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Watering the Grassroots: Funding challenges and opportunities for Grassroots Europe and its affiliates

ABOUT THE PROJECT

This study was commissioned by the Education Support Program of the Open Society Foundations (OSF). It was conducted and recognized in partial fulfillment for the “Policy Labs” course within the Department of Public Policy at Central European University. Policy Labs are part of the MA curriculum. They give an opportunity for small teams to work for external clients producing and presenting policy relevant research that will be used for advocacy, assessment and development. Clients are civic organizations, donors, research centers and international organizations. The Policy Lab focusing on this project was mentored by Andrew Cartwright, Research Fellow at Central European University’s Center for Policy Studies.

ABOUT THE PAPER SERIES

Policy Research Reports are occasional studies that provide support or background information for wider research projects. They include reviews of scientific literature, state of the art reports, and country studies. They are works in progress and offer practical combinations of academic and policy writing.

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The views in this report are the authors’ own and do not necessarily reflect those of the Center for Policy Studies, Central European University, Education Support Program (OSF) or any its entities.

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Watering the Grassroots

Funding challenges and opportunities for Grassroots Europe and its affiliates

Introduction

In July of 2013, the Parliament of the European Union approved a resolution in favor of the 2014-2020 Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF), or what can more simply be termed the European Union budget.

Parliament's approval of the resolution marked a significant milestone in what has been a long and contentious budgeting process for the E.U. as the MFF budget covering the period from 2007-2013 closes. The 2008 financial crisis and the Eurozone crisis, compounded by national-level economic crises in Greece, Spain, Ireland, Portugal, and Italy, and a consequent general sense of the need for budgetary austerity in the Union as a whole – pushed especially hard by members such as the United Kingdom – contributed to a uniquely challenging atmosphere for the E.U. budgeting negotiations.

While the Parliamentary resolution does not conclude the settlement of the '14-'20 MFF, it does mark passage of a major hurdle. Negotiation between the Council, the European Commission, and the Parliament had, to this point, set markers for widely conflicting budgetary priorities between those institutions, each of whom has a significant role in final passage. Parliament seemed less inclined toward an austerity approach, while the Council, especially given its need for broad consensus between its own members in order to give final approval, generally refused to countenance any budgetary increase. Consequently, even reaching a tentative framework required extensive, often contentious, negotiations.

All of which is to say that the parameters of this specific research project met a significant hurdle until July. This report is the result of a collaboration between the Department of Public Policy (DPP) at Central European University (CEU) and the Grassroots Europe for Local Wellbeing Initiative, a project housed at the Open Society Institute, as part of DPP's "policy labs" program, which provides opportunities for masters students at CEU to engage in targeted research projects for independent, external clients.

Our team was tasked by Grassroots Europe with providing insight into the EU budget: general information on the budgeting process itself, an overview of available funding for which Grassroots Europe and its national-level affiliate organizations may qualify, and a simplified breakdown translating this complexity into an informative and easily understandable one-sheet that could be provided to individuals involved with Grassroots Europe and their partners to inform them of how they can influence the EU budget process.

Needless to say, the bulk of the work – identifying funding available – was made somewhat impossible until the '14-'20 MFF had been largely settled, which, as noted above, did not occur with any confidence until Parliament had signaled its approval of the draft budget, signaling that prior negotiations had resulted in a framework that all budget partners would find acceptable. While this report presents information based on the draft '14-'20 MFF, it should be noted that any findings contained herein are, of course, still subject to change: the political process for final adoption of the MFF remains ongoing, and until the Council, the Commission, and the Parliament have concluded their disparate roles, the budget technically remains unofficial. That said, all parties seem to be comfortable with what is currently on the table; final approval is likely to occur sometime in the autumn of 2013.

Below, we have provided general information on the EU budget and budgeting process. Where possible given information availability, we have provided breakdowns of support and policies in specific countries where Grassroots Europe and its affiliates have a presence. In addition to the large emphasis in this report on the EU budget, we have included shorter sections on potential avenues for financial support from the non-profit and private sectors. We felt that brief overviews on those sectors may be useful to both Grassroots Europe and its partners in identifying financial support.

It is our hope that this report provides a useful foundation of information for Grassroots Europe and its member organizations as they seek to continue their work in the years ahead. We are grateful to have had the opportunity to conduct this research on their behalf.

Overview of the Member organisations

In this section, an overview is given of the member organisations in order to have a clear oversight of what their focus are and what activities they do.

Table 1: Overview of Agencies interest and activities

Name of agency	Area of interest	Activities
AIM Agency for Interculture and Mobility (Italy)	To promote the implementation and the recognition of non-formal education through concrete dialogue with the formal and the informal dimensions.	Non-formal education : training, communication, local labs for young people and adults, European project management and international mobility.
Zentrum für Sozial- und Integrationsprojekte (Austria)	furthering the integration of migrant and minority groups in Austria	awareness-raising campaigns on discrimination, intercultural communication and research; the organisation of school enrolment, religious issues, gender issues have been organised with the participation of local authorities and migrant self-help groups
	solving community problems related to marginalisation	
Interkulturelles Zentrum (Austria)	the development of interaction between people from different cultural backgrounds and training people in practical intercultural work	
	4 Other areas of interest are "International School Projects", "International Initiatives", "Intercultural Education and Communal	

	Integration” and the Austrian Agency for “Youth in Action”. A particular geographical focus of our international activities is Southeast and Eastern Europe as well as the Caucasus.	
Children Are the Future (Albania)	to create better lives for children and equal opportunities for their development.	Focused on children's rights, education, gender equality, child and community development, community mediation and intercultural exchange
Vitakultúra Association (Hungary)	the promotion of social development processes community mediation and intercultural exchange	debate culture trainings over 15 years for student self-governments in different secondary schools and in higher education; written manuals for complaint-handling methods for secondary schools; psychological and social support in three regions for people with disabilities for labor market reintegration; prejudice-handling trainings for teachers.
Open Society Foundations (Hungary)	Education Support Program	supporting the renewal and rebuilding of education systems in post-conflict countries, promoting equal education and inclusion for marginalized groups, strengthening critical thinking and education quality, and helping civil society play a progressive and engaged role in the education reform process.
LIFE e.V. (Germany)	education and training, consulting and networking	development of new educational concepts, learning methods and e-learning content

		with a special focus on gender and diversity issues for different marginalised target groups; training for career advancement for disadvantaged and marginalised students (mostly with migrant backgrounds); vocational training and support for career entry for young mothers (especially from disadvantaged community); development of gender adequate training methods and materials; organization of networks to promote equality of opportunity in the educational sector and in the labour market.
Forum for Freedom in Education (Croatia)	Education	creating and implementing education programs for methodological training of the teaching professionals, non-violent conflict resolution, health education, civic education, student scholarships, and training in the field of methodology of teaching.
Public Policy Centre (Romania)	to inclusive and transparent public policy development at the local level effective local governance and improving the democratic character of local policy making in Romania.	conducting independent research (Policy research and analysis), enhancing the information flow (Advocacy), and facilitating policy debate among various policy stakeholders (Enhancement of citizens' participatory capacity).
Education Development Center (Latvia)	participation in the development of educational and development policies Civic Education	Civic education, intercultural, inclusive and development education, promoting social cohesion and providing support to vulnerable groups,

	<p>promoting social cohesion and providing support to vulnerable groups</p> <p>promote the cooperation of different non-governmental organizations</p> <p>dissemination of information and raising public awareness on the above mentioned topics</p>	<p>participation in the development of policies, especially in the field of education, dissemination of information and raising public awareness on above mentioned topics.</p>
<p>Agora CE, o.p.s. (Czech Republic)</p>	<p>fostering democracy</p>	<p>holding public debates and meetings; facilitating working groups, conducting sociological surveys and polls; transferring knowledge and experience to their partners (towns or NGOs); organising professional seminars, training and conferences for our partners; organising consultations for interested parties.</p>

Source: Grassroot Europe, 2013

The EU 2020

In this section, a brief introduction is given on what the EU 2020 strategy is, what its focus are as well as the objectives set within this multi annual strategy.

The Europe 2020 strategy (EC, 2010) is about delivering growth that is: smart, through more effective investments in education, research and innovation; sustainable, thanks to a decisive move towards a low-carbon economy; and inclusive, with a strong emphasis on job creation and poverty reduction (EC 2010). For Grassroot Europe and its partner organizations, the inclusion and the smart growth are of direct importance.

Out of the 7 priorities, only 4 are of importance, namely:

- helping people of all ages anticipate and manage change through investment in skills & training.
- modernising labour markets and welfare systems.
- education (encouraging people to learn, study and update their skills)
- research/innovation (creating new products/services that generate growth and jobs and help address social challenges)

For funding necessity, Grassroot Europe and its partner organizations could secure or improve getting funds if its/their work contributes to the following target priorities:

1. 75% employment rate for women and men aged 20-64 by 2020- achieved by getting more people into work, especially women, the young, older and low-skilled people and legal migrants
2. better educational attainment – in particular:
 - reducing school drop-out rates below 10%
 - at least 40% of 30-34-year-olds completing third level education (or equivalent)
3. at least 20 million fewer people in or at risk of poverty and social exclusion

4. combined public and private investment levels to reach 3% of EU's GDP as well as better conditions for R&D and Innovation

Country Overview

In line with the above mentioned EU 2020 strategy, a short overview is given of each member organisation country. The findings are from the Country Specific Recommendations (EC, 2013) as well as the National Reform Programmes for certain countries (Ibid). Furthermore, information is taken from the Commission Working Paper that is accompanying the Country Specific Recommendations. However, an overview could not have been made of Albania these important documents are missing.

Hungary

Table 2: Overview table Hungary (CSR, Targets)

2012 commitments	Summary assessment
Europe 2020 (national targets and progress)	
R&D target: 1.8 %	In 2011, R&D intensity increased to 1.21 % of GDP, from 1.17 % in 2010. Reaching the target is realistic, although very challenging in the present economic context. Hungary should maintain the 4.5 % average annual rate of increase it had in the last decade in order to reach the Europe 2020 target.
Early school leaving target: 10 %	Although Hungary succeeded in reducing the number of early school leavers in the last decade (from 13.9 % in 2000 to 10.5 % in 2010), progress has stalled in the last few years and the trend has even reversed in 2011 (11.2 %) and slightly deteriorated in 2012 (11.5%).
Tertiary education target: 30.3 %	Hungary is very close to reaching the national target which is one of the lowest among EU Member States.
	Tertiary educational attainment was 23.9 % in 2009, 25.7 % in 2010, 28.1 % in 2011 and 29.9% in 2012.

	Hungary has not yet reached the national target and is below the EU target of 40 %.
	Current policy developments are likely to decrease instead of increase the number of students.
Target on the reduction of population at risk of poverty or social exclusion in number of persons: 450 000	The number of people at risk of poverty increased to 3.1 million in 2011 (against the 2008 baseline of 2.83 million).
	The poverty rate has therefore not been improved. On the contrary, now there are some 150000 more people at risk of poverty, compared against the baseline.

Source:EC, 2013a

In order for Grassroots Europeto secure and improve getting funds from the European Union, a particular focus should be given to the two following sectors within Hungary and its strategies:

1) Education and Training

In 2012, the Council Recommendation for Hungary contained a Country Specific Recommendation (CSR) (European Council, 2012) concerning implementing a strategy on early school leaving (ESL) and reforming higher education to improve access for disadvantaged young pupils. Unfortunately this has not yet been adopted. While the country has lowered the number of ESL before 2010, this has been reversed in the last two years and an increasing number of disadvantaged students, mainly Roma students, may reinforce this negative trend. Also, the lowering of the compulsory school age of 18 to 16 will most probably increase the number of ESL and therefore increase the youth unemployment of 28,1% in 2012 (16,2% increase compared to 2001 as indicated in the NRP).

In Hungary, students in disadvantaged region need more attention as they perform worse than the national average and as the registered increase in the share of students entering secondary education affected only marginally the children with multiple disadvantages and Roma students. In schools with Roma majority that increased with 43% since 2004 (Government Of Hungary, 2011), the quality of education is lower. Although more efforts are needed to reduce inequalities through the education policy,

the Hungarian government reduced the total national budget allocated to schools education by 17%.

2) Social policies

Since the financial crisis started, the social situation in Hungary became worse and some 220,000 people lived in poverty after the crisis in 2008. According to the National Reform Paper (NRP), 31% of the population is at risk of poverty or social exclusion, and 23% faces severe material deprivation¹, because of the economic crisis and the growing unemployment and of the negative effects of austerity measures on low-income people such as reducing the maximum amount of unemployment benefits and shortened the related entitlement period (from 2.83 million in 2008 to 3.1 million in 2011)². As this measure made most registered job seekers without any allowance or a job in 2012, and a further strengthening of the eligibility for social benefits has been restricted, the number of people in poverty increased. Furthermore, the NRP also highlighted that poverty continues to greatly affect the disadvantaged territories³ and groups, in particular the Roma, more than 90% of whom are at risk of poverty (FRA, 2012),⁴ as well as children. Although the Hungarian Government adopted a National Social Inclusion Strategy covering also Roma's in 2011, the counteracting mainstream policy development and the limited resources given to this strategy could negatively affect the efficiency and sustainability while the poverty situation calls for an immediate action.

¹23.1% of Hungary's population is affected by severe material deprivation, compared to only 8.4 % in the EU.

²The maximum period for unemployment benefits has been reduced from 270 to 90 days. The upper limit of the benefit was decreased from 120 % of the minimum wage to the minimum wage. So far, no impact assessment is available on the effects of the measure.

³Regional economic disparities are important. The Budapest region is the only one with a GDP per capita above the EU-27 average. The labour market has a strong regional dimension as well, with particularly high (long-term) unemployment rates in North Hungary and North Great Plain. Significant differences also exist between urban and rural areas, as a high proportion of marginalised people, mainly Roma, live in the latter

⁴According to a recent survey, the percentage of households at risk of poverty is more than double for marginalised Roma households than for marginalised non-Roma households. See FRA report.

Romania

Table 3: Overview table Romania (CSR, Targets)

2012 commitments	Summary assessment
Europe 2020 (national targets and progress)	
Employment rate target: 70 %	In 2012 the employment rate rose to 63.8 %, 1 percentage point higher than in 2011 and 6.2 percentage points below the national employment target (20-64 age group). It remains to be seen if this reverse of the previously negative trend is sustainable. Despite the recent improvement, the national target of 70 % by 2020 un
Early-school leaving target: 11.3 %	The early school-leaving rate (17.4 % in 2012) is well above both the EU average (12.8 %) and the 10 % EU benchmark and is the same as in 2011 (17.5 %). Problems persist especially for rural areas and the Roma minority.
Tertiary education target: 26.7 %	The tertiary or equivalent attainment rate (21.8 % in 2012) is 14 percentage points below the EU average (35.8 %). However there has been constant progress over the past five years with a noteworthy increase from 2011 (20.4 %). There is still a significant mismatch between the education offered by universities and labour market requirements.
Risk of poverty or social exclusion target: reducing by 580 000 people (compared to 2008).	In order to monitor this target, Romania has opted to use one of the three sub-indicators of the headline indicator, more precisely the ' <i>at risk of poverty rate</i> '. The latest Eurostat data show a light improvement in this indicator to 22.2 % in 2011, from 23.4 % in 2008. In absolute terms, 240 000 people were lifted out of poverty between 2008 and 2011.

Source: EC, 2013b

From a public policy point of view and in order to secure and improve getting funds from the European Union, the Public Policy Centre in Romania should focus on the following strategy:

1. Labour market, youth unemployment and poverty

Employment challenges are particularly severe for a number of disadvantaged people.

In 2012, the country continued to register a low employment rate among those aged 20-64 years (63.8 %), although a slight improvement was achieved compared to the year before (62.8 %). The youth employment and activity rates (20-29 years) were among the lowest in the EU, whereas the youth unemployment rate increased reaching 22.8 % in 2012. Additionally, there is a high and increasing number of young people in Romania that are not in employment, education or training (17.4 % in 2011). While a number of measures were undertaken by the Romanian government such as the introduction of the law on apprenticeship in the workplace, the results of its implementation are rather modest and a far reaching measure is desirable. Most of the spending goes on various forms of employment subsidies, while training, guidance and counselling are underdeveloped. However, the government still has not been able to implement the National Plan for Youth Employment, which is a starting point for the introduction of the Youth Guarantee⁵ focusing on improving the entrepreneurial culture among youth and support the SMEs, as well as on adapting education and vocational training to the labour market needs.

Other employment challenges concern older workers and women. Measures to promote older workers value should be undertaken as the labour market measures to promote longer working lives are too few and too isolated to deliver the necessary change in working and retirement practices. Although measures such as helping women start companies were implemented to overcome women's low level of participation in the labour market, the provision of full-time childcare facilities is particularly low, as is

⁵ Council Recommendation of 22 April 2013 on establishing a Youth Guarantee (2013/C 120/01) to ensure that all young people under the age of 25 years receive a good-quality offer of employment, continued education, an apprenticeship or a traineeship within four months of becoming unemployed or leaving formal education).

availability of part-time childcare facilities for those under 3 years old⁶. Disadvantaged people, in particular Roma, face great difficulties in accessing the formal labour market. In 2011, the employment rate among Roma people was 36.3 %, about two thirds that of the overall population, while the unemployment rate among Roma people (48.6 %) was more than six times higher than the average national unemployment rate (Soros Foundation, 2012). Gaps identified by the Commission when assessing the National Roma Integration Strategy 2012-2020 (EC, 2012a) concern reducing unemployment among women, young people and those living in disadvantaged micro-regions and segregated neighbourhoods as well as to increasing skills and promoting the transition from undeclared to regular employment. In overall, at 0.02% in 2012 (lower than the previous years⁷), spending on active labour market policies as a share of GDP in Romania is still very low compared to the EU27 and therefore more measures to include the disadvantaged people, including Roma people, into the labour market is necessary.

A revised strategy and a new action plan to be prepared by the Romanian authorities in the summer of 2013 are expected to take on board the Commission's assessment.

Poverty reduction remains a challenge for Romania as well as the situation of disadvantaged people.

Romanians are the second highest most likely to be at risk of poverty or social exclusion in the EU. In general, the impact of social transfers (excluding pensions) in reducing poverty remains significantly below the EU average. Romania also has an extremely high proportion of 'in-work poverty' (double the EU average), especially among men and for the people aged 65+. The risk of poverty has a strong impact, especially on children, of whom 49.1% were at risk of poverty or social exclusion in 2011. Poverty in Romania affects the most people living in rural areas in the north-east, south-east and south-west of the country.

Faced with low participation in the labour market, difficult access to public services, low skills, poor infrastructure and housing, and discrimination, these people have been among the worst affected by the crisis. In line with the EU 2020 strategy and its targets,

⁶ 1 In 2010, only 4 % of children less than three years old were in formal childcare up to 29 hours per week and a further 3 % were in formal childcare for 30 or more hours per week. Among those aged from 3 years to compulsory school age, 49 % were in formal childcare for up to 29 hours of care per week and 17 % were in services providing 30 hours of more of care per week.

⁷ 0.04% for Romania compared with 0.54% for the EU27 in 2009

the Roma's situation has to be addressed explicitly and quickly and the implementation of Romania's National Roma Integration strategy is stalling. Fast and strong coordination measures are needed to include the disadvantaged people, especially the Roma, in the education and labour market.

2. Education reform

Romania faces a major challenge in raising the quality of its education and training as well as matching the skills and labour market demands.

There are a number of national programmes that aim to improve vocational training but the overall vocational training system remains largely on an undeveloped stage. The level of Romanian citizen's basic skills is very low as the country is among the worst performers in the EU on basic skills (40.4 % in reading; 47 % in mathematics and 41.4 % in science). Early-school leaving is also a significant challenge as, despite a number of measures implemented, the early-school leaving rate was estimated at 17.4 % in 2012 which is well above the EU average of 12.8 %. The education law of 2011 that set a long-term agenda for upgrading the quality of education at all levels is not yet fully operational. Furthermore, Romania allocated in 2009 the lowest proportion of GDP to investment in education in the EU and the education budget has been cut even further over the last three years. This caused partially the quality of and access to upper secondary and tertiary education to remain low, which had as an affect that mismatches occurred between the skills obtained and the labour market demands. This is highlighted by the fact that for the 20-24 age group, 29.4 % of tertiary graduates were unemployed in 2011 compared to 22.9 % of secondary graduates. While the legal framework on adult training has been reformed, adult participation in lifelong learning, particularly among low skilled adults, remains stagnant at very low levels (1.6 % in 2011), significantly lower than the EU average (8.9 %). If this will stay as it is, Romania will face a gap in medium and high skilled labours by 2020 (CEDEFOP 2008).

3. Better public administration

Modernisation of public administration

Poor administrative capacity is a core concern for Romania and the weak management, control systems and poorly functioning public procurement systems is the source for the low rate of absorption of EU funds.

The public administration is characterised by an inconsistent legal framework, frequent recourse to emergency ordinances, inadequate inter-ministerial cooperation and excessive bureaucracy. It is also undermined by a lack of skills by the contracting authorities, poor transparency in staff recruitment and management as no adequate solution for preventing of conflicts of interest has been found, and high turnover rates. This situation has contributed to a low rate of absorption of EU funds under the current programming period, with Romania in last place in the EU rankings for structural, cohesion and fishery funds. It is therefore a need for Romania to improve the coordination and policy making capacity as well as undertaking comprehensive ministerial modernisation. An example given is that Romania does not have a comprehensive system for impact assessment of policies and legislative proposals, which underscores the need for a coherent e-government strategy.

All this contributes to the already existing corruption that 96% of the Romanian respondents affirmed (Eurobarometer 2011), with 3 points higher than in 2009, particularly affecting the healthcare and infrastructure sectors. Romania also scores also very low on the Transparency International’s Corruption Perception Index for 2012 and on the World Bank’s control of corruption ranking for 2011. Furthermore, the Romanian government has proven to be reluctant to fight against the prevailing corruption as evaluated on a regular basis by the Commission in the Cooperation and Verification Mechanism.⁸

Austria

Table 4: Overview table Austria (CSR, Targets)

2012 commitments	Summary assessment
Europe 2020 (national targets and progress)	
Employment rate target:	In 2012 the overall employment rate in Austria amounted to 75.6 % of all 20 to 64 years-old and was more than 7 percentage points above the EU average (68.5 %). To reach the target of an

⁸The EU Justice Scoreboard: a tool to promote effective justice and growth, COM(2013) 160 final

	employment rate between 77 % and 78 % by 2020 the current employment rate should rise by between 1.4 p.p. and 2.4 p.p. To reach the proposed target the growth of the employment rate of Austria has to be between 0.2 pp. and or 0.3pp.
Early school leaving target: 9.5 %	With regard to ESL, Austria is already outperforming Europe 2020 and its national target, but efforts have to be continued to reduce the ESL rate of persons with a migrant background. 2006: 9.8 %, 2012: 7.6 %
Tertiary education target: 38 %	Austria makes progress and increasing general tertiary graduation rates remains a challenge. 2006: 21.2 %, 2011: 23.8 %, 2012: 26.3 % ¹⁸ Including ISCED 4a Levels the graduation rate is in 2012 already at 36.6 %.
Risk of poverty or social exclusion target:	The Austrian NRP 2013 gives precise data on the developments towards the poverty target: the number of people at risk of poverty or social exclusion has fallen by 125 000 (EU SILC 2011), which implies that Austria has already reached just over half of the targeted reduction of 235 000 by 2020.

Source: EC, 2013c

Labour

In the year 2012, the labour market in Austria improved in general, but a low employment rate of older workers, a big gender pay gap (the third highest in the EU), and poor performances of disadvantaged people such as people with migrant background has persisted. Although Austria has the lowest unemployment rate in the EU (4.3%) and with an employment rate of 75.6% of active workers between 20-64 – which is in line with the ambitious national target of 78% by 2020 – the employment rate of older people is significantly lower than the EU average, the part-time and low paid work is extraordinary among woman, and the unemployment rate of workers with a migrant background is more than twice compared to the Austrian nationals.

Education

Austria has recently introduced a school reform, a so called transition to 'new lower secondary schools' (Neue Mittelschule) from the 'Hauptschule' as of 2018/2019. A close monitoring of these new changes is needed particularly with regard to the potential to mitigate the negative effects of early tracking on the prospects of access to higher education for the disadvantaged ones and for its capacity to improve the language outcomes. Also, Austria has successfully reduced the Early School Leaving (ESL) to 7.6% in 2012, which is lower than the EU average of 12.6%. This has been done through the introduction of a strategy against early school leaving (ELS) focusing on three pillars, namely prevention, intervention and compensation. Furthermore, another strategy, the language acquisition strategy, was developed, with a special focus on migrant children as 23% of all the pupils entering school have difficulties with the language of instruction. For this new strategy, an additional 5 million per year has been made available for the German language training in kindergartens until 2014, but it is likely that this new strategy will not meet the challenge.

In order to cope with the growing numbers of students and to fight high drop-out rates in the higher education sector, the Austrian government made additional budgets available from 2012 and introduced the Austrian Higher Education Plan for until 2021. The increase budget is meant to create more study places, to promote mathematics, science and technology subjects, and to increase the quality of teaching. The Austrian government plans to set a maximum number of students in 5 study fields that are overcrowded with students in order to increase the quality of teaching and to fight against the drop outs. However, the recommendations also states that Austria should adapt the teaching and the learning methods to the new volume of students, adopt a student centred learning and increase students opportunities to gain work related experience. But overall, the Austrian government needs to put the emphasis on young people with a migration background.

Also, a 6 point proposal is under negotiation, including abolishing school authorities at district level in order to improve the governance of Austrian education system. However, the recommendation also states that a further simplification is needed to reduce the fragmentation more substantially.

Preventing poverty and social exclusion and the inclusion of people with migrant background

Although the Austrian government wants to prevent poverty through a focus on labour market integration, it does not address the quality of work, the relatively low net replacement, the access to social services and inequalities in education. Furthermore, the potential of people with a migration background have not been utilised to the fullest and it results often in the undergrading of migrants in the wage agreements. The Austrian government implemented some measures in the National Action Plan on Integration to improve the labour access of people with migration background. Some of the measures include the establishment of a centralised coordination centre and contact points in different regional level for information advice and the recognition of skills gained abroad as well as the shortening of 3 months of the recognition procedure for academic diploma gained abroad. However, the impact needs to be monitored and some measures must be implemented for the recognition of vocational qualifications of skilled labour.

How to access EU funding?

In this section, the different funding opportunities applicable to the member organisation are described.

The Commission can directly give financial contribution to NGO's in support of projects or organisation which support the interest of the EU or contribute to the implementation of an EU programme of policy. Interested NGO's can apply through a grant, an operating grant or a public contract (EC 2012b; EC 2013d).

Grants:

- This way of funding is meant for specific projects and it is publicly announced by the Commission in advance. Part of the funding comes from the EU, the other part from other sources such as national budgets.

Operating grant:

- Under some programmes and if the organisation has the aim of pursuing a general European interest or an objective of forming part of a European Union policy, the Commission might directly then subsidise the organisation through an operating grant, sometimes for a couple of years. In this case, the grant is then based on an analysis of the dimensions of the organisations activities, the scope, the annual work plan, the compatibility with the policy priorities etc..

Public contracts:

- This type of funding is to buy services, goods or works in order to ensure the operations of EU institutions or programmes (see the recommendations). Contracts are awarded through calls for tenders (public procurement) and must cover areas such as studies, technical assistance and training, conference organization, buying of IT equipments or consultancy. Most of these funding is managed on national level through checks and annual audits, therefore it is important to lobby at national level.

NGO's, our partner organizations, are eligible for the following grants:

Culture, education and youth

- Culture
- Education
- Youth

Employment and social rights

- European Social Fund
- Social affairs and equal opportunities

Justice, home affairs and citizens' rights

- Citizenship
- Immigration

- Security and fundamental rights

Culture, Education and Youth

In this section, a special focus is made on the culture aspect, as this programme makes the link between education and the youth as well.

Culture background

The objective of the Cultural Programme (EC, 2013e) is to enhance the area shared by Europeans, through the development of cultural co-operation between the creators, cultural players and cultural institutions of the countries taking part, with a view to contributing the development of European citizenship. The specific objectives of interest to the partner organizations are

- To promote the transnational mobility of cultural players;
- To encourage intercultural dialogue.

These objectives are implemented through the following 3 different strands:

- ***Action 1: support for cultural actions, as follows:***
 - o Multi annual co-operation projects;
 - o Co-operation measures, including literary translation;
 - o Special actions
- ***Action 2: support for bodies active at European level in the field of culture, as follows:***
 - o Cultural bodies of European interest.
- ***Action 3: support for:***
 - o Cultural Contact Points;
 - o Policy analysis groupings;

- Analysis in the field of cultural co-operation;
- Collection and dissemination of information;
- Valorisation of the impact of projects in the field of cultural co-operation.

Furthermore, the Programme shall contribute to the following objectives:

- Promoting the fundamental principle of freedom of expression;
- Encouraging greater awareness of the importance of contributing to sustainable development;
- Seeking to promote mutual understanding and tolerance within the European Union;
- Contributing to the elimination of all discrimination based on sex, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation.

Overview

From all the total of 1.121 applications received by the Commission, 34,6% higher than 2011, a total of 338 projects were selected for funding with 57 million euro (EC 2012c). Italy (13%) and France (9%) account for the highest applicants and the rest of the 78 % is evenly spread in the EU MS. Slovenia, Belgium, Poland, Hungary, Serbia, Croatia as well as Macedonia, Czech Republic and Bulgaria saw an increase in the applications for a grant. For the selected projects, the highest success rate was found in France with 11% of the total followed by Germany with 9.2%, Belgium with 8.9% and Italy with 6% of the total. However, Netherlands, Denmark, Iceland, Norway, Sweden as well as the new member states and the candidate countries recorded high success rate (Ibid).

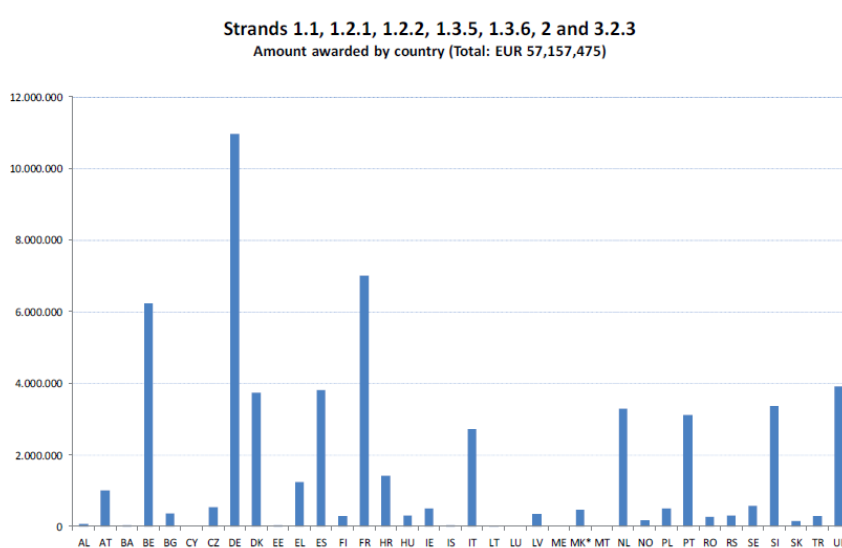
It is noticeable that 19% of the total selected projects were focused on building links with active again as the theme of the European Year 2012, compared to 29% of selected projects in 2011 were focused on addressing volunteering as that was part of the theme of the European Year 2011.

Of all the selected applications, 317 had focused mainly on the mobility of cultural professionals (94% compared to 61% in 2011), 306 on the circulation of cultural

workds (91% the same as 2011), and 235 on intercultural dialogue (70% compared to 83% in 2011).

Projects focusing on more than 1 discipline

Figure 1: Amount awarded by country



Source: EC 2012c

With regard to the target groups, the selected projects were mainly aiming the general public with 96%. However, some other target groups were also targeted, especially culture specialist (67%), with artists (63%) and young people (51% compared to 56% in 2011). Also 40% of the total projects were building bridges with educational institutions,

which indicates that the Programme stimulates culture-based creativity in line with one of the European Agenda for Culture priorities. Furthermore, 39 projects were aimed to tackle racism and ethnic origin related issues compared to 26 projects in 2011, 24 focused on gender imbalances (the double compared to 2011), 20 addressed age-related barriers, 14 focused on people with disabilities or special needs, 6 dealt with Roma issues, and 10 other projects were aimed at increasing equal opportunities by addressing different facets of social exclusion.

Strand 1.1 - multiannual cooperation projects

- For this category, around 21.2 million euro was committed. 54 applications - proposing 492 partners - were submitted, with the highest coming from Italy with 11 applications and Germany with 10 projects. Eventually only 14 projects with 153 implementing partners were selected and each selected project had an average of 11 partners. Within this category, the projects focus was on promoting the circulation of works of art with 13 projects, stimulating the mobility of cultural operator with 14 projects and encouraging intercultural dialogue with 14 projects as well. The most frequently targeted group was the general public (13 projects), artist and culture specialist (12 projects each). The least were Educational Institutions with 4 projects and the youth with 3 projects only.

Strand 1.2.1 - Cooperation measures

- For this category, around 318 applications were received involving 1.395 partners; 19 million EUR was committed. Only 112 projects - with 524 partners - were finally accepted for funding compared to 103 in 2011. Dutch, French, Belgian and German saw most of the projects granted. Also, organizations from Croatia, Greece and Spain also saw high success rate. However, organisations from Poland and Italy the success rate was rather low compared to the years before. Among the Programmes objectives, most of the selected projects focused on the intercultural dialogue (111 projects) followed by the mobility of cultural operators (105 projects) and the circulation of works of arts (102 projects) and this is mostly in line with last years projects. The targeted groups were mostly the general public with 108, followed by artist (86) and culture specialist (84). Youth were more approached compared this time with 51 projects, however educational system the least with 35 projects.

Strand 1.2.2 – support to literary translation

- Although this category is not of importance to the member organisations, it is worth mentioning it nevertheless. This category has 2.8 million euro committed is mainly for translating books.

Strand 1.3 – Special action

1. third country cooperation

- This category is also not of importance, however, like 1.2.2, it is worth mentioning that there is a fund for cooperation with organisation outside the EU. The budget allocated for this category is 1.52 million euro.

2. EU Prizes in the field of culture

- This category might of interest to the member organisations as the budget allocated for it is 1 million euro in the domains of:

- a) The EU Prize for Cultural Heritage: This award is given to organisations who have shown outstanding European cultural heritage initiatives in the field of: conservation; research; dedicated service; and education, training and awareness raising.

3. Support for Presidency projects

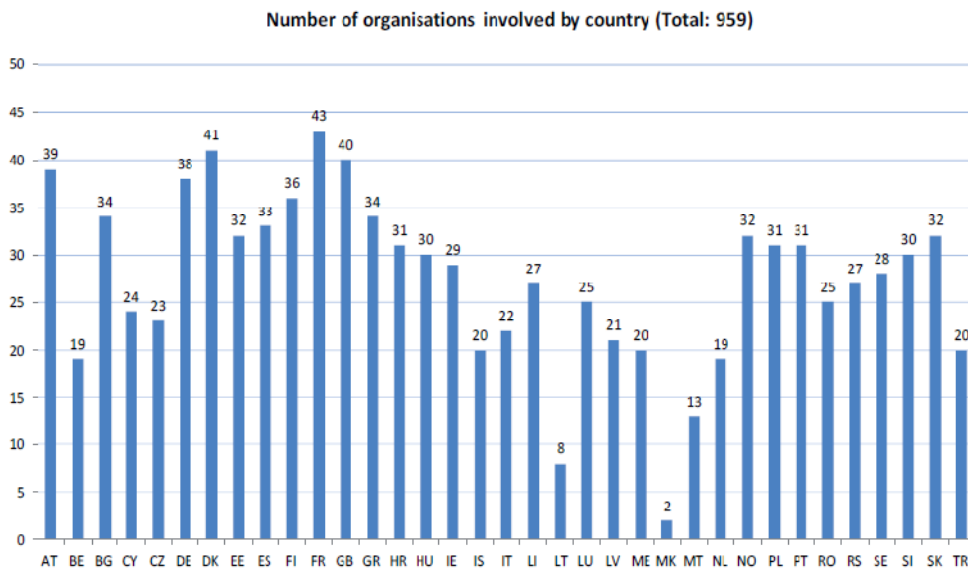
- Knowing that the Presidency rotates in Europe, it is worth taking a note of this in advance and coordinate with the national government on implementing seminars and conferences of interest to the member organisation. The budget allocated is 0.4 million.

Strand 2 – support to operating costs

- This category provides funding for the operating costs of bodies that are active on the European Level in the field of culture with a total budget allocation of 7.7 million euro. From the 94 applications that were received, 61 projects were finally approved for granting reaching 959 organisations (please see graph 2). Among these projects, 41 were for networks, 18 for ambassadors and 2 for

platforms. Furthermore, 22 out of the 61 selected organizations were given an annual grant and 39 were given a 3 year framework agreement. An important note is that networks and ambassadors saw an increase of 17% and 28%. Another important note is that out of the 61 organisations, 17 used to be earmarked by the European Parliament prior to the competitive selection process through the open calls, while 44 organisations are totally new. Most of the selected organisations are located in Brussels with 19 organisations (many umbrella organisations are located there in order to be close to the institutions), but France, Germany, UK and the Netherlands also record a minimum of 6 organisations. Also, Hungary has one organisations. The activities of the organisations mainly focused on the circulation of works of art (59), then intercultural dialogue (58) and not so much on the transnational mobility of people working in the cultural sector (54). Under this action, most of the organisations targeted culture specialist (61), followed by educational institutions and the general public (each 60). However, there was not much difference between the targeted group as the least targeted group, namely both the youth and artists, were equally represented with 57 projects.

Figure 2: Selected organisations



Source: EC 2012c

Strand 3 – support for analysis and dissemination of information

a) Studies

Under this category, funds could be received for providing the European Commission with advice and support in its policy developments.

b) Policy groupings

This category of projects were previously managed under the Action 2: support for bodies active at European level in the field of culture. 7 applications were received and only 4 projects were eventually selected – representing 20 organisations – with a total budget allocation of 0.7 million euro. New relevant topics such as access to culture in a digitalised world and economic models for the creative sectors have been addressed by these 4 organisations as well positive development in intercultural dialogue involving the Balkans and the Central European countries.

Figure 3: summary

Budget Line 15.0444 Title "Culture Programme"		EUR 27	EFTA/EEA	C4/C8(**)	THIRD COUNTRIES	TOTAL(***)		
Commitment appropriations		59.356.000	1.661.968	297.821	8.203.474	69.519.263		
WPI (*)		Budget	Mode of implementation	Number of grants / contracts	Average value of grants / contracts	Maximum rate of cofinancing	Publication of calls for proposals / calls for tenders	Grant Agreement / Grant Decision (****)
Action 1 - Support to cultural actions								
1.10	Multinational co-operation projects	24.000.000	CFP-EA	15	1.600.000	50%	3rd quarter 2012	AGR
1.21	Co-operation measures (support to translations not included)	21.100.000	CFP-EA	95	222.105	50%	3rd quarter 2012	AGR
1.22	Co-operation measures - support to translations	3.899.263	CFP-EA	115	33.907	50%/flat rate	3rd quarter 2012	DEC
1.31	Special actions - cultural prizes	860.000	CFP	3	286.667	60%	NA	AGR
1.32	Special actions - co-operation with third countries	2.650.000	CFP-EA	8	331.250	50%	3rd quarter 2012	AGR
1.33	Special actions - festivals	2.700.000	CFP-EA	20	135.000	60%	3rd quarter 2012	AGR
1.34	Special actions - European Capitals of Culture	3.000.000	P	2	1.500.000	na	NA	DEC
1.35	Special actions - Co-operation with Council of Europe and Unesco	700.000	JOINT	5	140.000	60%	NA	AGR
1.36	Special actions - EU Presidencies	400.000	MON	2	200.000	50%	NA	DEC
	Sub-total	59.309.263						
2.10	Action 2 - Support for cultural bodies of European interest	6.100.000	CFP-OP-EA	45	135.556	80%	3rd quarter 2012	DEC
	Sub-total	6.100.000						
Action 3 - Support for analysis, collection and dissemination of information								
3.10	Cultural Contact Points	1.710.000	Art. 54.2c-EA	37	46.216	50%	NA	AGR
3.20	Policy analysis groupings	700.000	CFP-EA	9	77.778	60%	3rd quarter 2012	AGR
3.30	Procurement	1.700.000	PP	5	340.000	100%	1st half 2013	
	Sub-total	4.110.000						
	TOTAL	69.519.263						

(*) WPI : Work Programme Index

(**) Estimate

(***) Pursuant to Article 83 of the Financial Regulation, the appropriations may also finance the payment of default interest.

(****) AGR - Grants covered by a written agreement / DEC - Grants covered by a decision

Source: EC 2012c

Education and Training

The Educational and Training Programme from the EU had for the period of 2007-2013 a budget allocated of 7 billion. It does not only funds projects for organisations involved in education and training, but also individual students and learns as well as for teachers and trainers. The programme has 4 sub-programmes which funds different projects on different levels of education and training (EC, 2013f), but they are mainly for individuals or for institutions. However, for organizations relevant to educations such as language learning, information and communication technologies, policy cooperation, and dissemination and exploitation of project results, the member organizations could get funding through the ‘transversal’ part of the programme.

Depending on the target group, our member organization can apply for the following:

Table 4: Summary of Culture, Education and Youth funding opportunities

Target group	Programme	Example
Young people	Youth in Action	Exchanges, volunteering abroad
Youth workers	Youth in Action	Exchanges, developing youth policies and partnerships
Parents’ associations and non-government organisations involved in school education	Comenius	Parents’ associations and non-government organisations involved in school education
Language schools	Languages	Developing learning materials (this refers to

		transversal programme)
Education policymakers, Researchers	Information and Communication technologies	Using technology to create innovative education and training practices (this refers to transversal programme)
All organisations involved in education and training	Exploiting Results	Disseminating project results (this refers to transversal programme)

Source: EC, 2010

Comenius:

This programme aims to improve the quality of school education, boost its European dimension and promote mobility, language learning and greater inclusion of people through exchanges and cooperation between schools from different countries.

There are 4 types of support through this programme namely: =

- Individuals
- Partnerships
 - o Comenius region partnership: The most important option in this type of support is that this programme helps local and regional stakeholders in school education to exchange good practices
- multilateral projects and networks

These projects bring together different stakeholders – educational staff, training institutions and other organizations – active in school education to improve the quality of education and to help student teachers gain experience abroad. There is also the option of creating a forum, a joint reflection to promote innovation and good practice in a thematic area.

- accompanying measures

This support is to help the Comenius programme reach its own objectives through for example raising awareness of the importance of school cooperation in Europe. It also funds for preparatory visits for potential partners in the Comenius projects to meet and set up the objectives and a work plan for a future project.

How to apply:

For the multilateral projects, networks or accompanying measures, organizations should approach the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency:

<http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/index.htm>

Youth in Action

This programme is to inspire a sense of active European citizenship, solidarity and tolerance among European youths. The programme promotes mobility of young people within and outside Europe, and it encourages the inclusion of all young people, regardless of their educational, social and cultural background. This programme also helps the youth to gain new competences and experiences, and it provides them with opportunities for non formal and informal learning with a European dimension.

The programme supports projects that enhance, promotes exchanges, youth initiatives and youth democracy for the youth between 13 and 30 years of age that encourages youth participation in the democratic life, the entrepreneurial spirit and active European citizenship.

Youth Initiative Projects

- this kind of projects supports activities that are initiated, set up and carried out by young people and in which they play the key role. This kind of projects can be started by a single group at the local, regional or national level in a country or by two or more groups from different countries.

Youth Democratic Projects

- this kind of projects support the participation of young people in the democratic life of their local, regional or national community or at international level. They are developed through a European partnership and allow pooling of ideas, experiences and methodologies on a European level from activities at a local, regional and a national level.

European voluntary service

- this project enables young people to do a volunteer service for a maximum period of 12 months in another country. The idea behind is that it will foster intergenerational solidarity and mutual understanding, and provide real experiences. The project can focus on a variety of areas such as culture, youth, sports, cultural heritage, environment, development cooperation, civil protection etc..

Youth in the World

- this kind of project supports the exchange, training, networking of youth organisations and cooperation with partner countries, with a special focus on neighbouring partner countries of the European Union.

Youth Support Systems

This measure promotes the development of exchange programmes, training and information schemes for young people, youth workers and organisations dealing with youth.

- Support for NGOs dealing with youth related issues and active on an European level with the goal of European interest. The activities of these NGOs must

contribute to the participation of young people in public life and the society as well as the development and implementation of European cooperation activities in the field of youth in the broadest sense.

- Training and networking of organisations active in youth work. This can involve job shadowing and other practical learning experience; feasibility visits; evaluating meetings; study visits; activities that promote partnership building; seminars; training; or activities aiming to create new networks or activities that further strengthen the existing networks under the 'Youth in Action' programme.
- Projects that encourage innovation and quality aim on introducing, implementing and promoting innovative approaches in the youth field.
- Information activities for young people and organisations dealing with youth which improve the access to information and communication services of young people and which increases the participation in the preparation and dissemination of user-friendly and targeted information products to the youth.
- Projects dealing with the creation of partnership projects with regional or local bodies (regions and municipalities) or with organisations dealing with the youth sector on a European level to develop or strengthen long term action plans in non formal learning and youth.

European cooperation for the development of youth

This mechanism supports the development of youth policy cooperation on a European level through:

- Meetings of young people and those responsible for youth policy, seminars and dialogues between young people, individuals active in the youth work and organisations dealing with youth.
- Support for activities to bring better knowledge of the youth field
- Cooperation with international organisations working in the field of youth, with a special attention to the Council of Europe, the UN and its specialised agencies.

How to apply:

Much of the information management is decentralised through a network of national agencies and they can be contacted at:

http://ec.europa.eu/youth/youth/contacts_en.htm

However, some programmes in the 'Youth in Action' programme are centralised at the European Commission. More information can be found here:

<http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/youth>

Language, Information and Communication Technology and Dissemination funds

Policy cooperation and innovation:

- There is funding available for the analysis of policies and systems in the lifelong learning field, as well as for improving reference material such as surveys and statistics, and for reinforcing innovation in education and training. Grants are also available for European research centers and comparative study projects as well as for study visits for policy makers and stakeholders in education and training.

Language support

- There is funding available for projects that are raising awareness of the importance of linguistic skills, that are boosting access to language learning resources and for developing language learning materials for teaching. Any language is eligible, however, the priority is given to the EU official languages.

Information and communication technologies

- Funding is available for projects that support the use of technology to develop innovative educational and training practices, or for projects that improve access to lifelong learning or develop advanced management systems. The focus should be on identifying and implementing innovative use of ICT.

technology for lifelong learning, in particular for disadvantaged groups in the society.

- However, only member organisations that contain practitioners, researchers, teachers and trainers can apply for this one.
- all eligible.

Dissemination and exploitation

- There is also funding available for activities that secure a maximum impact from EU funded projects. The aim of this is to support a framework for effective exploitation of results on different levels (local, sectoral, regional, national and European levels).

How to apply:

Organisations that are interested in multilateral projects and networks can contact the Commission department Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency: <http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/index.htm>

Culture

This programme is described above, but a short version is given here. Funding is available for the following projects:

Cultural actions

- In this programme, multiannual and annual cultural cooperation projects that bring together people throughout Europe working in the field of culture are funded.
- Translation of all types of fiction between European languages are also funded
- Large scale actions that increases people's sense of belonging to the same community and projects that increase the awareness of Europe's cultural diversity and that contribute to the intercultural and international dialogue are also funded.

Organisations active at European Level

- Organisations that are active at a European level and have an interest in the field of culture are funded. Support is given to ambassadors (e.g. orchestras, choirs, theatre groups and dance companies), advocacy networks and policy support structures.

Analyses, collection and dissemination of information and maximising the impact of projects

- There is support given the analyses of European cultural cooperation and cultural policy developments

How to apply

Interested organisations should approach the Culture contacts points in their own country and the contact points can be found at: http://ec.europa.eu/culture/annexes-culture/doc1232_en.htm

Employment, Social Affairs and Social Inclusion

The European Commission provides funding for projects dealing with employment, social affairs and social inclusion through the following funding mechanism:

European Social Fund (ESF)

This programme (EC, 2013g) funds projects that are meant to help people improve their work skills and job prospects. The Commission sets the priorities, but is eventually not involved in selecting the projects as it is the ESF managing authority in the member organisation country that is responsible for selecting the project. Furthermore, the ESF is designed and implemented in a partnership between the Commission and national and regional authorities. This means that the ESF is co-financed between the Commission and these authorities ensuring ownership at national and regional level, and the ESF is always financed with public or private financing and the co-financing rate is usually between 50 and 85%. Also, the ESF has a shared management: the designing of the programme guidelines are done a European level, but with the consultation of different stakeholders.

On June 19th 2013, the Commission adopted a new communication called 'Working together for Europe's young people - A call to action on youth unemployment' outlining that combating youth unemployment is a top priority in all the efforts of getting the EU economy growing again (EC, 2013h). In this new communication, the Commission proposes a number of practical and achievable measures with a potential of immediate impact, however, some of these measures must still be agreed at EU level. The priority is given to accelerate the implementation of the Youth Guarantee programme and although the European Council agreed in February to create a dedicated Youth Employment Initiative (YEI) to be supported by EUR 6 billion from the EU budget, the Commission is proposing for this money of the Youth Employment Initiative to be frontloaded so that the money is committed in 2014 and 2015 instead of a 7 year period of the MFF. Also, the Commission will develop - in close partnership with social partners and important stakeholders - a number of EU level tools to help Member States, such as EU Alliance for Apprenticeships, the coalition for digital employment, EURES (the European Job Mobility Portal) and the 'your first EURES job' initiative, as well as help firms recruit young people.

The Commission stated that the European Structural and Investment Fund (ESIF) will play a significant role in supporting young people and the implementation of the Youth Guarantee programmes. Also, a minimum of 25% of the cohesion policy funding for the ESF will ensure that 80 billion remains available for investment in Europe's human capital.

Member States are also working intensively with the Commission to design the next generation of Operational Programmes that will mention how this funding will be used. A focus will be made on regions that struggle most with youth unemployment rates above 25% and a focus on targeting young individuals aged 15-24 not in employment, education or training (NEETs) and further contribute to the support provided by the ESF for the implementation of the Youth Guarantee.

Activities within the ESF

There are four focus activities with the ESF and each activity has a set of sub activities, namely:

- Strengthening Employment And Mobility

- Opening pathways to work
- Creating chances for youth
- Boosting business
- Caring for careers
- Better Education
 - Opening doors to learning
 - Helping people aim higher
 - Training that works
- Giving A Chance To All
 - Fighting marginalisation
 - Promoting social enterprises
 - Supporting local partnerships
 - Inclusive approaches
- Better Public Services
 - More effective institutions
 - Boosting the quality of a broad range of services available to the local, and regional citizens, workers, and job seekers.
 - Partnerships for progress
 - For helping the public authorities and stakeholders such as NGOs to work together and to deliver successful programmes

For projects within the country, please see appendix 1

How to participate

The ESF funding goes through the managing authority in the respective member organization country or region. Please the interactive map on the following link for the contact details of the EAS managing authority:
<http://ec.europa.eu/esf/main.jsp?catId=45&langId=en>

Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF)

In this section a short background is given on the MFF and what the changes are compared to earlier MFFs agreement. Also, a short indication on the budget for the relevant funds to the member organisation is given. Nevertheless, this is of importance for the member organisation to know as they need to know where to look for call for proposals or when dealing with the local, national or regional authorities for funding.

The multiannual financial framework (MFF, formerly 'financial perspectives') is the Union's budget for 7 years and a tentative negotiated agreement was reached on June 19 2013 (EC Press Release, 2013a; EC, 2012d). Within that framework, the European Parliament and the Council, which are the 'budgetary authority' of the Union, have to agree each year on the budget for the subsequent year. In reality, the annual budget adopted always remains below the overall ceiling of the MFF. The MFF de facto sets political priorities for future years and constitutes therefore a political as well as budgetary framework ('in which areas should the EU invest more or less in the future?'). These are (EC Press Release 2013b)

- Specific flexibility to tackle youth unemployment and strengthen research
- Global margin for growth and employment, in particular youth employment

In the meantime, and despite cuts, the draft 2014 budget shows a 3.3% increase in commitments in the "Competitiveness for growth and jobs" area as the EU's reduced

resources must focus on measures to tackle unemployment and generate growth. These include Horizon 2020 – the EU's new funding programme for research and innovation (almost €9bn), the Youth Employment Initiative (€3.6 billion), the Connecting Europe Facility (close to €2bn) and support measures for Europe's businesses, in particular from Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs). The overall commitment ceiling proposed by the Commission for the 2014-2020 period is EUR 1 033.2 billion. This amount equals that of the last year of the current MFF (2013) multiplied by 7 (years). It also amounts to 1.08 % of expected EU gross national income (GNI) compared to 1.12 % for the current MFF. The ceiling for payments equals 1.03 % of GNI (1.06 % for 2007-2013). Please see figure 1 and figure 2 for specific outlining.

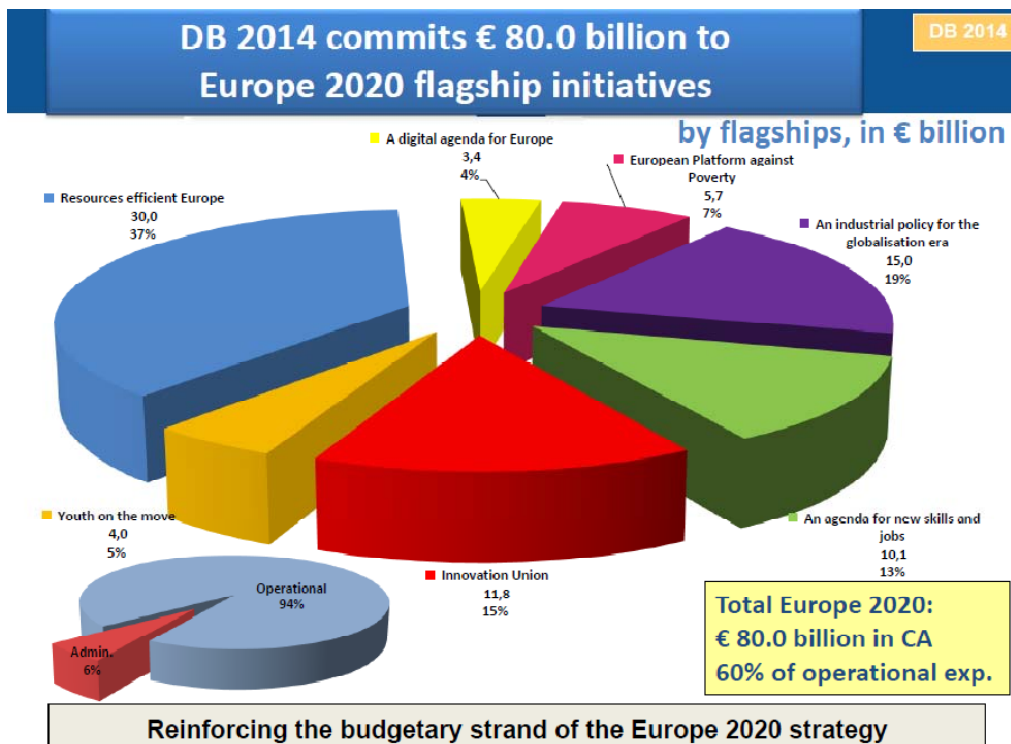
Figure 1: 2014-2020 Multiannual Financial Framework

In EUR million, rounded figures

APPROPRIATIONS BY HEADING	DB 2014		Δ on 2013 (in %)		Margins	
	CA	PA	CA	PA	CA	PA
1. Smart and inclusive growth:	63 824.7	62 788.7	-9.7	-9.3	148.3	
<i>Competitiveness for growth and jobs</i>	16 264.2	11 694.9	+3.3	-9.3	125.9	
<i>Economic, social and territorial cohesion</i>	47 560.6	51 093.7	-13.5	-9.3	22.4	
2. Sustainable growth: natural resources	59 247.7	56 532.5	-1.1	-2.3	55.3	
<i>Market related expenditure and direct payments</i>	43 778.1	43 777.0	+0.3	+0.3	0.0	
<i>Rural development, environment and fisheries</i>	15 469.6	12 755.5	4.7	10.1		
3. Security and Citizenship	2 139.5	1 668.0	-9.4	-11.9	39.5	
4. Global Europe	8 175.8	6 251.3	-12.5	-8.2	159.2	
5. Administration:	8 595.1	8 596.7	(*) +1.5	(*) +1.5	125.9	
<i>of which Pensions and European schools</i>	1 658.8	1 658.8	(*) +5.8	(*) +5.8		
<i>of which Commission</i>	3 348.5	3 350.2	(*) +0.1	(*) +0.1		
<i>of which other institutions</i>	3 587.7	3 587.7	(*) +0.8	(*) +0.8		
6. Compensations	28.6	28.6	-61.9	-61.9	0.4	
Outside the MFF	456.2	200.0	-41.4	-26.9		
Total appropriations	142 467.6	136 065.8	-6.0	-5.8	528.6	0.2
In % of EU-28 GNI	1.06	1.01				

Source: EC, 2013i

Figure 2 : Draft Budget 2014 to EU flagship initiatives



Source: EC, 2013i

What's new for growth, jobs and cohesion?

The Commission proposes to bring the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund and the Cohesion Fund together under a common strategic framework, which will also cover the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development and the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund. The Commission proposes to conclude partnership contracts with each Member State in order to achieve a more results-oriented programming.

The European Social Fund will provide structural actions for economic, social and territorial cohesion, through four main investment poles: employment, education, social inclusion and improving public administration. Also, the new Youth Employment Initiative would see strong funding in 2014 and 2015 as the situation calls for immediate measures.

Furthermore, the Cohesion funding will be focused on investments which contribute to achieving the quantified targets set out in the Europe 2020 strategy supported by specific conditionality provisions. Conditionality will take the form both of ex ante conditions that must be in place before funds are disbursed and ex post conditions that will make the release of additional funds contingent on the achievement of pre-specified results. The priorities and conditions for funding, including a system to monitor progress in achieving the targets set, will be part of the partnership contracts to be agreed between the Commission and each Member State.

What's new for justice, health and security?

In the department of Home Affairs, the number of funds will be reduced to, namely 1) A migration and Asylum Fund and 2) an Internal Security Fund. In order to reduce the administrative workload of all the involved stakeholders, the Commission is planning to move away from the annual programming, to a result-driven, multi-annual programming.

In order to be more efficient, the Commission wants to merge all the other existing programmes into a 'Justice' Programme and a 'Rights and Citizenship' programme.

Funding and Programmes

The following fundings schemes are of importance to our member organizations and they all have the goal of contributing to the EU 2020 (EC, 2013j)

Employment and Social Affairs

Under the Employment and Social Affairs funding programme, a total of €88.3bn is allocated and the ESF gets 84bn allocated. The funding will concentrate on the priorities set by the EU 2020 strategy, namely employment promotion, investment in skills, education and lifelong learning, social inclusion and to fight against poverty, and enhancing institutional capacity and efficient public administration.

Education and Culture

Under this programme, a total of €16.8bl is allocated. A focus will be made on the increase investment in human capital and the modernization of education and training systems that will eventually help to the EU to become a smart, sustainable and inclusive economy. The budget is separated into:

- Education Europe: with a budget allocation of €15.2bn
- And creative Europe, with a budget allocation of €1.6bl.

Home Affairs

Under this programme, a total of €8.23bn is allocated. A special focus is given to the Migration and Asylum fund that will only continue to contribute to the EU 2020 employment targets, particularly in the context of a fast ageing EU population and the diminishing labour force as a consequence. The Migration and Asylum Fund is allocated €3.4bn.

Citizens (Europe for Citizens Programme)

Under this programme, that supports transnational projects with the focus on citizen participation and European citizenship (identity), a total budget of 203 million are allocated.

APPENDIX 1: ESF country projects

Hungary

Total budget allocation under ESF: €3,629,088,551 (2007-2013)

Equal education for... everyone

(<http://ec.europa.eu/esf/main.jsp?catId=46&langId=en&projectId=268>)

- Tanodas, an ESF-funded project, bridges the gap in education levels between the marginalised and the majority of children in Hungary and ensures proper schooling services for both Roma and other disadvantaged children. Participants: 66 schools with 5-8th grade and secondary students - ESF contribution: €7 493 024 (<http://ec.europa.eu/esf/main.jsp?catId=46&langId=en>)

Keeping hungarian scientists at home

(<http://ec.europa.eu/esf/main.jsp?catId=46&langId=en&projectId=259>)

- The ESF-funded Semmelweis Bridge Project is stemming the flow of researchers out of Hungary by creating an innovative working group, including young scientists, international collaborators and industry partners, which will carry out long-term basic cardiovascular research. Participants: 200 - ESF contribution: €2 256 000

Austria

Total budget allocation under ESF: €524,412,560 (2007-2013)

Moving on to better jobs

(<http://ec.europa.eu/esf/main.jsp?catId=46&langId=en&projectId=330>)

- The 'Move On' project was launched to help schoolchildren with an immigrant background, who are generally more likely to drop out of full-time education early.
Participants: 952 - ESF contribution: €201 000

Recycling success

(<http://ec.europa.eu/esf/main.jsp?catId=46&langId=en&projectId=264>)

- The 'Demontage- und Recycling-Zentrum' (DRZ) is a place where the long-term unemployed and people with disabilities can be reintegrated into the job market.
Participants: 60 (+~15 in training) - ESF contribution: €358 798

Three steps into work

(<http://ec.europa.eu/esf/main.jsp?catId=46&langId=en&projectId=372>)

- In the Austrian city of Graz, six organisations which promote employment came together to offer better opportunities to the long-term unemployed, asylum-seekers and immigrants. Participants: 60 - ESF contribution: €460 230

Discovering value in diversity

(<http://ec.europa.eu/esf/main.jsp?catId=46&langId=en&projectId=373>)

- The 'Value diversity, Use diversity' project in the Austrian city of Linz focused on supporting migrants and those with an immigrant background – especially women and young people – to integrate better into social life and work. Participants: Around 2500 - ESF contribution: €258 239

Czech Republic

Total budget allocation under ESF €3,787,795,992 (2007-2013)

A second-hand shop with first class ambitions

(<http://ec.europa.eu/esf/main.jsp?catId=46&langId=en&projectId=241>)

- The 'Second Hand, SECOND HELP' project helps people with mental disabilities enjoy paid work in a suitable environment. Participants: 15 - ESF contribution: €191.121

Training café brings an end to isolation

(<http://ec.europa.eu/esf/main.jsp?catId=46&langId=en&projectId=476>)

- An ESF-project in the Czech Republic gave people with mental disabilities the opportunity to gain work experience and self-confidence, improving their chances of finding employment. ESF Contribution : CZK 2 966 520 – Number of participants : 28

All due 'kredit' to work scheme

(<http://ec.europa.eu/esf/main.jsp?catId=46&langId=en&projectId=475>)

- A project in the Czech Most region aims to help disabled people into the world of work. ESF Contribution : CZK 7 357 181 – Number of participants : 60

A small village with a grand vision

(<http://ec.europa.eu/esf/main.jsp?catId=46&langId=en&projectId=474>)

- An innovative ESF- project is finding ways to improve municipal strategic management and planning activities in the Czech Republic. ESF Contribution : CZK 7 720 871 – Number of participants : 375

Help for the unemployed in south bohemia

(<http://ec.europa.eu/esf/main.jsp?catId=46&langId=en&projectId=238>)

- The ESF-funded 'EFEKT' project ('Through Efficient Qualification to the Labour Market') is helping unemployed individuals find jobs in the South Bohemia Region. Participants: 160 - ESF contribution: €208 699

Breaking down barriers for the hearing impaired

(<http://ec.europa.eu/esf/main.jsp?catId=46&langId=en&projectId=473>)

- A project in the Czech Republic aims to integrate people with hearing impairments into the jobs market. ESF Contribution : CZK 5 004 265 – Number of participants : 375

Germany

Total budget allocation under ESF: €9,380,654,763 (2007-2013)

Integration through work

opportunities <http://ec.europa.eu/esf/main.jsp?catId=46&langId=en&projectId=423>

- Social stigma and a lack of support often mean that the long-term unemployed, including those with disabilities, do not always have the opportunity to reach their professional potential. The Agrigent project in Germany is trying to change this, for the benefit of participants, the environment and the community at large. ESF contribution: €585 350 - Number of participants: 300

Leg-up in the job

market <http://ec.europa.eu/esf/main.jsp?catId=46&langId=en&projectId=243>

- The ESF '1st Job' project has started a traineeship blog where companies, young people, parents and teachers can exchange information and network to encourage new job-seekers to take their first steps on the career ladder. Participants: 180 - ESF contribution: €207 283

Technology for kids - learning while

playing <http://ec.europa.eu/esf/main.jsp?catId=46&langId=en&projectId=422>

- The Bavarian initiative "Technology for Children" introduces kids in a playful way to the topic and is helping to secure the future skills needs. Participants: 5 065 - ESF contribution: EUR 1 628 219

A HELPING HAND <http://ec.europa.eu/esf/main.jsp?Catid=46&langid=en&projectid=240>

- An ESF-backed project in Germany helped students improve their chances of getting a job once they reached ninth grade and apply for vocational training. Participants: 821 - ESF contribution: €60 335

Life skills - and a vocation - are on the

menu <http://ec.europa.eu/esf/main.jsp?catId=46&langId=en&projectId=502>

- A German project gives socially marginalised young people the chance to acquire skills and qualifications in the hotel and catering sector. ESF Contribution : € 1 208 532 - Number of Participants : planned: 125, abroad placements so far: 96

Juwel: helping unemployed young people to

sparkle! <http://ec.europa.eu/esf/main.jsp?catId=46&langId=en&projectId=429>

- The Juwel project targets all unemployed under 25 years old in the area of Rhein-Lahn in Germany, supporting their social and occupational integration until they can take up employment or vocational training. ESF contribution: €500 000 - Number of participants: 768

Coaching for

careers <http://ec.europa.eu/esf/main.jsp?catId=46&langId=en&projectId=470>

- In Germany, job coaches help students find an apprenticeship right after they finish school. Participants: 4 106 - ESF contribution: € 433 808

The challenge

abroad<http://ec.europa.eu/esf/main.jsp?catId=46&langId=en&projectId=462>

- A project in Göttingen offers about 200 unemployed young people the challenge to do an internship abroad and thus progress in the labour market. ESF contribution: €1 716 202 - Number of participants: 200

Into a job - via scotland or

ankara<http://ec.europa.eu/esf/main.jsp?catId=46&langId=en&projectId=471>

- Students, unemployed youth and people with disabilities from the German region of Münster can increase their training and labor market chances through working visits abroad. Participants: 200 - ESF contribution: € 3 326 826

Supporting frontier it

research<http://ec.europa.eu/esf/main.jsp?catId=46&langId=en&projectId=375>

- The information society is rapidly evolving and pushing us to adopt ever newer ways of doing and working in our daily lives. Participants: 19

A business incubator for young

people<http://ec.europa.eu/esf/main.jsp?catId=46&langId=en&projectId=421>

- The ESF-funded business incubator workshop "Future Lausitz" supports unemployed young people successful in starting up their business. Participants: 270 - ESF contribution: EUR 920 997

Time of entry<http://ec.europa.eu/esf/main.jsp?catId=46&langId=en&projectId=420>

- Through help for career entry or support during the first six months of activity in the new company the programme "Time of Entry" helps to keep young people in Brandenburg and assists companies in securing their needs for skilled workers. Participants: 675 (in 2011) - ESF-contribution: EUR 8 082 374

Opening an exit from

extremism<http://ec.europa.eu/esf/main.jsp?catId=46&langId=en&projectId=388>

- EXIT-Germany is an initiative to help anyone who wants to break with right-wing-extremism and to start a new life. ESF support allowed putting an emphasis on integration of former radicals into the job market. Participants: right-wing extremism dropouts - ESF contribution: €409 722

A common e-learning platform for the it

sector<http://ec.europa.eu/esf/main.jsp?catId=46&langId=en&projectId=447>

- A jointly developed e-learning platform allows a needs-based training of employees in the IT sector. ESF contribution: € 292 254 - Number of participants: >100

Advising on foreign

qualifications<http://ec.europa.eu/esf/main.jsp?catId=46&langId=en&projectId=405>

- More and more Europeans travel to other countries to work. Tracking down job opportunities abroad and moving to make the most of them is challenging enough. The trouble of getting the qualifications you earned in your home country recognised in the country you've moved to, can be enough to put people off taking the plunge.
Participants: 1088 persons (counselling) - ESF contribution: €374 000

Parents are key to

integration<http://ec.europa.eu/esf/main.jsp?catId=46&langId=en&projectId=541>

- An ESF project in Hamburg works locally with the parents of students with immigrant backgrounds to improve school success and to facilitate the entry into the world of work. Participants: more than 1500 parent reached, 43 trained multipliers (April 2013). ESF contribution: € 287 482

Entry to the world of

work<http://ec.europa.eu/esf/main.jsp?catId=46&langId=en&projectId=389>

- The 'Come In' project in the German City of Hamburg aims to help young people with their entry into the world of work. Participants: 652 (until April 2012) - ESF contribution: €5 854 483

Flexible training in

hamburg<http://ec.europa.eu/esf/main.jsp?catId=46&langId=en&projectId=406>

- Balancing work and family commitments is challenging at the best of times. Looking after young children, the disabled or elderly is a commitment that requires significant time and energy. Participants: 648 persons (April 2012) - ESF contribution: €298 040

Italy

Total budget allocation under ESF: €6,930,542,469 (2007-2013)

Supporting human resources in the research and innovation

sectors<http://ec.europa.eu/esf/main.jsp?catId=46&langId=en&projectId=273>

- The 'Spinner 2013' programme was established to promote the qualification and upgrade of people working in R&D, technology transfer and innovation in the

Emilia-Romagna Region of Italy. Participants: 2 300 - ESF contribution: €23 million

An outstanding

performance<http://ec.europa.eu/esf/main.jsp?catId=46&langId=en&projectId=281>

- The Sipario project, conceived to train people for work in live music and theatre, encountered an overwhelming response, with hundreds of applications from young people all over Italy and beyond. Participants: 182 - ESF contribution: €887 000

Bright ideas take

off<http://ec.europa.eu/esf/main.jsp?catId=46&langId=en&projectId=263>

- The 'Ideas Project' launched by th Umbrian Research Agency, and co-funded by the ESF, gives young Italian entrepreneurs a flying start. Participants: 28 start-up businesses

Moving up in the

world<http://ec.europa.eu/esf/main.jsp?catId=46&langId=en&projectId=276>

- A project aimed at secondary school pupils, teachers and parents throughout the Piedmont region of northern Italy offered young students new perspectives and 'alternative destinations' in life. Participants: 6 995 students, 393 teachers - ESF contribution: €78 667

Bringing best practice to judicial

offices<http://ec.europa.eu/esf/main.jsp?catId=46&langId=en&projectId=416>

- Workloads at courts across Europe are frequently heavy – optimising efficiency and work processes is all the more vital at this time of tighter public budgets. A project in Italy is transferring best practices in judicial offices to enhance performance across the country. Participants: 182 judicial offices - ESF contribution: over € 40 000 000

Croatia

Youth in the labour

market <http://ec.europa.eu/esf/main.jsp?catId=46&langId=en&projectId=483>

- Young unemployed people in Croatia were trained in childcare, skills they could put to use in the new playgroups in the community of Pleternica. ESF Contribution : € 94 551 – Number of Participants : 225 young people in the county

Fostering effective inclusion of persons with disabilities into the labour market

<http://ec.europa.eu/esf/main.jsp?catId=46&langId=en&projectId=484>

- Inclusion of people with disabilities at the labour market. ESF Contribution : € 110 120 – Number of Participants : 180 people with disabilities from Međimurje county

Romania

Budget allocation under the ESF: €3,684,147,618 (2007-2013)

Train of hope offering a chance for

everyone <http://ec.europa.eu/esf/main.jsp?catId=46&langId=en&projectId=432>

- “The Train of Hope Centre” in Romania offers social and educational support services to students, teachers and parents with the aim of preventing and

combating early school leaving. ESF contribution: €372 717 - Number of participants: 131

A strategy for sustainable local

development <http://ec.europa.eu/esf/main.jsp?catId=46&langId=en&projectId=450>

- In Ghizela, western Romania, a project involving local administration personnel and civil society has contributed to improving the quality and sustainability of public services. ESF contribution: RON 246 649 - Number of participants: 24 (training)

Improving skills through quality

internships <http://ec.europa.eu/esf/main.jsp?catId=46&langId=en&projectId=438>

- The 'Convergence between academic training and active life' project in Romania supports students to complement their academic knowledge with work skills developed during quality internships. ESF contribution: RON 15 808 474 - Number of participants: 15 255

Quality and equality in

education <http://ec.europa.eu/esf/main.jsp?catId=46&langId=en&projectId=295>

- The 'Quality in education - a step to equality' project led by the 'Amare Rromentza' NGO aimed to get more Roma and non-Roma children into education and keep them there, starting at the pre-school phase. Participants: around 950 - ESF contribution: €719 476

Creating chances for women, changing attitudes to

women <http://ec.europa.eu/esf/main.jsp?catId=46&langId=en&projectId=282>

- The 'Better Future for Women' project is promoting a more active role for disadvantaged women in their local economies by helping them set up and manage their own businesses and associations. Participants: 4 000 women, 2 000 people from vulnerable groups, 10 mass media experts - ESF contribution: €3 831 990

Latvia

Total budget allocation under the ESF: €583,103,717 (2007-2013)

A world of difference for deaf

people <http://ec.europa.eu/esf/main.jsp?catId=46&langId=en&projectId=252>

- The aim of the ESF-funded 'World of Silence' project is to help deaf people stay in touch with the rest of society. Participants: 506 - ESF contribution: €479 420

Retraining after the

crisis <http://ec.europa.eu/esf/main.jsp?catId=46&langId=en&projectId=244>

- The Latvian ESF project 'Raising teachers' seeks to retrain teachers. Participants: 27.486 - ESF contribution: €23.968.460

Promoting primary vocational

education <http://ec.europa.eu/esf/main.jsp?catId=46&langId=en&projectId=434>

- The 'Promotion of Primary Vocational Education Attraction' project in Latvia enhances the attraction of vocational education by providing scholarship grants to students from 14 to 18 years old. ESF contribution: €31 264 921 - Number of participants: 31 983 students

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