Important characteristics of the Erasmus+ Programme

The following features of the Programme deserve special attention:

Protection, health and safety of participants

Protection and safety of participants involved in the Erasmus+ projects are important principles of the Programme. All persons participating in the Erasmus+ Programme should have the opportunity to take full advantage of the possibilities for personal and professional development and learning. This should be assured in a safe environment which respects and protects the rights of all persons, their physical and emotional integrity, their mental health and wellbeing.

Each organisation participating in the Programme must have in place effective procedures and arrangements to promote and guarantee the safety, protection and non-discrimination of the participants in their activity. When necessary, adults should accompany underage participants (pupils, VET learners, youngsters) in mobility activities. Accompanying adults should ensure sufficient quality of the learning component of the mobility as well as the protection and safety of the underage participants.

In addition, all pupils, students, trainees, apprentices, adult learners, young people, and staff, involved in a mobility activity under all Key Actions of the Erasmus+ Programme, must be insured against the risks linked to their participation in these activities. The Programme leaves it up to project organisers to seek the most suitable insurance policy according to the type of project carried out and to the insurance formats available at national level. Furthermore, it is not necessary to subscribe to a project-specific insurance, if the participants are already covered by existing insurance

policies of the project organisers.

In either case, the following areas must be covered:

- wherever relevant, travel insurance (including damage or loss of luggage);
- third party liability (including, wherever appropriate, professional indemnity or insurance for responsibility);
- accident and serious illness (including permanent or temporary incapacity);
- death (including repatriation in case of projects carried out abroad).

If applicable, it is strongly recommended that participants in transnational activities 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 27 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.

Finally, if projects involve young people under 18, participating organisations are required to obtain the prior authorisation of participation from their parents or those acting on their behalf.

Multilingualism

Multilingualism is one of the cornerstones of the European project and a powerful symbol of the EU's aspiration to be united in diversity. Foreign languages have a prominent role among the skills that will help equip people better for the labour market and make the most of available opportunities. The EU has set the goal that every citizen should have the opportunity to acquire at least two foreign languages, from an early age.

The promotion of language learning and linguistic diversity is one of the specific objectives of the Programme. The lack of language competences is one of the main

barriers to participation in European education, training and youth programmes. The opportunities put in place to offer linguistic support are aimed to make mobility more efficient and effective, to improve learning performance and therefore contribute to the specific objective of the Programme.

The programme will offer language learning support to participants carrying out a mobility activity. This support will mainly be offered via the Erasmus+ Online Language Support (OLS) platform, adapted as necessary to individual sectors, as e-learning offers advantages for language learning in terms of access and flexibility. The Erasmus+ Online Language Support (OLS) will allow participants to assess, practice and improve their knowledge of languages. The platform will provide features such as assisted and blended learning tools to enable teachers and youth workers to provide extra support to their learners and social networking to enable collaborative learning. The Erasmus+ Online Language Support (OLS) will also provide free open language learning material. In addition to OLS, other forms for linguistic support may be offered to support the language learning needs of particular target groups – such as the use of sign language or braille, which can be financed through the dedicated financial inclusion support category.

Within the framework of cooperation projects, language teaching and learning will also be encouraged. Innovation and good practices aiming to promote language skills can include for example teaching and assessment methods, development of pedagogical material, research, computer assisted language learning and entrepreneurial ventures using foreign languages.

The European Commission has established the **European Language Label** (ELL) awards to recognise quality, to support the sharing of results of excellent projects in the area of multilingualism, and to promote public interest in language learning. National Agencies will award the ELL annually or biennially to education and training organisations that have completed a decentralised Erasmus+ project with outstanding results in the area of language learning and teaching. In addition to the selection among Erasmus+ projects, the National Agency may decide to award the ELL to other initiatives with comprehensive, inclusive or innovative approaches to the teaching and

learning of languages.

International dimension

Erasmus+ includes a strong international dimension (i.e. cooperation with Partner Countries) in mobility, cooperation and policy dialogue activities. In order to support European organisations in facing the global challenges brought about by globalisation, climate change and the digital transition, a key element is the intensification of international mobility and cooperation with third countries, strengthening the role of the European Union as a global actor. In parallel, the Programme actions contribute to promoting values, principles and interests around common priorities, , notably related to human and institutional development climate change, digital transition, growth and jobs, good governance and peace and security. The engagement of the young people in Partner Countries is a key element in the process of building societies that are more resilient and are based on mutual trust and intercultural understanding.

Recognition and validation of skills and qualifications

Erasmus+ supports EU transparency and recognition tools for competences, skills and qualifications – in particular Europass, Youthpass, the European Qualifications Framework (EQF), the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS), the European Quality Assurance Reference Framework (EQAVET), the European Quality Assurance Register (EQAR), the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA) – as well as EU-wide networks in the field of education and training supporting these tools, in particular the National Academic Recognition Information Centre (NARIC), Euroguidance networks, the National Europass Centres and the EQF National Coordination Points. A common purpose of these tools is to ensure that competences, skills and qualifications can be more easily recognised and are better understood, within and across national borders, in all sub-systems of education and training as well as in the labour market, no matter whether these were

acquired through formal education and training or through other learning experiences (e.g. work experience; volunteering, online learning).

In order to fulfil these objectives, the tools available should be able to cater for new phenomena such as internationalisation of education and growing use of digital learning, and support the creation of flexible learning pathways in line with learners' needs and objectives. The tools may also need to evolve in the future, leading to enhanced coherence and simplification that allow learners and workers to move freely for learning or working.

In the field of youth, thematic strategies[1] such as Youthpass and the European Training Strategy (ETS) aim at offering further support to the developments in these areas.

More information available at:

https://ec.europa.eu/education/policy/strategic-framework/skills-qualifi...

Communicating projects and their results to maximise impact

Communicating projects and their results is crucial to ensure impact at different levels. Depending on the action, applicants for funding under Erasmus+ are required to plan their communication activities to share information about their project and results during and beyond the project life cycle. Project applications will be evaluated based on relevant criteria to ensure that these aspects are covered. Applicants will also need to evaluate the success of their communication activities, both qualitatively and quantitatively. The level and intensity of communication and dissemination activities should be proportional to the objectives, the scope and the targets of the different actions of Erasmus+.

Beneficiaries must clearly acknowledge the European Union's support in all communication and dissemination activities and products, such as events, internet

websites and publications. In particular, they must ensure that the European Union emblem is included in all communication material and it respects the provisions laid out in the grant agreement or grant decision2. The beneficiary's grant may be reduced if such provisions are not respected.

In order to design a good communication and dissemination plan, applicants need to take into consideration the following:

- The communication objectives: i.e. to raise awareness, promote societal values, develop new partnerships for the future or influence policies and practices;

- The audience or target group: these are the people you would like to reach out to and that could make use of results. Be as specific as you can. It can be the general public, stakeholders, experts and other interested parties, decision-makers, media etc.;

- The channels and activities to reach the target audience: applicants need to choose the channels and activities that are the most effective and appropriate to meet the needs of their chosen targets, such as social media, events, publications.

- The project results (outputs and outcomes) such as good practice guide, a practical tool or product, research report of studies, what knowledge and skills were gained and so on. Results should be shared or promoted on the Erasmus+ Project Result Platform (https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/projects_en).

- The timing: you need to effectively plan when different activities take place (linking it to work plan/ milestones), agree on realistic target and ensure flexibility depending on the project progress, the change in needs of the target audience or group as well as development in policy and procedure.

- Key performance indicators (KPIs): indicators are a valuable management tool to monitor progress (and allow adjustments if needed) during the implementation of the communication and dissemination plan and to measure the degree of success in achieving its objectives

Erasmus+ Open Access Requirement for educational materials

Erasmus+ promotes the open access of project outputs to support learning, teaching, training, and youth work. In particular, Erasmus+ beneficiaries are committed to make any educational resources and tools which are produced in the context of projects supported by the Programme – documents, media, software or other materials freely available for the public under an open license. The materials should be easily accessible and retrievable without cost or limitations, and the open license must allow the public to use, reuse, adapt and share the resource. Such materials are known as 'Open Educational Resources' (OER). To achieve this aim, the resources should be uploaded in an editable digital form, on a suitable and openly accessible platform. While Erasmus+ encourages beneficiaries to apply the most open licenses[3], beneficiaries may choose licenses that impose some limitations, e.g. restrict commercial use by others, or commit others to apply the same license on derivative works, if this is appropriate to the nature of the project and to the type of material, and if it still allows the public to use, reuse, adapt and share the resource. The open access requirement is obligatory and is without prejudice to the intellectual property rights of the grant beneficiaries.

Erasmus+ Open Access for research and data

Erasmus+ encourages beneficiaries to publish research output through open access pathways, i.e. in ways which are free of cost or other access restrictions. Beneficiaries are also encouraged to apply open licenses to this research output. Whenever possible,

data collected by projects should be published as 'open data', i.e. with an open license, in a suitable format and on a suitable open data platform.

---

1. The strategies can be found here: https://www.salto-youth.net/

2. Guidance on how to use the European Commission visual identity, including the European Union emblem can be found here https://ec.europa.eu/info/resources-partners/european-commission-visual-...

3. E.g. the widely used Creative Commons Attribution or Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike licenses for creative works, the GNU Public License and GNU Lesser Public License for software, or the Open Database License for databases.