

A2_The truth about synergies: synergies with the Cohesion Policy funds, notably European

About this session

Synergies between EU funding programmes have great potential to support better and more coherently policy goals such as social inclusion, to reinforce the accessibility and efficiency of EU funding, and to increase the impact of funded actions.

There is a significant potential for complementarities and synergies between Erasmus+ and the Cohesion Policy funds, notably the European Social Fund, as both programmes support convergent policy objectives in terms of qualitative development of education and training in the EU aiming to address current societal challenges. But this potential is currently under-exploited, hampering optimum access and coherent use of various funding sources. The main barriers identified concern limited communication, coordination and interaction between responsible authorities, in addition to the complex financial rules and delivery mechanisms.

More structured and systematic cooperation between the implementing bodies of both programmes i.e. Erasmus+ National Agencies and the ESF Managing Authorities is needed to explore the 'win-win' situations where the synergies bring added value and support the policy objectives of both programmes, notably regarding support for people with fewer opportunities. Effective and timely cooperation would help to identify the sectors, actions and operational set-ups whereby synergies and complementarities would benefit both sides.

Participants will be updated on the synergies' rationale, mechanics and implementation. This session aims to provide an overview of the solutions currently explored, building on the increasingly compatible legislative framework, and based on concrete modalities already well defined in certain Member States (e.g. topping-up Erasmus+ mobility grants or funding Erasmus+ projects in the reserve to increase the volume of mobility activities; scaling-up Erasmus+ high quality projects, etc.) Under the future programme, targeted support is foreseen for the National Agencies to facilitate the implementation of synergies and complementarities at operational level. In this context, exchanging information and building a common understanding across Europe and across implementing bodies is key to increase simplification and enhance the take-up of synergies.

Social Fund+

Something to think about

This session comes at a key moment when the actions of the future programmes are being designed, both for Erasmus+ and for the European Social Fund. This is therefore a great opportunity to engage in a meaningful and constructive dialogue. We welcome your active participation and kindly ask you to reflect on the following questions before the session:

- 1. Would you have best practice examples from previous experience with synergies and complementarities that you would like to share?*
- 2. What are your views regarding the drivers for improving synergies and complementarities between the two programmes?*
- 3. What fora could be used to enable dialogue between the programmes' implementing bodies and to explain the mutual benefits of synergies?*