



WELCOME LETTER

Erasmus+ Programme
INFO KIT
February 2018

Dear volunteer!

Congratulations for having been selected for participation in Erasmus+ volunteering. The next weeks and months might be a life changing experience for you.

Through your participation in Erasmus+ volunteering you will get the chance to live in another country, get to know a new culture and a new language. You will meet new friends – within and beyond your Receiving Organisation. You will provide a service to the benefit of your Receiving Organisation and the local community at the same time as you will develop your own personal, social and professional skills.

This Info-Kit will help you prepare for the Erasmus+ volunteering experience. It gives you important information about what you can expect from your Sending and Receiving Organisations and what they can expect from you. It is meant to complement and support the activities organised by your Sending Organisation to prepare you for Erasmus+ volunteering. With this regard, it is recommended that you go through and discuss the Info-Kit with the Erasmus+ volunteering coordinator of the Sending Organisation.

The Info-Kit is composed of the following:

1. "What to expect from Erasmus+ volunteering": a document providing clear information to volunteers and organisations about what can be expected in general terms before, during and after the Erasmus+ volunteering period;

2. Youthpass in Erasmus+ volunteering: information about the scope of Youthpass and how to obtain a Youthpass Certificate can be found on the Youthpass website. It is important that Sending, Receiving and Coordinating Organisations, and the volunteer, are familiar with the information here:
<https://www.youthpass.eu/en>
3. Information and guidelines about the insurance scheme provided to all Erasmus+ volunteers during their stay abroad (complementary to the mandatory European Health Insurance Card) can be found on the insurance provider website:
<https://www.cignahealthbenefits.com/en/plan-members>
4. The Erasmus+ volunteering Charter: highlighting the roles of Erasmus+ volunteering Sending, Receiving and Coordinating Organisations as well as the main principles and quality standards of Erasmus+ volunteering.

It is also important to know about the Erasmus+ Programme Guide (available at: http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/resources/programme-guide_en), which presents the formal definitions and criteria of Erasmus+ volunteering, including the funding rules.

The Info-Kit is among several supporting documents which complements the information in the Programme Guide and provides inputs for improving the quality and successful implementation of an Erasmus+ volunteering project.

Erasmus+

As you might know, Erasmus+ volunteering is part of the Erasmus+ Programme – the EU Programme for Education, Training, Youth and Sport. The programme aims to enhance the skills and competences of young people as well as their active citizenship.

Erasmus+ promotes mobility within and beyond the EU borders. The youth activities under Erasmus+ are based on non-formal learning and intercultural dialogue, and encourage the inclusion of all young people, regardless of their educational, social or cultural background.

Most volunteers participate in a project granted by National Agencies established in each of the 33 Programme Countries. Depending on the country of residence of the volunteer or on the country where the Erasmus+ volunteering takes place, the project can also be granted by the Executive Agency located in Brussels.

The National and Executive Agencies are promoting the programme, supporting applicants, managing applications and following-up the projects. In case a serious situation arises, you or the organisations involved may contact the granting agency or the agency of the receiving country.

There are also six SALTO Resource Centres, supporting National Agencies and organisations in working with a neighbouring region or a particular thematic. More information about the role of the different programme structures can be found in the Erasmus+ Programme Guide.

Erasmus+ volunteering

Erasmus+ volunteering provides young people aged 17-30 with an opportunity to express personal commitment through full-time voluntary activities in a foreign country within or beyond the borders of the European Union.

The European Union offers such an opportunity to young people because volunteering is valued as a non-formal learning experience enhancing volunteers' professional skills and competences, thus contributing to their employability. At the same time, it increases their sense of solidarity, develops their social skills and promotes active participation in society. It is a win-win situation, where both the volunteer and the community benefit.

The Commission has held a long commitment to supporting volunteering opportunities for young people and mobility across borders. Starting in 1996, the European Voluntary Service has allowed more than 100 000 young people to go abroad and gain a life changing experience as a volunteer. During the course of the Erasmus+ programme, many more will get the same opportunity.

We also take the opportunity to remind you that you are entitled to get an Erasmus+ volunteering youth card that provides you with discounts on accommodation, travel, shopping and more. If you have not received it yet, go to the European Youth Card Association website (<https://www.eyca.org/>) and ask for it!

We hope that you will take the best from this experience and we wish you the best of luck!

The European Commission