



Recommendations on the inclusion of higher education students and staff with physical, mental or health- related conditions in the Erasmus+ programme *for Erasmus+ National Agencies*



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**Recommendations on the inclusion
of higher education students and
staff with physical, mental or
health-related conditions in the
Erasmus+ programme**
for Erasmus+ National Agencies

Erasmus+, the European Union programme for education, training, youth and sport for 2014-2020, will provide over 2 million higher education students the opportunity to study or train abroad. These exchanges play a major role in providing young European citizens with the skills they need to find their place in society and build a creative, innovative and cohesive Europe.

Article 23 of the Erasmus+ [legal basis](#) emphasises the importance of ensuring fair and equitable opportunities to all potential participants, including those from groups which are usually under-represented in mobility programmes: "When implementing the Programme, inter alia as regards the selection of participants and the award of scholarships, the Commission and the Member States shall ensure that particular efforts are made to promote social inclusion and the participation of people with special needs or with fewer opportunities."

These recommendations have been written by a group of Erasmus+ National Agencies (NAs), representatives from higher education institutions (HEIs), practitioners, stakeholders and Erasmus+ participants to support the inclusion of higher education students and staff with physical, mental or health-related conditions in the programme. They could be applied, by analogy, to mobility in other sectors of the Erasmus+ programme.

Recommendations for Erasmus+ National Agencies

These practical recommendations for Erasmus+ National Agencies have been developed to facilitate the inclusion in Erasmus+ of higher education students and staff whose physical, mental or health-related conditions is such that their participation in the programme would not be possible without extra financial support (from here on referred to as “students and staff with physical, mental or health-related conditions”).

Promotion



Include in the National Agency (NA) website information for Erasmus+ students and staff with physical, mental or health-related conditions. In addition, examples of best practices could be included. For example, you can take inspiration from the German higher education NA, who dedicated a [webpage](#) (in German) to best practices/events/programmes for Erasmus+ students and staff with physical, mental or health-related conditions.



National Agency websites and other communication channels should be accessible to students and staff with physical, mental or health-related conditions and should comply with EC and national standards on accessible design.



Appoint one person in your NA to be in charge of Erasmus+ students and staff with physical, mental or health-related conditions. The role of this colleague would be to liaise with the higher education institutions, stakeholders and other interested parties, as well as colleagues in other National Agencies. The information of this contact person should be prominently displayed on the NA website. This person is invited to join the networking [yammer group for NAs](#) created for this purpose.



Promote diversity in the use of images, icons and other visual emblems in printed and electronic formats developed by your NA and HEIs, for example by including students/staff with physical, mental or health-related conditions. An [example](#) by the University of Malta is provided below.



Student and Staff Selection



Make sure that the process to apply for the special needs support is as simple and accessible as possible for both HEIs and participants. Remind higher education institutions that, by signing the [Erasmus Charter for Higher Education \(ECHE\)](#), they commit to respect in full the principles of non-discrimination set out in the Erasmus+ programme and ensure equal access and opportunities to mobile participants from all backgrounds. Moreover, students and staff with physical, mental or health-related conditions should benefit from the support services that the receiving institution offers to its local students and staff.



Encourage HEIs to ensure that selection criteria for participation in Erasmus+ mobility is as broad as possible to include not only academic performance but also personal motivation, inclusiveness and meeting the broader Erasmus+ programme objectives.

Monitoring



Explore the possibility of accompanying information on Erasmus+ students and staff with physical, mental or health-related conditions at the time of application for the mobility, in order to organise and provide the right support as early as possible. For example, the Swedish NA has developed templates for HEIs applying for the support grant for their Erasmus+ [students](#) and [staff](#) who have disclosed their access needs, specifying what support is needed and who is responsible for providing that support in the sending and receiving institutions.



Monitor the measures being taken at the higher education institutions to promote, implement, disseminate and support the inclusion of Erasmus+ students and staff with physical, mental or health-related conditions in mobility actions. For example, consider, as a routine, requesting that the office(r) responsible for services to students and staff with physical, mental or health-related conditions in the higher education institution be included among those that the NA meets during monitoring visits, if applicable.


Advocacy



Advocate for the specific inclusion of measures to promote international learning mobility for students and staff with physical, mental or health-related conditions in national and institutional internationalisation strategies.



Liaise with government departments/agencies in the area of social protection to ensure that existing entitlements are maintained and are portable while on learning or professional development mobilities under Erasmus+. For example, consider the creation of a national network with relevant stakeholders and other interested parties in the area of accessibility and inclusion of persons with physical, mental or health-related conditions.



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