

## **Frequently asked questions for Erasmus+ projects**

### **Who is financing youth mobility projects? What is Erasmus+?**

Youth mobility projects are financed by Erasmus+ programme of European Union. Erasmus+ aims are focused on modernise education, training and youth work across Europe. It is open to education, training, youth and sport organisations across all sectors of lifelong learning, including school education, further and higher education, adult education and the youth sector. It offers exciting opportunities for young people all around the Europe to study, work, volunteer, teach and train abroad. Its budget of €14.7 billion will provide opportunities for over 4 million young Europeans. Erasmus+ is divided in 3 Key Actions:

- KA1 Mobility - This is all about providing opportunities for individuals to improve their skills, enhance their employability and gain cultural awareness. Under Key Action 1 organisations can apply for funding to run mobility projects to offer structured study, work experience, job shadowing, training and teaching opportunities to staff and learners.
- KA2 - Cooperation for innovation and exchange good practices - This is all about enabling organisations to work together in order to improve their provision for learners and share innovative practices. Under Key Action 2 organisations can apply for funding to work in partnership with organisations from other participating countries.
- KA3 - Support for policy Reform - This Key Action covers any type of activity aimed at supporting and facilitating the modernisation of education and training systems. Under Key Action 3, the Erasmus+ programme will fund strategic activities supporting policy reform across the EU in education, training and youth.

### **What is youth exchange?**

Youth Exchanges allow groups of young people from at least two different countries to meet and live together for up to 21 days. The rather short duration makes the involvement of young people with fewer opportunities appropriate; as such a Youth Exchange offers an international mobility experience in the safety of a group with the possibility of having an adequate number of group leaders to take care of the participants. Youth exchanges allow groups of young people from different countries to meet, live together and work on shared projects for short periods. Youth exchanges take place outside the school environment. During a Youth Exchange, participants, supported by group leaders, jointly carry out a work programme (a mix of workshops, exercises, debates, role-plays, simulations, outdoor activities, etc.) designed and prepared by them before the Exchange. Youth Exchanges allow young people to: develop competences; become aware of socially relevant topics/thematic areas; discover new cultures, habits and life-styles, mainly through peer-learning; strengthen values like solidarity, democracy, friendship, etc. The learning process in Youth Exchanges is triggered by methods of non-formal education. A Youth Exchange can also be a good setting for discussing and learning about inclusion and

diversity issues. Youth Exchanges are based on a transnational cooperation between two or more participating organisations from different countries within and outside the European Union. Participants' learning experiences are recognised through a Youthpass Certificate. Youth exchanges last between 5 and 21 days. This excludes travelling time. Youth exchanges are open to people between the ages of 13 and 30. To be a group leader in a youth exchange, you must be at least 18 years-old. The EU grant supports travel as well as practical and activity-related costs necessary for the exchange. To participate in a youth exchange, you cannot apply directly for a grant as an individual. Applications must be made by an organisation or a group of young people who in turn select who will participate in the exchange.

### **What is mobility of youth workers?**

This activity supports the professional development of youth workers, through the implementation of activities such as transnational/international seminars, training courses, contact-making events, study visits, etc. or job shadowing/observation periods abroad in an organisation active in the youth field. All these activities are arranged by the organisations participating in the project. The participation of youth workers in such activities contributes to capacity building of their organisation and should have a clear impact on youth workers' daily work with young people. The learning outcomes should be further disseminated in the youth field.

### **What is the difference between youth exchange and mobility of youth workers?**

Youth exchanges are great opportunity for youth who do not yet have any international experience and no specific profile or experience of participants are usually required. Youth exchanges focus on intercultural learning, understanding, learning new cultures and countries through non-formal education methods. Youth exchanges are intended for all young people who are interested in the topics of the project and would like to learn more about it. The topics vary – might be active participation, human rights, environment, health, sport etc. The age of the participants depends on each youth exchange – might be for young people already from 13, 15, 18 years old. There is also upper age limit – e.g. until 25 or 30 years of age. The period of the youth exchange is usually between 7 - 12 days.

The mobility for youth workers is tool to improve youth workers competence in non-formal education in youth field. They are intended for youth workers, people who work with children or young people – e.g. those who work in NGOs or other way work with them - such as teachers in elementary, high or language schools, universities in non-formal methods. Participants of mobility for youth workers can get new competences on the subject of mobility that they can use in their work, get know people with similar profile

and develop future cooperation as well. The length of the mobility of youth workers is usually between 5 - 7 days.

## **What does EVS mean? Who can do it?**

EVS = European voluntary service is a learning program through volunteer activities focused on personal development. It is an international volunteering program funded by European Commission that allows young people aged 17-30 years to work as a volunteer for a specific period up to 1 year.

EVS is going to be replaced with 2 new actions called European Solidarity Corps and Volunteer Programme. European Solidarity Corps is focused for EU Legal Residences between 18-30 years old young people that can make volunteering in EU Countries and Volunteering program is focused on EU and Non-EU countries legal residences aged between 17-30 years old.

## **How and by whom are participants selected for projects?**

Best way to guarantee being able to participate in youth exchange is to write your own project together with friends. It is even possible to apply for funding as informal group of young people (you need one person 18+ who will take the legal responsibility). This is the recommended option!

However, in many cases you can also apply for projects developed by organizations via public call. Usually the call for participants together with info-pack is shared on platforms (social media, etc). This contains all the important info about the project including the eligibility criteria for applying and how to apply. There is an application to fill in with the personal details like age, nationality, contact etc and questions regarding participants' interest/motivation in the project; volunteering experience and previous involvement in youth work and any other information that the organisers think useful for the good implementation of the project (for example: level of English, insurance, hobbies).

Application form might be created by the organisers or also by the partners or by all of them combined. Usually sending partners select the participants from their countries, but they also discuss it with the organisers (host organization). This is done in order to reach a mixture of participants that can work together but have at the same time diversity (age/gender/experience/level of English) in order to create a good group dynamic.

The shortlisted participants receive an email where they are informed that they are selected and required to confirm their participation and sent more details about the project. In some cases applicants might be asked to come to an interview before the final selection. After the group is selected they will receive preparation from sending organization. For youth exchanges group is accompanied by group leader (18+).

## **What is the role of participants in youth exchange?**

Participants have a series of rights and responsibilities, but the main goal is for them to be involved, show interest and learn. The participants will have to try to fulfil all the proposed outputs of that particular project by carrying out the activities and contributing to the organization of youth exchange.

Before the exchange participants need to prepare for the project. They need to meet up with their group leader to fix practical things (insurance, tickets), but also prepare their homework (part of programme) for the exchange. Usually each country has set of workshops, they need to prepare and carry out. In youth exchange, there shouldn't be any trainers or "organizers". All activities should be divided between countries and participants themselves carry them out. Group leaders have rather supportive role. There might be exceptions to this, in that case participants are asked to keep open mind and try to contribute in best way possible. Before the project participants should also make research about hosting country and other participating countries to be aware about cultural norms and customs. Usually each country also needs to introduce their culture during international evening and participants should be ready to introduce their sending organization as well.

During the project - participants are required to take part in all the activities planned, be proactive and cooperative in order to have an enjoyable learning experience and achieve the common goal. They are encouraged to reflect daily on the activities and feedback to group leaders and/or host organization about any positive or negative experiences in order for the them to take the necessary measures and adapt the project to the needs of the group, if possible.

After the exchange participants are expected to share projects results back home and carry out follow-up activities.

## **Who is group leader?**

The group leader has to be over 18 years old and without an upper age limit. The group leader should have some experience in youth activities and should be motivated and responsible.

Group leader has some extra tasks (before, during and after the exchange). The most important task is for him/her to support the country group in all stages of the project. Group leader helps with preparation, communicates with sending/hosting organization on the name of the group and ensures the safety of group (makes sure everyone has travel insurance, gives guidelines for travel, etc). Before exchange group leader is responsible for organizing preparation meetings for country group. During the exchange group leader

should help participants to reflect on their learning. Group leader also mediates and tries to solve conflicts. Group leader collects travel documents and gives/sends them to host organization. In case of underage participants, group leader travels together with participant and takes adequate measures (has parent permissions etc). After the project group leader helps to coordinate the follow-up and dissemination activities and fills in the mobility tool report on the name of the group.

## **Why should I want to be group leader?**

Being a group leader provides a good experience as a leader and the opportunity to gain new skills, knowledge and attitudes. You have the opportunity to challenge yourself, take responsibility and show that you can be counted on. It is an opportunity to gain real life learning experience and to support a group of young people in a European project. Group leader can support making the project experience for participants not only fun, but also useful and beneficial for their future. If you have already participated in the projects before as participant, it is expected that next time applying you are ready to take a little bit more responsibility (= you would apply as group leader). Sending organizations will provide support for group leaders, help with materials and specific training.

## **How does the process of buying tickets look like? What is important to know? Where to find cheap tickets?**

The process of buying tickets might differ for each project and each sending organization. In most cases participants have to buy tickets themselves, and later those are reimbursed by host organization up to the limit defined in infopack. In few cases it is possible that sending/hosting organization will buy tickets for you – in case you cannot afford tickets yourself, contact them and ask about this option.

There is usually Facebook group or other platform created by sending organization or group leader to discuss the travel options. Never buy any tickets without confirmation and approval of the sending/hosting organizations or group leader. It is recommended that group travels together and it is obligatory in case of underage participants.

There are various websites that work as search engines for flights, for example, the most well-known are: <https://www.skyscanner.net/> and <http://www.azair.eu/>.

## **What kind of travel costs will be reimbursed?**

Only project related to **TRANSPORT** (no food, no insurance unless said otherwise, no accommodation during travel to the location) is reimbursed. There is a maximum limit which will be reimbursed. Check info pack or contact sending organisation to know the specific limit for your project. You need to confirm your travel plan with the hosting organization, before booking tickets. After they give you “green light” you can book it.

As a rule, you need to travel from your (sending organization) country to the host country. Exceptions are only accepted in case pre-confirmed with host organization (they confirm with their NA). You should use public transportation (bus, train, plane, ferry); economy class. And it should be the cheapest option.

**Taxi cost are not reimbursed** (it is allowed only if there is no other mean of transport available, e.g. very late arrival and it is pre-confirmed with host organization). Using own car is allowed for some cases, but again you need to confirm with hosting organisation before.

In case of Youth Exchange, the travel plan should be decided within national groups. Group leader will be in charge of the communication with host organisation.

### **What kind of documents do I need for travel reimbursement?**

It depends on the hosting organization and the national agency. The most used documents requested are: all original bus, train, flight tickets and boarding passes (pdf versions are accepted as well – so make online check-in where possible!). Most of the information regarding needed travel documents are specified in infopack, if not consult with your sending or hosting organization. Some organizations might request invoices or confirmations of payment from bank account. Please pay attention to this topic to avoid misunderstandings. Keep in mind, that without original tickets/boarding passes, there won't be reimbursement of travel costs. Each project will facilitate information about maximum travel budget available for participants according the distance between sending organization and the place of the project defined in project application.

### **Can I stay longer in project location?**

It depends on the hosting organization and hosting national agency (governmental body dividing Erasmus+ grants). Usually, this information is provided in project description (infopack). If there is no information, please consult with your sending organization about the details. Taking considerations that most of the national agencies allow to stay 2 days more in the country in order to get cheaper travel options. However you should keep in mind, that Erasmus+ projects are educational projects, not holiday trips. Never book travel tickets without confirmation and approval of the sending or hosting organization.

### **Can I start travelling from another country than my own?**

Generally it's not permitted to travel from another country than the residency country. Sometimes travel is permitted from outside the participating country, but only in case you get approval from your host organization and they get approval from their national

agency. In case you fly from your neighbouring country you should provide bus tickets to prove that you started the journey from your own country.

NB! You are not allowed to participate in Erasmus+ project, if you are part of another Erasmus + project or you are supported by another EU funding programme at the same time. That means for example if you are EVS volunteer or Erasmus student with grant, you are not allowed to take part of youth exchange while in service/studying.

## **What kind of documents I need for travelling?**

- Identification Card (EU countries) /Passport (non-EU or travelling through non-EU)
- European Health Insurance Card
- Visa (only if required for this country)
- Always check the validity of your documents before travel. Mos cases it needs to be valid at least 3/6 months after the travel date
- Under 18 (check the question below)
- Don't forget: keep all originals of tickets, invoices and boarding passes. Hosting organisation needs it to make your reimbursement.

## **Do I need travel insurance?**

Before you project always apply for/or check the validity date on your European Health Insurance Card. You can only have it when you have health insurance in your own country (please check the conditions). It provides you guarantee of provided health care in case of emergency in European Union. However this card doesn't cover your costs.

Therefore also to have travel insurance is obligatory in each project you participate. It is your own responsibility to make it and it is not covered from the project costs (unless stated otherwise in info pack). It is very easy to do and it costs usually 10-20€. You should have medical insurance, trip protection and luggage insurance included.

When having a youth exchange that includes underage youth check for possibilities to have a group health insurance. It should cover some extra costs that otherwise are not covered (for example: group leader's new travel tickets in case group leader has to stay behind with an underage person).

## **I have a long layover at airport, do I need to pay accommodation myself?**

Accommodation during your trip to/from the hosting country is not covered. So, in case you want to book accommodation for a long stopover it will be under your own expenses. In any case, confirm with your sending organization.

Hint: Long stopovers in Istanbul, when travelling with Turkish Airlines, might be granted with accommodation and sightseeing. Check for conditions [HERE](#).

## **When can I expect travel costs reimbursement?**

Check that information in the info pack. In case it is not written there, ask the group leader / hosting organisation before project. Normally, hosting organisations reimburse travel costs after receiving final grant from their National Agencies. Don't forget you need to provide all the original travel documents and provide evidence of dissemination activities, or reimbursements cannot be done.

Transfer might be done to the group leader or sending organisation, who in turn will transfer it to you.

Be aware that reimbursement may sometimes take several months. It depends on the hosting organisation's capacity. In some rare cases, you'll get the reimbursement on spot.

## **I am under 18. What conditions apply for me and do I need additional documents?**

Participants under 18 need to have a parental (legal representative) permission to take part in Erasmus+ mobility. It is a document that states what project, country and dates the person is permitted to go and travel on. It has to have details (name, contacts) of the legal representative. Download the form [HERE](#).

ATTENTION! People under 18 can only travel with a representative that is stated in the parental permission! (In case of some emergency at least with another grown up) Travelling alone is not allowed for underage people according to Erasmus+ rules.

## **What is intercultural evening - what should I bring/prepare for it?**

Intercultural evening is an event which usually takes place during all Erasmus+ projects, and its purpose is to show something particular about the cultural identity of each participating country. What to bring depends on the kind of intercultural evening taking place, but usually it is a good idea to prepare and bring national food, drinks and to dress in national and traditional clothes.



During the intercultural evening the participants may perform theatrical games and national dances, make quizzes or introduce their culture in some creative way.

### **How can I give feedback about project to my sending organization?**

Before the event, confirm with your sending organization what feedback you are expected to provide when you return. Depending on the organizations the methods may vary. Normally, there is a feedback form, participants need to provide a short report with the highlights of the event, together with the “photos/videos.

### **What are follow-up and dissemination activities?**

There are follow-up and dissemination activities after each project. The main idea is to share the outcomes of the project with other people and also let other youngsters know about Erasmus+ opportunities – so next time they could join in! There are different ways to do it like writing articles for organization’s website or for local media, sharing information in social media, making videos, organizing workshops, short presentations among your classmates or just talking to friends. For some organizations it is mandatory part of the project and without it, you are not reimbursed.

### **What is mobility tool report and who has to fill it in?**

Mobility Tool+ is a web platform tool for collaboration, management and reporting for mobility projects under the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Commission. If you are a group leader at the end of your mobility you have to fill a short report about it. Report includes questions about the quality of mobility (ex. youth exchange), process of the project, how it goes ect. The report has a form of a web-based questionnaire with different types of questions – single choice, multiple choices, and matrix-type of questions. You will receive invitation to fill in mobility tool report shortly after the end of activity on your email. E-mail is entitled as “Erasmus+ participant report” and it gives you link to fill in survey.

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