Educational and Research Funding Synergies

Part 1: Synergies from Horizon Europe to Erasmus+



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Educational Material Identity

Educational and Research Funding Synergies. Part 1 : synergies from Horizon Europe to Erasmus+

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Explanation of buttons and icons

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Structure

Main Goal
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Main Goal

The aim of this training course is to raise leaners' awareness of opportunities for synergies between European research and training funds.

The first part of the training course aims at providing learners with practical knowledge about the potential bridges and connections from an Horizon Europe action to an Erasmus + project.

Expected Learning Outcomes 1/3

Knowledge level

Learners will be able to:

- Identify the key objectives, structures, and evaluation criteria of Horizon Europe (MSCA Doctoral Networks) and Erasmus+ (Erasmus Mundus Joint Masters)
- Explain the concept of synergies between research (Horizon Europe) and education (Erasmus+) programmes, including their complementary roles in training, innovation, and mobility
- Describe the expected outcomes and scope of calls focused on training
- Recognise the principles of innovative doctoral training
- Understand the evaluation criteria for both Horizon Europe and Erasmus+ proposals

Expected Learning Outcomes 2/3

Skills level

Learners will be able to:

- Analyse call documents (Horizon Europe MSCA DN or Erasmus Mundus) to extract training-related requirements and align them with project objectives.
- Create synergies between Horizon Europe and Erasmus+ by reusing elements like:
  - Training programme quality and credibility.
  - Supervision arrangements and modernisation strategies.
  - Impact assessment.
- Apply tools such as self-reflection quizzes to assess consortium gaps, synergy logic, and risk awareness in proposal development.

Expected Learning Outcomes 3/3

Attitudes level

Learners will adopt:

- A proactive mindset toward collaboration between academic and non-academic sectors to strengthen doctoral training and innovation.
- Critical thinking to evaluate the credibility and measurability of synergies, avoiding artificial or forced links between programmes.
- Openness to interdisciplinary and cross-sectoral approaches, valuing diversity in training and research.
- Commitment to sustainability, studying the opportunity of other EU funding.
- Reflective practice to continuously improve proposals by addressing challenges such as double funding risks, timeline mismatches, or missing partners.

Keywords

- Synergies
- Erasmus+
- Research
- Complementarity
- Sustainability
- Horizon Europe

Introduction

The European Commission introduced the European Education Area by 2025 and the New European Research Area (ERA) to drive transformation in higher education by strengthening **links between education, research, and innovation.**



The **2021–2027 EU budget** encourages synergies between funding programmes like **Erasmus+** and **Horizon Europe** (including **Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions** and the **European Universities Initiative**). This course explores how actions from both programmes can complement each other, allowing organisations to:

- **Build on results** from related projects
- **Develop spin-off initiatives** in the other programmes

Introduction

70% of MSCA beneficiaries are universities, which also have access to Erasmus+ funding. However, siloed working often means staff handling MSCA and Erasmus+ are unaware of complementary opportunities.

Both programmes support:

- Mobility, training, and career development
- New study and/or research programmes
- Collaborative projects
- Internationalisation
- Cross-sector cooperation



Introduction

Key actions:

- MSCA: Doctoral Networks, Postdoctoral Fellowships, Staff Exchanges, COFUND
- Erasmus+: Mobility, Joint Masters, Capacity Building, Cooperation/Innovation Partnerships, European Universities

Institutions can combine actions **without double funding**, provided participants meet each programme's requirements.

There are **diverse possible approaches of complementarity and synergies** between Erasmus+ and Horizon Europe and more specifically between MSCA and Erasmus Mundus Joint Masters.



Training focus in Horizon Europe calls

A two-step approach:

1. Analysis of the call for proposals and identification of keywords related to training
2. Putting the requirements into context:
    - Analysis of the requirements: *Expected outcome* and *scope*.
    - What does this mean in practical terms:
        - *Consideration of the evaluation criteria*
        - *Part B*



Application:
From Horizon Europe Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions Doctoral Network >> Erasmus+ Mundus Design Measures / Erasmus+ Mundus Joint Master

Training focus in Horizon Europe calls

Calls analysis: Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions Doctoral Network – MSCA DN

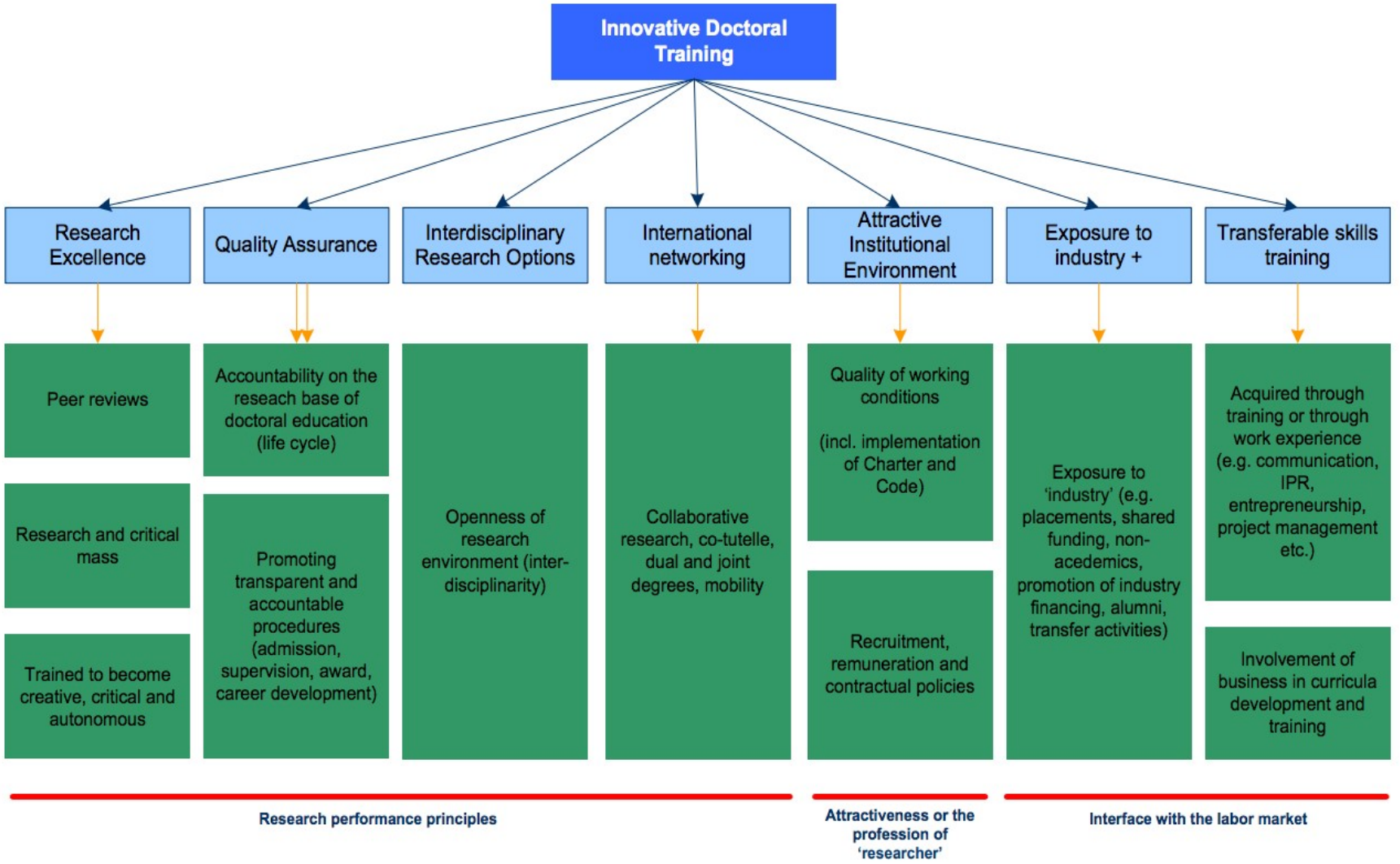
From the « Expected outcome » and « Scope » criteria, the following items are of importance for the training focus:

- For recruited candidates:
  - New skills: research, transferables, turning ideas into products and services, dissemination, public communication, networking etc.
- For institutions (structure of the doctoral programme):
  The objectives are to improve:
  - Doctoral training programmes (quality, relevance)
  - Arrangements for supervision
  - Cooperation and knowledge transfer
  - Link between research and training (integrating research findings into training content)



Training focus in Horizon Europe calls

Principles of [Innovative doctoral training]



Training focus in Horizon Europe calls


Instructions, please remove
Horizon Europe Programme

Standard Application Form
Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions - Doctoral Networks (HE MSCA DN)

Project proposal – Technical description (Part B)

Version 5.0
29 April 2025

Excellence

- 1.3 Quality and credibility of the **training programme**
- 1.4 Quality of the **supervision**

Impact

- 2.1 Contribution to **structuring doctoral training at the EU level** and to strengthening EU innovation capacity
- 2.2 Credible measures to enhance career perspectives and employability of researchers + **contribution to their skills development**

Implementation

- 3.1 Quality and **effectiveness of the work plan**, assessment of risks and appropriateness of the effort assigned to work packages
- 3.2 Quality, capacity and role of each participant, including hosting arrangements and extent to which the consortium gathers the **necessary expertise**

Calls Horizon Europe, focus on « training »

This “training” focus on Horizon Europe (more specifically on Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions Doctoral Network – MSCA DN) leads to a **possible synergy with the Erasmus Mundus Joint Master action in the Erasmus + programme**.

EMJM action:

- High-level integrated international study programme
- Focused on excellence and open to all disciplines
- Master’s degree(s) awarded by an international consortium of higher education institutions
- Offers a generous level of scholarships to the best students from Europe and around the world
- Provides significant financial support to the participating institutions

Erasmus Mundus Joint Master

The main objectives of the EMJM are:

- To support **quality, innovation, excellence and internationalisation** in higher education institutions.
- Enhancing the **quality and attractiveness** of the European Higher Education Area.
- **Supporting the European Union's external policy** in higher education.
- Enhancing **synergies between higher education, innovation and research.**
- Improving the **skills and employability of students** holding a Master's degree.
- Addressing **societal and labour market needs.**



Joint Master Erasmus Mundus

In relation with Horizon Europe “training” ambitions, the following evaluation criteria and expectations are important:

Relevance of the project

"Synergy with other initiatives and innovation”

- Strategy aimed at promoting excellence and innovation
- Strategy aimed at enhancing attractiveness, integration and internationalisation

Quality of the project’s design and implementation

"Concept and methodology”

- Excellence of the academic programme, innovative elements in the learning experience
- Quality of teaching, training, research and administrative activities
- Relevance of project teams, staff and experts

Joint Master Erasmus Mundus

In relation with Horizon Europe “training” ambitions, the following evaluation criteria and expectations are important:

Quality of the partnership and cooperation arrangements

- Consortium structure

Impact

- Impact at the systemic level (within and outside academia, including the general public and society)
  - at institutional level (partner organisations)
  - at individual level (with a particular focus on employability).
- Communication, dissemination and visibility

Joint Master Erasmus Mundus

EMJM action can integrates various focuses **on research and innovation**:

- Focus on innovative research techniques and areas at Master's level
- Integration of learning "through research" methodology
- Training for a career in applied research
- Pursue of studies within PhD programmes

+ Institutional cooperation for joint degrees or double degrees, like Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions Doctoral Network – MSCA DN





Synergies between proposals

Continuity and synergies between both actions :what can be reused for an Erasmus Mundus Design Measures (EMDM) or Joint Masters (EMJM)?

EXCELLENCE

Transferable skills, **inter/multidisciplinary**, **inter-sectoral** and gender as well as other diversity aspects

Qualifications and supervision experience of supervisors, & Quality of the **joint supervision arrangements**

horizon europe → horizon europe

Quality and credibility of the training programme & Quality of the supervision

Overview and **content structure of the doctoral training programme**, including **network-wide training events** and **complementarity with those programmes offered locally** at the participating organisations

Guiding, supporting, directing, advising and mentoring are key factors for a researcher to pursue his/her career path

⇨ Green charter + guidance, Transferable skills Gender dimension

⇨ Guidelines on supervision

Erasmus+
Enriching lives, opening minds.

Needs analysis and specific objectives & Complementarity with other actions and innovation

Support to the **modernisation and internationalisation strategy of the partner** HEIs

Issues/challenges/gaps and specific **objectives that the project aims to address in academic terms, and with regard to societal and labour market needs**

Project **uniqueness and added value** when **compared with the existing offer of master programmes**

Strategy to increase the attractiveness, integration, internationalisation, and contribute to the policy objectives of the European Higher Education Area

Synergies between proposals

Continuity and synergies between both actions :what can be reused for an Erasmus Mundus Design Measures (EMDM) or Joint Masters (EMJM)?







IMPACT

a) Meaningful **contribution of the non-academic sector to the doctoral training**, as appropriate to the implementation mode and research field

b) Developing **sustainable (=lasting) elements of doctoral programmes** after the end of the DN funding

Impact of the research and training on the fellows' careers

Contribution to structuring doctoral training at the European level and to strengthening European innovation capacity

developing **sustainable elements of doctoral programmes**

Credibility of the measures to enhance the career perspectives and employability of researchers and contribution to their skills development

The magnitude and importance of the project's contribution to the **expected scientific, societal and economic impacts**

Impact & ambition

Impact at system level (in and outside the academia, including general public and society), **institutional level** (partner organisations), **and individual level** (with particular emphasis on **employability**)

Mid/long-term development and sustainability strategy beyond the EU funding period, including the mobilisation of other funding sources

Synergies/complementary with other (EU and non-EU funded) activities that can build on the project results

Synergies between proposals

Continuity and synergies between both actions :what can be reused for an Erasmus Mundus Design Measures (EMDM) or Joint Masters (EMJM)?

IMPLEMENTATION







Quality & effectiveness of work plan	Project design and implementation
Individual Research Projects, including secondment plan **Progress monitoring** and evaluation of individual research projects **Recruitment strategy** • For DN-JD, **joint admission**, **selection**, **supervision**, **monitoring** and **assessment** procedures Consortium composition and **exploitation of participating organisations' complementarities** **Commitment of beneficiaries and associated partners to the programme** • + DOC2 : Network organization • + DOC2 : Participating Organisations	**Jointness/integration of the EMJM** • Academic programme • Mutual recognition of learning outcomes • Principles and requirements for student application, selection, participation and student scholarship allocation • Services offered to students • Contribution to teaching, training, research and administrative activities **Jointly designed and fully integrated curriculum** Quality Assurance of Joint Programmes in the European Higher Education Area **EU funding** • Management of scholarships and costs • Mobilisation of complementary funding • Budget plan

Triangle of knowledge and innovation



MSCA Doctoral Networks Horizon Europe *(RESEARCH)*

- Option for joint/multiple degrees
- International, cross-sectoral and interdisciplinary mobility
- A possible systemic approach (European structuring of doctoral training)

Erasmus+ cooperation partnerships *(TRAINING)*

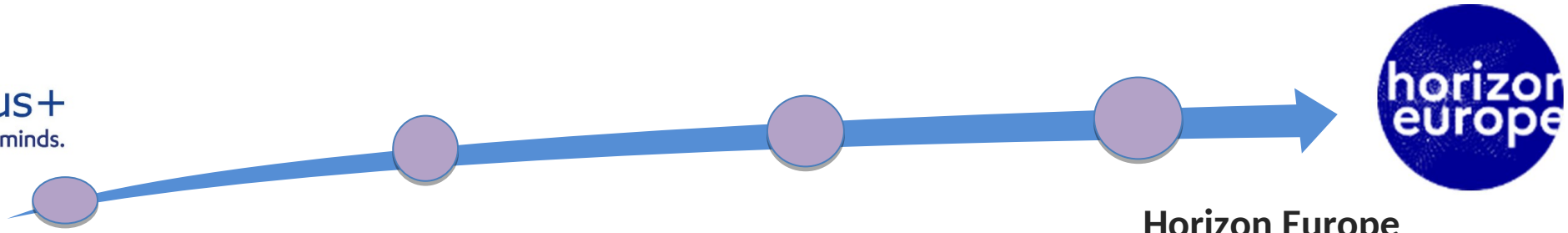
- Multilateral cooperation to prevent skills shortages and mismatches
- Strengthening the link between training and research
- Innovative training modules

Erasmus+ innovation alliances (INNOVATION)

- Link between higher education and business/companies
- Encouraging entrepreneurship
- Educational innovation (learning & teaching)

Mobility and research collaboration

Exemple of synergies from PhD student mobility scheme



KA131 Mobility Erasmus+ for PhD students

From 3 to 12 months

Create and enhance networks

- Interactions between researchers (supervisors)
- Research training
- Training in cross-functional activities

Joint publications and conferences

- Before and during mobility
- With institutions/teams

Horizon Europe MSCA Doctoral Networks

- Creation of a European doctoral training network
- Sustaining existing partnerships
- Course structure

Self-reflection quiz 1/4



Where do you see the biggest missed opportunity for synergies in EU projects?

- Dissemination
- Exploitation
- Skills / Training
- Consortium Design
- Funding Alignment

Self-reflection quiz 2/4



Complete the sentence: “Horizon Europe provides _____, Erasmus+ amplifies it by _____.”

Which type of synergy action can be MOST convincing in a proposal? Rank them.

- Training based on research results
- Pilot / demonstration activities
- Mobility linked to innovation uptake
- Policy engagement activities
- Digital platforms / tools
- Other

Self-reflection quiz 3/4



Which partner type is MOST often missing in your projects?

What would be for you the most important challenge / question to ask when approaching synergies between programmes?

- Is this double funding risk?
- Is the link too weak/artificial?
- Is the impact credible and measurable?
- Other

Self-reflection quiz 4/4



What would most likely make a synergy fail?

- Weak integration between programmes
- Artificial / forced link
- Timeline mismatch
- Missing partners
- Lack of exploitation
- Other

Would you realistically integrate this approach into your next proposal?

- Yes
- Maybe
- No

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