

Who implements the Erasmus+ Programme?

The European Commission

The European Commission is ultimately responsible for the running of the Erasmus+ Programme. It manages the budget and sets priorities, targets and criteria for the Programme on an on-going basis. Furthermore, it guides and monitors the general implementation, follow-up and evaluation of the Programme at European level. The European Commission also bears the overall responsibility for the supervision and coordination of the structures in charge of implementing the Programme at national level.

At European level, the European Commission's European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA) is responsible for the implementation of a number of actions of the Erasmus+ Programme. In addition to the information contained in this Guide, the relevant Call documents and application forms for the actions covered by this Guide and managed by the Executive Agency are published in the Funding and Tender Opportunity Portal.

The Executive Agency is in charge of the complete life-cycle management of these projects, from the promotion of the Programme, the analysis of the grant requests, the monitoring of projects on the spot, up to the dissemination of the project and Programme results. It is also responsible for launching specific calls for proposals relating to some actions of the Programme that are not covered by this guide.

The European Commission, notably through the Executive Agency, is also responsible for:

- carrying out studies in the fields supported by the Programme;
- carrying out research and evidence-based activities through the Eurydice network;
- improving the visibility and the systemic impact of the Programme through dissemination and exploitation activities of the Programme's results;
- ensuring the contractual management and financing of bodies and networks supported by the Erasmus Programme;
- managing calls for tenders to provide services within the framework of the Programme.

The National Agencies

The implementation of the Erasmus+ Programme is mainly implemented as Indirect Management, meaning that the European Commission entrusts budget implementation tasks to National Agencies; the rationale of this approach is to bring Erasmus+ as close as possible to its beneficiaries and to adapt to the diversity of national education, training and youth systems. For this purpose, each EU Member State or third country associated to the Programme has appointed one or more National Agencies. These National Agencies promote and implement the Programme at national level and act as the link between the European Commission and participating organisations at local, regional and national level. It is their task to:

- provide appropriate information on the Erasmus+ Programme;
- administer a fair and transparent selection process for project applications to be funded in

their country;

- monitor and evaluate the implementation of the Programme in their country;
- provide support to project applicants and participating organisations throughout the project life-cycle;
- collaborate effectively with the network of all National Agencies and the European Commission;
- promote and ensure the visibility of the Programme;
- promote the dissemination and exploitation of the results of the Programme at local and national level.

In addition, National Agencies play an important role as intermediate structures for the qualitative development and implementation of the Erasmus+ Programme by:

- carrying out projects and activities, such as Training and Cooperation Activities and Networking Activities - outside the tasks of project life-cycle management - that support the qualitative implementation of the Programme and/or trigger policy developments in the fields supported by the Programme;
- providing a supportive approach to newcomers, less experienced organisations and target groups with fewer opportunities, in order to remove the obstacles to full participation in the Programme;
- seeking cooperation with external bodies and National Authorities in order to increase the impact of the Programme their respective fields of action, in their country and in the European Union.

The supportive approach of National Agencies aims at guiding the users of the Programme through all phases, from the first contact with the Programme through the application process to the realisation of the project and the final evaluation. This principle is not in contradiction with the fairness and the transparency of selection procedures. Rather, it is based on the idea that in order to guarantee equal opportunities for everybody, it is necessary to give more assistance to some Programme target groups through advising, counselling, monitoring, and coaching systems tailored to their needs.

The relevant calls covering the actions managed by the Erasmus+ National Agencies are published in the Erasmus+ Website and publicised in the websites of the National Agencies.

What other bodies are involved in the implementation of the Programme?

Apart from the bodies mentioned above, the following Resource Centres and information offices, platforms, and knowledge and expert networks provide complementary expertise to the implementation of the Erasmus+ Programme:

Resource centres and information offices

SALTO Resource Centres

The aim of the SALTO Resource Centres is to improve the quality and impact of the Erasmus+ programme at a systemic level through providing expertise, resources, information and training activities in specific areas for National Agencies and other actors involved in education, training and youth work. Among others, these activities include organising training courses, seminars workshops, study visits, forums, cooperation and partnership-building activities on Erasmus+ priority themes.

Education and training

In addition, in the fields of education and training, the work of the SALTO centre:

- offers a platform for European training activities;
- enables stakeholders to, inter alia, develop their organizations' capacities to fully seize Erasmus+ opportunities, share best practices across European countries, find partners, or increase their projects' impact at European level;

Youth

In the field of youth, the work of the SALTO YOUTH centres focuses on improving the quality and impact of the EU youth programmes (Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps) and supporting and developing European youth work. It involves:

- fostering the recognition of non-formal and informal learning throughout Europe;
- developing and documenting training and youth work methods and tools;
- enhancing the quality of youth projects through training courses, tools and practical publications and guidance;
- actively promoting inclusive approaches in youth work throughout Europe;
- giving an overview of European training activities that are available to youth workers through the European Training Calendar;
- providing a database of trainers and resource persons in the field of youth work;
- coordinating the implementation of Youthpass, the instrument to support validation of non-formal and informal learning outcomes in youth mobility and youth work activities.

The SALTO centres in the youth field have either a thematic (participation and information, inclusion and diversity, training and cooperation) or geographical (Eastern Partnership Countries and Russia, Southern Mediterranean, Western Balkans) focus.

More information available at: www.salto-et.net and www.salto-youth.net

Otlas - the partner finding tool for organisations in the youth field

One of the tools developed and hosted by the SALTO-Youth Resource Centres is Otlas, a central online partner finding tool for organisations in the youth field. Organisations can register their contact details and areas of interest in Otlas, and also create partner requests for project ideas.

More information available at: www.salto-youth.net/otlas

National Erasmus+ Offices

In the third countries not associated to the Programme concerned (Western Balkans, Eastern and Southern Mediterranean countries, Russia and Central Asia) the National Erasmus+ Offices (NEOs) assist the Commission, the Executive Agency and the local authorities in the implementation of the Erasmus+ Programme. They are the focal point in these countries for their stakeholders involved in the Erasmus+ Programme in the area of higher education, vocational education and training, youth and sports. They contribute to improving awareness, visibility, relevance, effectiveness and impact of the international dimension of Erasmus+.

The National Erasmus+ Offices are responsible for:

- providing information about Erasmus+ activities that are open to the participation of their

- countries (including in the fields of higher education, VET, youth and sports, where relevant);
- advising and assisting potential applicants;
 - coordinating the local team of Higher Education Reform Experts (HEREs);
 - contributing to studies and events;
 - providing support to policy dialogue;
 - maintaining contacts with the local authorities and EU Delegations;
 - following policy developments in the above mentioned areas in their country.

National Focal Points

In the third countries not associated to the Programme concerned (Latin America and the Caribbean, Sub-Saharan Africa, Middle East, Afghanistan, Asia and Pacific) the network of National Focal Points (NFPs) support the Commission, the Executive Agency and the local authorities to provide guidance, practical information and assistance on all aspects of participation in Erasmus+ in the **field of higher education**, youth, vocational education and training and sport. They act as focal points for the stakeholders in their country and contribute to improving awareness, visibility, relevance, effectiveness and impact of the international dimension of Erasmus+.

National Academic Recognition Information Centres (NARIC)

The NARIC network provides information concerning the recognition of diplomas and periods of study undertaken in other European countries as well as advice on foreign academic diplomas in the country where the NARIC is established. The NARIC network provides authoritative advice to anyone travelling abroad for the purposes of work or further education, but also to institutions, students, advisers, parents, teachers and prospective employers.

The European Commission supports the activities of the NARIC network through the exchange of information and experience between countries, the identification of good practices, the comparative analysis of systems and policies in this field, and the discussion and analysis of matters of common educational policy interest.

More information available at: <https://www.enic-naric.net/>

Eurodesk network

The Eurodesk network offers information services to young people and those who work with them on European opportunities in the education, training and youth fields, and the involvement of young people in European activities.

Present in all EU Member States and third countries associated to the Programme, and coordinated at European level by the Eurodesk Brussels-link Office, the Eurodesk network offers enquiry answering services, funding information, events and publications. It also contributes to the animation of the European Youth Portal.

The European Youth Portal offers European and national information and opportunities that are of interest to young people who are living, learning and working in Europe. It provides information in 28 languages.

To access the European Youth Portal, go to: <http://europa.eu/youth/>. For more information on Eurodesk, go to: <https://www.eurodesk.eu>.

Platforms and tools

The Erasmus+ Project Results Platform

The Erasmus+ Project Results Platform provides access to information and results concerning all projects funded under the Erasmus+ Programme. Organisations can find their inspiration in the wealth of project information and make use of the results and lessons learned from Erasmus+ implementation.

Projects can be searched by keyword, key action, year, country, topic, type of results, etc. Searches can be saved and constantly updated on the most recent projects, according to pre-defined criteria. Good practice projects - which have been identified in terms of policy relevance, impact, communication potential - are highlighted.

The Erasmus+ Project Results Platform can be accessed here:

<https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/projects/>

The School Education Gateway (SEG)

The School Education Gateway is Europe's online platform for school education, available in 23 EU languages. As it is a public website, it can be accessed by anyone on Internet (i.e. also from countries outside the EU) and the main audience is the broad range of European school education stakeholders: teachers and school leaders, VET teachers and trainers, Early Childhood Education and Care staff, learning support staff, education stakeholder organisation representatives, researchers, local and regional authorities, inspectorates and other central authority agencies, and ministries of education. This wide user reach and diverse content aims to improve the links between policy and practice in European school education, support school and professional development, and provide users with networking and collaborative tools to support their projects and mobility opportunities.

The SEG offers a wide range of content: effective practices developed within European projects; monthly articles and video interviews of European school education experts; online courses to support teachers and other stakeholders to develop their practices; resources such as publications, teaching materials and tutorials; information on school education news and events; and dedicated thematic areas, such as on Inclusion (with a dedicated European Toolkit for Schools) and Key Competences. Teachers and school staff can use the search tools to find training and mobility opportunities for professional development (on-site courses, job shadowing, teaching assignments etc.), which can be funded under Erasmus+ Key Action 1 and suitable partners for Key Action 2 (or other non-Erasmus+) projects.

Access to all Erasmus+ tools and relevant information is available at:

<https://schooleducationgateway.eu>

eTwinning

eTwinning is a community of teachers and school staff from pre-primary to upper secondary schools, hosted on a secure platform accessible only to school staff vetted by National Support Organisations (NSO). Participants can involve themselves in many activities: carrying out projects with other schools and classrooms; discussions with colleagues and development of professional networking; involvement in a variety of professional development opportunities (online and face-to-face). eTwinning is funded under Key Action 2 of the Erasmus+ Programme.

Teachers and schools participating in eTwinning receive support from their National Support Organisations (NSO). These are organisations appointed by the competent national authorities. They assist schools during the process of registration, partner finding and project activity, promote the Action, deliver prizes and quality labels and organise professional development activities for teachers.

The National Support Organisations are coordinated by a Central Support Service (CSS), which is also responsible for the development of the eTwinning platform and the organisation of teacher professional development activities at European level. The eTwinning platform will merge with the School Education Gateway in early 2022 for streamlining access to information and tools.

The list of all services and more information available at:
<https://www.etwinning.net/en/pub/community/countries.cfm>

EPALE

The Electronic Platform for Adult Learning in Europe - known as EPALE - is an initiative of the European Commission funded by the Erasmus+ Programme. It is open to adult learning professionals: teachers, educators, trainers and volunteers, as well as policy-makers, researchers, journalists and academics, and others involved in adult learning.

The site offers up-to-date news on developments in the field and interactive networks, enabling users to link with others all around Europe, engage in discussions and exchange good practice. Amongst many tools and content, EPALE offers instruments of specific interest for Erasmus+ (potential) beneficiaries. Some examples include:

- A Calendar of courses and events
- A Partner-search tool, useful to find partners to prepare an EU-funded project or to find or offer a job shadowing opportunity
- A Course Catalogue, where visitors can find a broad range of online and offline courses
- Communities of practice offer an additional facility to liaise with people and organisations with similar interest
- Collaborative spaces, where project partners can work in a safe environment to develop their project
- The Erasmus+Space, a safe and secure tool in particular for Erasmus+ KA1 and KA2 project coordinators and their partners to put blended mobility/cooperation into practice and to use it for project management and dissemination;
- A Resource centre, where project beneficiaries can source useful reference material and /or post articles, teaching materials, reports, manuals, and any other material produced by their project or their organisation, hence offering an additional dissemination opportunity
- A Blog, where participants in projects can share their experience or upload videos presenting their results in an informal and dynamic way.

Projects that receive EU funding are encouraged to share information on their activities and results on the platform through blog posts, news, events and other kinds of activities.

EPALE is implemented by a Central Support Service and a network of National Support Organisations in EU Member States and third countries associated to the Programme which are in charge of identifying interesting information and encourage stakeholders to use and contribute to the platform. EPALE can be accessed at: <https://epale.ec.europa.eu/>.

SELFIE

SELFIE (“Self-reflection on Effective Learning by Fostering the use of Innovative Educational technologies”) is a free, multilingual, web-based, self-reflection tool to help general and vocational schools develop their digital capacity.

SELFIE for Schools anonymously gathers the views of students, teachers and school leaders on how technology is used in their school. This is done using short statements and questions and a simple 1-5 answer scale. Based on this input, the tool generates a report – a snapshot (‘SELFIE’) of a school’s strengths and weaknesses in their use of technology. SELFIE is available for any primary, secondary and vocational schools in Europe and beyond, and in over 30 languages. It can be used by any school – not just those with advanced levels of infrastructure, equipment and technology use.

The Covid-19 pandemic has shown a massive shift towards digital technologies for remote working and learning, including for VET. It also demonstrated the difficulty of maintaining the work-based learning (WBL) part of VET in companies, which makes it even more urgent to increase the effectiveness of the dialogue between VET teachers and in-company trainers via digital means.

As part of the Digital Education Action Plan, a new tool for teachers is under development. This tool (‘SELFIE for Teachers’) which will be available in all official EU languages in Autumn 2021 will allow teachers to self-assess their digital competence and confidence and to get immediate feedback on strengths and gaps and where they can further develop. Teams of teachers can also work together to use the tool and develop a training plan.

In early 2020, a feasibility study on adapting the SELFIE tool for WBL in VET concluded there is a need for a SELFIE for WBL to bring VET institutions and companies closer together to jointly discuss how to best embed digital technology in the education and training provided. SELFIE for WBL not only gathers the three perspectives of school leaders, VET teachers and learners, but also adds as a fourth perspective the view of in-company trainers. In autumn 2020, nine countries conducted successful pilots for extending SELFIE to WBL, including related to apprenticeships, involving a large number of stakeholders. SELFIE for WBL is expected to be operational for a full roll-out by mid-2021.

SELFIE has been developed by the Joint Research Centre and Directorate General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture (DG EAC). More information about SELFIE can be found here: https://ec.europa.eu/education/schools-go-digital_en

HEInnovate

The HEInnovate guiding framework offers higher education institutions (HEIs) in the EU and beyond the opportunity to examine their innovation and entrepreneurship capacities through self-reflection in one or several of eight dimensions available, which are:

- Leadership and Governance
- Organisational Capacity: Funding, People and Incentives
- Entrepreneurial Teaching and Learning
- Preparing and Supporting Entrepreneurs
- Digital Transformation and Capability
- Knowledge Exchange and Collaboration
- The Internationalised Institution
- Measuring Impact

HEInnovate is also a community of practice and its experts offer workshops for HEIs to improve their innovation performance and train the trainers events to disseminate the approach more widely at national level. Training materials are available on the website. The platform also provides case studies and user stories to showcase examples of different innovation approaches in HEIs throughout the EU. A number of Country Reviews have been done in collaboration with the OECD and are available on the HEInnovate and OECD websites. The HEInnovate Country Reports show innovation and entrepreneurship approaches in different EU member states.

Erasmus+ -funded projects such as the European University alliances and the Alliances for Innovation are invited to use HEInnovate where relevant to accompany their projects.

HEInnovate can be accessed at: <https://heinnovate.eu/en>

The European Youth Portal

The European Youth Portal offers European and national information and opportunities that are of interest to young people who are living, learning and working in Europe. It also encourages the participation of young people in democratic life in Europe notably via the EU Youth Dialogue and other initiatives to engage with young people to influence policy making. The European Youth Portal also provides information for other stakeholders working in the field of youth, is **available in 28 languages** and can be accessed here: <https://europa.eu/youth/>

European Student Card Initiative

The European Student Card Initiative aims at simplifying learning and training mobility by digitalising all the main components necessary for the organisation of student mobility, from information provision to application processes and settling into the host community while abroad. In the context of this initiative, the Erasmus+ Mobile App and Erasmus without Paper Network are now available for higher education institutions and students and will be further enhanced by adding new services and features for users.

The Erasmus+ Mobile App gives students a single online point of access to all the information and services they need before, during, and after their exchanges abroad. The Erasmus+ Mobile App also includes information about participation in the programme for learners in other sectors. The app is available for download in the App store and on Google Play. More information can be found at: erasmusapp.eu

The Erasmus without Paper Network allows higher education institutions to connect to a central communication channel to exchange seamlessly student mobility data in a secure and streamlined manner supporting a fully digitalised mobility management, including online learning agreements and digital inter-institutional agreements. Higher education institutions that are looking to connect to the Erasmus without Paper Network can access information on how to connect, guidelines and tutorials by visiting the Erasmus without Paper Competence Centre: <https://cc.erasmuswithoutpaper.eu>

Knowledge and expert networks

Eurydice network

The Eurydice network primarily focuses on the way education in Europe is structured and organised at all levels and aims at contributing towards a better mutual understanding of systems in Europe. It provides those responsible for education systems and policies in Europe with European-level

comparative analyses and national specific information in the fields of education and youth, which will assist them in their decision-making.

The Eurydice Network produces a vast source of information, including detailed descriptions and overviews of national education systems (National Education systems and Policies), comparative thematic reports devoted to specific topics of Community interest (Thematic Reports), indicators and statistics (Key Data Series), and a series of facts and figures related to education, such as national education structures, school calendars, comparison of teacher salaries and of required taught time for countries and education levels (Facts and Figures).

It consists of a central coordinating unit located at the Executive Agency and national units based in all EU Member States and third countries associated to the Programme plus Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Montenegro.

More information is available on the website of the Executive Agency.

Youth Wiki National Correspondents Network

In line with the EU Youth Strategy and the objective of improving the knowledge on youth issues in Europe, financial support is provided to National Structures contributing to the Youth Wiki, an interactive tool providing information on the situation of young people in Europe and on national youth policies in a coherent, updated and exploitable way.

Financial support is given to the bodies designated by the national authorities, located in an EU Member State or third country associated to the Programme, for actions carried out by these bodies for the production of country specific information, comparable country descriptions and indicators which contribute towards a better mutual understanding of youth systems and policies in Europe.

Network of Higher Education Reform Experts (HEREs)

In the third countries not associated to the Programme concerned (Western Balkans, Eastern and Southern Mediterranean countries, Russia and Central Asia), the National Teams of Higher Education Reform Experts provide a pool of expertise to local authorities and stakeholders to promote reform and enhance progress in higher education. They participate in the development of policies in higher education in their respective country. HERE activities are based on "peer to peer" contacts. Each national team consists of five to fifteen members. The HEREs are experts in the field of higher education (Rectors, Vice-Rectors, Deans, senior academics, international relations officers, students etc.).

The mission of the HEREs involves supporting:

- policy development in their respective countries, by supporting modernisation, reform processes and strategies in higher education, in close contact with the local authorities concerned;
- policy dialogue with the EU in the field of higher education;
- training and counselling activities targeted at local stakeholders, in particular higher education institutions and their staff;
- Erasmus+ projects (in particular those implemented under the Capacity-building Action) by disseminating their results and outcomes, notably good practices and innovative initiatives and exploiting these for training purposes.

National Teams to support the implementation of EU VET tools

The purpose of the national teams of VET experts is to provide a pool of expertise to promote the application of EU VET tools and principles in EU funded projects supported by the Erasmus+ Programme. The concerned EU VET tools are laid down in the relevant EU VET policy documents such as the European Framework for Quality and Effective Apprenticeships and the Council Recommendation on VET (such as the EQAVET Framework, EU core profiles, graduate tracking and others). The experts should in particular provide support to the beneficiaries of EU funded projects supported by the Erasmus+ Programme to implement the abovementioned EU VET tools in their projects.

Network of EQAVET National Reference Points

The EQAVET National Reference Points (NRPs) are established by national authorities and bring together existing relevant bodies involving the social partners and all stakeholders concerned at national and regional levels, to contribute to the implementation of the European framework for quality assurance in VET as defined in the Council Recommendation on vocational education and training for sustainable competitiveness, social fairness and resilience.

The EQAVET NRPs aim to 1) take concrete initiatives to implement and further develop the EQAVET Framework 2) inform and mobilise a wide range of stakeholders to contribute to implementing the EQAVET framework 3) support self-evaluation as a complementary and effective means of quality assurance 4) provide an updated description of the national/regional quality assurance arrangements based on the EQAVET Framework and 5) engage in EU level peer reviews of quality assurance at VET system level.

EQF, Europass and Euroguidance - National centres

For each country, these three networks of national centres are supported through one single agreement:

European Qualifications Framework National Coordination Points (EQF NCPs)

The EQF NCPs, designated by national authorities, support them in:

- developing, implementing and reviewing national qualifications frameworks and referencing them to the European Qualifications Framework (EQF);
- reviewing and updating, when relevant, the referencing of the levels of the national qualifications frameworks or systems to the levels of the EQF.

EQF NCPs bring the EQF closer to individuals and organisations by:

- supporting the inclusion of the appropriate EQF levels on certificates, diplomas, supplements and other qualification documents and on databases of qualifications;
- developing qualification registers or databases that include qualifications included in the national qualification frameworks and publishing them on the Europass portal.

More information available at:

<https://europa.eu/europass/en/implementation-european-qualifications-framework-eqf>

Europass National Centres

The main feature of Europass is an online platform that provides individuals and organisations with interactive tools and information on learning opportunities, qualifications frameworks and qualifications, guidance, skills intelligence, self-assessment tools and documentation of skills and qualifications, and connectivity with learning and employment opportunities. This requires substantial work at national level, carried out by bodies designated by national authorities. This includes in particular:

- Making national information available for the EU platform, namely ensuring the interconnection between the EU platform and national data sources for learning opportunities and national qualifications databases or registers;
- Promoting the use of the services provided by the EU platform;
- Liaising with all relevant stakeholders at national level.

Euroguidance network

Euroguidance is a European network of national resource and information centres, designated by national authorities. All Euroguidance centres share the following common goals:

- cooperation and support at Union level to strengthen policies, systems and practices for guidance within the Union (the development of the European dimension of lifelong guidance);
- support competence development of guidance practitioners;
- provide quality information on lifelong guidance
- promote European opportunities for learning mobility and career management (through the Europass portal).

The main target group of Euroguidance is guidance practitioners and policy makers from both the educational and employment sectors. More information available at: <http://euroguidance.eu>