



## European Cooperation Opportunities in the field of Education and Training

**Elisabetta Delle Donne**

[elisabetta@pixel-online.net](mailto:elisabetta@pixel-online.net)

Pixel Associazione (Italy)

### Abstract

*This paper presents the European cooperation opportunities in the field of education and training that can be directly funded by the European Commission.*

*The programmes that are presented are the Lifelong Learning and the Tempus programmes. The European cooperation opportunities offered by each programme are presented.*

*Also, examples of initiatives already funded by the European Commission are provided.*

### Introduction

The European Council conclusions of February 2011 emphasizes the role of education and training in the implementation of the 'Europe 2020' strategy.

The Council indeed underlines that education and training have a fundamental role to play in achieving the 'Europe 2020' objectives of smart, sustainable and inclusive growth, equipping citizens with the skills and competences which the European economy and European society need in order to remain competitive and innovative, but also by helping to promote social cohesion and inclusion.

The Communication "*An Agenda for new skills and jobs: A European contribution towards full employment*" from the European Commission to the European Parliament of November 2010, states an employment rate target for women and men of 75% by 2020. A skilled workforce is an essential asset to develop a competitive, sustainable and innovative economy in line with Europe 2020 goals. One of the priorities to reach the stated goal focuses on the promotion of a comprehensive life long learning.

The main financial instruments promoting the acquisition of *new skills and jobs* are, first of all the structural funds. The European Social Fund (ESF) that invest in the development of qualifications and competences and the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) that supports investments in education infrastructure.

Besides structural funds, there are other European funding opportunities supporting the current European policies aiming at the promotion of employment and the acquisition of new skills, these include: the Lifelong Learning Programme, the Tempus programme, the Culture programme.

While structural funds are managed by national and regional bodies and therefore the specific rules to access them may be different in the different European member states, the other programmes mentioned above are part of the direct funding of the European Commission and are managed directly by the Commission or by its executive agencies.

This paper will focus on the European cooperation opportunities in the field of education and training through direct funding of the European Commission.



## **The European strategic framework for education and training**

European policies recognize that education and training are essential to the development of today's knowledge society and economy.

The education and training policies of the European Union (EU) have gained impetus since the adoption of the Lisbon Strategy in 2000. The strategy underlines that knowledge and innovation are the EU's most valuable assets, particularly in light of increasing global competition.

The strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training ("ET 2020") recognizes that high-quality education and training are fundamental to Europe's success and that lifelong learning needs to be a priority.

The long-term strategic objectives of EU education and training policies are:

- Making lifelong learning and mobility a reality;
- Improving the quality and efficiency of education and training;
- Promoting equity, social cohesion and active citizenship;
- Enhancing creativity and innovation, including entrepreneurship, at all levels of education and training.

EU level activities are being developed to address priority areas in each of the different levels of education and training based on these overall aims.

A series of benchmarks are set for 2020:

- at least 95% of children between the age of four and the age for starting compulsory primary education should participate in early childhood education;
- the share of 15-years olds with insufficient abilities in reading, mathematics and science should be less than 15%;
- the share of early school leavers should be less than 10%;
- the share of 30-34 year olds with tertiary educational attainment should be at least 40%;
- an average of at least 15 % of adults (age group 25-64) should participate in lifelong Learning

## **The Lifelong Learning Programme**

The Decision establishing the Lifelong Learning Programme was published in the Official Journal of the European Union L327/45 on 24 November 2006.

The Lifelong Learning programme funds a range of actions including exchanges, study visits, networking activities etc.

There are four sub-programmes which fund projects at different levels of education and training:

- Comenius: for schools
- Erasmus: for higher education
- Leonardo da Vinci: for vocational education and training
- Grundtvig: for adult education

The transversal programmes aim to complement the sectorial sub programmes and to ensure that they achieve the best results possible. They aim to promote European cooperation in fields covering two or more of the sub-programmes. In addition they seek to promote quality and transparency of Member States' education and training systems.

Four key activities focus on:

- Policy cooperation and innovation
- Languages
- Information and communication technologies (ICT)
- Dissemination and exploitation of results

The Lifelong Learning Programme (LLP) has a budget of nearly 7 billion euro for 2007 to 2013.



The lifelong learning programme is addressed to

- The 27 member states of the European Union
- EEA (European Economic Area) countries: Island, Liechtenstein, Norway
- Candidate countries (i.e. Turkey, Croatia, Macedonia).

### **The Comenius Sub Programme**

The aims of the Comenius Sub programme are:

- To develop knowledge and understanding among young people and educational staff of the diversity of European cultures and languages and its value
- To help young people acquire the basic life-skills and competences necessary for their personal development, for future employment and for active European citizenship

The operational objectives of the Comenius Sub programme are:

- To improve the quality and to increase the volume of mobility involving pupils and educational staff in different Member States
- To improve the quality and to increase the volume of partnerships between schools in different Member States
- To encourage the learning of modern foreign languages
- To support the development of innovative ICT-based content, services, pedagogies and practice in lifelong learning
- To enhance the quality and European dimension of teacher training
- To support improvements in pedagogical approaches and school management

The target group of the Comenius Sub programme are:

- Schools, as specified by Member States
- Pupils in school education up to the end of upper secondary education
- Teachers and other staff within those schools
- Associations, not-for-profit organisations, NGOs
- Persons and bodies responsible for the organisation and delivery of education at local, regional and national levels
- Research centres and bodies concerned with lifelong learning issues
- Higher education institutions
- Bodies providing guidance, counselling and information services

The following actions are supported by the Comenius Programme:

- Mobility of Individuals - Individual Pupil Mobility
- Mobility of Individuals - In-Service Training for School Education Staff
- Mobility of Individuals - Preparatory Visits
- Mobility of Individuals - Comenius Assistantship
- Mobility of Individuals - Hosting a Comenius Assistant
- Partnerships - School Partnerships
- Partnerships - REGIO Partnerships
- Multilateral Projects
- Networks
- Accompanying Measures

Examples of projects funded by the Comenius Sub-Programme – CMP (Comenius Multilateral Projects):

- The Michelangelo project (<http://michelangelo.pixel-online.org>)  
The project involved secondary school art teachers in the creation and development of an internet portal on European fine arts in the 6 countries involved.
- The Routes project (<http://routes.pixel-online.org/index.php>)



The project involved European secondary school history teachers in the carrying out of a research on the social history of migrations and about the integration of immigrants into European countries.

- School Inclusion (<http://schoolinclusion.pixel-online.org>)  
The project addressed the issue of early school leaving, starting from an in depth analysis of the causes of school dropping out and the strategies implemented to overcome.
- I am Not Scared (<http://iamnotscared.pixel-online.org>)  
The project has the aim to identify the best European strategies to prevent and combat the school bullying phenomenon.
- The On Air Project (<http://www.onair.medmediaeducation.it/>)  
The project exploited the use of new media (television, internet, radio etc.) in education and to promote media education in school.

### **The Erasmus Sub Programme**

The aims of the Erasmus sub programme are:

- To support the realisation of a European Higher Education Area
- To reinforce the contribution of higher education and advanced vocational education to process of innovation

The specific objectives of the Erasmus sub programme are:

- To improve the quality and to increase the volume of students and teaching staff mobility throughout Europe
- To improve the quality and to increase the volume of multilateral cooperation between higher education institutions in Europe
- To increase the degree of transparency and compatibility between higher education and advanced vocational education qualifications gained in Europe
- To improve the quality and to increase the volume of cooperation between higher education institutions and enterprises
- To facilitate the development of innovative practices in education and training at tertiary level, and their transfer, including from one participating country to others
- To support the development of innovative ICT-based content, services, pedagogies and practice for lifelong learning

The target group of the Erasmus sub programme are:

- Students and trainees
- Higher education institutions
- Teachers, trainers and other staff within those institutions
- Associations and representatives of those involved in higher education, including relevant student, university, and teacher/trainer associations
- Enterprises, social partners and other representatives of working life
- Public and private organisations, including not-for-profit organisations and NGOs, responsible for the organisation and delivery of education and training at local, regional and national levels
- Research centres and bodies concerned with lifelong learning issues
- Bodies providing guidance, counselling and information services

The following actions are supported by the Erasmus Programme:

- Mobility of Individuals - Erasmus University Charter
- Mobility of Individuals - Mobility of Students for the Purposes of Studying
- Mobility of Individuals - Student Placements
- Mobility of Individuals - Teaching Assignments for Teaching Staff
- Mobility of Individuals - Staff Training for Teaching and Other Staff
- Mobility of Individuals - Intensive Programmes





- Mobility of Individuals - Intensive Language Courses
- Mobility of Individuals - Organisation of Mobility
- Multilateral Projects - Development of Study Programmes
- Multilateral Projects - Co-operation between Universities and Enterprises
- Multilateral Projects - Modernisation of Higher Education
- Multilateral Projects - Virtual Campuses
- Networks
- Accompanying Measures
- Mobility of Individuals - Preparatory visits

Examples of project funded by the Erasmus Sub-Programme (Erasmus Virtual Campus):

- The History on Line Project (<http://www.history-on-line.eu>)  
The project developed an Internet Portal for teaching the history of pedagogy at university level based on the effective use of ICT potential.

### **The Leonardo da Vinci Sub Programme**

The aims of the Leonardo da Vinci sub programme are:

- To support participants in training and further training activities in the acquisition and the use of knowledge, skills and qualifications to facilitate personal development
- To support improvements in quality and innovation in vocational education and training systems, institutions and practices
- To enhance the attractiveness of vocational education and training and mobility for employers and individuals and to facilitate the mobility of working trainees

The specific objectives of the Leonardo da Vinci sub programme are:

- To improve the quality and to increase the volume of mobility throughout Europe of people involved in initial vocational education and training
- To improve the quality and to increase the volume of co-operation between institutions or organisations providing learning opportunities, enterprises, social partners and other relevant bodies throughout Europe
- To facilitate the development of innovative practices in the field of vocational education and training
- To improve the transparency and recognition of qualifications and competences, including those acquired through non-formal and informal learning
- To encourage the learning of modern foreign languages
- To support the development of innovative ICT-based content, services, pedagogies and practice for lifelong learning.

The target groups of the Leonardo da Vinci sub programme are:

- People learning in all forms of vocational education and training except at tertiary level
- People in the labour market
- Institutions and organisations providing learning opportunities in the fields covered by the Leonardo da Vinci Programme
- Teachers, trainers and other staff within those institutions or organisations
- Associations and representatives of those involved in vocational education and training, including trainees', parents' and teachers' associations
- Enterprises, social partners and other representatives of working life, including chambers of commerce and other trade organisations
- Bodies providing guidance, counselling and information services relating to any aspect of lifelong learning
- Persons and bodies responsible for systems and policies concerning any aspect of vocational education and training at local, regional and national level
- Research centres and bodies concerned with lifelong learning issues
- Higher education institutions



- Not-for-profit organisations, voluntary bodies, and NGOs

The actions of the Leonardo da Vinci sub programme are:

- Mobility of Individuals - Transnational Mobility for Trainees in Initial Vocational Training (IVT)
- Mobility of Individuals - Transnational Mobility for People in the Labour Market (PLM)
- Mobility of Individuals - Transnational Mobility for Professionals in Vocational Education and Training (VETPRO)
- Partnerships
- Multilateral Projects - Transfer of Innovation
- Multilateral Projects - Development of Innovation
- Thematic Networks
- Accompanying Measures

Examples of projects funded by the Leonardo da Vinci Sub-Programme, Development of Innovation (DOI):

- Hippocrates (<http://www.hippocrates.fadgradenigo.it>)  
The project provided trainers who work in the health sector with the necessary skills for knowledge management.

Examples of projects funded by the Leonardo da Vinci Sub-Programme, Transfer of Innovation (TOI):

- ELS at Work (<http://elsatwork.pixel-online.org/info/index.php>)  
The project transferred the ELS portal which was originally created, with a Leonardo da Vinci funding, to train secretarial and administrative staff, to vocational schools with the purpose to offer language students and teachers a successful tool for on line learning of business languages.

Examples of mobility projects funded by the Leonardo da Vinci Mobility Actions named: (a) People in the Labour Market (PLM) and (b) Vocational Education and Training Professionals (VETPro). These are mobility initiative addressed to in service staff willing to get to know the Italian labour market and the Italian experiences in several subject areas.

- Mobility initiative on Tourism Promotion and Management addressed to the Agency for Support of Regional Development Kosice, Slovakia, who had the opportunity to get to know, through direct meetings with Tuscan public authorities, how Tuscany public bodies carry out the marketing and promotion of tourism.
- Mobility Initiative on How to Organise and Manage In Service Training Courses addressed to Tartu Vocational Education Centre, Estonia, who had the opportunity, through direct meetings with Tuscan public authorities, to get to know how in service training initiatives are organized and managed in Tuscany.
- Mobility Initiative on Education Management Practices addressed to Latgale Transport and Telecommunication Technical School, Latvia, who had the opportunity, through direct meetings with Tuscan public authorities, to get to know how the education sector is organized and managed in Tuscany.

Further information is available at: [http://euoplan.pixel-online.org/MOB\\_intro.php](http://euoplan.pixel-online.org/MOB_intro.php)

Examples of mobility projects funded by the Leonardo da Vinci Mobility Actions named Initial Vocational Training (IVT). These are mobility initiative addressed to vocational students willing to get to know and experience the Italian labour market.

- Mobility Initiative on Information and Communication Technologies for Business Management addressed to Angus College, United Kingdom.



- Mobility Initiative on Web Design addressed to Landstede Vocational Centre, Netherland and to IES Sant Vicent Ferrer, Spain.
- Mobility Initiative on Forestry and Logging addressed to Oulu College, Finland.

Further information is available at: [http://euoplan.pixel-online.org/MOB\\_intro.php](http://euoplan.pixel-online.org/MOB_intro.php)

## **The Grundtvig Sub Programme**

The aims of the Grundtvig sub programme are:

- To respond to the educational challenge of an ageing population in Europe
- To help provide adults with pathways to improving their knowledge and competences

The specific objectives of the Grundtvig sub programme are:

- To improve the quality and accessibility of mobility throughout Europe of people involved in adult education and to increase its volume
- To improve the quality and to increase the volume of co-operation between organisations involved in adult education throughout Europe
- To assist people from vulnerable social groups and in marginal social contexts, in particular older people and those who have left education without basic qualifications, in order to give them alternative opportunities to access adult education
- To facilitate the development of innovative practices in adult education and their transfer, including from a participating country to others
- To support the development of innovative ICT-based content, services, pedagogies and practice for lifelong learning
- To improve pedagogical approaches and the management of adult education organizations

The target groups of the Grundtvig sub programme are:

- Learners in adult education
- Institutions and organisations providing learning opportunities in adult education
- Teachers and other staff within those institutions or organisations
- Establishments involved in the initial or further training of adult education staff
- Associations and representatives of those involved in adult education, including learners' and teachers' associations
- Bodies providing guidance, counselling and information services relating to any aspect of adult education
- Persons and bodies responsible for systems and policies concerning any aspect of adult education at local, regional and national level
- Research centres and bodies concerned with adult education issues
- Enterprises
- Not-for-profit organisations, voluntary bodies, non-governmental organisations (NGOs)
- Higher education institutions

The actions of the Grundtvig sub programme are:

- Mobility of Individuals - Individual Adult Learner Mobility
- Mobility of Individuals - Teaching Experience for Future or Recently Qualified Adult Education Teachers
- Mobility of Individuals - In-service Staff Training for Adult Education Staff
- Mobility of Individuals - Preparatory Visits for Learning Partnerships
- Learning Partnerships
- Multilateral projects
- Thematic Networks
- Accompanying Measures



Examples of project funded by the Grundtvig Sub-Programme (Grundtvig Multilateral Project):

- The Tech Connected Teacher (<http://www.tteacher.eu/?lang=2>)  
The project had the objective to raise the availability and quality of European training courses for adults

### **The Transversal Programme - Policy Co-operation and Innovation in Lifelong Learning, Key Activity 1 (KA1)**

The following actions are supported by the key activities of policy cooperation and innovation in lifelong learning:

- Mobility of individuals
- Multilateral projects aimed at preparing and testing policy proposals developed at Community level and innovation in lifelong learning
- Multilateral cooperation networks of experts and/or institutions working together on policy issues
- Observation and analysis of policies and systems in the field of lifelong learning
- Action to support transparency and recognition of qualifications and competences
- Accompanying Measures

Example of project funded by KA1:

- The Chemistry Is All Around Us Project (<http://chemistry.pixel-online.org/index.php>)  
The project has the aim to identify barriers and success factors to the implementation of lifelong learning policies in scientific subjects and in particular in chemistry.

### **The Transversal Programme – Language Learning, Key Activity 2 (KA2)**

The following actions may be supported under the key activity of languages:

- Multilateral projects aimed, inter alia, at the promotion of language awareness and access to language learning resources and developing new language learning materials, including online courses, and instruments for language testing
- Networks in the field of language learning and linguistic diversity
- Accompanying Measures

Example of project funded by KA2:

- The Lets Go project (<http://letsgo.pixel-online.org/info>)  
The project's objective is to provide language teachers and trainers with the skills to successfully apply new technologies to the teaching and learning of foreign languages.

### **The Transversal Programme – Development of Innovative ICT-based Content, Services, Pedagogies and Practice for Lifelong Learning, Key Activity 3 (KA3)**

The following actions are supported under the key activity of ICT:

- Multilateral projects aimed at the promotion of ICT enabled learning embedded into long-term educational strategies and the development and distribution of innovative methods, contents, services and environments
- Networks aimed at sharing and exchanging knowledge, experience and good practice
- Other actions aimed at improving lifelong learning policy and practice, which may include mechanisms for evaluation, observation, benchmarking, quality improvement and the analysis of trends with respect to technology and pedagogy

Example of project funded by KA3:





- The Learning Game project (<http://www.learninggame.org/>)  
The project's objective is to implement e-learning solutions and methods in a teaching and learning context that make full use of the interactive and multimedia solutions, therefore including videogames.

### **The Transversal Programme – Dissemination and Exploitation of Results of Actions Supported under the Programme and Previous Related Programmes, and Exchange of Good Practice, Key Activity 4 (KA4)**

The prime objective for actions under Key Activity 4 'Dissemination and Exploitation of Results' is to help create a framework for the effective exploitation of the results of the Lifelong Learning Programme and previous related programmes at sectoral, regional, national and European levels.

This action can fund multilateral projects aimed, inter alia, at the development of a suitable framework (analysis, mechanisms, methodologies and practical tools) to facilitate the exploitation of project and programme results; to cross-programme actions promoting the exploitation of results at European level; and to the promotion of 'exploitation' activities by regional/European/sectoral networks with the aim of promoting a virtuous circle between policy development and practical experiences.

Example of project funded by KA4:

- The Embed project (<http://www.embeddyslexia.eu/>)  
The project aims at supporting the education of dyslexic individuals exploiting the results of previous European project in the field of dyslexia.

### **The Tempus Programme**

TEMPUS is the European Union's programme which supports the modernisation of higher education in the EU's surrounding area. Tempus promotes institutional cooperation that involves the European Union and Partner Countries and focuses on the reform and modernisation of higher education systems in the Partner Countries of Eastern Europe, Central Asia, the Western Balkans and the Mediterranean region. It also aims to promote voluntary convergence of the higher education systems in the Partner Countries with EU developments in the field of higher education. With regards to the Western Balkans, Tempus contributes to preparing the candidate and potential candidate countries for a participation in the integrated Life Long Learning Programme.

In addition to promoting cooperation between institutions, Tempus also promotes a people-to-people approach. Tempus provides support to consortia of institutions composed mainly of universities or university associations. Non-academic partners can also be part of a consortium.

The overall objective of Tempus is to contribute to the creation of an area of cooperation in the field of higher education between the European Union and Tempus Partner Countries in the countries neighbouring the EU and its wider proximity.

The specific objectives of Tempus are as follows:

- To promote the reform and modernisation of higher education in the Partner Countries;
- To enhance the quality and relevance of higher education to the world of work and society in the Partner Countries;
- To increase the capacity of higher education institutions in the Partner Countries and the EU, in particular their capacity to cooperate internationally and to continually modernise;
- To assist them in opening up to the world of work and the society at large in order to:
  - o overcome inter-country fragmentation in the area of higher education and inter-institutional fragmentation in the countries themselves;
  - o enhance inter-disciplinarity and trans-disciplinarity between university faculties;
  - o enhance the employability of university graduates;
  - o make the European Higher Education Area more visible and attractive to the world;
- To foster the reciprocal development of human resources;



- To enhance mutual understanding between the peoples and cultures of the EU and the Partner Countries.

Priority themes under Tempus are defined around the main components of the EU's higher education modernization agenda and are therefore structured in the following three building blocks:

- Curricular Reform  
Modernization of curricula in academic disciplines identified as priorities by the Partner Countries, using the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS), the three cycle system and the recognition of degrees
- Governance Reform  
University management and services for students; Introduction of quality assurance; Institutional and financial autonomy and accountability; Equal and transparent access to higher education; Development of international relations.
- Higher Education and Society  
Training of non-university teachers; Development of partnerships with enterprises; Knowledge triangle education-research-innovation; Training courses for public services (ministries, regional/local authorities); Development of lifelong learning in society at large; Qualifications frameworks.

National and regional priorities are defined based on these themes.