



Seizing the opportunities for a healthy recovery

- Multiannual Financial Framework 2021-2027
and NextGenerationEU

EuroHealthNet

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List of abbreviations

CAP: Common Agricultural Policy

CF: Cohesion Fund

COVID-19: Corona Virus Disease

CPR: Common Provisions Regulation

CSRs: Country-Specific Recommendations

DG CNECT: Directorate-General

Communications Networks, Content and
Technology

DG ECFIN: Directorate-General Economic and
Financial Affairs

DG SANTE: Directorate-General Health and Food
Safety

EAFRD: European Agricultural Fund for Rural
Development

EAGF: European Agricultural Guarantee Fund

EaSI: EU Programme for Employment and Social
Innovation

ECT: European Territorial Cooperation

EHU: European Health Union

ERA: European Research Area

ERDF: European Regional Development Fund

ERNs: European Reference Networks

ESF+: European Social Fund Plus

ESI: European Structural and Investment funds

ESPN: European Spatial Planning Observation
Network

FEAD: Fund for European Aid to the Most
Deprived

FEAD: Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived

GDP: Gross Domestic Product

GNI: Gross National Income

HaDEA: Health and Digital Executive Agency

IGJ: Investment for Growth and Job goal

Interreg: European Territorial Cooperation

JTF: Just Transition Fund

MFF: Multi-annual Financial Framework

NGEU: Next Generation EU

NRPs: National Recovery Plans

NRPs: National Recovery Plans

RRF: Recovery and Resilience Facility

SGPP: Steering Group for Prevention and Promotion

SMEs: Small-Medium Enterprises

TSI: Technical Support Instrument

WHO: World Health Organization

YEI: Youth Employment Initiative

1 Introduction

1.1 What has happened?

In early 2021 – in the context of the COVID-19 crisis and following 2.5 years of negotiations - EU institutions agreed on the future budgetary frameworks for the European Union (EU), or the [Multiannual Financial Framework \(MFF\) 2021– 2027](#). It's [adoption](#) paved the way for the approval of a wide range of more sector specific funds and programmes, with retroactive enforcement as of the beginning of 2021.

In parallel to the MFF process, EU Institutions agreed to an additional emergency facility of guaranteed loans and grants, the [NextGenerationEU \(NGEU\)](#). NGEU will address the immediate and medium-term socio-economic consequences of the crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. These two processes are complementary as they share common goals and visions. While the MFF will support the implementation of the EU's [long-term political and strategic objectives](#) until 2024 (the current political term) and then until 2027, NGEU is meant to boost EU funding for Member States (MS) for the upcoming years until 2024/26¹.

Why is it relevant for health?

Following the COVID-19 crisis, the initial proposals for the MFF and the EU's overall budget, developed before 2020, were substantially revised in response to the new needs and priorities that emerged. This is reflected in the creation of the new and ambitious [EU4Health Programme](#) that now has a budget well over 11 times larger than that of the previous EU Health Programme. Despite its substantial growth, the [EU4Health Programme](#) represents only a fraction of the funding available at EU level that could potentially be applied to invest in health and well-being and to strengthen health systems across the EU. As the EU and EU Member States focus on restoring health as well as the economy both during and following the COVID-19 pandemic, other programmes have emerged or been revised to address these new realities. This means new opportunities have come up to address the underlying causes of ill-health such as socio-economic and environmental factors and to reduce health inequalities. Relevant programmes include those that aim to help achieve the EU's top-level priorities of achieving a green and digital transition, in the fields of research and development, employment and social protection, and education and training. These new and revised programmes and the associated funds offer unprecedented chances to improve health and well-being, to reduce inequalities in health and move to an Economy of Wellbeing.

Who is this briefing for?

The purpose of this briefing is to provide public health authorities and other stakeholders across the EU in the field of or with an interest in health including the EuroHealthNet Partnership, with a clear, comprehensive, overview of the funds and the relevant programmes of the new EU budget. EuroHealthNet's aim is to encourage these key stakeholders to become more aware of and to seize the opportunities for investments in public health, health promotion and health equity. If they do not engage, other actors may do so in ways that may not contribute to or even undermine their goals of improving

¹ Funding under the RRF will be made available until 2024, with projects implemented until 2026 at the latest

health outcomes and reducing health inequalities.

This briefing is also aimed at national managing authorities in the Member States and various ministries' departments to demonstrate the broad range of the funds and new possibilities to combine them in a more strategic and impactful ways for the wellbeing of people and planet, contributing to common EU political objectives and of highest EU added-value.

This briefing describes contents of various EU funds and programmes, provides useful links to institutional sources, and, if available, basic details on how and who can apply. For further support and information, also about joining the EuroHealthNet partnership, please do not hesitate to [contact us](#).

1.2 Main headline developments

The EU budget will comprise of:

- [Multiannual Financial Framework \(MFF\)](#) budget 2021-2027 totalling **€1.074 Trillion**
- [NextGenerationEU \(NGEU\)](#) 2021-2024 (also known as “*Recovery Fund or Recovery Plan*”) worth **€750 Billion**

With a total of over €1.8 Trillion², these two funding programmes represent the [largest stimulus package ever financed through the EU budget](#). These resources will come from a mix of familiar grants and innovative sources for public-private medium-term loans. New rules and conditions for spending have been introduced.

The EU budget has always evolved with the needs of the Union, responding to changing political, social and economic contexts. Under the [MFF](#), EU funding will be geared towards new and reinforced priorities across the EU's policy areas, including green and digital transitions. The long-term budget provides the framework for the funding of almost 40 EU spending programmes over a seven-year period. Cohesion policy and the common agricultural policy will continue to receive the most significant funding and undergo modernisation to ensure that they best contribute to Europe's economic recovery and the EU's green and digital objectives.

The [MFF](#) funding is managed under programmes jointly administered by the European Commission and national authorities in the EU countries. Most of the rest is awarded to projects that are directly managed by the European Commission, through e.g., grants, by officials in different departments, in the EU delegations or through EU executive agencies, such as HADEA. A small percentage are indirectly managed through e.g., national authorities, international organisations or development agencies of EU countries.

[NextGenerationEU](#) main purpose is to address the immediate and medium-term actions of the socio-economic consequences of the crisis caused by the COVID-19 syndemic³. It foresees grants and innovative

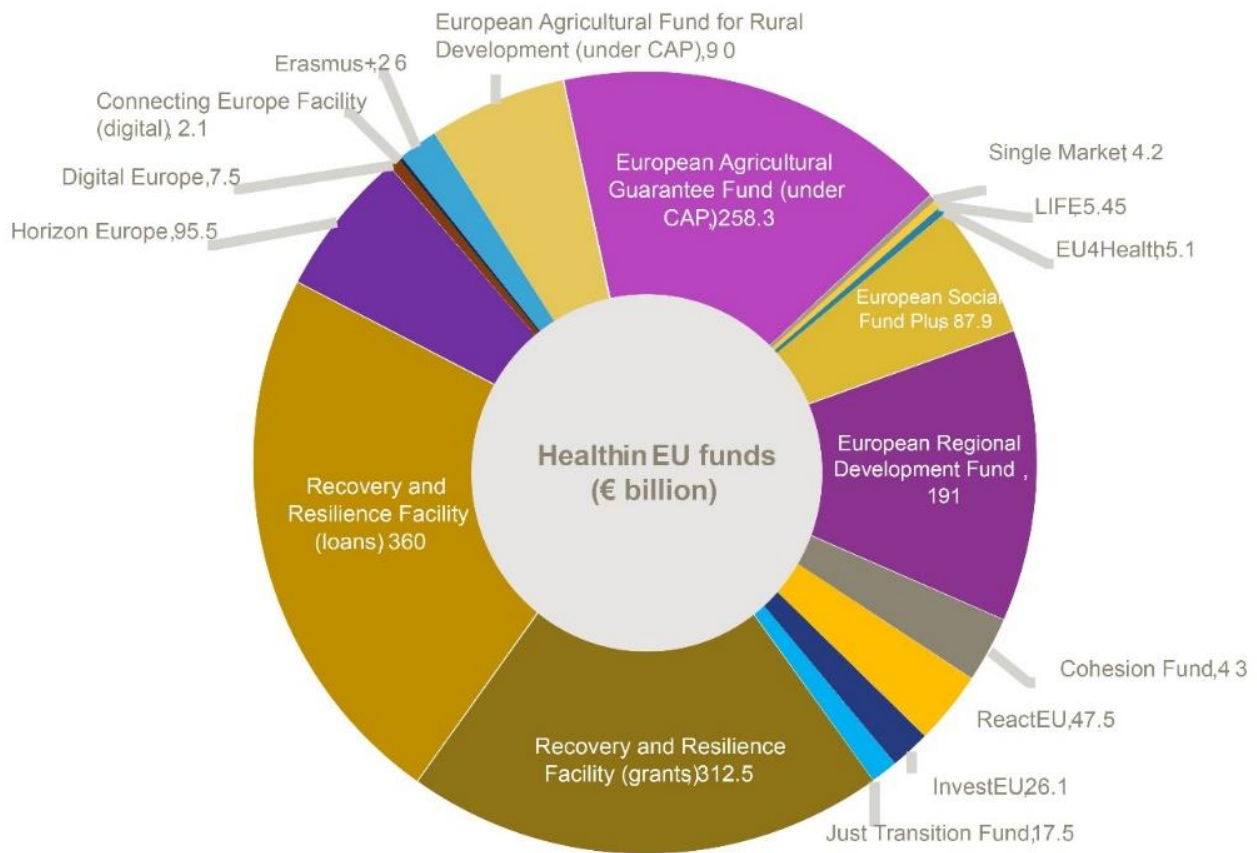
² Here and throughout the document amounts quoted are in 2018 prices (unless otherwise stated), which is how the European Commission presents its budget for 2021-2027

³ Emerging scientific and political narrative refer to the COVID-19 pandemic as a syndemic, as COVID-19-related “conditions are clustering within social groups according to patterns of inequality deeply embedded in our

sources for private medium-term loans that are complementary with and will strengthen the MFF, as well as new ad-hoc programmes, namely the *Recovery and Resilient Facility (RRF)*.

The *RRF* is aimed directly at EU MS governments and contributes to the revised European Semester process⁴. The RRF’s intrinsic feature are national Recovery and Resilience Plans (RRPs), to be submitted by the governments to the EU top level in spring 2021 who will assess and agree on them by the end of the summer 2021. EuroHealthNet is investigating how these plans can impact on health and social equity – [further information on our work on the European Semester can be found here](#).

The graph below illustrates budgetary *MFF-NGEU* composition of various EU funds.



societies”. Source: The Lancet [https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736\(20\)32000-6/fulltext](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736(20)32000-6/fulltext)

⁴ The EU annual process of governance for economic, social and environmental priorities

All commitments under the *NGEU* will have to be made by the end of 2024 and all payments by the end of 2026. In addition, 70% of the grants provided by the *Recovery and Resilience Facility* should be committed in the years 2021-2023. A remaining 30% will be used in the last years. The Recovery and Resilience Plans (RRPs) submitted by MS will be assessed by the EC within two months of submission and approved by the Heads of EU States within four weeks of the proposal. The EC assisted MS throughout the preparatory phase of the development of their plans via an [associated Technical Support Instrument](#) (TSI). Countries were encouraged to engage as soon as possible in a broad policy dialogue including all relevant stakeholders to prepare their Recovery and Resilience plans and urged to interact with the Recovery Task Force and DG ECFIN to discuss their draft plans. The Commission will provide information on progress in the implementation of the RRF through a special Recovery and Resilience Facility Scoreboard. Please see for more details the section explicitly dedicated to the *RRF* later in this brief.

Common principles for MFF

Another important feature of the EU budgetary guidelines of the ‘regular’ MFF programmes is that funds will only be released based on compliance with several key principles, which the European Parliament succeeded in integrating into the legislative texts. These four main overarching principles to adhere to in order to receive EU funding are:

- Compliance with the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights
- [Gender equality](#) and mainstreaming
- Fighting [discrimination](#), and
- The respect of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the [Paris Climate Agreement](#).

Further guidelines on how the funds and programmes are to be managed and operationalised is laid out in the Common Principles Regulation (CPR). The CPR will guide the implementation of several funds: *European Social Fund+*, *European Regional Development Fund*, the *Cohesion Fund*, the *European Maritime and Fisheries Fund*, the *Just Transition Fund*, and set out financial rules for the *Asylum and Migration Fund*, the *Internal Security Fund* and the *Border Management and Visa Instrument 2021–2027*. While measures linked to most funds can be suspended when countries do not comply with the CPR, and the EU budgetary guidelines are time-bound, *ESF+* and *Interreg* funds (part of the *European Regional Development Fund*, see later) may not be suspended.

In a framework of all CPR-guided funds, partnership agreements by national authorities will be simplified and limited. Regional, local, urban, and other public authorities, economic and social partners, civil society, as well as research bodies, where appropriate, will be key partners to the agreements. The EC and national authorities will establish National Contact Points or Focal Points for the different MFF funds (e.g. National Contact Points for the ESF+ programme, the Horizon Europe Programme, and National Focal Points for the EU4Health Programme) to help interested stakeholders understand national funding priorities, advise them on application procedures, and support their efforts to find partners at the sub-national or trans-national level. The Commission encourages funds to be applied for initiatives that reinforce one another to help achieve Member States’, and/or the EU’s overriding policy priorities and objectives. It will in this respect also encourage the different National Contact Points to work together within and between countries.

2

EU Health Programme – EU4Health

2.1 What is new?

EU4Health Programme is the EU's most direct response to COVID-19 health impacts and will be the largest European health programme with the biggest budget to date. The Programme will promote actions in areas where a Union's added-value can be demonstrated. EU4Health aims to:

- boost EU's preparedness for major cross-border health threats by creating:
 - reserves of medical supplies for crises
 - a reserve of healthcare staff and experts that can be mobilised to respond to cross-border crises across the EU
 - increased surveillance of health threats
- strengthen health systems so that they can face epidemics as well as long-term challenges by stimulating:
 - disease prevention and [health promotion](#) in an ageing population to address a growing burden of non-communicable diseases (NCDs)
 - [digital transformation](#) of health systems
 - [access to health care](#) for vulnerable groups
- More equitable access to [medicines](#) and [medical devices](#), more prudent and efficient use of [antimicrobials](#), medical and pharmaceutical innovation and greener manufacturing.

It will contribute to EC work on urgent health priorities such as tackling [cancers](#) (through key risk factors), reducing the number of [antimicrobial-resistant infections](#) and improving [vaccination](#) rates, in keeping with the 'One Health' and 'Health in All Policies' approaches. There is a specific focus given to protecting people in vulnerable situations, including those suffering from mental illness and those living with or most affected by communicable, non-communicable or chronic diseases. The Programme will support communication activities targeted at the general public or to specific groups of people or professionals. These can include communication activities that aim to address misinformation and disinformation in relation to the causes, prevention, and treatment of diseases, as well as vaccine hesitancy and organ and blood donations, in a manner that complements national campaigns on such matters.

The EU will expand successful initiatives like the [European Reference Networks](#) for rare diseases and continue to pursue [international cooperation](#) on global health threats and challenges, particularly through agreements with the World Health Organization (WHO).

2.2 Opportunities for stakeholders in health

In the first years of the programme, there will be a clear focus on recovery and resilience, in particular pandemic preparedness and response. A new Steering Group of Stakeholders will advise the formal EU4Health Programme Committee of Member States on key priorities, and the EC will decide on an annual basis on the Programme's priorities, the annual work plans and on the specific topics for calls for funding (as of mid-2021).

The calls for funding will be for actions that include strengthening the exchange of best practices between Member States, supporting networks for knowledge exchange and mutual learning (including by increasing the number of Joint Actions), addressing cross-border threats to health to reduce their risk and mitigate their consequences. Actions can also address issues relating to the internal market to which the EU can add value, thereby unlocking the potential of innovation in health, and improving efficiency by avoiding the duplication of activities and optimising the use of financial resources. The Programme will also support capacity-building actions to strengthen strategic health emergencies and contingency planning, access to multisource financing, the upskilling of the healthcare and public health workforce, and the capacity to invest in and implement actions of the Programme. It will, in this respect, provide country-specific tailor-made assistance to Member States, or groups of Member States, with the greatest needs.

It should be noted that the EC is proposing to expand the EU role in health through the establishment of a [“European Health Union”](#) (EHU). Plans include actions directed at strengthening preparedness planning and response capacity at national and Union level, at reinforcing the role of the [European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control](#) (ECDC) and the [European Medicines Agency](#) (EMA), and the establishing a health [emergency preparedness and response authority](#) (HERA). However, this has yet to be agreed by Member States and other EU Institutions and will be mostly discussed in planned negotiations during [the strategic Conference on the Future of Europe](#) which began in 2021 and will be finalised under the French Presidency of the Council of the European Union in the first half of 2022. All the key EU institutional actors are involved.

The EC is stressing that liaison between the [EU4Health Programme](#), other elements of the MFF and NGEU and [European Semester](#) processes will be important. The [Steering Group on Health Promotion, Disease Prevention and Management of Non-Communicable Diseases](#) (SGPP), representing the Member States, will play an essential role in making these links. The SGPP will advise to the Commission on public health issues, on the annual work programme and its implementation. The EC may develop new indicators to monitor the implementation of the actions developed and delivered in a context of the [EU4Health](#) Programme. As an example, all Member States already signed up to the SDG3 target of reducing a third of premature mortality from NCDs through prevention and treatment by 2030.

2.3 Budget available

The overall budget of the *EU4Health* Programme will be up to **€5.1 Billion**. As explained earlier, this is about eleven times the previous EU Health Action Programme resources and the range of actions has been significantly widened. A large part of the increased budget will be spent on direct and indirect post-pandemic recovery actions, in the crucial first years of its implementation. €316 Million will be spent in 2021, rising to over €900 Million in 2027.

20% of the EU4Health budget shall be reserved for health promotion and disease prevention by addressing health risks such as the harmful use of alcohol and tobacco. Digitalising healthcare, including by supporting the creation of a [European Health Data Space](#), is also included as a key priority. Up to 12.5% will be spent on procurement to complement national stockpiling of essential crisis-relevant products, with a further 12.5% to support global commitments and international health initiatives.

In February 2021 the EC announced its [Europe's Beating Cancer Plan](#), which includes the overall strategy of addressing cancers, a detailed Action Plan, and a dedicated budget of **€4 Billion** earmarked from EU funds for research and other programmes (including €1.25 Billion from *EU4Health*), in a comprehensive pan-European approach to tackle inequalities and bring EU added value to address the main burdens of cancers by focussing on:

- prevention
- early detection
- diagnosis and treatment
- quality of life of cancer patients and survivors

The Cancer Plan is linked to other Commission priorities, notably the [Pharmaceutical Strategy for Europe](#) and the [EU Farm to Fork Strategy](#) as well as the planned [European Health Data Space](#) (expected by 2025). [Cancer is one of the proposed European research and innovation missions](#) and part of the [Horizon Europe](#) framework beginning in 2021.

The responsible EC Directorate for the EU4Health programme remains DG Health and Food Safety ([DG SANTE](#)), and the new '[European Health and Digital Executive Agency](#)' (HaDEA), will play a budget overseeing role. The total budget managed by HaDEA will be over €20 Billion over the 7 years period of the 2021-2027 *MFF*. Next to the *EU4Health* budget, it will also manage: (1) *Horizon Europe*: Pillar II, Cluster 1: Health with €4.8 Billion; (2) *Horizon Europe*: Pillar II, Cluster 4: Digital, Industry and Space with €5.5 Billion; (3) *Single Market Programme*: Food Safety with €1.68 Billion; (4) *Digital Europe Programme* with €800 Million; and (5) *Connecting Europe Facility*: Digital with €1.7 Billion.

EU4Health calls will be launched in mid-2021.

Resources

- [Commission welcomes entry into force of EU4Health Programme](#)
- [EU4Health Programme 2021-2027 Regulation](#)
- [EU4Health MEMO](#)
- [EU4Health factsheet](#)

3 European Social Fund Plus (ESF+)

3.1 What is new?

The *European Social Fund Plus (ESF+)* will be the main financial instrument to strengthen Europe's social dimension, through the implementation of the **European Pillar of Social Rights** and its Action Plan. It is the new 'simpler but stronger' version of the existing *European Social Fund (ESF)*.

ESF+ will focus its resources on three main areas: (1) education and skills, (2) labour market effectiveness and equal opportunities for quality employment, as well as (3) social inclusion measures. All of these areas address key, underlying determinants of health and health inequalities, making the funds an important potential resource for health authorities and those with an interest in health. *ESF+* also includes more specific, health related objectives such as: active and healthy ageing, digital skills and literacy, access to quality, sustainable, effective and affordable services and the effectiveness and resilience of healthcare, long-term care and social protection systems.

During the 2014–2020 programming period, the EU's Employment and Social Innovation programme (EaSI) was a stand-alone programme organised around three axes: PROGRESS, EURES, and Microfinance and Social Entrepreneurship. It will now be merged (with some adaptations regarding the EURES Microfinance and Social Entrepreneurship 'axis') into a much broader *ESF+* programme, that also includes the previous ESF, the Youth Employment Initiative (YEI), and the Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived (FEAD). This merger is expected to streamline and simplify existing rules across the different funds and contribute to increased opportunities for synergies between the components of the new programme. The formal adoption of the *ESF+* programme is planned for June 2021.

The former EaSI programme, which will become an integrated strand under the *ESF+* programme, will help tackle new challenges, including the COVID-19 crisis and its social impacts that are exacerbating inequalities between and within countries. It will continue to be implemented directly by the Commission, while a shared management strand will be implemented under indirect management to support transnational cooperation to transfer innovative solutions.

The *ESF+* programme will include a new emphasis on bottom-up approaches based on partnerships involving public authorities, the private sector and civil society (such as community-led local development). It will incentivise the scale-up of social innovations developed not just under the EaSI strand, but also through the EU Research and Health programmes.

3.2 Relevance to health, health equity and the social determinants of health

Across the world, including across Europe, people's health status is closely correlated to their socio-economic status. In other words, [the greater the level of disadvantage, the poorer the state of health and the shorter the life expectancy](#). The health of people who are the least well off, and/or that face high levels of discrimination (homeless, ethnic minorities, migrants, LGBTIQ+) tends to be worst. The disadvantage is visible in areas such as access to opportunities and resources, such as health services and preventive measures, (early years) education, employment, social and living conditions.

The [WHO Health Equity Status Report](#) indicates that 90% of health inequalities can be explained by these five factors: (1) Quality of health care (10%); (2) Financial insecurity (35%); (3) Poor quality housing and neighbourhood environments (29%); (4) Social exclusion (19%); (5) Lack of decent work and poor working conditions (7%).

The *ESF+* funds offer many opportunities to invest in initiatives and social innovations that aim to address the underlying factors that lead to ill-health and generate health inequities. As such, these funds hold great potential to promote health, prevent diseases, reduce social inequalities in health, and build a well-being economy.

3.3 Budget available

ESF+ will be complementary to other EU Funds and the *NextGenerationEU*. Resources for *ESF+* of a total of **€87.9 Billion** will be allocated to key political priorities and citizens' concerns:

- *ESF+* funded programmes and projects will have to concentrate on related challenges identified under the revised European Semester, now linked with the Recovery and Resilience Facility;
- Investments in young people: Member States with a substantial number (above the EU average 2017-2019) of young people (age between 15-29 years) not in employment, education or training (NEETs) will have to dedicate **at least 12.5%** of the *ESF+* funding to measures in support of youth employment, education and activation; all other countries must allocate 'an appropriate' amount of their *ESF+* resources to targeted actions to support youth employment measures;
- Support the most vulnerable: Member States should allocate **at least 25%** of *ESF+* funding to measures fostering social inclusion and targeting those most in need;
- Food and basic material assistance to the most deprived: the current [Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived \(FEAD\)](#) is integrated into the *ESF+* and **at least 3%** of their national *ESF+* envelope must be devoted to this aim, with co-financing rate at 90%;
- Investing in children and addressing child poverty: Member States with a level of child poverty above the EU average (2017-2019) should use **at least 5%** of their *ESF+* resources to address this issue. All other Member States must allocate 'an appropriate' amount of their *ESF+* resources to targeted actions to combat child poverty. Those dedicated resources are to be 'reserved' for the Commission's legislative initiative - [the EU Child Guarantee](#);
- Direct support for social innovation through the new **Employment and Social Innovation (EaSI)** strand of the *ESF+* with a dedicated financial envelope of **€676 Million**.

Calls for proposals under the EaSI strand will be published on the European Commission website through the EU's ['Funding and Tenders Portal'](#). Other *ESF+* resources are managed by national authorities and national and regional operational plans. The Commission will support the establishment of National Contact Points (NCPs) operating on behalf or within national, regional and/or local authorities to promote the EaSI strand actions and results in the Member States and other participating countries.

Last but not least, European beneficiaries will be allowed to use their EaSI operating grants to continue cooperating with their UK members/partners in the next programming period 2021-2027.

Resources

- [Commission welcomes political agreement on the ESF+](#)
- [A New, Stronger European Social Fund Plus](#)

4 Horizon Europe

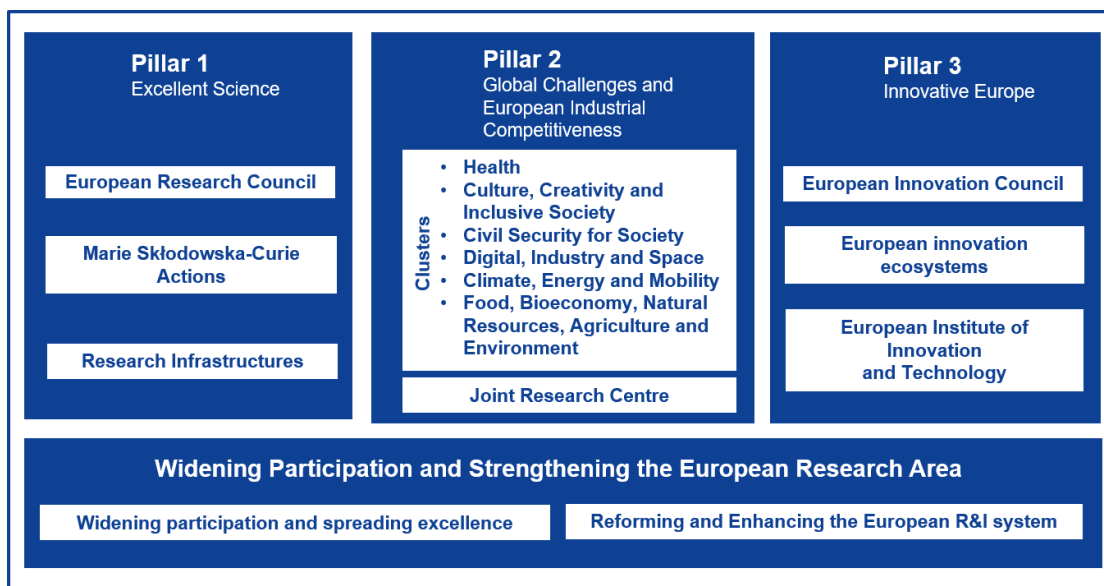
4.1 What is new?

Horizon Europe is the next EU research and innovation programme. The programme's aims and structure have seen substantial changes over the course of the negotiations. The aim of *Horizon Europe* is to provide new knowledge and innovative solutions to overcome our societal, ecological and economic challenges.

Horizon Europe is divided in three main pillars:

- **Pillar 1: Excellent Science**, which aims to increase the EU's global scientific competitiveness.
- **Pillar 2: Global Challenges and European Industrial Competitiveness**, which aims to support research relating to societal challenges and reinforces technological and industrial capacities through clusters. It also defines EU-missions to tackle specific, commonly agreed challenges.
- **Pillar 3: The Innovative Europe**, which aims to make Europe a frontrunner in market-creating innovation via the European Innovation Council.

The Pillars are supported by the horizontal objective of **Widening Participation and Strengthening the European Research Area (ERA)** to increase support to EU Member States in their efforts to strengthen national research and innovation potential.



The EU Missions

The EU has established five key missions, to address major societal challenges and maximise the socio-economic impact of research and innovation in the EU. Concretely speaking, a mission is [defined](#) as “a portfolio of actions across disciplines intended to achieve a bold and inspirational and measurable goal within a set timeframe, with impact for society and policy making as well as relevance for a significant part of the European population and wide range of European citizens”.

The five missions’ areas are:

- [Adaptation to climate change including societal transformation](#)
- [Cancer](#) (see some details below, as well in EU4Health section earlier)
- [Climate-neutral and smart cities](#)
- [Healthy oceans, seas, coastal and inland waters](#)
- [Soil health and food](#)

4.2 Relevance to health, health equity, and the social determinants of health

Horizon Europe represents one of the most ambitious research funding programmes in the world. Calls for projects (including under the Missions’ implementation plans) that directly or indirectly address health equity and social determinants of health will be put forward during 2021 and beyond. The Programme’s Missions can be of particular importance to health stakeholders, as several determinants of health fall directly or indirectly under their scope. Of direct health relevance is the [Cancer Mission](#) with an objective to: “save more than 3 million lives, improve life expectancy, achieve a thorough understanding of cancer, prevent what is preventable, optimise diagnosis and treatment, support the quality of life of all people exposed to cancer and ensure equitable access to the above across Europe.”

4.3 Budget available

Horizon Europe will amount to **€95.5 Billion**, including €5.4 Billion from *NGEU*. This represents a 33% increase from the Horizon 2020 budget. Most health and health related actions will be financed under Pillar II: Global Challenges and European Industrial competitiveness, which will receive a total of 56% of the funding. Actions related to health will receive 8% of this funding, while relevant actions relating to ‘inclusive and creative society and a secure society will each receive 2%, those relating to climate energy and mobility 16% and those related to food, natural resources and agriculture will receive 9% of the funding.

While the non-health related calls will be published on the European Commission website and funding will be [managed by the European Research Executive Agency](#) and in cooperation with the [European Research Council](#) (Agency), all the health and digital related parts of *Horizon Europe* and its funding will be managed by HaDEA (see EU4Health section earlier).

The first calls for proposals will be [launched and published here](#) in the spring of 2021 and will be presented at the [2021 European Research and Innovation Days](#).

Resources

- [Horizon Europe, the EU research and innovation programme 2021-2027 general overview](#)
- [Participation in Horizon Europe](#)
- [European Partnerships in Horizon Europe](#)
- [Implementation strategy for Horizon Europe](#)
- [Horizon Europe's first strategic plan 2021-2024: Commission sets research and innovation priorities for a sustainable future](#)
- [The role of research and innovation in Europe's recovery \(factsheet\)](#)
- [Missions in Horizon Europe](#)
- [First calls under Horizon Europe to be launched by the European Research Council](#)

5 European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and Cohesion Fund

5.1 What is new?

A modernised EU Cohesion Policy 2021-2027, the EU's main investment policy, designed to put Europe's countries and regions on a more equal footing by reducing disparities between the various EU regions, includes several new key features as compared to the previous funding period.

With its two major funding instruments - the *European Regional Development Fund (ERDF)* and the *Cohesion Fund (CF)* - EU Cohesion Policy focuses on key investment priorities ('thematic concentration', down to five from 11 in the previous period), where the EU is best placed to deliver:

- A '**Smarter Europe**' – research, innovation, and smart economic transformation
- A more '**Connected Europe**' – digital transition, mobility, and regional ICT connectivity
- A '**Greener Europe**' - transition to a low-carbon economy and the fight against climate change as outlined in the European Green Deal
- A more '**Social Europe**' - implementing the European Pillar of Social Rights, delivering on quality employment, education, skills, social inclusion, and equal access to healthcare.

In addition, a focus will be placed on a more tailored, locally-led, sustainable and integrated approach to regional, urban and coastal development by investing in all European regions, according to need (GDP-based), promoting economic, social and environmental convergence ('**Europe closer to citizens**').

New criteria are added to better reflect the reality on the ground – youth unemployment and low education levels, impact of and need to address climate change and the reception and integration of migrants. Local, urban, and territorial authorities will be more involved in the management of the funds, while increased co-financing rates will improve ownership of EU-funded projects. The *CF* will still support only 'less-developed' EU MS with the Gross National Income (GNI) per capita under 90% of the EU average. All cohesion programmes will require some national 'own' contribution to complement EU funds. In addition, the *CF* programme will include a **European Urban Initiative** and introduce a new climate monitoring mechanism to contribute to the achievement of the EU climate targets.

Access to funds will be simplified, with lighter control procedures, and with a single set of rules. It will facilitate impactful synergies and flexible transfer between the funds (up to 20%⁵) and

⁵ 25% for Czechia

increase coherence. A mid-term review will take place in 2025 to adapt to changing needs, emerging priorities, and strengthen the performance of the programmes and the enabling conditions linked to the compliance with the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights and application of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

EU Cohesion Policy funds will also support the 6th generation of [European Territorial Cooperation Programmes \('Interreg'\)](#), aiming to overcome (in)formal barriers that prevent border regions from their fullest development, facilitating cooperation that addresses their specific needs. It comprises of the following strands: (A) cross-border, (B) transnational, (C) interregional and (D) outermost regions cooperation. Interregional cooperation will also continue to promote the exchange of expertise, good practices and capacity building through a dedicated set of programmes: [Interreg Europe](#), [Urbact](#), [Interact](#) and [ESPON](#).

Lastly, the investment priorities under the [ERDF](#) and [CF](#) frameworks will be firmly linked to the revised European Semester's process at (sub)national levels – and a 'regionalisation' of the process is underway. It will support structural reforms that ensure complementarity and coordination with the new [RRF](#) (see later).

5.2 Relevance to health, health equity and the social determinants of health

EU Cohesion Policy funds can be applied to invest in health as a key asset for regional, urban and territorial development, in order to reduce economic and social inequalities, and increase inclusive regional progress. Investments may address several different areas such as ageing population, healthcare infrastructure (workforce and services), e-health, health services' coverage, and health promotion programmes. A specific focus lies in reinforcing crisis response capacities in health, long-term and social care. This is particularly (post-)COVID-19-relevant, while an explicit provision allows for temporary measures in the use of the funds to respond to exceptional and unusual circumstances (e.g., public health related) now and in the future.

Beyond investments in healthcare-related areas, socio-economic and environmental determinants of health can be addressed, hence improving health outcomes and reducing inequalities in health between and within European regions. These can be interventions in the field of employment, education, skills and professional development, income support, and in the fight against child poverty or air pollution.

5.3 Budget available

EU Cohesion Policy funding stands at **€234 Billion** (€191 Billion for [ERDF](#) and €43 Billion [CF](#)), 10% less than 2014-2020 allocations. However, there's also a **€47.5 Billion** [top-up under a new \[ReactEU\]\(#\) programme](#) that is part of the [New Generation EU](#) (NGEU) fund (see later).

The package will provide financing for existing cross-border cooperation programmes such as ['Interreg'](#). The latter will have a dedicated budget of **€8 Billion**. 8% of [ERDF](#) will be dedicated to sustainable urban development.

EU Cohesion Policy funds are managed by different authorities in charge of the relevant regional programmes. They will evaluate the projects and decide whether to grant funding. Managing authorities per country can be found [here](#).

Resources

- [Council and Parliament reach provisional political agreement on new framework for regional investment](#)
- [Council approves 330 billion cohesion legislative package](#)
- [Questions and Answers on the EU Cohesion policy legislative package 2021-2027](#)
- [Cohesion Policy at the centre of a Green and Digital Recovery: factsheet.](#)
- [ESI Funds For Health project website](#)
- [ESI Funds Open Data portal](#)

6 ReactEU

6.1 What is new?

ReactEU - Recovery Assistance for Cohesion and the Territories of Europe - is one of the largest programmes under new instrument *Next Generation EU* amounting to **€47.5 Billion**. It continues and extends the crisis response and crisis repair measures delivered through the [Coronavirus Response Investment Initiative](#) (CRII) and the [Coronavirus Response Investment Initiative Plus](#) (CRII+) and constitutes a bridge to the long-term recovery plan. Therefore, *ReactEU* resources should be used for projects that foster crisis repair capacities in the context of the coronavirus crisis, as well as investments in operations contributing to preparing a green, digital, and resilient recovery of the economy.

Each Member State shall allocate the *ReactEU* resources available for existing programming under the *ERDF* and the *ESF+* to annual operational programmes already in place and in preparation, or to cross-border cooperation programmes, involving local and regional authorities, as well as relevant bodies representing civil society and social partners, in accordance with the partnership principle. The partnership principle requiring close cooperation with regional and local authorities for the programming and implementation of these resources, fully applies. Similarly, the focus on the less developed regions cannot be neglected and regions with higher needs will receive more support. Technical assistance measures can also be financed up to 4% of all the fund's resources (at least 0.35% mandatory), with a special focus on Member States that are hit harder by the COVID-19 pandemic and Member States with lower absorption and implementation rates. There are no ex-ante conditionalities or thematic concentration requirements.

6.2 Relevance to health, health equity and the social determinants of health

In addition to the ESF/ESF+, *ReactEU* will add investments to keep and create jobs (especially among people in vulnerable situations), including through short-time work schemes and support to self-employed. Further initiatives can support measures for skills development, enhancing access to services of general interest, in social economy and infrastructure, aid to the most deprived, including for children. The resources should be used in accordance with the Paris Agreement, the UN Sustainable Development Goals, and the 'do no harm' principle. At least 25% of the resources must contribute to the climate objective.

In addition to the ERDF, the *ReactEU* will add resources that shall primarily be used to support investment in products and services for health services or in social infrastructure and to provide support in the form of working capital or investment support to SMEs.

6.3 Budget available

ReactEU comes with an envelope of **€47.5 Billion**. Large part of this fund will already be disbursed in 2021 as pre-payment (€37.5 Billion) with further resources spent until 2023 (€10 Billion). This funding is entirely new: it is a top up to 2014-2020 programmes and additional to the cohesion allocations 2021-2027. The EU-financing rate of up to 100% will also contribute to a fast roll-out of this additional funding, counted retroactively from February 2020. The package will provide additional funding for existing or new dedicated

programmes under the [European Territorial Cooperation \(ECT\) Investment for Growth and Job goal \(IGJ\)](#) and for existing cross- bordercooperation programmes.

The allocation methodology for this funding takes full account of the economic and social impact of the crisis on the EU countries, reflecting the GDP drop and rise of unemployment including among young people, as well as the relative wealth of the countries. For example, the Commission [communicated national ReactEU allocations for 2021](#), with Italy and Spain as the biggest beneficiaries. In order to reflect the evolving nature of the effects of the COVID-19 crisis, the breakdown should be revised in 2021 on the basis of the same allocation method and using the latest statistical data available by 19 October 2021 to distribute the 2022 tranche of the *ReactEU* resources.

Resources

- [Cohesion policy action against coronavirus](#)
- [REACT-EU Regulation](#)
- [European Commission on REACT-EU](#)

7 InvestEU

7.1 What is new?

The *InvestEU Programme* is the EU's flagship investment programme to reinvigorate the European economy. It will also be able to provide long-term funding and support in the recovery from the economic and social crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. At the same time, the Programme will ensure a strong focus on EU climate objectives and a *Just Transition Scheme* (see below), shaping Europe's digital future and the sustainability and inclusiveness of the Union's economic growth. The key feature of *InvestEU* is de-risking small-scale projects, replicate projects or pilot projects to encourage private finance for projects of public benefit, such as in the field of health and social care and infrastructure. The *InvestEU* consists of:

- The **InvestEU Fund**: Mobilising public and private investment using an EU budget guarantee. It should support projects that typically have a higher risk profile than the projects supported by the normal operations of the implementing partners.
- The **InvestEU Advisory Hub**: Providing technical advice on investment projects needing financing (see later for more details).
- The **InvestEU Portal**: An easily accessible database that matches projects with potential investors worldwide.

The *InvestEU Fund* should contribute to reaching the overall target of investing at least 3% of the Union GDP in research and innovation. The achievement of that target would require Member States and the private sector to proceed with their own reinforced investment actions in research, development and innovation, to avoid underinvestment.

7.2 Relevance to health, health equity and the social determinants of health

The *InvestEU Fund*, through the **Social Investment and Skills window** will be used to support public-private projects that generate positive social impacts and enhance social inclusion for example by helping to increase employment across all regions. It is relevant for health equity, since investments are needed to improve conditions for example for people who are unskilled and long-term unemployed, and/or the socially and geographically isolated. The Fund can also be used to improve the situation regarding gender equality and intergenerational solidarity, equal opportunities and non-discrimination at the labour, education and the social housing market (especially homeless, low-income families, migrants). The Programme can largely boost accessibility of public goods and services (primary health care, including health promotion and disease prevention), as well as the inclusiveness of the digital- and green transition.

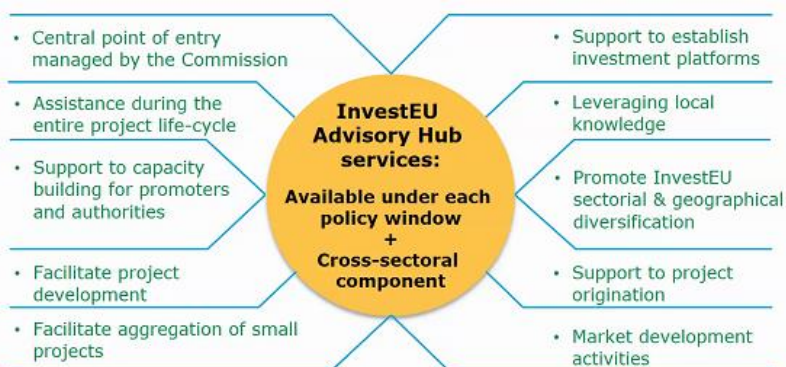
The [InvestEU Advisory Hub](#) can support capacity building actions to develop organisational capacities, skills, and processes and to accelerate the 'investment readiness' of organisations, in particular local organisations and authorities. This would enable public authorities and project promoters (those who seek investment) to build investment project pipelines, develop financing mechanisms and investment

platforms and to manage projects. The InvestEU Advisory Hub will be available to public and private projects promoters, including SMEs and start-ups, to public authorities, to national promotional banks and institutions, and to financial and non-financial intermediaries.

InvestEU Advisory Hub

Provides advisory support for:

- the identification, preparation, development, structuring, procuring and implementation of investment projects, or
- for enhancing the capacity of promoters and financial intermediaries to implement financing and investment operations



7.3 Budget available

The *InvestEU Programme* is expected to mobilise around **€372 Billion** of public and private investments with a budget guarantee of **€26.1 Billion** put upfront by EU, and the Fund’s budgetary division will be as follows:

- Sustainable infrastructure window: **€9.9 Billion**
- Research, innovation and digitisation window: **€6.6 Billion**
- SME window: **€6.9 Billion**
- Social investment and skills window: **€2.8 Billion**

InvestEU will also provide for a dedicated *Just Transition Scheme* under the second pillar of the *Just Transition Mechanism* to generate additional investments to the benefit of just transition regions (see section below). This scheme earmarks at least 30% of the investments, mobilising €30Billion. Member States will be able, on a voluntary basis, to implement part of the plans they have for the implementation of the four investments windows under the *Recovery and Resilience Facility* via the InvestEU Fund and the InvestEU Advisory Hub, hence [strengthening the link between the investments and reforms as part of the European Semester process](#).

Any organisation or company can apply for the funds, including public sector entities (territorial or not), public-private partnerships (PPPs) and private companies with a public purpose, as well as non-for-profit organisations. The *InvestEU Fund* will be implemented through financial partners like European Investment Bank (EIB) Group, National Promotional Banks, etc. who will invest in projects using the EU

guarantee. The Investment Committee will select projects for financing after the European Commission conducts the initial check to verify that the proposals are in line with the EU agenda.

Eligible InvestEU Implementing partners, in addition to the EIB Group, will be [listed on this website](#).

Resources

- [InvestEU home page](#)
- [Commission welcomes European Parliament's approval of InvestEU](#)
- [Questions and Answers: The proposed InvestEU programme](#)
- [InvestEU Launch event – Summary of sessions](#)
- [E-Guide on Financing Health Promoting Services](#)
- [Steering Board for Social Investments' Joint Position: "InvestEU and the Economy of Wellbeing: making the most of local know-how"](#)

8 Just Transition Fund

8.1 What is new?

The *Just Transition Mechanism* was proposed by the European Commission in December 2019, as part of the European Green Deal. The Mechanism consists of three pillars: (1) a *Just Transition Fund (JTF)*, (2) a dedicated *Just Transition Scheme* under *InvestEU* (see the previous chapter), (3) and a public sector loan facility with the European Investment Bank (EIB) Group to mobilise additional investments to regions concerned with the green transition.

The *JTF* is a financing tool which aims to mitigate the adverse effects of the transition towards a climate-neutral economy by supporting the most affected territories, sectors and workers, and to help avoid increasing inequalities between regions. EC will set out the annual breakdown of available MS allocations under the Investment for Jobs and Growth (IJG) goal under the European Territorial Cooperation, such as the ones identified in the [Annex D to the European Semester 2020](#). It will seek to do this by fostering:

- economic diversification of affected territories (e.g., smart industrial transformation);
- modernisation of the local economy;
- up-skilling and reskilling of affected workers, to help them adapt to new employment opportunities;
- active inclusion of jobseekers in the labour market (e.g., through job-search assistance).

The *JTF* will be a co-financing instrument, which is implemented through shared management in close cooperation with national, regional, and local authorities and stakeholders. It will be established within the framework of Cohesion Policy, and the programming will be steered by the European Semester process. The *JTF* will support all Member States, focusing on regions and sectors most impacted by measures to foster sustainable growth, given their dependence on fossil fuels. The co-financing rate for the *JTF*'s supported priorities will be 85% for less developed, 70% for transition, and 50% for more developed regions.

8.2 Relevance to health, health equity and the social determinants of health

Health, equity and environmental conditions are closely correlated, and transitioning to more sustainable, greener societies can improve population health in a wide range of ways. Yet those who are less well-off tend to benefit least, or most slowly, from measures to 'green' the economy and societies. Those who are already relatively deprived are often negatively impacted by transitional processes, as they e.g., lose their livelihoods in more highly polluting industries and/or cannot afford or fail to benefit from subsidies for cleaner, healthier products and alternatives. They are also not engaged in the identification of new policy priorities. Economic pressures can manifest in mental and physical health problems. It is therefore important that health professionals are involved in ensuring that policy and other measures linked to the Green transition are 'proportionally universal', and benefit those with the greatest needs, the most. Health professionals must work in partnership with other actors deploying 'Green' funds to ensure that these measures indeed reduce, rather than widen (health) inequities.




8.3 Budget available

The *Just Transition Fund* has an overall budget of **€17.5 Billion**, of which €7.5 Billion are coming from the *MFF* and €10 Billion from *NGEU*.

As said, the *JTF* falls under a larger *Just Transition Mechanism*, which includes funding from *InvestEU* and a public sector loan facility with the EIB Group. The budget available under the *Just Transition Fund* will be complemented through Member State co-financing as well as EU Cohesion Policy resources. Together, these resources are expected to amount to **at least €150 Billion**.

The [Just Transition Platform](#) assists EU countries and regions with the fund and provides comprehensive technical and advisory support. Authorities and beneficiaries can access it to find all they need to know about the funds, including opportunities, relevant regulatory updates or sector specific initiatives.

Three pillars

		
A new Just Transition Fund	InvestEU "Just Transition" scheme	EIB public sector loan facility
of €40 billion, generating at least €89-107 billion investments	mobilising €30 billion in investments	of €10 billion in loans, backed by €1.5 billion of the EU budget, mobilising up to €30 billion of investments

Resources

- [European Commission: The Just Transition Fund](#)
- [Just Transition Fund \(JTF\) Regulation - Progress report](#)
- [European Parliament briefing – Just Transition Fund](#)
- [The Just Transition Mechanism: making sure no one is left behind](#)

9 Recovery and Resilience Facility and Technical Support Instrument

9.1 What is new?

The *Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF)* is a new large-scale financial tool to support reforms and investments. It lies at the core of the *Next Generation EU*, the overall EU recovery financial instrument, and has been closely intertwined with the European Semester. The Facility is intended to be used to address the challenges identified in the Country Specific Recommendations (CSRs) of recent years - in particular of the 2019 and 2020 cycles. It is to enable Member States to enhance their economic growth potential, job creation and economic and social resilience. Meeting the green (at least 37%) and digital transitions (at least 20%) ambitions are also included.

To access the funds, countries need to present specific *Recovery and Resilience Plans* (RRP, see below) together with their 2021 [National Reform Programmes](#) (NRPs). The RRP will consist of a package of reforms and public investment projects that they will implement by 2026. The Commission will accompany the proposals of the plans with analytical documents assessing their contents. These documents will replace the European Semester country reports in 2021. Those countries that will present the plans in 2021 will receive no Country Specific Recommendations. More clarity and details about the post-2021 process will need to follow.

The European Commission put forward 7 *Flagships projects* representing issues that Member States are encouraged to include in their plans:

1. **Power up** – The frontloading of future-proof clean technologies and acceleration of the development and use of renewables ([see examples of reforms and investments as suggested by EC](#)).
2. **Renovate** – The improvement of energy efficiency of public and private buildings ([examples](#)).
3. **Recharge and Refuel** – The promotion of future-proof clean technologies to accelerate the use of sustainable, accessible, fair and smart transport, charging and refuelling stations and extension of public transport ([examples](#)).
4. **Connect** – The fast rollout of rapid broadband services to all regions and households, ([examples](#)).
5. **Modernise** – The digitalisation of public administration, including healthcare systems ([examples](#)).
6. **Scale-up** – The increase in European industrial data cloud capacities and the development of the most powerful, cutting edge, and sustainable processors ([examples](#)).
7. **Reskill and upskill** – The adaptation of education systems to support digital skills and educational and vocational training for all ages ([examples](#)).

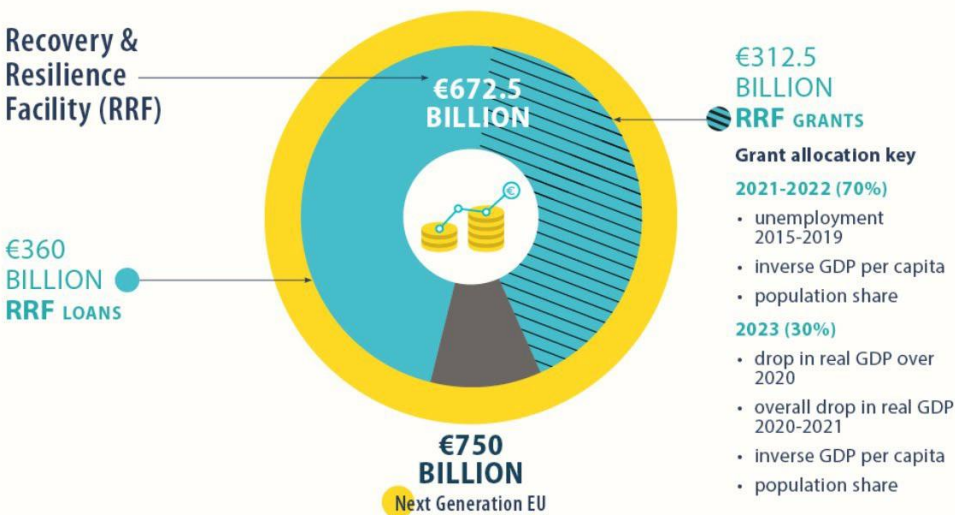
9.2 Relevance to health, health equity and the determinants of health

The *Recovery and Resilience Facility* represents one of the largest financial tools put in place by the EU to face consequences of the health emergency caused by the COVID-19 pandemic outbreak. It will support countries in setting out major reforms programmes over the next seven years to face short- and long-term challenges as well as bringing innovation in those sectors that will benefit the most. It will be therefore crucial to ensure that appropriate funding will be allocated to ensure principles of social and health equity will be guaranteed in the recovery process. These funds can also be used for investments in health infrastructure, equipment, digital transformation of healthcare, or manufacturing capacity for medicines and medical devices.

9.3 Budget available

Making up a total of **€672.5 Billion**, the *RRF* consists of **€312.5 Billion** in grants and up to **€360 Billion** in loans. The Facility will be demand-driven and powered by the *Next Generation EU*, which aims at providing the EU with the necessary financial incentives to withstand the crisis and raise additional financing on the financial markets. The *RRF* will be aided by a *Technical Support Instrument* (TSI) that will help states to implement reforms. The *TSI* will have a budget of **€864 Million** over the period 2021-2027, which comes in addition to the *RRF* budget.

How much money?



*Figures expressed in 2018 prices. In current prices, the Next Generation EU envelope amounts to €807.1 bn, including €724 bn for the Recovery and Resilience Facility (€338 bn grants, €386 bn loans).

To access the fund, Member States can formally submit their RRP, as explained earlier. The RRF will be managed by Member States, in most cases within the Ministry of Finance, EU affairs or Regional Policy. Technical support will be provided by the European Commission upon [request](#) (via a National Coordinating Authority) and evaluation. This request must be submitted by 31 October of each year.

Resources

- [NextGenerationEU: Commission presents next steps for €672.5 billion Recovery and Resilience Facility in 2021 Annual Sustainable Growth Strategy](#)
- [Communication: 2021 Annual Sustainable Growth Strategy](#)
- [Commission welcomes European Parliament's approval of Recovery and Resilience Facility](#)
- [Staff Working Document: Guidance to Member States on recovery and resilience plans](#)
- [Staff Working Document: Draft template for recovery and resilience plans](#)
- [Recovery and Resilience Facility – Grants allocation](#)
- [Recovery and Resilience Facility: EC website](#)
- [Recovery and Resilience Task Force: Service Department](#)
- [Technical Support Instrument \(TSI\)](#)

10

Common Agricultural Policy Funds

10.1 What is new?

Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) and its funds (especially the *European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development, EAFRD*) are to support a fair income for food producers, rebalance power within the food supply chain, support climate change action, support generational renewal, vibrant rural areas, and protect health and food quality. To ensure stability and predictability, direct income support will remain an essential part of the CAP. A higher level of support is earmarked for small and family farms, 2% of the fund set aside for young farmers, with a higher ambition on environmental and climate change mitigation actions beyond mandatory requirements (40% of total CAP expenditure). The traditional division between the two pillars of direct support to farmers/market measures and rural development remains the same, with Member States having the option to transfer up to 15% of their CAP allocations between the two.

10.2 Relevance to health, health equity and the social determinants of health

Financial support given to EU farming amounts to a large part of the EU budget (currently 38%) and affects how and what kinds of agricultural goods are produced, promoted, and consumed in the EU. It forms a vital part of how sustainable European food system(s) can be. Inevitably, it also impacts on environmental conditions, public health and nutrition, and levels of wealth and social inclusion in the EU, including among the farming communities. The *EAFRD*, being explicitly dedicated to support the livelihood, social infrastructure, and the economic viability of rural areas, where inequalities in health are large, is a key part of the whole CAP package.

The fund will allow farmers, consumers and rural areas to deliver on the European Green Deal and in particular the new [Farm to Fork Strategy](#) and its implementation Action Plan, which sets EU's ambitions for a fair, healthy and environmentally-friendly food system, [Zero Pollution Action Plan](#), and EU [Biodiversity strategy](#) 2030, but indirectly it will also support the new [Europe's Beating Cancer Plan](#) (as explained earlier).

10.3 Budget available

With its revised *MFF* proposal, the European Commission proposes a total funding for the Common Agricultural Policy at **€391.4 Billion**. With this, the *European Agricultural Guarantee Fund* (EAGF – direct payments and market-related expenditures) receives **€258.3 Billion**, while the *European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development* (EARDF) receives **€90 Billion**.

During the first two years of the 2021-2027 MFF, the existing 2014-2020 CAP regulations will continue to apply, as set out in the transitional regulation adopted at the end of 2020. The regulation is in place to ensure a smooth transition to the future framework of the CAP strategic plans.

Resources

- [Future of the Common Agricultural Policy \(2018\)](#)
- [Proposal for a regulation on the financing, management, and monitoring of the CAP](#)
- [Proposal for a regulation establishing rules on support for strategic plans to be drawn up by Member States under the Common Agricultural Policy \(CAP Strategic Plans\) and financed by EAGF and EAFRD](#)
- [Common agricultural policy funds](#)
- [CAP transitional regulation 2021-2022](#)

11 Digital Europe

11.1 What is new?

The *Digital Europe Programme* will support digital empowerment across the EU for a wide deployment of digital technologies as well as a faster recovery from the COVID-19 crisis. The programme will boost five main areas of the digital sector: supercomputing, artificial intelligence, cybersecurity, advanced digital skills, and a wide use of digital technologies across the economy and society. Its final goal is to support and improve the digital transition and guarantee high quality public services benefiting citizens and businesses.

Additional funding for the deployment of eHealth solutions can be found under the *Connecting Europe Facility (CEF)*. Overall, the CEF is a funding programme that supports the development of high trans-European networks in the fields of transport, energy, and digital services. Regarding the latter, it aims to support and catalyse investments in digital connectivity infrastructures of common interest during the period 2021-2027.

11.2 Relevance to health, health equity and the social determinants of health

The *Digital Europe Programme and Connecting Europe Facility* offers funding opportunities to boost digital innovation and improve the delivery of services, including social and health services. In addition, as it becomes clear that digital technologies are already reshaping the way we live, consume and work, major effects on people's health and wellbeing can be expected. New digital applications are also playing an increasingly important role in addressing the COVID-19 pandemic, including by providing accelerated services via remote access and tackling the spread of the outbreak through tracing technologies. However, to truly benefit everyone, digital transformations need to go hand in hand with social innovation and consider potential negative impacts on certain population groups. Opportunities could be used to tackle digital exclusion, boost digital skills and increase digital health literacy to make sure that all citizens are empowered, motivated and able *"to seek, find, understand, and appraise health information from electronic sources and apply the knowledge gained to preventing, addressing or solving a health problem"*.

11.3 Budget available

The planned overall budget of the *Digital Europe Programme* consists of **€7.5 Billion**. The budget will be divided as follows: €2.2 Billion to supercomputing, €2.1 Billion to artificial intelligence, €1.7 Billion to cybersecurity, €580 Million for advanced digital skills and €1.1 Billion to ensuring the wide use of digital technologies across the economy and society.

The *Connecting Europe Facility* budget dedicated to digital services consists of **€2.7 Billion**.

The grants will be managed by the Directorate-General for Communications Networks, Content and Technology (DG CNECT). More details on how to access them will be shared later in 2021. All the health-related parts of the *Digital Europe* programme and its funding will be managed by HaDEA (see EU4Health section earlier).

Resources

- [Political agreement on €7.5 billion Digital Europe Programme](#)
- [Digital Europe Programme: Summary Report on the targeted consultation on the future of investment in Europe's digital economy](#)
- [Connecting Europe Facility 2021-2027: Financing key EU infrastructure networks](#)

12

Single Market Programme

12.1 What is new?

The EU's *Single Market Programme* 2021 - 2027 will support the implementation and enforcement of EU legislation in the area of internal market for goods and services, market surveillance, standardisation, competition policy and financial services. It will, in addition assist SMEs (including in the [Social Economy](#)) through advisory services and the provision of European statistics. The programme will focus on the protection of a safe and sustainable food supply chain, as well as actions in the field of the [Single Digital Market](#). More specifically, the main objectives of the programme are to:

- improve the functioning of the internal market
- strengthen the competitiveness of EU enterprises, including SMEs
- enable the development of high-quality European standards
- increase consumer protection
- enhance human, animal and plant health, as well as animal welfare
- promote high-quality, timely and reliable statistics

12.2 Relevance to health, health equity, and the social determinants of health

The *Single Market Programme* will touch upon market aspects relevant for health, including digital health via the Single Digital Market. A specific focus on social economy enterprises may contribute to improving access to health, preventive measures, and health-enhancing initiatives (e.g., potentially for social and nature prescribing) across the EU. It will also contribute to employment, social cohesion, regional and rural development, environmental protection, consumer protection, food production, and social security policies.

12.3 Budget available

The total budget of the programme is **€4.2 Billion**. This is a "top-up" of €119 Million compared to the original Commission proposal from two years ago. All the health, food and digital related parts of the *Single Market Programme* and its funding will be managed by HaDEA (see EU4Health section earlier).

The [Food Safety Programme 2021-2027](#) under the Programme is €1.68 Billion (circa €240 Million on average per year).

Resources

- [Council endorses agreement on Multiannual Single Market programme](#)
- [Factsheet, The Single Market Beyond 2020](#)

13 Erasmus+

13.1 What is new?

The Council and the European Parliament agreed on the *Erasmus+ Programme* for the period 2021-2027. The new programme will cover all levels and types of education and training (the current one only covers higher education). It will offer access to vocational education or training, adult education, non-formal learning, youth, and active participation activities. It also aims at facilitating the participation of small scale and grassroots organisations, and people with fewer opportunities, including people with disabilities and migrants, as well as EU citizens living in remote areas.

Erasmus+ focuses on three main action areas - education and training, youth, and sport. Its main specific objectives are:

- promoting learning mobility of individuals and groups in the field of education and training
- promoting non-formal and informal learning mobility and active participation among young people
- promoting learning mobility of sport staff

In addition, the programme fosters cooperation, quality, inclusion, creativity, and innovation at the level of organisations and policies in the three action areas. *Erasmus+* also supports “Jean Monnet actions” for teaching, learning, research, and debates on European integration matters.

13.2 Relevance to health, health equity and the social determinants of health

Education represents a key aspect of people’s lives and has been shown to increase healthy behaviours and improve health outcomes. It also allows people to improve other key social determinants of health, such as access to better jobs and income. The *Erasmus+ programme* offers funding opportunities to address themes in educational settings that are key to fostering health equity and well-being.

The opportunity to invest the funds in projects which foster mutual learning and capacity exchange may open potential for beneficiaries in the health sector to strengthen public health capacities and workforce, build up skills and ways of working across sectors and borders. Health promotion and preventive services may benefit.

13.3 Budget available

Erasmus+ will have a budget of about **€26 Billion**. This will be complemented by about **€2.2 Billion** from the EU’s external instruments. 83% of the total budget will be allocated to activities in the field of education

and training, 10.3% to actions in the area of youth and 1.9% will be spent on sport-related activities.

Every year a General Call for Proposals and an annual work programme are published, presenting opportunities for organisations and individuals active in the fields of education, training, youth, and sport. The calls define the objectives of the programme, provide an overview of the actions it is divided in, eligibility of potential actors, budget and duration of projects, and submission deadlines for each action.

Resources

- [Erasmus+ 2021-2027 programme brings over €26.2 billion to support mobility and cooperation](#)
- [Erasmus+ Programme Guide 2021](#)
- [2021 annual work programme – Erasmus+: the Union Programme for Education, Training, Youth and Sport](#)

14 LIFE Programme

14.1 What is new?

The *LIFE Programme* for 2021- 2027 should contribute to the European Green Deal and to the shift towards a sustainable, circular, energy-efficient, renewable energy-based, climate-neutral and resilient economy. It is also expected to support the protection, restoration and improvement of the quality of the environment, including air, water and soil, and health, and to halting and reversing biodiversity loss. The implementation and management of the LIFE Programme will be aligned with various interventions or by supporting the integration of those objectives in other policies.

The *LIFE Programme* should also include measures contributing to the implementation of the EU climate adaptation policy to decrease vulnerability to the adverse effects of climate change as well as a clean energy transition.

LIFE contains two main portfolios, Environment and Climate Action, and covers four sub- programmes:

- Nature and Biodiversity
- Circular Economy and Quality of Life
- Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation
- Clean Energy Transition

14.2 Relevance to health, health equity and the social determinants of health

Environmental conditions, health and equity are closely intertwined (see the [INHERIT project](#), [One Health/Planetary Health approach](#)). Environmental determinants of health – such as clean air, quality and safe food and water, circular economy, accessible and available green spaces – are critical for people’s health, as well as for promotion and prevention of many NCDs, mental health problems and infectious diseases. *LIFE* and other funding opportunities associated with the Green Deal can support the design and implementation of policies and measures that improve the quality of the environment and living conditions and thereby encourage and enable people to change behaviours to improve health, health equity and environmental sustainability.

13.3 Budget

The budget consists of **€5.45 Billion** to be divided through the various sub- programmes (see above).

The Commission publishes calls for proposals based on the LIFE multiannual work programmes. The application procedure varies according to which sub-programme and project type you apply for. More information can be found [here](#).

Resources

- [Proposal For A Regulation Establishing A New Life Programme For 2021-2027](#)
- [LIFE programme](#)

Our mission is to help build healthier communities and tackle health inequalities within and between European States.

EuroHealthNet is a not-for-profit partnership of organisations, agencies and statutory bodies working on public health, promoting health, preventing disease, and reducing inequalities.

EuroHealthNet supports members' work through policy and project development, knowledge and expertise exchange, research, networking, and communications.

EuroHealthNet's work is spread across three collaborating platforms that focus on practice, policy, and research. Core and cross-cutting activities unite and amplify the partnership's activities.

The partnership is made up of members, associate members, and observers. It is governed by a General Council and Executive Board.



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