

Youth participation activities

Activities outside formal education and training that encourage, foster and facilitate young people's participation in Europe's democratic life at local, regional, national and European level.

Objectives of the Action¹

Erasmus+ supports youth-driven local, national and transnational participation projects run by informal groups of young people and/or youth organisations encouraging youth participation in Europe's democratic life and following one or more of the following objectives:

- provide young people with opportunities to engage and learn to participate in civic society (providing pathways of engagement for young people in their daily lives but also in democratic life, aiming for a meaningful civic, economic, social, cultural and political participation of young people from all backgrounds, with special focus on those with fewer opportunities);
- raise young people's awareness about European common values and fundamental rights and contribute to the European integration process, including through contribution to the achievement of one or more of the EU Youth Goals;
- develop young people's digital competences and media literacy (in particular critical thinking and the ability to assess and work with information) with a view to increasing young people's resilience to disinformation, fake news and propaganda, as well as their capacity to participate in democratic life;
- bring together young people and decision makers at local, regional, national and transnational level and/or contribute to the EU Youth Dialogue.

Policy context

The European Union Youth Strategy 2019-2027² 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'. Under the core area 'Engage', the EU Youth Strategy aims for a meaningful civic, economic, social, cultural and political participation of 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 were developed in 2018, identifying a range of cross-sectoral areas that affect young people's lives and point out challenges to be tackled in each of them. Based on the input of young stakeholders, each 18-month cycle of the EU Youth Dialogue identifies specific thematic priorities, designated to become the focus of implementing the EU Youth Strategy over the given period.

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)³.

Description of the activities

Youth participation activities are non-formal learning activities revolving around active participation of young people. Such activities aim to enable young people to experience exchanges, cooperation, cultural and civic action. Supported activities should help the participants strengthen their personal, social, citizenship and digital competences and become active European citizens.

This Action supports the use of alternative, innovative, smart and digital forms of youth participation, including the extension of youth participation into a variety of sectors and spaces (healthcare services, sports facilities etc., regardless of whether these are operated by the public or private sector), opening pathways to active participation for young people from all backgrounds.

Youth participation activities can be actively used to conduct dialogues and discussions between young people and decision-makers to promote the active participation of young people in democratic life in Europe. As a concrete result, young people are able to make their voices heard (through the formulation of positions, proposals and recommendations), especially on how youth policies should be shaped and implemented in Europe. Youth participation activities can also take the form of civic action and youth activism, allowing young people to engage in various ways to raise awareness of issues that matter to them.

Youth participation activities can be either transnational (implemented in one or more participating countries and involving partners from several participating countries) or national (implemented at local, regional or national level and involving informal group(s) of young people and/or organisations from a single participating country). National youth participation Activities are particularly suited to testing ideas at the local level and as a tool for following-up previous initiatives to help upscale and further develop successful ideas.

All Youth participation activities, regardless of the level at which they are implemented, need to have a demonstrated European dimension and/or added value and each individual supported activity must clearly contribute to reaching one or more of the Action's objectives listed above.

Supported activities can take the form of (or a combination of): workshops, debates, role-plays, simulations, use of digital tools (e.g. digital democracy tools), awareness raising campaigns, trainings, meetings and other forms of online or offline interaction between young people and decision-makers, consultations, information and/or cultural events etc.

Some examples of activities that could be implemented within a project are:

- face-to-face or online workshops and/or meetings, seminars or other events/processes at local, regional, national or transnational level offering space for information, debate and active participation of young people on issues relevant to their daily lives as active European citizens, ideally including, leading to or following up on interactions with decision-makers and other stakeholders concerned by such issues;
- consultations of young people identifying topics/issues of specific relevance to them (in local, regional, national or transnational context) and identifying their needs related to participation in addressing such topics/issues;
- awareness-raising campaigns revolving around participation of young people in democratic life, including information and/or cultural events linked to specific societal challenges relevant to young people;
- facilitation of access to open, safe and accessible virtual and/or physical spaces for young people, offering effective opportunities for learning to participate in democratic life and processes;

- simulations of the functioning of democratic institutions and the roles of decision-makers within such institutions.

Projects may or may not include a mobility element and/or events involving physical presence of participants at a specific location. Specific financial support is foreseen for such activities (mobilities and physical events). Wherever relevant, it is highly encouraged to integrate digital activity formats (e.g. webinars, hackathons, various e-participation tools etc.) and/or training regarding the use of digital democracy tools in activities to be implemented within a Youth participation activities project.

A project should consist of different activities that together contribute to achieving the planned objectives. Some of these activities could take the form of mobilities, where the participants travel to a different venue than where they reside, to take part in a participatory experience. These mobilities can be both national and international. The activities can also take the form of a physical event, involving the physical presence of young people and decision makers, including participants that are not directly involved in the implementation of the project, at a specific location. Separate budget categories support the organisation of mobility activities and youth participation events. Depending on the needs of specific projects, mobilities and physical events can be either standalone or they can be combined (e.g. if it is necessary for the participants to travel to take part in an event, this can be declared as a mobility activity as well as an event, triggering relevant support for travel and subsistence costs). A typical project will also include activities that are neither mobility activities nor physical events. These are equally important for the implementation of the project and should be covered from the budget category “project management”.

The following types of activities may not be supported under this Action: statutory meetings of organisations or networks of organisations, **organisation of partisan political events**, physical infrastructure (e.g. the cost of construction/acquisition of buildings and their permanent equipment).

Examples of projects with a strong participation element (not limited to the format of Youth participation activities) and relevant best practices can be found in the Youth Participation Toolkit⁴.

Setting up a project

A project supported by this Action should include one or more of the activities described above. Activities may be combined in a flexible manner, depending on the objectives of the project and the needs of the participating organisation(s) and participants.

A project is implemented by one or more informal groups of young people, one or more organisations, or a combination thereof. The informal group(s) of young people and/or participating organisations must be identified at application stage. If only an informal group of young people is involved, one of them applies on behalf of the group. If several groups or organisations are involved, one of them takes 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 ("activities conceived by young people for young people"). The Youth Participation Toolkit can provide practical ideas and guidance to enhance youth participation.

- Planning (define the needs, objectives, learning outcomes, activity formats, development of work programme, schedule of activities etc.)
- Preparation (practical arrangements, set up of agreements with partners, confirmation of the

target group(s) of envisaged activities, linguistic/intercultural/learning- and task-related preparation of participants 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). As a part of the follow-up phase, each project should envisage providing feedback on concrete project outcomes to the young participants, including on how such outcomes have been communicated to other relevant stakeholders and/or used by them.

EU Youth Dialogue

The topics and priorities identified in the context of the EU Youth Dialogue⁵ may serve as inspiration for Youth participation activities at all levels. A similar source of inspiration might be found in the EU Youth Goals developed in the EU Youth Dialogue and which identify cross-sectoral areas affecting young people's lives and pointing out challenges. Furthermore, results of successful Youth participation activities may be used as input for further stages of the EU Youth Dialogue.

Learning Process

A Youth participation activities project needs to envisage support for the reflection process, identification and documentation of individual 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 participation activities are particularly suitable for inclusion of young people with fewer opportunities:

- Youth participation activities are designed as a grass-root action format with very flexible parameters (duration, number of participants, national/transnational activities etc.), which can be easily adapted to the specific needs of young people with fewer opportunities;
- Informal groups of young people carrying out a Youth participation activities project may be supported by a coach⁶. The services of a coach could be particularly relevant and helpful to support young people with fewer opportunities in developing and carrying out their projects.
- The objectives of the action include providing young people with opportunities for learning to participate in civic society, as well as improving digital and media literacy. Projects pursuing these goals can be especially useful for helping young people with fewer opportunities overcome some of the challenges they may be facing.

Youth participation activities are also particularly suitable to work thematically on inclusion and diversity in society, for example to support fight against stereotypes, foster understanding, tolerance and non-discrimination.

Protection and Safety of participants

During the planning and preparation of a project, the issue of protection and safety of the participants should be addressed and all necessary measures to prevent/reduce risks should be foreseen.

Community Building

Inclusion of community-building activities in Youth participation activities projects is strongly encouraged. Wherever possible, such activities should strive to survive beyond the duration of supported projects and become self-sustainable.

Environmental Sustainability

A project 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. It 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.

The introduction of digital and online elements to lower the threshold for participation of young people with fewer opportunities is encouraged. Through projects and activities that aim to boost digital skills, foster digital literacy and/or develop an understanding of the risks and opportunities of digital technology, the programme can change mindsets and contribute to developing digital and blended approaches in youth activities.

Depending on the design and objectives of the activities, the development of competences and awareness on digital issues, and the use of new technologies can be introduced in physical events or learning mobilities, whereas purely virtual components should be financed from the project management costs. Duly justified expenses for including young people with fewer opportunities can be applied for under inclusion costs.

Erasmus Youth Quality Standards

The implementation of all activities 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

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 people.⁷

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 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 project.⁸

Number and profile of participating organisations

- National Youth participation projects: minimum one participating organisation must be involved.
- Transnational Youth participation projects: minimum two participating organisations from different countries must be involved.

Duration of project

From 3 to 24 months.

Venue(s) of the activities

The activities must take place in the country of one or more participating organisations. Activities can also take place at the seat of an Institution of the European Union⁹, even if in the project there are no participating organisations from the country that hosts the Institution.

Eligible participants

Young people aged between 13 and 30¹⁰ resident in the country of the participating organisations and decision-makers relevant to the topics addressed by the project.

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 monthly timeline of the Youth participation activities project showing all activities planned must be annexed to the application form.

In addition, if the project plans mobility activities and/or events: A timetable of each of the mobility activities and events planned in the project must be annexed to the application form.

Award criteria

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.
- The extent to which the project will address one or more of the priorities identified in the context of the EU Youth Dialogue or the Youth Goals;
- The extent to which the project is suitable for producing high-quality learning outcomes for the participants;
- The extent to which the project provides European added value;
- The potential impact of the project:
 - for 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 incorporates measures aimed at making its results sustainable beyond the project's life-time.
- 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;
- The extent to which the project addresses sustainable and environmental-friendly practices.

Quality of project design (maximum score 40 points)

- The consistency between identified needs, project objectives, participants profile and activities proposed;
- The clarity, completeness and quality of all the phases of the project: preparation (including preparation of the participants), implementation and follow-up (including a feedback mechanism for participants);
- The extent to which 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 fewer opportunities;
- The appropriateness of the participative learning methods proposed, including of any virtual components;
- The extent to which the project makes use of alternative, innovative and smart forms of youth participation, in particular to test new ideas and follow up;

- The quality of arrangements and support for the reflection process, the identification and documentation of the participants' learning outcomes, and the consistent use of the European transparency and recognition tools, in particular Youthpass;
- 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 and management and support modalities;
- The quality of the cooperation and communication between the participants of the group(s), participating organisations, as well as with other relevant stakeholders;
- The quality 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

The budget of the project must be drafted according to the following funding rules (in euro):

Maximum grant awarded per project for Youth participation activities: 60.000 EUR

Budget category - Project management

Eligible costs and applicable rules

Costs linked to the management and implementation of the project (e.g. preparation and implementation of project meetings, preparation of activities, implementation, evaluation, dissemination and follow-up).

Financing mechanism: contribution to unit costs.

Rule of allocation: based on the duration of the project.

Amount

EUR 500 per month

Budget category - Coaching costs

Eligible costs and applicable rules

Costs linked to the involvement of a coach in the project. Coaching costs are only applicable if the project is implemented by an informal group of young people.

Financing mechanism: contribution to unit costs.

Rule of allocation: based on the venue country and the working days.

The request for financial support to cover coach costs must be motivated in the application form. The duration of coaching is not linked to the project duration.

Amount

Table B3 (below) per day of work. Maximum 12 days.

Budget category - Inclusion support

Eligible costs and applicable rules

Additional costs directly linked to participants with fewer opportunities and their accompanying persons, decision makers 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 - 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.

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 B3 Coaching costs

Country Group

Teacher/Trainer/Researcher/ Youth worker Unit contribution per day

Country Group	Teacher/Trainer/Researcher/ Youth worker Unit contribution per day
Denmark, Ireland, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Austria, Sweden, Liechtenstein, Norway	241
Belgium, Germany, France, Italy, Finland, Iceland	214
Czech Republic, Greece, Spain, Cyprus, Malta, Portugal, Slovenia	137
Bulgaria, Estonia, Croatia, Latvia, Lithuania, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, North Macedonia, Turkey	74

Additional funding for physical events carried out in the frame of the project

Budget category - Youth participation events support

Eligible costs and applicable rules

Costs linked to the implementation of national and transnational physical events central to achieving the objectives of the Youth participation activities project. This budget category is not intended to cover the participation of staff of the participating organisation(s)/ members of the informal group(s) of young people and facilitators, as attendance of meetings by these participants should be covered by the budget category “project management”.

Financing mechanism: contribution to unit costs.

Rule of allocation: based on the number of participants at the event, including decision makers, excluding facilitators. When relevant, Youth participation events support can be combined with funding for mobilities.

Amount

EUR 100 per participant

Additional funding for mobilities carried out in the framework of the project

Budget category - Travel

Eligible costs and applicable rules

Contribution to the travel costs of participants, including accompanying persons, decision makers and facilitators, from their place of origin to the venue of the activity and return, regardless of whether the travel is national or transnational.

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 activity¹¹ by using the distance calculator supported by the European Commission¹².

For itinerant activities, the applicant should add up the distances between individual venues and choose the distance band corresponding to the total.¹³

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 accompanying persons, decision makers and facilitators (if necessary), including also one travel day before the activity and one travel day following the activity (if necessary), 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

Costs related to the organisation of mobility activities involving participants with fewer opportunities.

Financing mechanism: contribution to unit costs.

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

Amount

100 EUR per participant

Budget category - Exceptional costs

Eligible costs and applicable rules

Expensive travel costs of participants, including accompanying persons, decision makers 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

80% of eligible costs

Table A2.1 Individual support for youth exchanges

	Youth Participation Activities (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
Slovenia	34
Spain	34
Sweden	70
Turkey	45

1 The main budget of this Action is allocated to support projects 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 projects 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 https://europa.eu/youth/strategy_en

3 The strategies can be found here: Youth Participation Strategy: <https://participationpool.eu/Youthpass>:
[https://www.youthpass.eu/de/SALTO-YOUTH - What is Youthpass? / ETS](https://www.youthpass.eu/de/SALTO-YOUTH-What-is-Youthpass-/ETS):
<https://www.salto-youth.net/rc/training-and-cooperation/trainingstrategy/>

4 <https://participationpool.eu/toolkit/>

5 https://europa.eu/youth/strategy/euyouthdialogue_en

6 Depending on their needs, informal groups of young people may use one or several coaches during the project.

7 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".

8 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.

9 Seats of the Institutions of the European Union are Brussels, Frankfurt, Luxembourg, Strasbourg, and The Hague

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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 of the activity.

11 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).

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

13 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:

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