

National Contact Point “Mobility”

This Newsletter contains an overview of a new European Union programme Erasmus+, which will begin in January 2014. The first Call for Proposals is to be published at the end of 2013.

ERASMUS+ PROGRAMME OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

Erasmus+ (Erasmus for All) is a new European Union (EU) programme for education, training, youth and sport for 2014-2020. It is now going through ratification at the European level. On 19 November 2013, the European Parliament voted to adopt Erasmus+, and the final step of the endorsement process will be for the European Council to approve the programme in December 2013.

Erasmus+ will reflect the priorities of the Europe 2020 strategy and its flagship initiatives.

The new programme will bring together and replace seven existing European and international initiatives such as the Lifelong Learning Programme, Youth in Action, Erasmus Mundus, Tempus, Alfa, Edulink and the programme for cooperation with industrialised countries that will cease in the end of 2013.

The main Erasmus+ objectives are to improve people's skills, regardless of their age or background, and their employability, as well as to support the modernisation of education and training systems. Investing in high quality education and training for all, which is one of the basic elements of the programme, will be essential to achieve Europe 2020 goals for growth, jobs and innovation.

The programme will be open to all EU Member States, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, Switzerland, EU candidate and other countries in the Western Balkans. In addition, non-EU, mostly neighbourhood countries, can benefit from its actions.

It will be available to all learners and trainers through any public or private body active in the areas of education, training, youth and sport.

More emphasis will be placed on support for teachers, trainers, information officers and youth workers because of their importance as 'multipliers'.

The Erasmus+ offers a new approach to funding for education and training. The structure proposed for the programme reflects a need for greater simplification and streamlining. Combining several existing programmes into one will ease grant application procedures and make funding more efficient and accessible. It will also help to avoid duplication and fragmentation among activities.

Erasmus+ will significantly increase the funds allocated for the development of knowledge and skills. The budget of the new programme is € 14.7 billion. Up to 4 million people, almost twice as many as now, will receive grants to study, train or volunteer abroad. Among them there will be nearly 3 million of higher education and vocational students. 200 000 full-time Masters' students will also benefit from a new loan guarantee scheme set up with the European Investment Bank Group to help finance

studies abroad. The initiative would be complementary to national funding schemes, where they exist.

Among the key targets of Erasmus+ are mobility, cooperation and policy reform. Schools will be encouraged to establish partnership links with their peers in other EU countries to enhance the impact of EU support and promote synergies between different forms of collaboration, such as pupil and staff mobility and educational projects. There will be greater support for IT platforms, such as eTwinning, to connect schools and other learning providers via the internet.

Education and training institutions and youth organizations will have more opportunities to engage in partnerships to exchange good practice, and with private sector to foster innovation and employability. Good practice will be shared through cross-cultural and cross-institutional learning in education and training institutions, and youth organisations. This will be formally put in place through one of the completely new elements of the programme – creation of "Knowledge Alliances" at university level and "Sector Skills Alliances" in vocational institutions.

The Erasmus+ will also promote policy reform in EU Member States and development of cooperation with non-EU countries, with a focus on strengthening the evidence-base for policy making and exchange of good practices.

The task of modernisation and internationalisation in higher education shall become a part of strategy of each higher education institution (HEI) participating in the programme. Such HEIs shall adopt Erasmus+ Charter for Higher Education (ECHE). Thus, the programme is also aimed at the monitoring of the institutions involved in it.

In the area of sports, a particular focus will be on collaboration and activities in grassroots sport.

Being an integrated programme and having a simplified structure, Erasmus+ will support **three Key Actions**.

Action 1: Learning mobility of individuals – activities providing opportunities for individuals, both within the EU and beyond, to improve their skills, enhance their employability and gain cultural awareness, including study and training, traineeships, teaching and professional development and non-formal youth activities such as volunteering.

This Action may include

- Study period or work placement for students in Higher Education;
- Vocational traineeships for apprentices and students in initial vocational training;
- Youth Exchanges;
- European Voluntary Service activities;
- Professional development and training for staff in all sectors of education, training and youth.

Mobility activities will be project-based and will need to be led by organisations. Individuals will no longer be able to apply. This approach is intended to make projects more strategic and impactful.

Participants are public and private organisations involved across all education, training and youth sectors (e.g. schools, higher education, further education and adult education institutions, youth organisations, charities, SMEs, etc.).

Action 2: Co-operation for innovation and good practices – activities enabling organisations to work in strategic partnerships within and across countries and sectors to encourage the development and implementation of innovative practices in education, training and youth activities, to tackle common issues, and to promote employability, creativity and entrepreneurship.

Within the framework of this Action, there will be possible

- Projects focusing on sectoral and cross-sectoral co-operation;
- Projects working with industry;
- Bilateral and multilateral partnerships;
- Implementation of innovative activities;
- Flexibility in terms of activities and partners.

The Action will be open for educational institutions, youth organisations, businesses, local and regional authorities and NGOs.

Under this Action, one organisation will lead the project and manage the activities and funding on behalf of the partnership. Different sizes of partnership will be possible so that smaller organisations can be involved.

Action 3: Support for policy reform – any type of activity aimed at promoting and facilitating the modernisation of education, training and youth systems.

This will cover support for policy reforms in EU Member States and cooperation with non-EU countries, with a focus on strengthening the evidence-base for policy making and exchange of good practices. The support will include the implementation of EU transparency tools, cross-country studies and specific policy agendas such as the Bologna (higher education) and Copenhagen (vocational education and training) processes.

Youth Structured Dialogue projects, aimed to facilitate discussions between youth policy makers and young people on chosen themes, will be also encouraged.

The Action will mainly consist of projects run by the European Commission's Executive Agency. The Youth Structured Dialogue will be managed by a National Agency in a participant country.

Projects focused on grassroots sports will be centralized and managed also by the European Commission's Executive Agency. Any projects using sports in the context of education and training or youth activities may still be funded under Action 1 and Action 2.

Full details on the Key Actions will be published on the web-site: [Erasmus+](#) once the programme is finally approved.

Sources:

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