



EU programmes

What is it about?

The EU has funding programmes for research, innovation, education, vocational training, youth, sport, culture and other fields. Non-EU member states like Switzerland can take part in these programmes under certain conditions.

Owing to the lack of regulations stabilising Swiss-EU relations, since 2021 Switzerland has been denied association to key cooperation programmes in education, research and innovation (ERI) such as the Horizon package and Erasmus+ 2021–27. Against the backdrop of current bilateral developments, Switzerland should be able to regain full association to these EU programmes.

Outcome of exploratory talks and outlook for negotiations

During the exploratory talks, Switzerland was able to break the deadlock on the EU programmes, particularly in the field of ERI. Since the exploratory talks on the package approach were concluded, work on creating a legal framework for Switzerland's association to the EU programmes has been ongoing as part of the technical discussions with the EU.

A transitional arrangement enabling researchers in Switzerland to take part in the European Research Council's 2024 calls for proposals was also agreed and will come into effect once the negotiations on the package have been opened and Switzerland's association to Horizon Europe has begun. As soon as a corresponding Swiss-EU agreement has been initialled, the transitional arrangement is to be applied to all Horizon Europe and Euratom calls for proposals for the 2025 programme year.¹

Switzerland is aiming for re-association with such EU programmes as Horizon Europe and Erasmus+ as soon as possible. The Federal Assembly has already approved the financial framework for Horizon Europe. With regard to Erasmus+, the main parameters of Switzerland's participation first need to be clarified with the EU before a funding proposal can be submitted to Parliament. Switzerland adopted the negotiating mandates for the Horizon package and Erasmus+ at the end of 2020 and start of 2021 respectively.

¹ Initialling is a preliminary step before the final signing of an agreement.