Mobility projects for young people and youth workers

The Actions supported by the Erasmus+ Programme in the field of youth provide many opportunities for young people to acquire competences and grow as individuals, through non-formal and informal learning.

Non-formal learning refers to the learning which takes place outside formal educational curriculum. It has a participative and learner-centred approach; it is carried out by learners on a voluntary basis and therefore is closely linked to young people's needs, aspirations and interests. By providing an additional source and new forms of learning, such activities are also important means to improve the attainment in formal education and training as well as to address young NEETs (i.e. young people not in employment, education or training) or young people with fewer opportunities and combat social exclusion.

Informal learning refers to the learning in daily life activities, in work, with peers, etc. It is mainly learning by doing. In the youth sector, informal learning can take place in youth initiatives, in peer group discussions, through voluntary activities and in a variety of other situations.

Non-formal and informal learning enable young people to acquire essential competences that contribute to their personal and socio-educational development and foster their active participation in society, thereby improving their employment prospects. Learning activities within the youth field are meant to have a significantly positive impact on young people as well as on the organisations involved, the communities in which these activities take place, the youth field itself and the European economic and societal sectors at large.

A high-quality non-formal and informal learning dimension is a key aspect of all youth projects supported under the Erasmus+ Programme. Youth projects funded by the Erasmus+ Programme must adhere to the following non-formal and informal learning principles:

- learning in non-formal contexts is intended and voluntary;
- young people and youth workers are actively participating in the planning, preparation, implementation and evaluation of the project;
- learning activities take place in a diverse range of environments and situations;
- the activities are carried out with the support of professional facilitators (such as trainers, youth workers, experts in the youth field) or volunteers (such as youth leaders, youth trainers, etc.);
- the activities usually document learning in a specific, field-oriented way.

The activities must also be planned in advance and be based on participatory methods that:

- offer space for interaction of participants, sharing of ideas, avoiding passive listening;
- allow participants to contribute to the activities with their own knowledge and skills, reversing the traditional roles of outside "experts" (a reversal of learning, from extracting to empowering);
• allow participants to undertake their own analyses, including reflections on competences acquired during the activity (i.e. their own learning outcomes);
• ensure that participants have influence over project decisions, not simply involvement.

Finally, the activities should have an intercultural/European dimension and:

• encourage participants to reflect on European topics and to involve them in the construction of Europe;
• offer participants the opportunity to identify common values with persons from different countries in spite of their cultural differences;
• challenge viewpoints that perpetuate inequality, discrimination;
• promote the respect of cultural diversity and fight against racism or xenophobia.

1. Youth Exchanges and Youth Workers Mobility

Agreement between project partners

All participating organisations involved in a youth mobility project are strongly recommended to sign an internal agreement between them. Such an agreement has the purpose of clearly defining responsibilities, tasks and financial contribution for all parties involved in the project. It is up to the participating organisations to jointly decide on how the EU grant will be distributed and which costs it will cover.

An internal agreement constitutes a key instrument for ensuring a solid and smooth cooperation among partners in a youth mobility project as well as to avoid or manage potential conflicts. Indicatively, it should contain at least the following information:

• project title and reference of the grant agreement between the applicant participating organisation and the granting Agency;
• names and contacts of all the participating organisations involved in the project;
• role and responsibilities of each participating organisation; division of the EU grant (according to the above responsibilities);
• modalities of payments and budget transfers among participating organisations.

Safety and Protection of participants

European Health Insurance Card

If applicable, it is strongly recommended that young people and youth workers taking part in youth mobility projects are in possession of a European Health Insurance Card. This is a free card that gives access to medically necessary, state-provided healthcare during a temporary stay in any of the 28 EU countries, Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway, under the same conditions and at the same cost (free in some countries) as people insured in that country. More information on the card and on how to obtain it is available at http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=559.

Youth Exchanges

All participants in a Youth Exchange must be insured against the risks linked to their participation in these activities. The Erasmus+ Programme does not define a unique format of insurance, nor does it recommend specific insurance companies. The Programme leaves it up to participating
organisations to seek the most suitable insurance policy according to the type of activity carried out and to the insurance formats available at national level. Furthermore, it is not necessary to stipulate a project-specific insurance, if the participants are already covered by insurance policies previously stipulated by themselves or the participating organisations. In any circumstances, the following areas must be covered: third party liability for youth leaders (including, wherever appropriate, professional indemnity or insurance for responsibility); accident and serious illness (including permanent or temporary incapacity); death (including repatriation in case of activities carried out abroad); wherever relevant, medical assistance, including after care and special insurance for particular circumstances such as outdoor activities.

Visa requirements

Young people and youth workers taking part in youth mobility projects may need to obtain a visa for staying abroad in the Programme or Partner Country hosting the activity.

It is a collective responsibility of all the participating organisations to ensure that the authorisations required (short/long stay visas or residence permits) are in order before the planned activity takes place. It is strongly recommended that the authorisations are requested from the competent authorities well in advance, since the process may take several weeks. National Agencies and the Executive Agency may give further advice and support concerning visas, residence permits, social security, etc.

Recognition of learning outcomes - Youthpass

Every young person or youth worker taking part in a youth mobility project is entitled to go through the Youthpass process and receive a Youthpass certificate at the end. Youthpass identifies and documents the non-formal and informal learning outcomes gained during the project. It is recommended to embed Youthpass in the learning content from the start of the project and use it during the project activities as a tool to help participants to become more aware of, reflect on and assess their learning process. For support and more information on Youthpass, please consult the Youthpass guide and other relevant material at www.youthpass.eu.

2. Volunteering Activities under Capacity Building Projects in the field of youth

Accreditation

Accreditation is a minimum requirement to gain access to volunteering activities and to ensure that the principles and minimum quality standards are met. These standards are set in the Erasmus+ volunteering Charter and in the Accreditation Guidelines.

Any organisation from a Programme Country, a Western Balkan country, a Southern Mediterranean country, an Eastern Partnership country or from the Territory of Russia as recognised by international law wishing to send or receive volunteers must be accredited.

The bodies in charge of accreditation may carry out regular or punctual controls to verify that the
accredited organisations still meet the volunteering quality standards. Following these controls, the accreditation may be temporarily suspended or withdrawn.

As from 2019, organisations can not apply for accreditation under Erasmus+. Organisations not holding an accreditation and wishing to take part in volunteering activities should apply for a Quality Label within the context of the European Solidarity Corps. Such European Solidarity Corps Quality Label is valid in the context of the Erasmus + volunteering activities.

Selection

The selection of volunteers can be carried out by any of the organisations involved in the project (usually this task is carried out by the sending or coordinating organisation).

The Volunteering activities under Capacity Building in the field of youth are open to all young people, including people with fewer opportunities. Volunteers are to be selected in a fair, transparent and objective way, regardless of their ethnic group, religion, sexual orientation, political opinion, etc. No previous qualifications, educational level, specific experience or language knowledge should be required. A more specific profile of the volunteer might be drawn up if justified by the nature of the tasks of the activity or by the project context.

Agreement with the volunteer

Prior to their departure, each volunteer must sign a Volunteering Agreement with the coordinating organisation. This agreement defines the tasks s/he will carry out during the volunteering activity, the intended learning outcomes, etc. The Volunteering Agreement remains an internal document among partners and volunteers; however it may be requested by the Executive Agency.

Safety and protection of participants

European Health Insurance Card

Volunteers must be in possession of a European Health Insurance Card. This is a free card that gives access to medically necessary, state-provided healthcare during a temporary stay in any of the 28 EU countries, Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway, under the same conditions and at the same cost (free in some countries) as people insured in that country. More information on the card and on how to obtain it is available at http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=559.

Volunteering Insurance

Every volunteer must be enrolled in the Erasmus+ Volunteering Insurance foreseen by the Erasmus+ Programme, which complements the coverage of the mandatory European Health Insurance Card and/or national social security systems.

Those volunteers who are not eligible for the European Health Insurance Card shall be entitled to
receive a full coverage through the Insurance provided by the European Commission. The coordinating organisation, in cooperation with the sending and receiving organisations, is responsible for the enrolment of the volunteer(s). This enrolment must be done before the departure of the volunteer(s) and cover the duration of the activity.

Information about the coverage and support available through the insurance for volunteers, as well as instructions for enrolment, is available on the website of the Executive Agency.

**Visa requirements**

Volunteers may need to obtain a visa for staying abroad in the Programme or Partner Country hosting the activity.

It is a collective responsibility of all the participating organisations to ensure that the authorisations required (long stay visas or residence permits) are in order before the planned activity takes place. It is strongly recommended that the authorisations are requested from the competent authorities well in advance, since the process may take several weeks. The Executive Agency may give further advice and support concerning visas, residence permits, social security, etc.

**Mentoring**

Personal support through mentoring should be provided to the volunteers. Main responsible for mentoring is a mentor, appointed by the Receiving or the Coordinating Organisation. Mentoring consist of having regular meetings to follow up on the personal wellbeing of the volunteer within as well as outside the Receiving Organisation. Mentoring is targeted towards the individual volunteer and thus the content and frequency of the meetings will vary according to the individual needs. Possible topics of mentoring meetings: personal wellbeing, wellbeing in the team, satisfaction with the tasks, practicalities etc. Intensified Mentoring process 'Reinforced Mentorship' might be necessary to support young people with fewer opportunities, if they are not able to implement a volunteering activity independently/with regular mentoring or tutoring support. Reinforced Mentorship involves closer contact to and more meetings with the volunteer as well as allowing more time to implement the tasks of regular mentoring, guaranteeing a step by step support for the volunteers during project activities as well as outside of working hours. Reinforced Mentorship is targeted at successful implementation of the project and at enabling the volunteer to gain as much autonomy in this as possible.

**Pre-departure training**

The quality of the preparation of the participants is a key element to implement a successful project. In this regard, a pre-departure training is to be provided to the volunteers. Pre-departure training is the responsibility of the participating organisations (usually the sending organisation or the coordinating organisation) and gives volunteers an opportunity to talk about their expectations, develop their motivation and learning objectives, better understand the Youthpass process and the value of validation of their learning outcomes, and obtain information on their host country and on the Erasmus+ Programme.
On- Arrival training and Mid-term evaluation

Volunteers have the right and obligation to participate in an on-arrival training and a mid-term evaluation. The responsibility for organising the trainings depends on where the events are to take place:

- in Programme Countries: the training/evaluation is organised by the National Agencies;
- in Partner Countries neighbouring the EU (region 1-4): the training/evaluation is organised respectively by SALTO SEE, SALTO EECA and SALTO Euromed Resource Centres in the countries covered by each of the centres respectively;
- in other Partner Countries: training and evaluation sessions are not organised by National Agencies or SALTOs. It is responsibility of the participating organisations to ensure that the volunteers receive on-arrival training and that they are provided a space for carrying out a mid-term evaluation of their experience. In this regard, for activities organised within the framework of Capacity Building in the youth field, the costs linked to such preparation can be covered under the item "activity costs".

In any case, beneficiaries are always encouraged to provide additional training and evaluation opportunities to the volunteers, even if no specific funds are allocated for that purpose within the project grant. All relevant providers of training and evaluation activities in should provide information about Youthpass.

In addition, in cases of justified needs, an on-arrival training for short-term activities involving young people with fewer opportunities may be organised by the participating organisations. The costs linked to such sessions can be covered under the item "exceptional costs" for activities involving young people with fewer opportunities (see "funding rules" section in Part B of this Guide).

Recognition of learning outcomes - Youthpass

Every volunteer taking part in a volunteering activities project is entitled to go through the Youthpass process and receive a Youthpass certificate at the end. Youthpass identifies and documents the non-formal and informal learning outcomes gained during the project. It is recommended to embed Youthpass in the learning content from the start of the project and use it during the project activities as a tool to help participants to become more aware of, reflect on and assess their learning process. For support and more information on Youthpass, please consult the Youthpass guide and other relevant material at [www.youthpass.eu](http://www.youthpass.eu).

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1. Information in this annex is also relevant for mobility activities taking place under Key Action 2 - Capacity Building and Strategic Partnerships projects in the field of youth.
3. [https://www.salto-youth.net/](https://www.salto-youth.net/)