

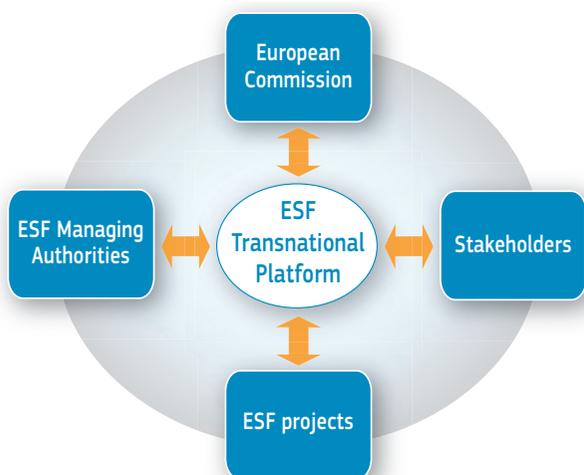
## The ESF Transnational Platform

The European Commission has set up the ESF Transnational Platform to support stakeholders' willingness to cooperate beyond frontiers. The Platform runs the Thematic Networks and facilitates coordinated calls for proposals. It publishes articles, a newsletter and technical dossiers. It is also organising seminars and conferences.

### Mutual learning

Mutual learning is at the core of the work of the Thematic Networks. Each network is normally led by a Member State and benefits from the assistance of a thematic expert. Throughout the programming period, the networks will hold a number of activities: workshops, peer reviews, site visits, etc. Depending on the wishes expressed by their participants, they will develop specific publications: case studies, guidelines, toolkits, etc.

Member States are strongly encouraged to ensure that the knowledge created within the Thematic Networks is disseminated in their country, for instance through existing or new national networks.



## How can I learn more about transnational cooperation?



Read the Introductory guide to transnational cooperation 2014-2020 in the ESF and get in touch with your National Contact Point (see Annex 6.3):

<https://ec.europa.eu/esf/transnationality/content/introductory-guide-transnationality-esf>

Learn more about the Network on our Thematic Networking guide or read our technical dossiers and newsletters on ESF Transnational Cooperation:

<https://ec.europa.eu/esf/transnationality/forums/esf-transnationality>

Subscribe to the ESF Transnational Platform's newsletters:

[esf@aeidl.eu](mailto:esf@aeidl.eu)

Contact the ESF Transnational Platform: [esf@aeidl.eu](mailto:esf@aeidl.eu)

Phone the ESF transnational cooperation infoline: +32 2 736 1890

The ESF Transnational Platform is managed by AEIDL - Association Européenne pour l'Information sur le Développement Local, Chaussée Saint-Pierre 260, B-1040 Brussels - [www.aeidl.eu](http://www.aeidl.eu).

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Social Europe



# Transnational cooperation in the European Social Fund

## Transnational cooperation in the ESF

### The European Social Fund 2014-2020

With a budget of €86.4 billion, the ESF is the main source of investment at EU level to help Member States to restore and increase growth and ensure a job rich recovery while ensuring sustainable development.

### Transnational cooperation

Transnational cooperation in the ESF helps develop better and more effective employment and social policies. It improves the delivery of reforms in the Member States, by enabling people to learn from experiences and practice in other countries.

### A component of the ESF programming

Member States have the choice to implement transnational cooperation in three different ways according to article 10 of Regulation (EU) n° 1304/2014 of 17 December 2013:

- on the basis of common themes (the Common Framework);
- without central coordination (the flexible approach);
- through a combined approach of the above.

### The financing of transnational cooperation

Transnational cooperation in the ESF can be financed under a specific priority axis. In such a case, ring-fenced resources are dedicated to transnational activities and support a strategic approach focused on a number of priorities.

Another approach consists in integrating transnational cooperation within all or some thematic priorities of an operational programme. This allows transnationality to be supported across a wide variety of themes.



## The Common Themes

Member States and the European Commission have agreed to focus the Common Framework for transnationality on nine Common Themes which reflect the investment priorities.

## The Thematic Networks

Nine networks are active on the following Common Themes:



These networks enable mutual learning among countries and stakeholders and facilitate coordinated calls for proposals. They contribute to the alignment of ESF funding with the policy priorities resulting from the Europe 2020 strategy.

The promotion of gender equality and social innovation are mainstreamed within the different thematic fields.

The members of the Thematic Networks include representatives of the bodies managing the national and regional ESF Operational Programmes, ministries and regional authorities, social partners, civil society organisations and academics. Officers from the relevant policy units in the European Commission also contribute to the work.



## The coordinated calls for proposals

Managing Authorities and Intermediate Bodies are invited to launch public calls for proposals open to transnational cooperation. These calls constitute the core of the Common Framework, and aim to create synergies and effective transnational partnerships on the Common Themes. They enable project promoters to apply for ESF grant aid in their respective countries to support specific transnational activities.

### Two rounds of calls, in 2016 and 2018

Two coordinated calls for proposals are taking place over the programming period: the first call took place in 2016, and the second will be issued in 2018, each covering most of the Common Themes. These coordinated calls comprise individual national and/or regional level calls launched by Managing Authorities (or Intermediate Bodies on their behalf) participating in the Common Framework, following a timetable and terms of reference agreed at EU level. It is part of the role of the thematic networks to ensure coordination between the different authorities in charge of these calls for proposals.

In February 2017, an Impact Task Force started operating in order to enhance the capacity of Member States to launch transnational calls and mainstream the impact of transnational activities.

### A European partner search database

The European Commission has set up a public partner search database. Interested project promoters can share their project ideas and search for projects from other countries that they could cooperate with. Partners sign a Transnational Cooperation Agreement, which is agreed by the ESF authority in each of their Member States.

In early 2017, the European partner search database reached over 180 organisations which registered 140 projects.