2020 poverty target acts as an incentive for developing a stronger focus on social issues each year in the European Commission's Annual Growth Survey. These policy responses are in line with the social investment approach, as reflected in the Social Investment Package.

Efforts are needed to ensure the effectiveness of social protection systems in countering the effects of the economic crisis to promote social inclusion and to prevent poverty by adopting inclusion strategies, encompassing efficient and adequate income support, measures to tackle poverty, including child poverty, as well as broad access to affordable and high-quality services, such as social and health services, childcare, housing and energy supply and by strengthening the link between social assistance and activation measures through more personalised services and efforts to improve the take-up of measures by people facing specific challenges.

### **ESI Funds**

## **ESF**

20 % of the ESF allocation at national level shall be earmarked to this TO. The ESF will support active inclusion policies with a view to ensure better coordination between education, benefit systems and labour market policies to ensure transition to the labour market for the most disadvantaged. The income support component of the active inclusion strategy should be funded by the ESF only as a complementary measure as part of an integrated pathway approach to the labour market and should be limited in time to the duration of activation measures. Public employment schemes could be supported only as a transitional measure with the primary aim of equipping people with the necessary skills, competences and qualifications to reintegrate in the labour market. Member States are invited to make use of poverty maps, when designing and implementing integrated strategies to support the most disadvantaged areas and groups such as Roma. The integration of marginalised communities requires coherent and multi-dimensional approaches and could be supported through the approach of community-led local development (CLLD). To increase the effectiveness of ESF actions aimed at enhancing access to affordable, sustainable and high-quality services, the other ESI funds should be used in a complementary way to invest in social and health infrastructure in less developed regions and in rural areas.

## **EAFRD**

The EAFRD contributes to this TO by intervening into social inclusion aspects with targeted measures such as the investments in local basic services and related infrastructure (e.g. childcare, eldercare, healthcare, care for disabled people, etc), e-inclusion, local development concepts, partnerships and investments involving also social organisations implemented through LEADER. Additional support is provided through the start-up aid for development of small farms which aims at creating favourable conditions for their medium to long-term market sustainability and keeping small farmers outside the poverty trap. The EAFRD support complements the direct payment schemes of the CAP, which also play a huge role in combatting poverty in agriculture.

## **ERDF**

The **ERDF** can support investments in health and social infrastructure which contributes to national, regional and local development, reduces inequalities in terms of health status, promotes social inclusion through improved access to social, cultural and recreational services and makes the transition from institutional to community-based services.

It can also provide support for physical, economic and social regeneration of deprived communities in urban and rural areas, social enterprises, and undertaking investments in the context of community-led local development strategies.

Under cross-border cooperation (ETC), support can be provided for the promotion of social inclusion, combating poverty and any discrimination by promoting gender equality, equal opportunities, and the integration of communities across borders. The PEACE cross-border programme contributes to promoting social and economic stability in the regions concerned, in particular through actions to promote cohesion between communities.

### **City of Most (Czech Republic)**

Complex programme of integration of socially excluded people in the city of Most

ESF: EUR 900 000

Low threshold centre for youth 15-26 years in the city of Most

ERDF: EUR 400 000

Multifunctional centre Chanov in the city of Most

ERDF: EUR 700 000

All three projects are located within the same area of the city and are mutually inter-linked. Chanov is the part of the city typical by high unemployment rate, petty criminality, low housing standard, indebtedness, usury, etc. Number of persons living there is ca. 1500. Ca. 90% of them belong to Roma community.

The core activity of all three projects is providing advisory/consultancy services in the area of education, family life, working life, leisure activities, seminars, cooperation with potential employers. The target is to provide young people a background where they can get new skills (computer literacy) where they can spend their leisure time (gym, workshops), and where they can prepare for their school activities. The centre cooperates with the Labour Office, training centres, local schools and vocational training facilities. The objective of the activities carried out is to increase the chances of Chanov inhabitants at the labour market while the unemployment rate in the area is higher than average. All facilities are operated at a non-profit basis by the city of Most.

### **Least Developed Micro-Regions Programme (LDMR)**

The LDMR Programme is an experimental/innovative initiative which involves alternative instruments for using EU funds to boost economic and social development in a selected number of regions in Hungary. This was the first time in Hungary that a territorial approach was combined with resources-based planning, conferring a right and an opportunity to the local communities and decision-makers to choose their own development path in particular those projects that are really needed. Their task was helped by external experts; however, the final decision-making power remained in the hands of the micro-regions.

The funding of the LDMR Programme – altogether around EUR 360 million – was assured from both ERDF and ESF, through three national operational programmes (OPs), namely the

### **Berlin's neighbourhood management project**

The introduction of Neighbourhood Councils in deprived districts of Berlin has strengthened the participation of local residents in decision-making on the selection and financing of projects to improve their living conditions.

To counteract the negative outcomes of social segregation and social issues found in certain areas of Berlin after the reunification of the city, the Neighbourhood Management Berlin intervention strategy was launched in 1999 by the city authorities and, for more than a decade, it has proven to be a valuable tool in the development of the 'Socially Integrative City' of Berlin.

The socially disadvantaged areas of Berlin have suffered from a demonstrable neglect of public space as well as unemployment, dependence on state aid and the issues arising from a lack of social and ethnic integration. The overriding aim of the EU-supported Neighbourhood Management Berlin (NMB) programme has been to change this situation and create neighbourhoods of solidarity with equal development opportunities for the neighbourhood and its inhabitants.

The key partners in the project are the local residents working in cooperation with the city's Senate Department for Urban Development and the Environment, the local boroughs and the Neighbourhood Management Teams. A vital role is also played by local bodies such as housing societies, schools, businesses and community centres which often provide valuable synergy.

Total Investment: EUR 223 500 000, EU Investment: EUR 83 500 000

### **EaSI Programme (see under TO 8)**

#### **Synergies/Complementarities**

There is no derogation from the non-cumulative principle in the regulation on EaSI, meaning that for this programme a combination of funds within the same project is not possible.

The PROGRESS axis and the Microfinance and Social Entrepreneurship axis of EaSI are of particular importance in the context of TO 9

### **3.10. Investing in education, training and vocational training for skills and lifelong learning (TO 10)**

The Europe 2020 Strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth sets targets to 'Improving education levels, in particular by aiming to reduce school drop-out rates to less than 10% and by increasing the share of 30-34 year-olds having completed tertiary or

equivalent education to at least 40%.. In this context, the Agenda on new skills for new jobs will contribute, amongst other, to supporting a more skilled workforce, capable of contributing and adjusting to technological change with new patterns of work organisation. Investment in education and training systems, anticipation of skills needs, matching and guidance services are the fundamentals to raise productivity, competitiveness, economic growth and ultimately employment. Moreover, a number framework conditions need to be in place at the national level and priorities include, among others, raising the performance of education and training systems and overall skill levels and linking the worlds of work and education more closely together.

### **ESI funds**

#### **ESF**

Investments should support equal access to quality education at all educational levels, support restructuring and modernisation processes. Reforms should also aim at improving the match between skills supply and labour market demand and preparing entrepreneurial skills and education systems for the transition to a low-carbon economy. Successful investments require developing knowledge partnerships between higher education, the vocational education and training (VET) sector, research and business sectors and strengthening the links with the world of work.

#### **EAFRD**

The EAFRD contributes to this TO by supporting vocational training and skills acquisition actions such as training courses, workshops and coaching, supplemented where necessary by demonstration activities and information actions for the benefit of persons engaged in the agricultural, food and forestry sector, land managers and SMEs operating in rural areas. Support may also cover short-term farm and forest management exchanges as well as farm and forest visits. The EAFRD will also fund the provision of advisory services for SMEs supported by it. At the same time, it could fund basic educational infrastructure in rural areas and related services necessary for its proper and efficient functioning.

#### **ERDF**

The **ERDF** can provide support for the development of education and training infrastructure. In addition, the **ETC** can provide under cross-border cooperation support for the investment in education, training and vocational training for skills and lifelong learning by developing and implementing joint education, vocational training and training schemes.

#### **Erasmus+ (see TO8)**

### **3.11. Enhancing institutional capacity of public authorities and stakeholders and efficient public administration (TO 11)**

The quality of public administration has a direct impact on the economic environment and is thus crucial to stimulate productivity, competitiveness and growth. The 2014 Annual Growth Survey<sup>37</sup> highlighted that link and clearly recognised the need for Member States to increase the efficiency and effectiveness in the delivery of public services as well as the transparency and quality of public administration and the judiciary. Modernisation of public institutions was thus listed as one of the key priorities of the EU for a successful implementation of the EU2020 Strategy.

Institutional capacity building in the administration and the judiciary will be supported by ESF and ERDF with the objective to create institutions which are stable and predictable, but also flexible enough to react to the many societal challenges, open for dialogue with the public, able to introduce new policy solutions and deliver better services. The investment in the human capital of the public sector is oriented towards more efficient organisational processes, modern management, motivated and skilled civil servants and magistrates.

**ESF support** will focus on horizontal reforms for promotion of good governance. The interventions can involve public institutions and services at national, region and local level as well as bodies of the judicial system. The capacity building actions may cover a single authority or a system of authorities responsible for a specific policy area (for example those involved in policy-formulation, supervision, tax administration, etc.). Also, it is possible to have a cross-cutting approach where individual units performing a specific function in all authorities are covered (for example, the units for administrative service delivery of the municipalities or the human resources units in all ministries). The key actions may include:

- development of skills at all levels of the professional hierarchy within public authorities, training of different categories of staff, including magistrates and judicial administration, traineeship programmes for on-the-job-training, learning networks, etc.
- modernising and optimising the internal processes in the public institutions, incl. by introducing new working methods/organisation, development of quality management systems, adoption of IT systems, etc.
- improving the formulation and implementation of policies, including through tools for monitoring and evaluation, ensuring quality of legislation, supervision, legal enforcement, etc.
- improving the interaction between institutions and with stakeholders, incl. by improving coordination, tools and methods for evidence-based policy making,

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<sup>37</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/pdf/2014/ags2014\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/pdf/2014/ags2014_en.pdf)



mechanisms for public participation, actions for better law implementation and enforcement, tools for increased transparency and accountability, etc.

- improving the delivery and quality of services, incl. by reforms for reducing administrative burden, integration of services (focus on back office); one-stop shop delivery (focus on front office); including e-government / e-justice, etc.
- developing appropriate organisational structures, incl. through reallocation of functions, decentralisation, improving management, etc.
- development and implementation of human resources strategies and policies covering the main gaps in this field (as regards staff requirements and career development).
- developing the informational and technical resources.

The support in these areas will only be possible in Member States with at least one less developed region or in Member States which are eligible for Cohesion Fund assistance. In these two cases, ESF support may cover the whole territory of the country<sup>38</sup>.

In addition, ESF will support capacity-building for stakeholders delivering employment, education, health and social policies, and sectorial and territorial pacts to mobilise for reform at national, regional and local level by:

- enhancing the capacity of stakeholders, such as social partners and non-governmental organisations, to help them delivering more effectively their contribution in employment, education and social policies;
- development of sectorial and territorial pacts in the employment, social inclusion, health and education domains at all territorial levels.

This support can be provided across all types of regions.

**ERDF / CF support** will be available for:

- strengthening institutional capacity and the efficiency of public administrations and public services related to the implementation of ERDF / CF;
- support of actions in institutional capacity and in the efficient public administration supported by the ESF, including where necessary the provision of equipment and infrastructure to support the modernisation of public services in areas such as employment, education, health, social policies and customs;
- administrative capacity related to European Territorial Cooperation (ERDF only).

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<sup>38</sup> See Art. 8292)(a) of Regulation No [ ]

Participation in the ESF and ERDF / CF supported activities is open to public institutions, social partners and other non-government organisations.

**Institutional capacity building** involves cross-cutting reforms in the public administration, as well as for individual "sectors" of social and economic development. It has to be distinguished from **technical assistance** which is to support the authorities which administer and use ESI Funds.

**Justice Programme**<sup>39</sup> will promote judicial cooperation in civil and criminal matters, help train judges, prosecutors and other legal professionals, and support EU action to tackle drugs. Union legislation in the area of civil law and criminal law covers a broad spectrum from contractual law and insolvencies to procedural rights and victims' rights. The Justice Programme will support their effective and consistent application, and ensure proper access to justice for people and businesses in Europe.

The programme will be implemented through analytical activities, preparation of guides and reports, conferences, training activities, different forms of mutual learning and cooperation, as well as development and maintenance of systems and tools, including further development of the European e-justice portal. The budget is EUR 378 million.

Participation to the programme is open to all bodies and legal entities. Profit-oriented bodies can apply in conjunction with non-profit or public organisations.

**Hercule III Programme** will contribute to developing the activities at EU and Member State level to counter fraud and any other illegal activities affecting the EU's financial interests, including the fight against cigarette smuggling and counterfeiting. It will contribute to an increased transnational cooperation and coordination at Union level, between Member States' authorities, the Commission and OLAF. It shall also contribute to an effective prevention of fraud, corruption and other illegal activities against the EU's financial interests. The programme will provide technical assistance to MS' authorities in order to strengthen their operational and investigative capacity and by funding training, conferences and seminars for law enforcement professionals to improve their skills and to allow for the exchange of knowledge and best practices.

More information: [http://ec.europa.eu/anti\\_fraud/about-us/funding/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/anti_fraud/about-us/funding/index_en.htm)

**Safeguarding EU funds against fraud & corruption through the civil control mechanism of Integrity Pacts**

The project, financed under HERCULE II programme, with participants from Belgium, Croatia, Czech Republic, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Serbia, Switzerland (Swiss Contribution Fund, office in Budapest) and the Former Yugoslav Republic of

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<sup>39</sup> [Regulation \(EU\) No 1382/2013](#)

Macedonia has the following objectives:

- to introduce the Integrity Pact (IP) as an innovative idea and methodology to prevent corrupt public procurements affecting the EU's financial interests as well as those of individual states who benefit from EU funds;
- to create a forum, both nationally in each partner country and internationally, for the exchange of experience, information and best practices in monitoring EU funded procurements;
- to work on the development of a common EU-level method of prevention of fraud through the use of IPs, together with EU level experts and all the involved decision makers;
- to raise interest of EU funding bodies in the possibility of using IPs as a sign of commitment to transparency and fairness.

Project outputs:

- a two-day conference, aiming at exploring the possibilities of safeguarding EU funds against fraud and corruption through the civil control mechanism of Integrity Pacts (IPs), a corruption-prevention tool to be used in public contracting. A press conference will be organised on the second day with municipalities and companies interested in IPs are the main target audience;
- collection and summary of results of the project in a handbook and national compendia.

**Internal Security Fund** has been established to strengthen police cooperation and prevent and fight organised crime. Enhancing national capacities to fight corruption, protecting the economy against criminal infiltration and reducing incentives by seizing and confiscating criminal assets are among the major priorities covered by the Fund. The primary target groups are especially law enforcement and other security services. Investigation and other cooperation activities including exchange of information, sharing best practices, awareness raising and training actions could be supported in this framework, in complementarity with a broad range of actions under ESIF aiming at ensuring good governance and strengthening administrative capacities.

Further information: [http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/financing/fundings/funding-home-affairs-beyond-2013/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/financing/fundings/funding-home-affairs-beyond-2013/index_en.htm)

**Pericles Programme** funds exchanges, assistances and training for authorities, banks and others involved in combating euro-counterfeiting – both in the eurozone and in EU countries outside the eurozone. The aim is better protection for euro banknotes and coins in Europe and worldwide – by ensuring anti-counterfeiting measures throughout the EU have equivalent effect while respecting distinct national traditions and by improving cooperation between authorities. The overall budget available for the Programme during the current multi-annual financial framework is EUR 7.3 million and it is implemented on the basis of annual work programmes.

More information: [http://ec.europa.eu/anti\\_fraud/euro-protection/training/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/anti_fraud/euro-protection/training/index_en.htm)

**The Rights, Equality and Citizenship Programme** is meant to promote and protect specific rights and freedoms of persons deriving from EU law. It will promote gender equality, combating all forms of discrimination and fighting racism. In addition it aims at effective and consistent application of the Union law instruments and policies in the Member States, promoting cross-border cooperation and mutual knowledge. The support activities will include analytical activities, conferences, training activities, different forms of mutual learning and cooperation, as well as support for NGOs in the implementation of actions with European added value, support for member States for implementation of European instruments and policies. The budget for this programme is EUR 439 million.

Participation to the programme is open to all bodies and legal entities. Profit-oriented bodies can apply in conjunction with non-profit or public organisations.

**Europe for citizens programme**<sup>40</sup> will contribute to two objectives. In the first place, it aims to promote citizens' understanding of the Union, its history and diversity. A second strand focuses at fostering European citizenship and improving conditions for civic and democratic participation at Union level through developing citizen's understanding of the Union policy-making process and promoting opportunities. This second strand provides support for town twinning, networks of towns and civil society projects. The total budget of the programme is EUR 185 million.

Applications can be submitted by all stakeholders promoting European citizenship and integration in particular local and regional authorities, twinning committees, civil society organisations, etc.

#### **4. On-line Guidance for Beneficiaries**

An on-line tool is available at: .....

The potential beneficiary is asked to first select one of the eleven thematic objectives described above. He/She is then given a list of Union investment priorities falling under the chosen objective and is asked to select one of them. Finally, he/she is asked to identify him/herself by choosing between the following categories of beneficiaries: SME, large undertaking, research organisation, university, individual researcher, student, NGO and non-profit organisation, public authority, farmer, fisherman.

The potential beneficiary will then be given a list of useful links towards funds that might be relevant for its search.

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<sup>40</sup> [Regulation \(EU\) No 390/2014](#)