

Information Guide



Funding from the European Union

A guide to information sources on funding opportunities from the European Union

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Overview

Opportunities for obtaining money from the European Union (EU) fall into three broad categories: grants, loans and public procurement.

One of the prime sources of information on funding opportunities is the EU's Annual Budget, which sets out the financial framework for the institutions. The budget is published in the L series of the [Official Journal](#) (OJ) and provides the raw material for grants consultants and others who provide information and/or advice on funding applications.

The website of the European Commission's DG Budget has details of the annual budget and background information can be found in the ESO Information Guide on the EU budget.

Each budget is subsequently scrutinised by the [European Court of Auditors](#) (ECA), which publishes an Annual Report on the budget. The ECA website provides the Courts Annual Report, together with press releases and the more detailed Information Notes.

Members of the [Enterprise Europe Network](#) and other EU information networks such as [Europe Direct](#) can help with enquiries about funding.

The 2007-2013 funding period is drawing to a close. On 29 June 2011, the European Commission presented its proposals for the next funding period: 'A Budget for Europe 2020' ([COM\(2011\)500](#); see also [Financial Framework 2014-2020](#) and [MFF programmes](#) page). The proposals will see significant changes to many of the programmes mentioned in this guide. New programmes will start in 2014.

Grants

There is a common misconception that 'money from Brussels' is freely available for almost any purpose. The reality is that grants from the European Union are made available to support specific objectives and most money is not paid directly to beneficiaries, but via national and regional authorities. In addition to the major funds, referred to as Structural Funds and the funding available under the Common Agricultural Policy, there are numerous other programmes and initiatives which support specific EU activities. Notices for some are published in the Official Journal C series; others in the Supplement to the [Official Journal](#) (the OJ S; available online as [Tenders Electronic Daily](#) - TED).

Introductions to EU funding and links to other sources are provided by the Commission on its [Public contracts and funding](#) page.

Transparency and evaluation of funding

When the then European Commissioner for Administrative Affairs, Audit and Anti-Fraud, Siim Kallas, launched the European Transparency Initiative (ETI; see [Summaries of EU legislation](#)) in November 2005, one of its declared goals was to enhance the transparency on funding from the EU. Commissioner Kallas suggested creating a central web portal to bring together data on all recipients of centrally managed EU funding (i.e. managed by the European Commission). The Commission would also work towards greater transparency of decentralised funding and funding subject to shared management between the Commission and national authorities. The latter includes most of the EU's total financial support, since it covers the bulk of funding under the Common Agricultural Policy, the Structural Funds and the Cohesion Fund (see Press Release [SPEECH/05/628](#)).

The European Commission's DGs for Development and for External Relations, together with the EuropeAid Co-operation Office, run a joint website where they make evaluation of their funding programmes publicly available. An [Inventory of EU evaluations](#) brings together 'the evaluations completed and released by the Evaluation Services of the 25 EU Member States and the European Commission of their external/development cooperation actions since January 2000.' There are also other evaluation websites:

- DG Agriculture and Rural Development: [Evaluation of policy measures in agriculture](#)
- EU Humanitarian Aid Office (ECHO): [Evaluation](#)
- DG Education and Culture: [Evaluation Reports](#) (includes civil society, culture, education, languages, sport, training, youth and cross-cutting evaluations)
- DG for Communications Networks, Content and Technology (DG CONNECT): [Evaluation & Monitoring](#)
- DG Regional Policy: [Evaluation](#)

Funding opportunities in selected areas

The Commission's Directorates-General mentioned below issue 'Calls for proposals' and/or 'Calls for tender'; where available the relevant web pages are identified.

Agriculture and Fisheries

European Commission: [DG Agriculture and Rural Development](#) ([Calls](#)), [DG Maritime Affairs and Fisheries](#) ([Calls for proposals](#) / [Calls for tender](#))

[Financing the Common Agricultural Policy](#) - includes a general introduction, Financial Reports, information on distribution of aids and the Clearance of Accounts of Member States' expenditure (see also Summaries of EU legislation: [European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development](#) (EAFRD), [European Agricultural Guarantee Fund](#) (EAGF), [Financing the common agricultural policy](#)).

[Direct support](#) - the most important form of agricultural funding in the 15 old Member States since the 2003 reform, consisting of direct income support to farms, decoupled from production and subject to cross-compliance with certain standards. For individual plant and animal products, which might qualify for specific support schemes, see also the DG's website on [agricultural markets](#).

[Support for Promotional measures](#), both within the Internal Market and in third countries.

[Information measures relating to the Common Agricultural Policy](#) - support for projects aimed at explaining the CAP, promoting the European model of agriculture, informing farmers and raising public awareness.

Provision is also made for [Aid to farmers in Less Favoured Areas](#) (LFA), to support [Bioenergy](#), and to promote agricultural produce to children via the [School Milk Scheme](#) and [School Fruit Scheme](#).

There are rules on [State aid in the agricultural sector](#) which can be offered to the agricultural sector and details are available of the [Beneficiaries of CAP payments](#). Background information can be found in the ESO [Information Guide: Common Agricultural Policy](#) and [Information Guide: Common Fisheries Policy](#).

European Commission: [DG Maritime Affairs and Fisheries](#) provides information on [Contracts and funding](#), including the [European Fisheries Fund](#) (EFF - previously the Financial Instrument for Fisheries Guidance - FIFG; for background on the EFF and related topics, see [Summaries of EU legislation](#)).

Consumers

European Commission: [DG Health and Consumers](#), [Executive Agency for Health and Consumers \(Calls\)](#)

The [Consumer Programme 2007-2013](#) provides the financial framework for consumer policy (see [Summaries of EU legislation](#)).

The European Commission's DG Health and Consumers offers information on its [website](#), including details of [grants](#) and [tenders](#) for relevant activities.

In January 2005, the [Executive Agency for Health and Consumers](#) (EAHC) was created, to support implementation of the EU Public Health Programme. In 2008, the Agency's scope was extended to include actions in the field of consumer protection and training for safer food.

For background information see the ESO [Information Guide: Consumer Policy](#).

Culture and audiovisual sector

European Commission: [DG Education and Culture \(Calls\)](#)

The main programme in this area is [Culture](#). Spanning 2007-2013, it has three main objectives: to promote cross-border mobility of those working in the cultural sector; to encourage the transnational circulation of cultural and artistic output; and to foster intercultural dialogue. Within those objectives, the programme support three strands of activities: cultural actions; European-level cultural bodies; and analysis and dissemination activities (see also [Summaries of EU legislation](#)).

The website also gives details of other initiatives, including a [Pilot Project for Artist Mobility](#) and [prizes](#) in cultural heritage, architecture, literature and music.

The [MEDIA](#) programme supports the European audiovisual sector during the period 2007-2013. Its objectives are: to preserve and enhance European cultural diversity and its cinematographic and audiovisual heritage, guarantee accessibility to this for Europeans and promote intercultural dialogue; to increase the circulation of European audiovisual works inside and outside the European Union; to strengthen the competitiveness of the European audiovisual sector in the framework of an open and competitive market (see also [Summaries of EU legislation](#)). The associated [MEDIA Mundus](#) programme promotes cultural and commercial relations between Europe's film industry and film-makers from third countries.

In January 2005 the European Commission decided to set up an executive agency, the [Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency](#) (EACEA), to manage EU initiatives in this area (see [Summaries of EU legislation](#)).

Education, training and youth

European Commission: [DG Education and Culture \(Calls\)](#)

Education and training are also areas in which there are numerous opportunities for public and private sector organisations to participate in EU initiatives. For the period 2007-2013, the Commission has brought together previous education, vocational training and e-learning programmes which ended in 2006, into an overarching [Lifelong Learning Programme](#) (LLP).

Details of individual elements can be found via the [Education and training website](#) and also on the [FACEA site](#). The major 'sectorial' programmes are:

[Comenius](#) for schools (see also [FACEA page](#))

[Erasmus](#) for higher education (see also [FACEA page](#))

[Leonardo da Vinci](#) for vocational education and training (see also [FACEA page](#))

[Grundtvig](#) for adult education (see also [FACEA page](#))

In addition, there is also a Transversal Programme, intended to complement the sectorial programmes and to ensure their effectiveness, and which covers:

[Policy cooperation and innovation](#) (see also [FACEA page](#))

[Languages](#) (see also [FACEA page](#))

[Information and communication technologies](#) - ICT (see also [FACEA page](#))

[Dissemination and exploitation of results](#) (see also [FACEA page](#))

The [Jean Monnet Programme](#) for promoting the understanding of European integration also now falls under the umbrella of the LLP and has three distinct elements: support for University-level projects on European integration (the Jean Monnet Action); support for six specific academic institutions; support for Europe-wide associations (see also [FACEA page](#)).

Beyond the LLP, there are a number of external programmes and policies:

[Tempus](#), which contributes to the building of co-operation in the field of higher education between the EU and partner countries in neighbouring regions;

[Erasmus Mundus](#), which aims to enhance quality in higher education through scholarships and academic co-operation between Europe and the rest of the world;

[Co-operation with industrialised countries](#), which aims to enhance the quality of higher education and vocational training and to promote intercultural understanding with various countries, primarily in North America and the Asia-Pacific region.

[External co-operation in education and training](#) (an umbrella for Erasmus Mundus, Jean Monnet, Tempus, [Alfa](#), which focuses on cooperation between the EU and Latin America, and [Edulink](#), which fosters capacity building and regional integration in higher education in the Africa, Caribbean and Pacific states).

For additional background information, see also Summaries of EU legislation collections on [Lifelong learning](#) and on [Education, training, youth: cooperation with non-EU member countries](#).

The [Youth in Action](#) programme 2007-2013 replaces the YOUTH Programme, which ran from 2000 to 2006. Aimed at young people (usually aged 15-28; in some cases 13-30), Youth in Action aims to inspire a sense of active citizenship, solidarity and tolerance among young Europeans and to involve them in shaping the future of the EU.

The programme supports activities for young people and youth workers through five Actions:

Action 1 - [Youth for Europe](#), which encourages young people's active citizenship, participation and creativity through youth exchanges, youth initiatives and youth democracy projects;

Action 2 - [European Voluntary Service](#), which helps young people to develop their sense of solidarity by participating, either individually or in groups, in non-profit, unpaid voluntary activities abroad;

Action 3 - [Youth in the World](#), which promotes partnerships and exchanges among young people and youth organisations across the world;

Action 4 - [Youth Support Systems](#), which includes various measures to support youth workers and youth organisations and improve the quality of their activities;

Action 5 - [Support for European Co-operation in the Youth field](#), which supports youth policy co-operation at European level, in particular by facilitating dialogue between young people and policy makers.

In January 2005 the European Commission decided to set up an executive agency, the [Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency](#) (EACEA), to manage EU initiatives in this area (see Summaries of EU legislation page on [EACEA](#) and also pages on aspects of [Youth](#) policy).

For more background information see the ESO [Information Guide: Education Policy](#).

Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion

European Commission: [DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion](#) ([Calls for proposals](#) / [Calls for tender](#))

The [European Social Fund](#) (ESF) was set up to promote economic and social cohesion by reducing differences in prosperity and living standards across EU Member States and regions. Over the period 2007-2013, some €75 billion will be distributed across the EU Member States and regions to help generate employment.

The ESF funds activities across a wide range of areas, including: workers and new skills; businesses undergoing change; access to employment and social inclusion; education and training; women and jobs; fighting discrimination. Further details are on the [ESF website](#).

The [European Globalisation Adjustment Fund](#) (EGF) supports workers who lose their jobs as a result of changing global trade patterns, with the aim of helping them find another job. Member States can apply to the EGF for funding when significant job losses are experienced.

[PROGRESS](#) is the Union's employment and social solidarity programme, established to support the implementation of EU objectives in employment, social affairs and equal opportunities. Spanning 2007-2013, PROGRESS provides funding for actions in support of employment; social protection and inclusion; working conditions; diversity and combating discrimination; and equality between women and men (see also [Summaries of EU legislation](#)).

The aim of the [European Progress Microfinance Facility](#) (EPMF) is to give micro businesses (those employing fewer than 10 people) easier access to credit. It also aims to help provide microloans for vulnerable groups and unemployed people wanting to set up or further develop their own businesses.

For more background information see the ESO [Information Guide: Employment and Labour Market Policy](#).

Energy

European Commission: [DG Energy](#) ([Calls](#)), [Executive Agency for Competitiveness & Innovation](#)

[Intelligent Energy - Europe](#) (IEE) provides support for removing market barriers, changing behaviour, creating a more favourable business environment for growing energy efficiency and renewables markets, and promoting greater understanding of EU energy policies.

IEE is one of a number of programmes managed by the [Executive Agency for Competitiveness & Innovation](#) (EACI).

Energy is a major area of research for the EU, with funding available for a number of areas, including:

- Solar Energy ([Photovoltaics](#), [Concentrated Solar Power](#))
- [Wind Energy](#)
- [Bioenergy](#)
- Other renewable energies ([Ocean](#), [Hydro](#), [Geothermal](#))
- [Fuel cells and hydrogen](#)
- Energy networks ([Smartgrids](#))
- Clean coal/CCS ([Clean Coal / CCS](#), [Coal and steel - RFCS](#))
- Energy efficiency ([Energy efficiency](#))
- Horizontal aspects ([Socio-economic research](#), [Materials & future and emerging technologies](#))

For further information, see the Commission's Research page and the CORDIS page on [Energy research in the 7th framework programme](#).

Funding is also available for [Trans-European Energy Networks](#) (TEN-E), which aim to improve the interconnection, interoperability and development of trans-European networks for transporting electricity and gas.

Further background information can be found in the [Summaries of EU legislation](#).

For more background information see the ESO [Information Guide on Energy Policy](#) and [Information Guide: Trans-European Networks](#).

Enlargement and European Neighbourhood Policy

European Commission: [DG Enlargement](#) ([Calls](#))

Three countries are currently candidates to join the EU: Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, and Turkey. Six are potential candidates: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Montenegro, Serbia, Iceland.

The main form of financial assistance to candidates or potential candidates is the [Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance](#) (IPA), intended to help the countries concerned introduce political, economic and institutional reforms. The IPA has five components:

1. Transition Assistance and Institution Building
2. Cross-Border Cooperation (with EU Member States and other countries eligible for IPA)
3. Regional Development (transport, environment and economic development)
4. Human Resources Development (strengthening human capital and combating exclusion)
5. Rural Development

Components 1 and 2 are open to all beneficiary countries. Components 3, 4 and 5 are open to candidate countries only (see also [Summaries of EU legislation](#) and the DG Regional Policy page on the [IPA](#)).

[Sigma](#) is a joint initiative of the EU and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). Primarily funded by the EU, it focuses not only on the candidate and potential candidate countries, but also on the 16 countries covered by the European Neighbourhood Policy (see below) and Russia.

The [European Investment Bank](#) (EIB) provides funding for projects in the enlargement countries in the form of individual loans, intermediated loans and venture capital, with a focus on supporting investment to meet the requirements of EU legislation and to aid economic development ahead of membership negotiations.

The EU is part of the [European Bank for Reconstruction and Development](#) (EBRD), which is the largest single investor in central and eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). The EBRD provides loan and equity finance, guarantees, leasing facilities and trade finance.

The [European Fund for Southeast Europe](#) (EFSE), in which the European Commission is an investor, is the largest microfinance investment fund worldwide and the first Public-Private Partnership (PPP) of its kind, providing sustainable, long-term funding to financial institutions in Southeast Europe and supporting micro-enterprises and small businesses.

The [European Neighbourhood Policy](#) (ENP) governs the EU's relations with 16 neighbouring countries to the east and south: Algeria, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Egypt, Georgia, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Moldova, Morocco, Occupied Palestinian Territory, Syria, Tunisia and Ukraine. Financial support for the ENP is provided via the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI). Sustainable development is a focus of ENPI, which operates on the basis of funds being allocated to country programmes according to individual circumstances (see also [Summaries of EU legislation](#)).

Background information can be found in the ESO [Information Guide: Enlargement of the European Union](#).

Enterprise

European Commission: [DG Enterprise and Industry \(Calls\)](#)

The DG Enterprise and Industry's [Quick guide to funding](#) makes a distinction between [Indirect funding](#) and [Direct funding](#). The former provides financial assistance to small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) via financial intermediaries in their own Member State, to help finance regular business needs such as investments and tangible or intangible assets. The Commission identifies the main sources of EU funding for indirect support as the [Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme](#) (CIP) and the [Structural Funds](#), including the [JEREMIE](#) initiative (Joint European Resources for Micro to Medium Enterprises, which provides financing from seed capital funds and other types of investor).

Direct funding, in the form of grants, is available to support specific policy objectives in areas such as research and education, mostly by funding cooperative projects. Grants - usually 50% of project costs - are accessed through specific calls for proposals.

In addition, the EU has established a number of policies and instruments to support SMEs with appropriate sources and types of financing.

A [loan guarantee](#) facility is available to small businesses under the Competitiveness and Innovation framework Programme, which also offers [microcredit](#) facilities via the European Investment Fund (EIF). Under the SME Guarantee Facility Microcredit Window,

the EIF provides loan guarantees to microcredit organisations for loans of up to €25,000 to micro-enterprises (those with up to nine employees).

[CIP Financial Instruments](#) also support a High Growth and Innovative SME Facility (GIF) which provides risk capital for innovative SMEs in their early stages and risk capital for SMEs with high growth potential in their expansion phase, and an SME Guarantee Facility (SMEG), which provides loan guarantees to encourage banks to make more debt finance available to SMEs.

[Business angels](#) are individual investors who provide capital for start-up businesses. The CIP allows business angels to develop co-investment funds in partnership with venture capital funds.

There is no integrated [venture capital](#) market in the EU, with the regulatory situation varying from country to country and the market fragmented along national lines. EU policy seeks to unify the venture capital market in order to provide innovative small businesses with easier access to funding.

Under the Seventh Framework Programme for Research and Development (FP7), innovative SMEs can participate in projects using the Risk Sharing Finance Facility (RSFF - see [Commission page](#) and [EIB page](#)) which supports applied research and the commercialisation of results.

For more background information see the ESO [Information Guide: Enterprise Policy](#).

Environment

European Commission: [DG Environment \(Calls\)](#)

[LIFE](#) is the Union's Financial Instrument for the Environment. Established in 1992, the latest incarnation of the initiative is LIFE+, which helps fund environment and nature conservation projects in the EU and selected other countries (for background to LIFE, see [Summaries of EU legislation](#)).

LIFE+ comprises three elements:

- LIFE+ Nature and Biodiversity, for projects that contribute to the implementation of the Birds and Habitats Directives, and that contribute to the EU's goal of halting the loss of biodiversity.
- LIFE+ Environment Policy and Governance, for technological projects that offer significant environmental benefits and which improve the implementation of EU environmental legislation, that build the environmental policy knowledge base, and that develop environmental information sources through monitoring.
- LIFE+ Information and Communication, for projects that spread information about environmental issues, including forest fire prevention awareness and training campaigns.

LIFE+ provides funding for operational activities of NGOs - non-governmental organisations that are primarily active in protecting and enhancing the environment at European level. To be eligible, organisations must be active and have members in at least three EU Member States. Calls for proposals are published once a year on the DG Environment web page.

LIFE beneficiaries who have experience and knowledge to share may be eligible for support under the Interreg IVC Programme. Financed through the European Regional

Development Fund (ERDF), Interreg IVC promotes interregional co-operation, including the exchange and transfer of experience and knowledge between regions in the EU, Norway and Switzerland.

[Natura 2000](#) is an EU-wide ecological network of conservation areas intended to maintain and restore endangered habitats and species of Community interest. The [Financing Natura 2000: Guidance Handbook](#) identifies the main EU funding instruments which can be used to support Natura 2000 projects: LIFE+, the Structural Funds (European Social Fund, European Regional Development Fund), the Cohesion Fund, the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD), the European Fisheries Fund (EFF), and the 7th Research Framework Programme (FP7).

FP7 supports specific environmental projects predominately in the co-operation (collaborative research) programme. The main areas relevant to the environment are Food, Agriculture and Fisheries and Biotechnology (theme 2) and Environment, including climate change (theme 6). Further details can be found on the [Commission's FP7 website](#) and the [CORDIS FP7 site](#).

Amongst other things, the [Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme](#) (CIP) supports innovation activities including eco-innovation, which aims to promote the uptake of innovative products, services and technologies. Priorities of the [eco-innovation initiative](#) include materials recycling, food & drink, sustainable building materials and greening business with a focus on resource efficiency.

Further details can be found on the DG Environment's pages on [Funding opportunities](#) and [Other Funding](#).

For more background information see the ESO [Information Guide: Environment Policy](#).

External aid and external relations

European Commission: [DG EuropeAid \(Calls\)](#), [European External Action Service \(Grants\)](#) ([Contracts](#))

The European Union is the world's biggest aid donor, providing financial assistance via both the EU budget and the European Development Fund (EDF). The Commission's DG EuropeAid manages EU external aid programmes, implementing relevant projects and activities by making grants for actions under Commission-run programmes, awarding operating grants to cover expenditure incurred by EU-based organisations carrying out approved work, and offering aid-related contract opportunities. Details of grants and contracts offered by EuropeAid can be found via its [Funding](#) page.

EuropeAid draws on a range of EU financial instruments and programmes to collaborate with partners from the following regions:

- [Africa, Caribbean and the Pacific](#) (ACP)
- [Asia](#)
- [Gulf region](#)
- [Latin America](#)
- [Neighbourhood & Russia](#) (European Neighbourhood Policy - ENP)

Other programmes relevant to EuropeAid include the [European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights](#) (EIDHR) and initiatives concerning: [environment and natural resources](#), [food facility](#), [gender equality](#), [health](#), [migration and asylum](#), [nuclear safety](#), [stability](#).

The [PADOR](#) database (Potential Applicant Dated Online Registration), managed by EuropeAid, contains the organisations and their partners who apply for Commission grants in the field of external assistance.

For more background information see [Summaries of EU legislation](#) and the ESO [Information Guide: ACP-EU relations](#).

Health

European Commission: [DG Health and Consumers \(Calls\)](#), [Executive Agency for Health and Consumers \(Calls\)](#)

The [Second Programme of Community Action in the Field of Health 2008-2013](#) has three main objectives: improving citizens' health security (promoting actions related to patient safety); promoting health and reducing health inequalities; and generating and disseminating health information and knowledge.

The Programme is managed by the Commission with the assistance of the [Executive Agency for Health and Consumers](#) (EAHC) which was created in 2005 to support implementation of the first EU Public Health Programme. In 2008, the Agency's scope was extended to include actions in the field of consumer protection and training for safer food.

The DG Health and Consumers page on [Health and Structural Funds](#) highlights the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and the European Social Fund (ESF) as sources of health-related funding. Measures supported include health infrastructure, e-health, health promotion and training.

For more background information see [Summaries of EU legislation](#) and the ESO [Information Guide: Public Health](#).

Justice and Home Affairs

European Commission: [DG Justice \(Calls\)](#)

For the period 2007-2013, funding is available in the following areas:

- [Fundamental rights and citizenship](#)
- [Civil justice](#)
- [Criminal justice](#)
- [Gender equality & discrimination](#)
- [Drugs](#)

European Commission: [DG Home Affairs](#)

For the period 2007-2013, funding is available in the following areas:

- [Migration, Asylum and Borders](#)
- [Security and safeguarding liberties](#)

There is also information on [Funding Home Affairs beyond 2013](#).

Background information on current initiatives and details of previous ones can be found in the Summaries of EU legislation collections on: [Citizenship of the Union](#), [Combating discrimination](#), [Combating drugs](#), [Fight against organised crime](#), [Fight against terrorism](#), [Fight against trafficking in human beings](#), [Free movement of persons, asylum and](#)

[immigration](#), [Judicial cooperation in civil matters](#), [Judicial cooperation in criminal matters](#), [Police and customs cooperation](#).

See also the ESO [Information Guide: Justice and Home Affairs](#).

Research and technological development

European Commission: [DG Research & Innovation \(Calls\)](#)

The Union's Seventh Framework Programme (FP7) spans the period 2007-2013. It is divided into four main parts: Cooperation, Ideas, People, Capacities.

The [Cooperation Programme](#) supports research activities carried out by different research bodies in trans-national cooperation in the following areas:

- [Health](#)
- [Food, Agriculture and Fisheries, Biotechnology](#)
- [Information and communication technologies](#)
- [Nanosciences, nanotechnologies, materials and new production technologies](#)
- [Energy](#)
- [Environment](#) (including climate change)
- [Transport](#) (including aeronautics)
- [Socio-economic Sciences and the Humanities](#)
- [Space](#)
- [Security](#)
- [Coordination of Research Activities](#)
- [Joint Technology Initiatives](#)

The [Ideas Programme](#) is intended to enhance exploratory research in Europe, with the [European Research Council](#) supporting the most ambitious and innovative research projects and a Scientific Council identifying priorities and scientific strategies.

The [People Programme](#) aims to help improve the career prospects of researchers in Europe and to attract more high-quality young researchers, with a focus on the mobility and training of European researchers.

The [Capacities Programme](#) is intended to enhance research and innovation capacities throughout Europe and to ensure their optimal use.

In addition to the above, FP7 supports the Commission's own [Joint Research Centre \(JRC\)](#) and there is also an associated [Seventh Framework Programme of the European Atomic Energy Community \(Euratom\) for nuclear research and training activities \(2007 to 2011\)](#).

Further information can be found on the [Commission's FP7 website](#) and the [CORDIS FP7 site](#); see also [Summaries of EU legislation](#).

For more background information see the ESO [Information Guide: Research and Development](#).

Structural Funds and Cohesion Fund

European Commission: [DG Regional Policy \(Calls\)](#)

For the period 2007-2013, the number of financial instruments for 'cohesion policy' has been reduced from six to three: the European Regional Development Fund and the European Social Fund (collectively known as the Structural Funds) and the Cohesion

Fund. Between them, the funds support the three objectives of regional policy - Convergence, Regional Competitiveness and Employment, and European Territorial Cooperation. The DG Regional Policy website has details of [which regions are covered](#).

The aim of the [European Regional Development Fund](#) (ERDF) is to strengthen economic and social cohesion in the EU by addressing imbalances between its regions. It provides funding for: direct aid to investments in companies to create sustainable jobs; infrastructures, especially those linked to research and innovation, telecommunications, environment, energy and transport; financial instruments to support regional and local development and to foster cooperation between towns and regions; technical assistance measures.

In regions covered by the Convergence objective, the ERDF supports actions concerned with: culture; education; energy; environment; health; information society; innovation and entrepreneurship; research and technological development (RTD); risk prevention; tourism; transport;

For the Regional Competitiveness and Employment objective, ERDF priorities are: innovation and knowledge-based economy; environment and risk prevention; access to transport and telecommunications services of general economic interest.

For the European Territorial Cooperation objective, the ERDF focuses on: development of economic and social cross-border activities; establishment and development of transnational cooperation; increasing the efficiency of regional policy through interregional promotion and cooperation.

In addition, the ERDF also aims to assist areas with particular characteristics, including remote, mountainous or sparsely populated areas, and the Union's outermost areas.

The [European Social Fund](#) (ESF) is intended to help improve employment and job opportunities, providing financial support for: adapting workers and enterprises; access to employment for job seekers, the unemployed, women and migrants; social integration of disadvantaged people and combating discrimination in the job market; strengthening human capital by reforming education systems and setting up a network of teaching establishments.

The [Cohesion Fund](#) is aimed at Member States whose Gross National Income (GNI) per inhabitant is less than 90% of the Community average. For the period 2007-2013, the Fund is available to: Bulgaria, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Greece, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia. In addition, Spain qualifies for phase-out funding. The Cohesion Fund finances projects associated with trans-European transport networks and with the environment (including projects related to energy efficiency, use of renewable energy, developing rail transport, supporting intermodality and strengthening public transport).

In addition, a number of other initiatives provide money to target specific objectives: the [European Union Solidarity Fund](#) (EUSF) responds to major natural disasters; the [European Grouping for Territorial Cooperation](#) (EGTC) facilitates and promotes cross-border, transnational and interregional cooperation, enabling regional and local authorities and other public bodies from different Member States to set up cooperation groupings with a legal personality.

In the context of cohesion policy, the European Commission has highlighted the need for better access to finance for start-up businesses and micro-enterprises. As a result, a number of [Special support instruments](#) have been established, including [JEREMIE](#) (Joint European Resources for Micro to medium Enterprises) and [JESSICA](#) (Joint European Support for Sustainable Investment in City Areas).

Additional details of the Structural Funds and Cohesion Fund for 2007-2013 and for previous funding periods can be found in [Summaries of EU legislation](#) and in the ESO [Information Guide: Structural Policy](#).

Transport

European Commission: [DG Mobility and Transport \(Calls\)](#), [Executive Agency for Competitiveness & Innovation](#), [Trans-European Transport Network Executive Agency \(Calls\)](#)

[Marco Polo](#) is the EU funding programme for projects which move freight transport from the road to sea, rail and inland waterways. It is one of a number of programmes managed by the [Executive Agency for Competitiveness & Innovation](#) (EACI).

Funding for the Trans-European Transport Network (TEN-T) comes from a number of sources: grants from the Trans-European transport budget; grants from the Cohesion Fund; grants from the European Regional Development Fund; loans and guarantees from the European Investment Bank (see [EU funding for TEN-T](#)). TEN-T projects can also be eligible for support under the 7th Framework Programme (see DG Research page on [Transport](#) and DG Mobility and Transport [Research](#) page).

Technical and financial implementation of the TEN-T programme is managed by the [Trans-European Transport Network Executive Agency](#) (TEN-T EA). Much of the €8 billion budget for 2007-2013 is allocated to projects selected via calls for proposals. The [TEN-T EA funding](#) page gives details of multi-annual and annual calls.

The [NAIADES](#) Action Programme focuses on five strategic areas for a comprehensive Inland Waterway Transport (IWT) policy: market, fleet, jobs and skills, image and infrastructure. Issues addressed under NAIADES include working time arrangements, professional qualification requirements, the examination of administrative and regulatory barriers, the adoption of innovative technologies, and infrastructure improvements.

Implementation of NAIADES is supported by the [PLATINA](#) project. Adopted under the 7th Framework Programme, PLATINA funds actions in five strategic fields: market conditions; fleet modernisation; human capital; the image of inland navigation; infrastructure.

Also funded via the 7th Framework Programme, the [CIVITAS](#) initiative helps cities across Europe to implement and test innovative and integrated strategies addressing energy, transport and environmental objectives. Areas of research include alternative motor fuels and urban mobility.

The transport strand of the [Intelligent Energy Europe](#) (IEE) programme is known as STEER. It promotes a more sustainable use of energy in transport, with a specific focus on alternative vehicle propulsion, more efficient use of energy in transport, and strengthening the knowledge of local management agencies in the transport field. Details of STEER can be found in the brochure 'Energy efficient transport. Green mobility on the move' (available via the IEE [Publications & Videos](#) page), and STEER projects can be found via the [Search](#) page (in the 'Area' box select 'Transport (STEER)').

For more background information see the ESO [Information Guide: Transport Policy](#) and [Information Guide: Trans-European Networks](#).

Loans and venture capital

The [European Investment Bank](#) (EIB) gives loans to public and private borrowers and to projects in all sectors of the economy - from communication, environment and energy

infrastructure to industry, services and agriculture. The EIB finances up to 50% of large-scale projects by means of individual loans (€25 million plus) which are arranged directly with promoters or through financial intermediaries. Smaller projects are funded indirectly through global loans made available to banks or financial institutions operating at European, national or regional level. Details of projects supported can be found in the Bank's Press Releases.

The [European Investment Fund](#) (EIF) is a financial institution established as a joint venture by the European Investment Bank, the European Union (represented by the European Commission) and private and public financial institutions from the EU Member States. The EIF is not a lending institution and it does not provide or manage grants or subsidies. Instead, it offers guarantees on debt finance and invests in venture capital funds.

Public procurement

Businesses can benefit by selling direct to EU institutions and agencies as - in common with other public bodies - they spend money on a wide range of goods and services. There is a constant need for equipment, consumables, consultancy, surveys and so on. All of the EU's institutions have budgets for items such as office machinery and supplies, vehicles, furniture, security systems, clothing and publicity.

Invitations to tender appear in the Supplement to the Official Journal (OJ S) which is available electronically as the [Tenders Electronic Daily](#) (TED) database. Many Commission DGs also maintain their own lists of invitations to tender (relevant pages are noted under the selected themes above; the list below also includes pages for additional DGs; the Commission also maintains a page on [public contracts](#)).

European Commission DGs and Services

Policies

- [Agriculture and Rural Development](#) - [Calls for tender](#)
- [Climate Action](#) - [Contracts & grants](#)
- [Communications Networks, Content and Technology](#) - [Calls and work programmes](#)
- [Competition](#) - [Calls for tenders and proposals](#)
- [Economic and Financial Affairs](#) - [Procurement and grants](#)
- [Education and Culture](#) - [Calls for proposals and tenders](#)
- [Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion](#) - [Calls for tender](#)
- [Energy](#) - [Calls for tenders](#)
- [Enterprise and Industry](#) - [Calls for tenders](#)
- [Environment](#) - [Calls for tender](#)
- [Maritime Affairs and Fisheries](#) - [Calls for tender](#)
- [Mobility and Transport](#) - [Calls for tender](#)
- [Health and Consumers](#) - [Tenders](#) (consumers), [Tenders](#) (health - from Executive Agency for Health and Consumers)
- [Home Affairs](#) - [Financing](#)
- [Internal Market and Services](#) - [Calls for tender](#)
- [Justice](#) - [Calls for tender](#)
- [Regional Policy](#) - [Grants and procurements](#)
- [Research](#) - [Calls for tenders](#)
- [Taxation and Customs Union](#) - [Calls for tenders](#)

External relations

- [Enlargement](#) - [Tenders and low value tenders](#)
- [EuropeAid](#) - [Funding](#)
- [European External Action Service](#) - [Contracts](#)
- [Humanitarian Aid](#) - [Calls for tender](#)

- [Trade](#) - [Calls for tender](#)

General services

- [Communication](#) - [Contracts](#)
- [European Anti-Fraud Office](#) - [Calls](#)
- [Eurostat](#) - [Calls for tenders](#)
- [Joint Research Centre](#) - [Calls for tenders](#)
- [Publications Office](#) - [Procurement](#)

Internal services

- [Budget](#) - [Call for tenders](#)
- [Human Resources and Security](#) - [Public procurement](#)
- [Informatics](#) - [Public procurement](#)
- [Infrastructures and Logistics - Brussels](#) - [Contracts and public procurement](#)
- [Infrastructures and Logistics - Luxembourg](#) - [Calls for tender](#)
- [Office For Administration And Payment Of Individual Entitlements](#) - [Call for tenders](#)
- [Translation](#) - [Open calls for tender and expressions of interest](#)

The European Commission's [SIMAP](#) website offers background information on procurement in the EU, together with online submission forms. Information on procurement policy and legislation is available on the website of the [DG Internal Market and Services](#) and the Commission's Publications Office also has a page on [tenders](#).

Further information sources on the internet

- Europa
 - [Public contracts and funding](#)
 - [Public procurement in the EU - rules and guidelines](#)
 - [EU funding](#)
 - Summaries of EU legislation
 - [Public procurement](#)
 - For other topics, select relevant pages via the [main menu](#).
- European Commission: DG Budget
 - [Financial programming and budget](#)
- European Parliament
 - [Invitations to tender](#), [Grants](#)
- Council of the European Union
 - [Consilium Tendering](#)

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September 2013

Original compilation: 2000 (Eric Davies)

Revised: 2006 (Thomas Pritzkow), 2010 (Eric Davies), 2012 (Eric Davies)