



[National Assembly for Wales](#)

[Enterprise and Business Committee](#)

[Inquiry into EU funding opportunities 2014–2020](#)

Evidence from British Council and Ecorys UK – EUO 13

### **EU funding opportunities in Wales 2014-2020**

This document is the British Council and Ecorys UK's contribution to the inquiry into the EU funding opportunities that will be available to organisations in Wales for the next seven years (2014-2020) with particular reference to the point on the EU Funding sources for Erasmus+, specifically the funding for mobility/innovative actions in the fields of education, training and youth.

#### **I. Erasmus+**

- i. The British Council, in partnership with Ecorys UK, was awarded the contract to manage the European Union's new education, training, youth and sport programme, Erasmus+, in the UK. This programme will run from 2014-2020 and replaces the Lifelong Learning Programme (LLP), the Youth in Action Programme and other higher education programmes which were previously part of the EU's portfolio of international programmes.
- ii. Erasmus+ started on 1 January 2014 and will provide approximately €14bn across the 34 participating countries over the next seven years for education and training opportunities abroad. The new programme will bring together a number of existing EU programmes including the Grundtvig, Leonardo, Transversal, Comenius, eTwinning, Erasmus and Youth in Action programmes, which were all previously managed by the British Council and Ecorys UK.
- iii. The Erasmus+ programme is designed to double the number of people in the EU benefitting from these opportunities abroad to an expected five million. Funded by the European Commission, Erasmus+ is worth an estimated £800 million (€940 million) to the UK.
- iv. The budget allocated is for the whole UK, with no sub-division by country or region. This means that funds are awarded in response to the demand from each country and region in the UK. In practice, in the previous programmes, the devolved administrations were all punching above their weight when comparing population size with funds allocated. We will analyse participation rates for Erasmus+ by UK country when we have the results of the first application round in 2014.
- v. Erasmus+ will focus on mobility, partnerships and policy reform. There will be increased opportunities for international study in Europe and beyond, and for training, teaching and volunteering across Europe. These improvements will benefit higher education and vocational students and staff, trainers and trainees, teachers, pupils and students, young people and youth workers. In the area of sports, the programme will particularly focus on cooperation and activities in grassroots sport.



Ten Welsh Higher Education



Institutions have been awarded the new Erasmus Charter for Higher Education that allows them to offer the programme to the students and staff 2014-2020:

ABERYSTWYTH UNIVERSITY; BANGOR UNIVERSITY; CARDIFF UNIVERSITY; CARDIFF METROPOLITAN UNIVERSITY; UNIVERSITY OF WALES TRINITY SAINT DAVID; GRWP LLANDRILLO MENAI; GLYNDWR UNIVERSITY / PRIFYSGOL GLYNDWR; UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH WALES; SWANSEA UNIVERSITY; SWANSEA METROPOLITAN UNIVERSITY

## **II. Lifelong Learning Programme and Youth in Action Programme Legacy**

i. Since 2007, in total, the British Council and Ecorys distributed funds of over €568,000,000 through the Erasmus, Comenius, Leonardo, Grundtvig, Transversal and Youth in Action programmes. The British Council supported over 90,000 UK students through the Erasmus programme. Over 6,000 school partnerships were formed under Comenius and eTwinning, enhancing teaching and learning and developing skills for over 100,000 teachers and around two million pupils in the UK. Over 40,000 participants, the majority young people, took part in vocational placements to enhance employability and gain work experience through the Leonardo programme. In the non-formal sector, Youth in Action enabled 50,000 young people to take part in community-level projects with their counterparts in other countries, while 5,000 youth workers made use of opportunities for professional development.

### **ii. Comenius**

Interest from schools in similar opportunities under the predecessor Lifelong Learning Programme, Comenius, reached record levels by 2013, with Welsh schools and Local Authorities receiving around 7% of the Comenius budget for mobilities. This was an impressive figure when compared with the Welsh UK population share of 4.8%. In-service training funding for Welsh teachers was augmented by funding from the Welsh government (PTP) which provided supply cover costs to participating schools. This increased impact and participation rates in Wales.

### **iii. Erasmus**

#### *Student Mobility*

In the academic year 2012-2013, 14,600 Erasmus students participated, representing the largest number of UK outgoing student mobilities in the programme's 26 year history, and an increase of 6.9% on the figure for 2011/12. It consisted of an increase of 6.3% in study mobility and 8.1% in work-placement mobility. This is a highly positive position from which to look forward to Erasmus+.

The overall increase in mobility was apparent across all UK countries. Wales saw a small decline in study mobility (although the absolute numbers were small), but significant proportional growth in work-placement. Five per cent of Erasmus students came from Welsh Institutions, equating to their overall UK proportion of five per cent. However this represented an increase in actual numbers from 688 to 709 from the previous year. The University of Nottingham had the largest number of Erasmus students from England (522); the University of Edinburgh was the highest in Scotland (356); Cardiff University



was the highest from Wales (291). Over €11,000,000 was disbursed in Erasmus grant funds to Welsh Universities from 2006/7 to 2012/13.



### *Staff Mobility*

There was a small drop (1.5%) in staff mobility (the first in this generation of the programme) attributable to a fall of 3.2% in teaching mobility. Training mobility saw a gain of 4.4%. The changes (in both absolute and relative terms) were small, Wales was the only country that saw an increase in teaching mobility, but a drop in numbers undertaking staff training.

#### **iv. Youth in Action**

Youth in Action continued to bring opportunities to more young people in Wales to work together and make a difference on the issues that matter most to them. Applications in 2013 were up 54% on the previous year and a total of 36 new projects were approved. EC grant support awarded to these projects was €988,390 (up from €698,443 in 2012). This is equivalent to 8% of the UK total – and is significantly above the level expected, given the share of the UK population resident in Wales.

In order to boost levels of demand and recognition for the benefits of non-formal learning with a European and international dimension, the British Council worked in partnership with Connect Cymru. Connect Cymru has played an active part in preparations for the EU's successor programme - by highlighting links to current policy priorities in the youth and community sector in Wales, including the new National Youth Work Strategy.

#### **v. Leonardo**

The Leonardo programme continued to offer organisations the chance to provide work placements abroad and to work in partnership with a wide variety of organisations to improve VET provision. In 2013 Welsh organisations received 6% of the available Leonardo funding, equivalent to just under 1.8 million euros for 23 different projects. This included funding for 60 apprentices to undertake work placements as part of their training, providing them with vital employability skills. Participation in the Leonardo programme has grown in Wales since the LLP started in 2007 and both application and success rates have been above the expected rate when compared with the country's share of the UK's population.

#### **vi. Grundtvig**

Grundtvig supports adult education, offering professional development opportunities for staff and teachers, and the chance for organisations to work with partners to improve their provision for learners. Wales has a strong record of participation in the Grundtvig programme with a 50% increase in applications over the programme period.

#### **vii. Transversal**

The Transversal Study Visits programme offered professional development for senior education professionals and experts through a programme of individual grants. Participation from Wales was above expected levels until 2011 and then in line with the



country's population share in 2012 and 2013. Participants were drawn from schools, universities, cultural organisations and the Welsh Government, enabling participants to share best practice in Wales and learn from other countries approaches to education and training.



- viii. Since 2007 organisations in Wales have been awarded over 9 million euro of funding through the Leonardo, Grundtvig and Transversal programmes. The programmes have been supported by the Welsh Government through Ecorys' Welsh Advisory Group which has met twice a year since the start of the LLP. The Advisory Group brings together the National Agency, the Welsh Government, key stakeholders in VET and adult education, and project representatives. The Advisory Group has reviewed approval and funding levels in Wales, promoted the LLP and advised the National Agency on tailored approaches to promoting the programmes in Wales. The Advisory Group will continue under Erasmus+ as a whole programme group, and both British Council and Ecorys are looking forward to continued engagement with the Welsh Government on this initiative.