

Mobility projects for young people - “Youth Exchanges”

Mobility projects for young people - “Youth Exchanges”

Under this Action¹, organisations and informal groups of young people can receive support to carry out projects bringing together young people from different countries to exchange and learn outside their formal educational system.

Objectives of the Action

Erasmus supports non-formal learning mobility of young people in the form of Youth Exchanges, with the objective to engage and empower young people to become active citizens, connect them to the European project as well as to help them acquire and develop competences for life and their professional future.

More specifically, Youth Exchanges aim to:

- foster intercultural dialogue and learning and feeling of being European;
- develop skills and attitudes of young people;
- strengthen European values and breaking down prejudices and stereotypes;
- raise awareness about socially relevant topics and thus stimulate engagement in society and active participation.

The Action is open to all young people, with a special focus on those with fewer opportunities.

Policy context

The European Union Youth Strategy 2019-2027 sets out a Framework for European cooperation in the youth field, based on the Commission’s Communication of 22 May 2018 on ‘Engaging, Connecting and Empowering young people’. The Strategy fosters youth participation in democratic life, supports social and civic engagement and aims to ensure that all young people have the necessary resources to take part in society. The EU Youth Strategy also includes a Youth dialogue process and in that context, 11 European Youth Goals have been developed in 2018. These goals

identify cross-sectoral areas that affect young people's lives and point out challenges. The EU Youth Strategy should contribute to realising this vision of young people. Under the core area 'Connect', the EU Youth Strategy is promoting and facilitating connections, relations and exchange of experience between young people as a pivotal asset for the future development of the EU. These connections are best fostered through different forms of mobility, one of which is Youth Exchanges.

https://ec.europa.eu/youth/policy/youth-strategy_en

Thematic strategies in the youth field

The Erasmus+ Programme seeks to promote youth participation, reinforcement of the quality of informal and non-formal learning processes and development of quality youth work. Further support in these areas is available through specific thematic strategies, such as Youth Participation Strategy, Youthpass and the European Training Strategy (ETS)².

Description of the activities

Youth Exchanges

Youth Exchanges are meetings of groups of young people from at least two different countries who gather for a short period to implement jointly a non-formal learning programme (a mix of workshops, exercises, debates, role-plays, simulations, outdoor activities, etc.) on a topic of their interest, seeking inspiration from the European Youth Goals. The learning period comprises a planning period before the application, preparation phase before as well as evaluation and follow-up after the exchange.

The following activities are not eligible for grants under Youth Exchanges: academic study trips; exchange activities that aim to make financial profit; exchange activities that can be considered as tourism; festivals; holiday travel; performance tours, statutory meetings, training courses by adults for young people. Additionally to Youth Exchanges, projects could also comprise of Preparatory Visits.

Preparatory Visits

Preparatory visits aim to ensure high quality activities by facilitating and preparing administrative arrangements, building trust and understanding and setting-up a solid partnership between the organisations and people involved. In the case of Youth Exchanges activities with young people with fewer opportunities, the preparatory visit should enable to ensure that the specific needs of the participants can be catered for. Preparatory Visits take place in the country of one of the receiving organisations before the start of the Youth Exchange activity.

Setting up a project

A project is implemented by at least two organisations. Organisations involved in a project should benefit from their participation; the project should therefore be in line with their objectives and fit their needs. Organisations involved assume the roles of "sending" participants and/or "receiving" i.e. hosting the activity. One of the organisations takes also the role of coordinator and applies for the whole project on behalf of the partnership.

A project consists of four stages: planning, preparation, implementation and follow-up. Participating organisations and young people involved in the activities should take an active role in all those stages enhancing thus their learning experience.

- Planning (define the needs, objectives, learning outcomes, activity formats, development of work programme, schedule of activities etc. before submitting the application)
- Preparation (practical arrangements, set up of agreements with partners, linguistic/intercultural/learning- and task-related preparation of participants before departure etc.);
- Implementation of activities;
- Follow-up (evaluation of the activities, identification and documentation of the learning outcomes of participants, as well as dissemination and use of the project's outcomes).

A quality Youth Exchange

- relies on the active involvement of young people and participating organisations, who should take an active role in all the stages of the project, enhancing in this way their learning and development experience;
- involves diverse groups of participants and builds on this diversity;
- is based on clearly identified needs of the young participants;
- ensures that the non-formal and informal learning outcomes of the participants are properly identified and documented;
- encourages the participants to reflect on European topics and values.

Learning process

Setting a Youth Exchange in the context of non-formal learning requires that at least a part of the desired learning outcomes is planned in advance, in order to ensure the appropriate opportunities. Young people taking part in the activity should contribute to the identification of their needs and the learning that they wish to obtain or develop through the Youth Exchange.

Participants should also be involved as much as possible in the design and development of the activity (setting up the programme, the working methods and defining the division of tasks) and think how to prepare to maximise the learning and personal development they would gain during the Exchange.

After the core activity has finished, participants should be invited to provide a feedback on the activity, reflect on what they have learnt and how they can make use of these learning outcomes. Furthermore, participants should consider possible follow-up of the activity. This can be done individually and when possible as a group.

Organisations should support the learning process, the identification and documentation of the learning outcomes, in particular through Youthpass.

Inclusion and diversity

The Erasmus+ Programme seeks to promote equal opportunities and access, inclusion and fairness across all its actions. Organisations should design accessible and inclusive project activities, taking into account the views of participants with fewer opportunities and involving them in the decision making process.

Youth Exchanges are particularly suitable for inclusion of young people with fewer opportunities:

- Group mobility offers international mobility experience in the safety of a group;
- The short duration of Youth Exchanges makes the involvement of young people with fewer opportunities appropriate;
- Involvement of local participants facilitates first participation in European projects.

Youth Exchanges are also suitable to work on inclusion and diversity as the subject of the project, for example to support fight against stereotypes, foster understanding, tolerance and non-discrimination. The whole project should take a conscious approach towards inclusion and diversity. In the planning, preparation, implementation and follow-up these aspects should be taken into consideration.

Protection and Safety of participants

A Youth Exchange involves group leaders. Group leaders monitor and provide support to participants to ensure the qualitative learning process during the core activity. At the same time, they cater for a safe, respectful and non-discriminatory environment and protection of the participants. During the planning and preparation of a Youth Exchange, the issue of protection and safety of the participants should be addressed and all necessary measures to prevent/reduce risks should be foreseen.

Environmental sustainability

A Youth Exchange should promote environmentally sustainable and responsible behaviour among participants, raising the awareness about the importance of acting to reduce or compensate for the environmental footprint of mobility activities. A Youth Exchange should be designed and implemented with environmental consciousness by e.g. integrating sustainable practices such as opting for reusable or eco-friendly materials, reducing waste and recycling, sustainable means of transportation.

Digital transition

The Erasmus+ Programme supports all participating organisations in incorporating the use of digital tools and learning methods to complement their physical activities, to improve the cooperation between partner organisations, and to improve the quality of the activities.

Erasmus Youth Quality Standards

The implementation of all projects supported under this Action must follow the Erasmus Youth Quality Standards for organising high quality learning mobility activities. The Erasmus Youth Quality Standards cover the basic principles of the Action, as well as concrete implementation practices for project tasks such as selection and preparation of participants, definition, evaluation and recognition of learning outcomes, sharing of project results, etc. The Erasmus Youth Quality Standards are available here:

<https://erasmus-plus.ec.europa.eu/document/erasmus-quality-standards-mobility-projects-youth>

Criteria used to assess this project

Eligibility Criteria

General Eligibility criteria

The general criteria below apply for standard Youth Exchanges projects. For accreditations, please refer to the relevant section of this guide.

Eligible participating organisations

A participating organisation can be:

- a non-profit organisation, association, NGO; European Youth NGO; a public body at local, regional, national level; a social enterprise; a profit-making body active in Corporate Social Responsibility;
- an informal group of young people³.

established in an EU Member State or third country associated to the Programme or a third country not associated to the Programme neighbouring the EU (regions 1 to 4; see section “Eligible countries” in part A of this Guide).

Who can apply?

Any eligible participating organisation or group established in an EU Member State or third country associated to the Programme can be the applicant. This organisation applies on behalf of all participating organisations involved in the project⁴.

Number of participating organisations

Minimum two participating organisations (at least one sending and at least one receiving organisation) from different countries must be involved.

Duration of project

From 3 to 24 months.

Where to apply?

To the National Agency of the country in which the applicant organisation is established.

When to apply?

Applicants have to submit their grant applications by the following dates:

23 February at 12:00:00 (midday Brussels time) for projects starting between 1 June and 31 December of the same year

4 October at 12:00:00 (midday Brussels time) for projects starting between 1 January and 31 May of the following year

Possible additional round:

National Agencies may decide to open an additional round. The National Agencies will inform the

applicants about the opening of the additional round through their website.

- If an additional round is organised, applicants have to submit their applications by 4 May at 12:00:00 (midday Brussels time), for projects starting between 1 August and 31 December of the same year

How to apply?

Please see part C of this Guide for details on how to apply

Annexes

A declaration of honour of the legal representative must be annexed to the application form.

A timetable of each of the Youth Exchanges and Preparatory Visits planned in the project must be annexed to the application form.

Additional Eligibility criteria for Youth Exchanges

Duration of activity

From 5 to 21 days, excluding travel days.

Venue(s) of the activity

The activity must take place in the country of one (or several, in case of itinerant activities) of the organisations participating in the activity.

Number of participating organisations

Minimum two participating organisations (at least one sending and at least one receiving organisation) from different countries must be involved.

Activities within EU Member States and third countries associated to the Programme: all participating organisations must be from an EU Member State or third country associated to the Programme.

Activities with third countries not associated to the Programme neighbouring the EU: the activity must involve at least one participating organisation from an EU Member State or third country associated to the Programme and one participating organisation from a third country not associated to the Programme neighbouring the EU (Regions 1-4).

Eligible participants

Young people aged between 13 and 30⁵ residents in the countries of their sending and receiving organisations.

Group leaders⁶ and facilitators involved must be at least 18 years old.

Number of participants per activity and composition of national groups

Minimum 16 and maximum 60 participants per activity (group leaders, facilitators and

accompanying persons not included). In the cases of Youth Exchanges involving only young people with fewer opportunities, the minimum number of participants is 10.

Minimum 4 participants per group (group leaders, facilitators and accompanying persons not included).

Minimum two groups of young people from two different countries.

Each group must have at least one group leader.

Maximum two facilitators per activity.

Other criteria

At least one of the sending organisations or the receiving organisations in the activity must be from the country of the National Agency to which the application is submitted.

Additional Eligibility criteria for Preparatory Visits

Venue(s) of the activity

The activity must take place in the country of one of the receiving organisations.

Eligible participants

Representatives of the participating organisations, facilitators, group leaders and young people taking part in the main activity.

Award criteria

Projects will be assessed against the following criteria. To be considered for funding, proposals must score at least 60 points. Furthermore, they must score at least half of the maximum score points in each of the categories of award criteria mentioned below.

Relevance, rationale and impact (maximum score 30 points)

- The relevance of the project to:
 - the objectives of the Action;
 - the needs of the participating organisations and participants of the exchange;
 - The extent to which the project is suitable of producing high-quality learning outcomes for the participants;
- The potential impact of the project:
 - on participants and participating organisations during and after the project lifetime;
 - outside the organisations and individuals directly participating in the project, at local, regional, national and/or European or global level.
- The extent to which the project is suitable of contributing to the inclusion and diversity, green, digital and participatory dimensions of the Programme;
- The extent to which the project introduces newcomers and less experienced organisations to the Action.

Quality of project design (maximum score 40 points)

The consistency between identified needs, project objectives, participant profiles and activities proposed;

- The clarity, completeness and quality of all the phases of the project: planning, preparation (including preparation provided to participants), implementation of activities and follow-up;
- The extent to which the young people are involved in all phases of the activities;
- The extent to which the activities are designed in an accessible and inclusive way and are open to participants with diverse backgrounds and abilities.
- The appropriateness of the participative learning methods proposed, including of any online/digital components;
- The quality of arrangements and support for the reflection process, the identification and documentation of the participants' learning outcomes, and the consistent use of European transparency and recognition tools, in particular Youthpass;
- The balanced representation of participants in terms of countries and gender;
- The adequacy and effectiveness of the measures foreseen to ensure safety and protection of participants;
- The extent to which the activities incorporate sustainable and environmental-friendly practices.

Quality of project management (maximum score 30 points)

- The quality of the practical arrangements, management and support modalities;
- The quality of the cooperation and communication between the participating organisations, as well as with other relevant stakeholders;
- The quality of measures for evaluating the different phases and outcomes of the project;
- The appropriateness and quality of measures aimed at disseminating the outcomes of the project within and outside the participating organisations.

Funding rules

Budget category - Organisational Support

Eligible costs and applicable rules

Costs directly linked to the implementation of mobility activities.

Financing mechanism: contribution to unit costs

Rule of allocation: based on the number of participants, excluding group leaders, accompanying persons and facilitators.

Amount

100 EUR per participant in a Youth Exchange

Budget category - Travel

Eligible costs and applicable rules

Contribution to the travel costs of participants, including group leaders, accompanying persons and facilitators, from their place of origin to the venue of the activity and return.

-

Financing mechanism: contribution to unit costs.

Rule of allocation: based on the travel distance and number of persons.

The applicant must indicate the distance between the place of origin and the venue of the activity⁷ by using the distance calculator supported by the European Commission⁸.

For itinerant activities, the applicant should add up the distances between individual venues and choose the distance band corresponding to the total⁹.

Amount

Travel distance	Standard travel	Green travel
10 - 99 km	23 EUR	
100 - 499 km	180 EUR	210 EUR
500 - 1999 km	275 EUR	320 EUR
2000 - 2999 km	360 EUR	410 EUR
3000 - 3999 km	530 EUR	610 EUR
4000 - 7999 km	820 EUR	
8000 km or more	1500 EUR	

Budget category - Individual support

Eligible costs and applicable rules

Costs linked to subsistence.

Financing mechanism: contribution to unit costs.

Rule of allocation: based on the duration of the stay per participant, including group leaders, accompanying persons and facilitators (if necessary), including also one travel day before the activity and one travel day following the activity, and up to four additional days for participants receiving a green travel grant.

Amount

Table A2.1 (below) per participant per day

Budget category - Inclusion support

Eligible costs and applicable rules

Inclusion support for organisations: Costs related to the organisation of mobility activities for participants with fewer opportunities.

Financing mechanism: contribution to unit costs.

Rule of allocation: based on the number of participants with fewer opportunities, excluding group leaders, accompanying persons and facilitators.

Amount

100 EUR per participant in a Youth Exchange

Inclusion support for participants: Additional costs directly linked to participants with fewer opportunities and their accompanying persons, including group leaders and facilitators (including justified costs related to travel and subsistence if a grant for these participants is not requested through budget categories "Travel" and "Individual support").

Financing mechanism: real costs.

Rule of allocation: the request must be justified by the applicant and approved by the National Agency.

Amount

100% of eligible costs

Budget category - Preparatory visit support**Eligible costs and applicable rules**

Costs linked to the implementation of the preparatory visit including travel and subsistence.

Financing mechanism: unit costs.

Rule of allocation: excluding participants from the receiving organisation. A maximum of 2 participants per participating organisation can be funded, provided that the second participant is a young person. In addition, one facilitator per preparatory visit can also be funded. Conditional: the need for a Preparatory Visit, objectives and participants must be justified by the applicant and approved by the National Agency. This condition does not apply for projects funded under the accreditation system.

Amount

575 EUR per participant per preparatory visit.

Budget category - Exceptional costs**Eligible costs and applicable rules**

Costs for providing a financial guarantee, if the National Agency asks for it.

Visa and visa-related costs, residence permits, vaccinations, medical certifications.

Expensive travel costs of participants, including group leaders accompanying persons and facilitators; including the use of cleaner, lower carbon emission means of transport.

Financing mechanism: real costs.

Rule of allocation: the request must be justified by the applicant and approved by the National Agency.

Expensive travel applies in cases where the travel support based on unit cost does not cover 70% of the travel costs of participants.

Amount

Financial guarantee: 80% of eligible costs

Expensive travel costs: 80% of eligible costs

Visa and visa-related costs, residence permits, vaccinations, medical certifications : 100% of eligible costs

Table A2.1 Individual support for youth exchanges

	Individual Support (euro per day)
Austria	45
Belgium	42
Bulgaria	32
Croatia	35
Cyprus	32
Czech Republic	32
Denmark	45
Estonia	33
Finland	45
North Macedonia	28
France	38
Germany	41
Greece	38
Hungary	33
Iceland	45
Ireland	49
Italy	39
Latvia	34
Liechtenstein	45
Lithuania	34
Luxembourg	45
Malta	39
Netherlands	45
Norway	50
Poland	34
Portugal	37
Romania	32
Serbia	29
Slovakia	35

	Individual Support (euro per day)
Slovenia	34
Spain	34
Sweden	45
Turkey	32
Neighbouring third countries not associated to the Programme	29

1 The main budget of this Action is allocated to support transnational activities involving organisations and participants from EU Member States and third countries associated to the Programme. However, around 25% of the budget available can fund international mobility activities including organisations and participants from third countries not associated to the Programme neighbouring the EU (regions 1 to 4; see section "Eligible countries" in Part A of this Guide).

2 The strategies can be found here: <https://www.salto-youth.net/>

3 Group of at least four young people between 13 and 30 years old. One of the members of the group who is at least 18-years old assumes the role of representative and takes responsibility on behalf of the group. Please check the glossary for the definition of an informal group. For the purpose of this action and any provisions relating to it, "an informal group of young people" shall fit under the notion "participating organisation". Where a reference is made to "participating organisation" it shall be deemed to cover also an "informal group of young people".

4 Participating organisations will need to sign a mandate to the applicant organisation. The mandates should be provided at application stage and at the latest by the time of the grant agreement signature. For further information, please check Part C of this guide.

5

Please consider the following: lower age limits - participants must have reached the minimum age at the start date of the activity. upper age limits - participants must not be older than the indicated maximum age at the start date of the activity.

6 a group leader is an adult who joins the young people participating in a youth exchange in order to ensure their effective learning, protection and safety

7 For example, if a person from Madrid (Spain) is taking part in an activity taking place in Rome (Italy), the applicant will calculate the distance from Madrid to Rome (1365,28 KM) and then select the applicable travel distance band (i.e. between 500 and 1999 km).

8 http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/tools/distance_en.htm

9 For example, if a participant from Madrid (Spain) is taking part in an itinerant activity taking place first in Rome (Italy) and then Ljubljana (Slovenia), the applicant will first calculate the distance between Madrid and Rome (1365,28 KM), then between Rome and Ljubljana (489,75 KM) and add both distances (1855,03 KM) b) select the applicable travel distance band (i.e. between 500 and 1999 KM) and c) calculate the EU grant that will provide a contribution to the costs of travel of the participant from Madrid to Ljubljana (via Rome) and return (275 EUR).

Tagged in:

Youth