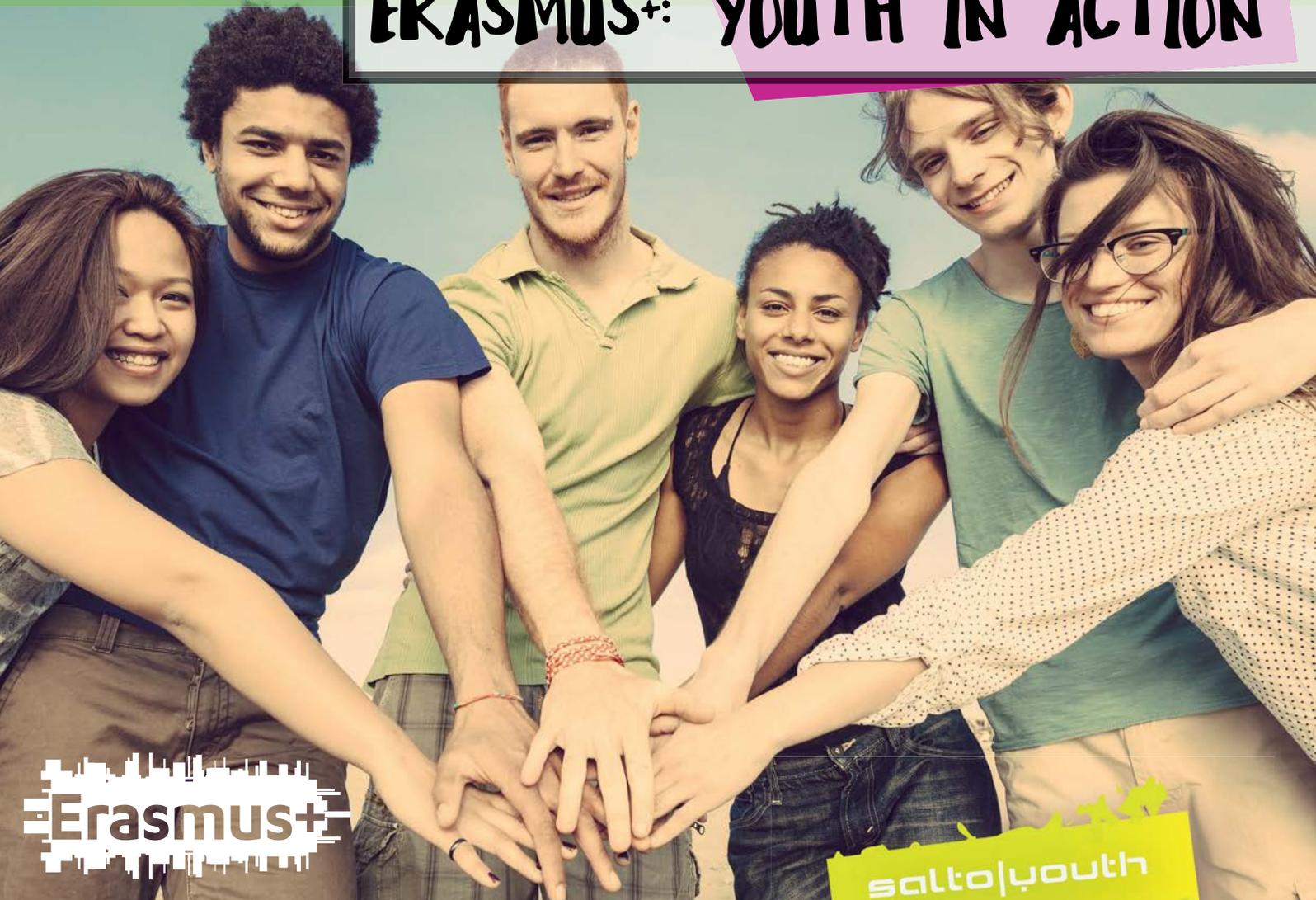


SALTO-YOUTH
SOUTH EAST EUROPE
RESOURCE CENTRE



Erasmus+

ERASMUS+ YOUTH IN ACTION



OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE WESTERN BALKAN REGION

This publication highlights the opportunities within the European Union's Erasmus+ Programme in the field of youth, in particular those for potential applicants and beneficiaries based in the so-called Partner Countries of the Programme in the Western Balkan region¹, who can participate in the Programme under specific conditions.

All the contents of this publication are presented with the intention of providing an overview as a first step into the Erasmus+ Programme. Before proposing a project application for financial support from the Programme, applicants are strongly advised to read the Programme Guide for the particular year, which outlines in detail the conditions and criteria for funding and the obligations of the beneficiaries.

It is also recommended that organizations based in the Western Balkan region seek advice and guidance from the European Commission's Education, Audio-visual and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA), SALTO South East Europe Resource Centre (SALTO SEE) or the local Contact Points in the Western Balkan countries ahead of the application deadlines, and to follow their websites and other communication channels. Contact addresses can be found at the end of this publication (under More Information).

¹ Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo (This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence), Montenegro and Serbia.

ERASMUS+ PROGRAMME

Erasmus+ is the European Union's present Programme in the fields of education, training, youth and sport until 2020. Within its broad framework, it complements the 25-year tradition of European programmes in the relevant fields, with the addition of support for grass roots sports.

The Programme builds on a framework set in the Europe 2020 Strategy, addressing the contemporary socio-economic challenges in Europe by strengthening the education and youth systems and promoting life-long learning. Providing the citizens with adequate skills required by the competitive job markets, it aims at reversing the economic stagnation in the European Union and boosting growth. Education and youth participation are also key elements in fostering inclusion, intercultural understanding and the overall social cohesion in Europe.

The Programme's implementation pursues the following general objectives:

- the objectives of the Europe 2020 Strategy, including the headline education target²;
- the objectives of the strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training (ET 2020), including the corresponding benchmarks;
- the sustainable development of Partner Countries in the field of higher education;
- the overall objectives of the renewed framework for European cooperation in the youth field (2010-2018);
- the objective of developing the European dimension in sport, in particular grassroots sport, in line with the EU work plan for sport;
- the promotion of European values in accordance with Article 2 of the Treaty on the European Union³ (Source: Programme Guide 2016).

The general objectives of the Programme are complemented by specific objectives for each of its chapters.

THE PROGRAMME IS DIVIDED INTO THREE MAJOR AREAS:

The field of education and training offers opportunities for the **school sector** (pre-university education), the **vocational education and training sector**, the **tertiary education sector** and the **adult education sector**, while **Jean Monnet** offers support for European studies through support to higher education institutions.

The field of youth offers opportunities for the **youth sector**.

The field of **sport** is focused on the sport sector and major international cooperation projects or events.

² The headline education target is to reduce early school leaving to less than 10% and increase attainment in tertiary education to at least 40% by 2020.

³ The Union is founded on the values of respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and respect for human rights, including the rights of persons belonging to minorities. These values are common to the Member States in a society in which pluralism, non-discrimination, tolerance, justice, solidarity and equality between women and men prevail.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR SUPPORT WITHIN THE PROGRAMME ARE DIVIDED INTO THREE KEY ACTIONS:

Key Action 1: Mobility of individuals

This Key Action is dedicated especially to the international learning mobility of individuals or groups, where the main purpose of cooperation is to enable and enhance the learning of participants.

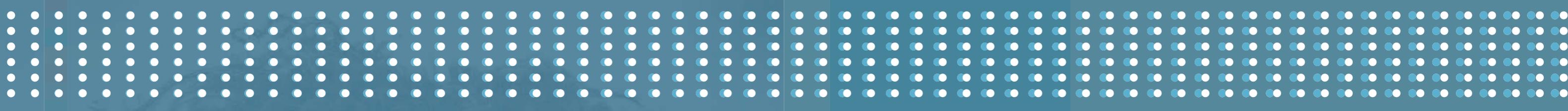
Key Action 2: Cooperation for innovation and the exchange of good practices

This Key Action is meant for the strategic and long-term cooperation of partners from different countries aiming at innovation, sustainable outcomes and the overall development of structures and policies in the fields of education, training and youth in Europe.

Key Action 3: Support for policy reform

This Key Action aims at supporting policy reform in the fields of education, training and youth in Europe, in particular the achievement of the goals of the Europe 2020 Strategy, of the Strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training (ET 2020) and of the European Youth Strategy.





ERASMUS+: YOUTH IN ACTION

Activities within the Programme targeting the youth field are referred to as Erasmus+: Youth in Action, which provides various possibilities for young people, youth workers and youth policy makers to cooperate, gain competences and be proactive in building a sustainable and democratic European society. In addition to the objectives common to the Programme as a whole, Erasmus+: Youth in Action functions as an important instrument to put into practice the European Union Youth Strategy 2010 – 2018, set in the resolution of the Council of the EU from 27 November 2009. The framework defines eight priority areas of cooperation within the Union and its Member States until 2018.

The key objectives of this cooperation are:

- to provide more and equal opportunities for all young people in education and on the labour market;
- to promote the active citizenship, social inclusion and solidarity of all young people.

Building on the Youth Strategy, the following specific objectives are pursued by the Erasmus+ Programme in the field of youth:

- to improve the level of key competences and skills of young people, including those with fewer opportunities, as well as to promote participation in democratic life in Europe and the labour market, active citizenship, intercultural dialogue, social inclusion and solidarity, in particular through increased learning mobility opportunities for young people, those active in youth work or youth organizations and youth leaders, and through the strengthened links between the youth field and the labour market;
- to foster quality improvements in youth work, in particular through enhanced cooperation between organizations in the youth field and/or other stakeholders;
- to complement policy reforms at the local, regional and national level and to support the development of knowledge and evidence-based youth policy as well as the recognition of non-formal and informal learning, in particular through enhanced policy cooperation, better use of EU transparency and recognition tools and the dissemination of best practices;
- to enhance the international dimension of youth activities and enhance the capacity of youth workers and organizations in their support for young people in complementarity with the European Union's external action, in particular through the promotion of mobility and cooperation between stakeholders from Programme and Partner Countries and international organizations (Source: Programme Guide 2016).

WHAT IS NON-FORMAL LEARNING?

The Erasmus+: Youth in Action Programme offers young people various opportunities for the acquisition of competences and personal development through non-formal learning. The concept refers to learning which takes place outside the formal educational curricula, and embraces a participative, indiscriminate and learner-centred approach. Non-formal learning is carried out on a voluntary basis and is therefore closely linked to young people's own needs and interests. A high-quality non-formal education provided by the beneficiaries is a key aspect of all projects granted within the Erasmus+: Youth in Action Programme.





**ACTIVITIES WITHIN
THE ERASMUS+: YOUTH
IN ACTION PROGRAMME**

**THE ERASMUS+: YOUTH IN ACTION PROGRAMME
SUPPORTS THE FOLLOWING ACTIVITIES:**

MOBILITY ACTIVITIES

within Key Action 1 or Key Action 2,
in particular:

- **Youth Exchanges** (more information on pages 10-11.)
- **European Voluntary Service** (more information on pages 12-13.)
- **Mobility of youth workers** (more information on pages 14-15.)

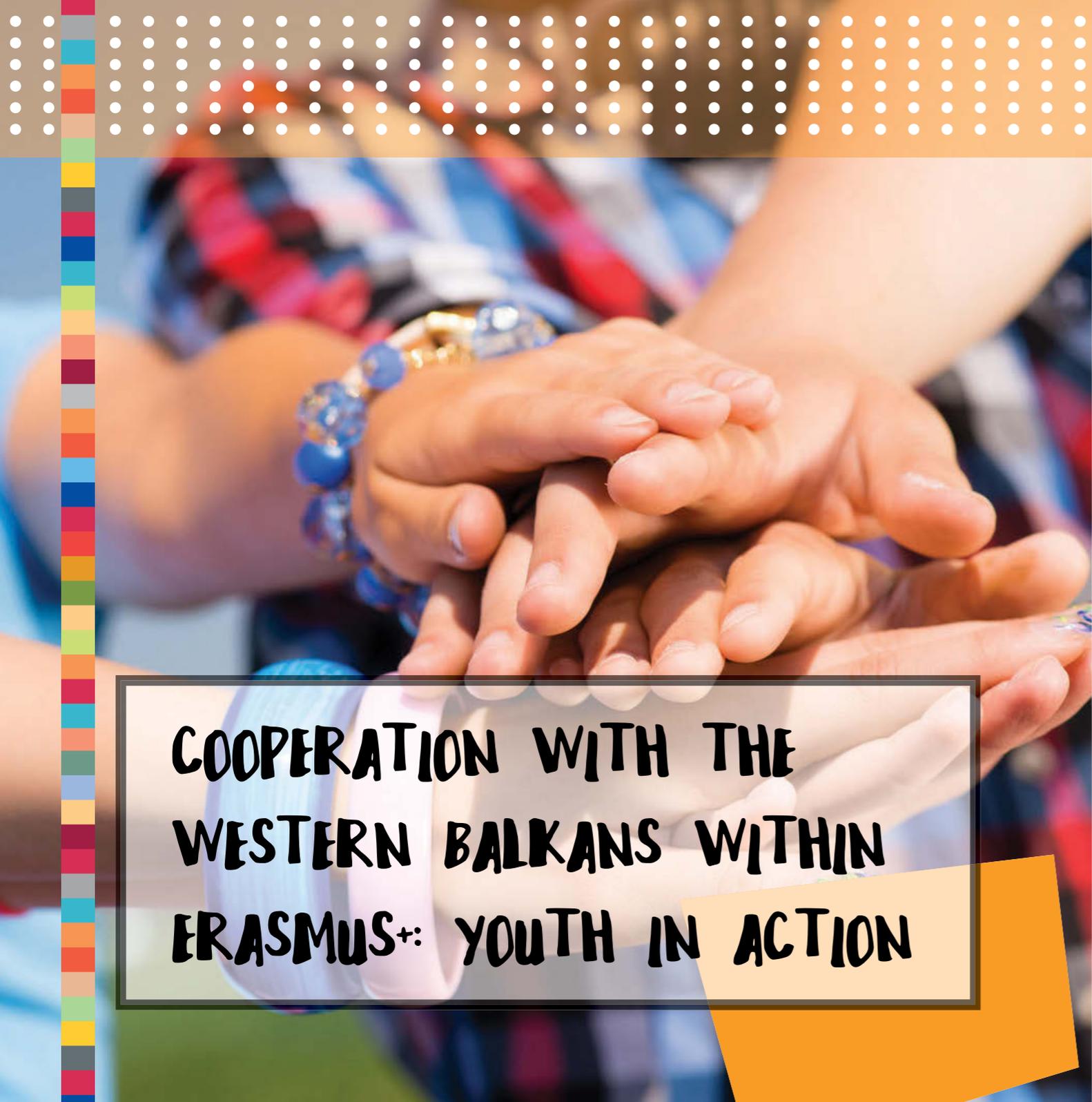
A project can include one or more of these mobility activities.

**STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS AND
CAPACITY-BUILDING IN THE FIELD
OF YOUTH**

within Key Action 2 (more information on pages 16-19).

**MEETINGS BETWEEN YOUNG
PEOPLE AND DECISION-MAKERS IN
THE FIELD OF YOUTH**

within Key Action 3 (more information on pages 20-21).



COOPERATION WITH THE WESTERN BALKANS WITHIN ERASMUS+: YOUTH IN ACTION

The Erasmus+ Programme is also open for Partner Countries Neighbouring the European Union. (more information on all participating countries on pages 24-25.)

Partner countries in the Western Balkan region include the following countries: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo⁴, Montenegro and Serbia. Their status as candidate countries or potential candidate countries within the European Union's enlargement policy suggests the perspective of joining the Union in the future. In this context, the Erasmus+: Youth in Action Programme, (equal to its predecessors YOUTH 2000-2006 and Youth in Action 2007-2013 Programmes), functions as the key instrument to facilitate the EU integration process within the Western Balkan region in the field of youth.

Some of these countries might join the Erasmus+ Programme in the coming years. Consult the latest version of the Programme Guide for up-to-date information regarding the status of a specific country.

Organizations from the Western Balkan Partner countries can take part in the Erasmus+: Youth in Action Programme as:

PARTNERS IN THE FOLLOWING ACTIVITIES:

- **Youth Exchanges and / or European Voluntary Service and / or Mobility of youth workers** (in projects within Key Action 1);
- **Strategic partnerships in the field of youth** (in projects within Key Action 2, under specific conditions);
- **Meetings between young people and decision-makers in the field of youth** (in projects within Key Action 3).

(More information on these activities on pages 10-17 and 20-21.)

APPLICANTS IN THE FOLLOWING PROJECTS:

- **Capacity-building in the field of youth**, in particular in the context of the Western Balkans Youth Window, within Key Action 2. Each project has to include at least one mobility activity: Youth Exchange, European Voluntary Service or Mobility of Youth Workers, corresponding to the activities within Key Action 1. (More information on capacity building projects and the Western Balkans Youth Window on pages 18-19.)



⁴ This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence.

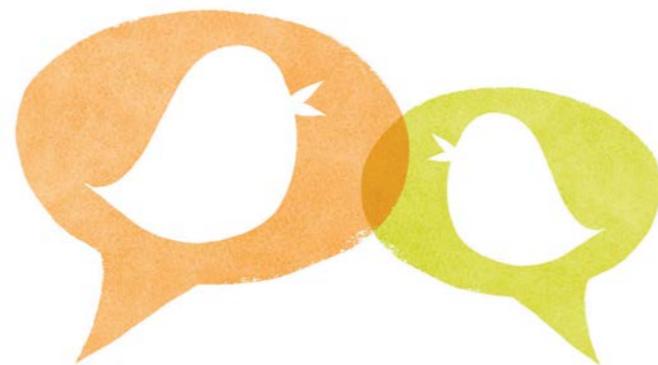
YOUTH EXCHANGE

A Youth Exchange is an effective tool of non-formal and informal learning in youth work. It allows groups of young people from different countries to spend up to 21 days together, exploring topics that connect them. In this process, young people develop their competences, become aware of socially relevant topics and thematic areas, discover new cultures and lifestyles together with their peers from different countries, and strengthen values such as solidarity, equality and democracy.

Youth Exchanges are composed of several phases: drafting and planning the activity, followed by its implementation, the conclusion and evaluation of the activity, and finally the dissemination and exploitation of the results. The practical tasks the participating young people carry out in all stages of the activity offer them various learning opportunities, through which they can gain relevant competences. Setting Youth Exchanges in the context of non-formal learning requires that at least a part of the desired learning outcomes are planned in advance, in order to ensure the appropriate opportunities. The definition of the desired learning outcomes can start in any or each of the groups of young people by identifying the competences that the participants wish to obtain or develop through the Youth Exchange.

Each participating group has a youth leader, who helps and supports the young participants in the implementation of the activity. Because managing such an activity requires taking numerous decisions, a Youth Exchange can also be an opportunity to learn about democratic participation and the decision-making processes in the wider society. However, this can only be achieved if as many decisions as possible in the activity are taken by the young participants themselves, whereby the chance to shape the decisions together should also mean taking responsibility.

In the phases of the conclusion and dissemination of results, the experiences of the young participants also need to be presented to others. Each participating group can for example organize a presentation for their local environment on how they experienced the project, and the (local) media might also be eager to hear the stories from the participants themselves. By sharing their experiences this way, the group will give more value to the learning outcomes reached and will contribute to strengthening the importance of non-formal learning in youth work.



ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA FOR SUPPORT FOR YOUTH EXCHANGES FROM THE ERASMUS+ PROGRAMME

Eligible partner: A public or private legal entity (primarily non-profit making) operating at the local, regional, national or European level, or an informal group of young people.

Origin of partners: Partners (participating youth groups) can come from Programme Countries or Partner Countries neighbouring the European Union. Every project must have at least one partner from a Programme Country.

Minimum number of partners:

- 2 (if the Youth Exchange is implemented within Key Action 1);
- 3 (if the Youth Exchange is implemented within Capacity-building in the field of youth within Key Action 2).

Participants: Young people aged between 13 and 30; minimum of 16 and maximum of 60 participants, group leaders / youth workers are not included; minimum of 4 participants per group, group leaders / youth workers are not included.

Project duration:

- from 3 months to 2 years (if the Youth Exchange is implemented within Key Action 1);
- from 9 months to 2 years (if the Youth Exchange is implemented within the Capacity-building in the field of youth within Key Action 2).

Duration of project activity: From 5 to 21 days, excluding travel time.

Venue of the activity: Country of one of the participating organizations.



EUROPEAN VOLUNTARY SERVICE

The European Voluntary Service (EVS) offers young people the possibility of long-term (up to 12 months) voluntary work with a receiving EVS organization in another country. The volunteer's work aims at benefiting the receiving organization in the frame of its regular activities, as well as at having a positive impact on the local community. The activities of the receiving organization can address a variety of fields, such as the young peoples' socio-educational advancement and civic engagement, youth information, inclusion of disadvantaged groups, environmental or developmental issues, culture and artistic expression etc.

Living in a foreign country and implementing the tasks agreed with the receiving organization, EVS volunteers encounter various learning opportunities. They are encouraged to take an active role in shaping the tasks and activities performed during the service according to their learning interests. The volunteers' learning during the service is enhanced by the EVS training cycle - organized by National Agencies granting the project or the relevant SALTO Resource Centres - as well as the personal support provided by an appointed mentor within the receiving organization.

The European Voluntary Service is open to all young people regardless of their gender, ethnicity, religious or political opinions, sexual orientation etc. Also no

prior qualifications or level of education should be required from the volunteers. A specific profile can only be expected should the context of the project require so.

Each EVS activity includes at least one sending and one receiving EVS organization and, of course, a volunteer. One of the organizations also takes on the role of coordinating the organization (and applicant for the entire project); this role can also be taken on by a separate coordinating organization, especially in larger EVS projects. Under ideal circumstances, EVS activities are based on long-term partnerships between sending and receiving organizations, which are often reciprocal, offering learning opportunities within the EVS to young people with whom the organizations already work. The tasks of each partner and of the EVS volunteer are described in an agreement between the sending and the receiving organization.

Everyone involved in an EVS activity must respect the principles of the EVS Charter, which sets forth the rights and obligations of all the participating parties in the project, limits the work of the EVS volunteers to non-profit purposes and prohibits the use of EVS volunteers for tasks that should, according to their character, be carried out by employed staff.

A typical **individual long-term EVS activity** lasts from 2 to 12 months. In the case of young people with fewer opportunities or groups of EVS volunteers (10–30 volunteers), the activities can be shorter; a **short-term EVS** can last from 2 weeks to 2 months. **Group EVS activities** can include help with building a house, arranging a park, organizing a film festival or a sailing regatta etc. where volunteers gain specific competences and knowledge. In addition, **Large-scale EVS projects** involving at least 30 volunteers can be organized accompanying events such as the World Youth Summit, European Youth Capitals etc.

ACCREDITATION OF EVS ORGANIZATIONS

To take part in EVS, an organization must first be accredited. Accreditation is a form of recognition that an organization is capable of serving as a coordinating, sending or receiving EVS organization. The process of accreditation starts with an application for EVS accreditation, which organizations can submit at any time in electronic form to the relevant National Agency or regional SALTO Resource Centre. In the Western Balkan region, accreditation is done by the SALTO South East Europe Resource Centre. More information: www.salto-youth.net/rc/see/eisee/.

DATABASE OF ACCREDITED EVS ORGANIZATIONS

There are many different ways to identify partners for EVS projects. The most obvious way is to check the European Youth Portal at <https://europa.eu/youth/>, which includes a database of all accredited EVS organizations. The organizations can be browsed according to various criteria, and the Portal can also be used to publish specific calls for partners.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA FOR SUPPORT FROM THE ERASMUS+ PROGRAMME

Eligible partner: A public or private legal entity (primarily non-profit making) operating at the local, regional, national or European level.

Origin of partners: Partners (sending and receiving organizations) can come from Programme Countries or Partner Countries neighbouring the EU. Every project must have at least one partner from a Programme Country.

Minimum number of partners:

- 2 (if the EVS is implemented within Key Action 1);
- 3 (if the EVS is implemented within Capacity-building in the field of youth within Key Action 2).

Participants: Young people aged between 17 and 30; minimum of 1 and maximum of 30⁵ participants for the whole project. The volunteers must be resident in the country of their sending organization.

Project duration:

- from 3 months to 2 years (if the EVS is implemented within Key Action 1);
- from 9 months to 2 years (if the EVS is implemented within Capacity-building in the field of youth within Key Action 2).

Duration of project activity: From 2 to 12 months; EVS activities (within Key Action 1) involving at least 10 volunteers or involving young people with fewer opportunities can take from 2 weeks to 12 months, travel time excluded.

Venue of the activity: The country of one of the participating organizations, but EVS volunteers must not come from the country of the receiving organization. A volunteer from a Programme Country must carry out their activity in another Programme Country or in a Partner Country neighbouring the EU. A volunteer from a Partner Country neighbouring the EU must carry out their activity in a Programme Country.

⁵ Projects involving more than 30 EVS volunteers are considered large-scale EVS projects, which are approved and managed by the Education, Audio-visual and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA).

MOBILITY OF YOUTH WORKERS

The mobility of youth workers allows actors in the youth field to set up together with partners activities for youth workers and youth leaders to upgrade their existing efforts to strengthen the competences of those working directly with young people. These activities have a two-fold purpose. On the one hand, they allow the participating youth workers and youth leaders to develop and strengthen their own competences for performing their role in youth work. On the other hand, youth workers spread the knowledge acquired through these activities in their own organizations after the project, stipulating the development and improvement of the work of the entire organization. The activities should have the approach and methodology suitable for non-formal education.

There are two types of mobility activities for youth workers: group activities with a larger number of partners and participants (e.g. professional seminars on topics related to youth work or youth policies, trainings for youth workers and other actors in the field of youth work, seminars on searching for project partners and study visits) and individual activities (e.g. job shadowing visits in partner organizations), which usually include two partners and one or two participants.

MOBILITY



ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA FOR SUPPORT FROM THE ERASMUS+ PROGRAMME

Eligible partner: A public or private legal entity (primarily non-profit making) operating at the local, regional, national or European level.

Origin of partners: Partners can come from Programme Countries or Partner Countries neighbouring the EU. Each project must have at least one partner from a Programme Country.

Minimum number of partners:

- 2 (if the Mobility of youth workers is implemented within Key Action 1);
- 3 (if the Mobility of youth workers is implemented within Capacity-building in the field of youth within Key Action 2).

Participants: No age limits; maximum of 50 participants from the countries of the participating project partners, including trainers, facilitators and other staff carrying out the project activities. Participants must be resident in the country of their sending or receiving organization.

Project duration:

- from 3 months to 2 years (if the Mobility of youth workers is implemented within Key Action 1);
- from 9 months to 2 years (if the Mobility of youth workers is implemented within Capacity-building in the field of youth within Key Action 2).

Duration of project activity:

- from 2 days to 2 months, excluding travel time. The minimum of 2 days must be consecutive. (if the Mobility of youth workers is implemented within Key Action 1);
- from 5 days to 2 months, excluding travel time (if the Mobility of youth workers is implemented within Capacity-building in the field of youth within Key Action 2).

Venue of the activity: The country of one of the participating organizations.

Strategic partnerships in the field of youth provide a possibility for implementing activities leading to the overall professionalization and development of youth work practices in Europe. A great variety of activities are possible, aiming at experimentation or the application of innovative methods, tools or approaches or the exchange of best practice.

In particular, the activities may address fostering the development of young peoples' key competences, recognition of the outcomes of non-formal learning, professionalization of youth workers, modernization of the forms of delivering youth work, combating the marginalization of youth at risk, transversal networking of different actors and institutions relevant for youth or the strategic cooperation of public authorities responsible for youth.

The Programme also supports projects of cross-sectorial Strategic Partnerships aiming at concrete results in the development of youth policies or strengthening competences for better organization and performance of youth work. Such projects must incorporate actors from different fields covered by the Erasmus+ Programme, including the youth sector. Partnerships may also include enterprises, particularly when the desired project results are focused on increasing the contribution of non-formal learning in youth work to the greater employability of young people, especially those with fewer opportunities.

Strategic Partnerships in the field of youth also cover transnational youth initiatives, which are cooperation activities led by youth groups from different countries aiming at enhancing the participation and entrepreneurship of the participating young people.

As a general rule, Strategic Partnerships target the cooperation between organizations established in Programme Countries. However, organizations from Partner Countries can be involved in a Strategic Partnership, as partners, if their participation brings an essential added value to the project. For more information on the types of activities possible within the Strategic partnerships in the field of youth, please consult the Programme Guide of the relevant year.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA FOR SUPPORT FROM THE ERASMUS+ PROGRAMME

Eligible partner: Any public or private legal entity.

Origin of partners: Partners can come from Programme Countries. The participation of Partner Countries is only possible on the condition that their participation brings an essential added value to the project.

Minimum number of partners: Minimum of 2 organizations from 2 different Programme Countries.

Participants: No specific limitations.

Project duration: From 6 months to 3 years.

Venue of the activity: Country of one of the participating organizations.



> CAPACITY-BUILDING IN THE FIELD OF YOUTH <

Capacity-building in the field of youth refers to partnerships between partners from Erasmus+ Programme Countries and Partner Countries. Projects within the Western Balkans Youth Window are granted within this action.

WESTERN BALKANS YOUTH WINDOW

The Western Balkans Youth Window refers to additional EU funds made available through the Erasmus+ Programme. The aim is to reinforce the participation of Western Balkan countries in the Programme by ensuring a higher number of granted projects within the region in general, and enabling the organizations based in these countries to take the role of an applicant in Erasmus+: Youth in Action projects. Projects in the frame of the Western Balkans Youth Window are granted within Capacity-building in the field of youth within the Programme's Key Action 2.

Western Balkans Youth Window projects should aim to increase the capacity of organizations through the implementation of mobility activities (**Youth Exchanges, European Voluntary Service and Mobility of youth workers**), which should be complemented by other, possibly national or local capacity-building activities of the partners involved in the project.

In practice, projects should launch, test and implement youth work practices, such as tools and methods for the socio-professional development of youth workers and trainers or non-formal learning methods. Ideally they would also use new forms of youth work, notably the strategic use of open and flexible learning, virtual mobility, open educational resources (OER) and better exploitation of the ICT potential.

Complementary capacity-building activities can be:

- activities encouraging policy dialogue, cooperation, networking and exchanges of practices in the field of youth;
- conferences, workshops, meetings, large-scale youth events, information and awareness campaigns
- products: tools, youth work methods, materials, training modules, ...

Since this publication is targeting potential beneficiaries in the Western Balkans region, capacity building in the field of youth beyond the Western Balkans Youth Window projects referring to other regions of the world is not addressed. As the Western Balkans Youth Window projects must contain mobility activities, for more information and on the content and the assessment criteria of mobility activities, please consult the pages 10-15.



ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA FOR SUPPORT FROM THE ERASMUS+ PROGRAMME WITHIN THE WESTERN BALKANS YOUTH WINDOW

Applicant:

- non-profit organization, association, NGO;
- national youth council;
- public body (established under public law);
- legally registered for at least 1 year;
- established in a Western Balkan country.

Partners:

- any public or private organization established in a Programme country or Western Balkan country.

Partnership:

- Minimum of 3 participating organizations from 3 different countries;
- Minimum of 1 Programme country.

Duration:

- 9 months – 2 years.

Activities:

- projects must contain at least one Mobility activity;
- only one project application per deadline by the same applicant.

Award criteria:

- relevance of the Project (20%);
- quality of the project design and implementation (30%);
- quality of the project team and cooperation arrangements (30%);
- impact and dissemination (20%).



Meetings between young people and decision-makers in the field of youth promote young people's active participation in democratic life and encourage debate on the topics and priorities within the Structured Dialogue and/or the renewed political framework in the youth field. (European Union's Youth Strategy 2010 – 2018).

The main objective of every such activity is to enable young people to get acquainted with a particular challenge, form their own opinions in the process or develop their own proposals of measures for local, national or European institutions, and get a chance to present their opinions and proposals to decision-makers in the form of reasoned dialogue.

A project can comprise one or more of the following activities:

- national meetings and transnational/international seminars that offer space for information, debate and the active participation of young people – in dialogue with youth decision-makers – on issues which are relevant to the Structured Dialogue or to the EU Youth Strategy;
- national meetings and transnational seminars that prepare the ground for the official Youth Conferences organized during each semester by the Member State holding the turn of Presidency of the European Union;
- events that promote debates and information on youth policy themes



linked to the activities organized during the European Youth Week;

- consultations of young people, with a view to find out their needs on matters relating to participation in democratic life (online consultations, opinion polls, etc.);
- meetings and seminars, information events or debates between young people and decision-makers/youth experts around the theme of participation in democratic life;
- events simulating the functioning of the democratic institutions and the roles of decision-makers within these institutions.



ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA FOR SUPPORT FROM THE ERASMUS+ PROGRAMME

Eligible partner: A non-profit organization, a European Youth NGO or a public body at the local or regional level.

Origin of partners: Partners can come from Programme Countries or Partner Countries neighbouring the European Union. Each project must have at least one partner from a Programme Country.

Minimum number of partners: One partner⁶ for national meetings and at least two partners from two different countries for international meetings.

Participants: Minimum of 30 young participants, aged between 13 and 30. If the project foresees the participation of decision-makers or experts in the youth policy field, they can be involved regardless of their age and country of residence.

Project duration:

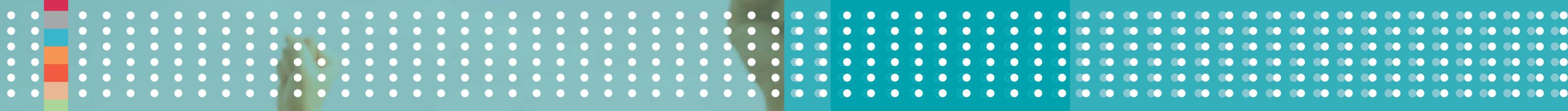
- from 3 months to 2 years.

Duration of project activity:

- minimum of 1 day.

Venue of the activity: National meetings must take place in the country of the applicant organization. Transnational/international meetings may take place in any of the Programme Countries involved in the project.

⁶ Projects of Structured Dialogue between young people and decision-makers are the only opportunity where cooperation with partners from other countries is not necessary for support within the Erasmus+ Programme.

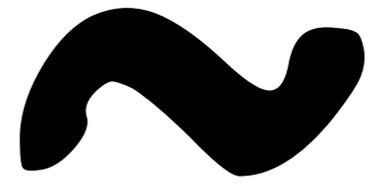


**WHO IMPLEMENTS THE ERASMUS+:
YOUTH IN ACTION PROGRAMME?**

The overall responsibility for the Erasmus+ Programme lies with the European Commission. The European Commission's Education, Audio-visual and Culture Executive Agency is responsible for the implementation of the centralized actions of the Erasmus+ Programme, including the projects granted within the Western Balkans Youth Window.

A large part of the Programme is managed in a decentralized way by the National Agencies in each of the Erasmus+ Programme Countries. The National Agencies manage the selection of projects, as well as provide Programme beneficiaries and those who are interested in applying for project grants with information and support concerning the Programme. The Eurodesk network offers information services to young people and those who work with them on opportunities in the education, training and youth fields in Europe, also regarding the Erasmus+ Youth in Action Programme.

In addition, a network of eight SALTO-YOUTH Resource Centres assists the National Agencies and other stakeholders in supporting quality in Erasmus+ Youth in Action projects and further developing European youth work and youth policies. Through their work in priority areas in the European youth field, they provide resources, information, training and networking activities as well as foster the recognition of non-formal learning in youth work. Besides topic-based SALTO Resource Centres, three regional SALTO Resource Centres provide support for the implementation of the Erasmus+ Youth in Action Programme in and with the Programme's Partner regions.





ELIGIBLE COUNTRIES

PROGRAMME COUNTRIES

- **EU Member States:** Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden and the United Kingdom.
- **Non-EU Programme Countries:** Iceland, Liechtenstein, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Norway, and Turkey.

PARTNER COUNTRIES NEIGHBORING THE EUROPEAN UNION

- **Western Balkans (Region 1.):** Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo⁷, Montenegro and Serbia.
- **Eastern Partnership countries (Region 2.):** Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova, Territory of Ukraine as recognized by international law
- **South Mediterranean countries (Region 3.):** Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Palestine, Syria and Tunisia.
- **Russian Federation (Region 4.):** territory of Russia as recognized by international law

Other Partner Countries: Other Partner Countries of the world as defined in the Programme Guide.



⁷ This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence.



APPLICATION PROCEDURE AND ASSESSMENT

Applications for funding of projects from the Programme are submitted using electronic application forms, with several deadlines for applications every year. Before the first application, each organization must acquire a Participant Identification Code (PIC) by creating a profile for the organization on a special portal of the European Commission. More information on the application procedure, application forms and all the necessary documents (including the Programme Guide of the relevant year) can be found on the websites of National Agencies, the Education, Audio-visual and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA) and the European Commission.

The projects applied in the Erasmus+ Programme Countries are submitted primarily to the relevant National Agency in the country. Applications for the centralized actions of the Erasmus+ Programme, including the projects granted within the Western Balkans Youth Window, are submitted to the European Commission's Education, Audio-visual and Culture Executive Agency.

Accordingly, organizations from Partner Countries in the Western Balkans can apply for projects under the Western Balkans Youth Window, or be partners in projects under certain actions (as outlined on pages 10-21) applied for to a National Agency or the EACEA by their project partner based in a Programme Country.

In addition to the eligibility criteria specific for each action and / or activity type, project proposals are assessed according to award criteria reflecting the quality aspects of the proposal. The institutions responsible for the selection also carry out the assessment according to the specific exclusion and selection criteria to ensure the applicant fulfills the financial regulations of the European Union and has sufficient financial and operational capacity to complete the proposed project.

The financing mechanisms applicable within the Erasmus+ Programme as well as the funding rules concerning all activities are listed in the Programme Guide of the relevant year.





**IMPORTANT FEATURES OF
THE ERASMUS+ PROGRAMME**

- ★ RECOGNITION AND VALIDATION OF SKILLS AND QUALIFICATIONS
- ★ DISSEMINATION AND EXPLOITATION OF THE PROJECT RESULTS
- ★ OPEN ACCESS TO EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS AND DOCUMENTS
- ★ INTERNATIONAL DIMENSION
- ★ MULTILINGUALISM
- ★ EQUITY AND INCLUSION
- ★ PROTECTION AND SAFETY OF PARTICIPANTS

The Erasmus+ Programme contains important features which are described below with specific reference to cooperation in the field of youth.

RECOGNITION AND VALIDATION OF SKILLS AND QUALIFICATIONS

The Erasmus+ Youth in Action Programme strives for a greater recognition of the competences and skills acquired in non-formal learning through participation in different forms of youth work. For this purpose, the Programme offers the European tool Youthpass, which allows structured documentation and (self)-assessment of the competences acquired in projects. In addition to this, the Youthpass also functions as a certificate of the accomplished learning results. All participants of projects supported by the Erasmus+ Youth in Action Programme are entitled to receive a Youthpass. The certificates are created by the project partners, while National Agencies provide information and trainings on how to issue Youthpass certificates.

DISSEMINATION AND EXPLOITATION OF THE PROJECT RESULTS

The dissemination and exploitation of project results is one of the key phases in the lifecycle of projects in the framework of the Erasmus+ Youth in Action Programme. Participating organizations are encouraged to make the results of their project known to the public – such as the local community, other

organizations, policy makers etc. - and in this way to increase the impact of their project and its sustainability. The level and intensity of the dissemination and exploitation activities should be proportional to the scope of the project and its objectives.

OPEN ACCESS TO EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS AND DOCUMENTS

The Erasmus+ Youth in Action Programme promotes open access to materials and media produced as a part of projects within the Programme that are useful for youth work. The project organizers should promote the availability of such products by making them freely available (on the internet). They can however, define the most appropriate level of open access. The open access requirement is without prejudice to the intellectual property rights of the grant beneficiaries.

INTERNATIONAL DIMENSION

Erasmus+ Youth in Action includes a strong international dimension, which is demonstrated by the possibility of cooperation with Partner Countries within all of the Programme's Key Actions. However, in some cases, their participation must provide a clear added value for the project.

Regarding the Western Balkans, the Erasmus+ Youth in Action Programme contributes to promoting stability in the region by supporting the development of youth work and promoting multicultural awareness, tolerance and solidarity among young people. It thus contributes to the other efforts of the European Union towards the stabilization of the Western Balkan region as well as cooperation between and with the countries of this region.

MULTILINGUALISM

The promotion of language learning and linguistic diversity is highlighted in the Programme, as the lack of language competences is one of the main barriers to international learning mobility. Support for language learning is available for the language used by participants within long-term mobility activities,

such as the European Voluntary Service. An online language learning tool is offered in the main European languages via the Erasmus+ Online Linguistic Support, which includes a mandatory assessment of language competences and voluntary language courses.

EQUITY AND INCLUSION

The Erasmus+ Youth in Action Programme is open to ALL young people, including young people with fewer opportunities. The Programme aims to encourage them to use the opportunities it offers to strengthen their skills and competences through non-formal learning in youth work and to make their voice heard in the shaping and development of youth policies at the local, national and European level.

The definition of young people with fewer opportunities can be fairly broad, but the group definitely includes young people whose unfinished education or its low level leaves them with reduced possibilities on the labour market, those growing up in difficult social and economic conditions and those who are facing greater obstacles in their integration into society due to their cultural background, personal circumstances or facing other similar constraints.

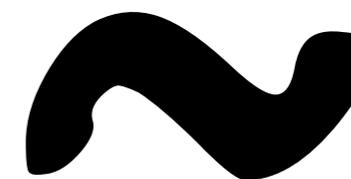
To facilitate the inclusion of young people with fewer opportunities or special needs, the Programme offers a possibility of covering 100% of the eligible costs without which it would be hard or impossible for young people with fewer opportunities to participate in a project.

PROTECTION AND SAFETY OF PARTICIPANTS

The protection and safety of participants involved in Erasmus+ Youth in Action projects are important principles of the Programme. Each participant should be able to take full advantage of the possibilities for personal and professional development and learning. This can only be ensured in a safe environment which respects and protects the rights of all.

To this end, each participating organization must have in place effective procedures and arrangements to promote and guarantee the safety and protection of the participants in their project. In this regard, all participants involved in a mobility activity under Key Actions 1 or 2 must be insured against the risks related to their participation in these activities, while the European Voluntary Service includes a specific insurance policy that is integrated in the project.

Organizations which involve young people under 18 years of age are required to obtain a prior authorization of participation from their parents or those acting on their behalf.





SUPPORT OFFERED BY THE SALTO SOUTH EAST EUROPE RESOURCE CENTRE

SALTO South East Europe (SEE) Resource Centre is one of eight SALTO-YOUTH Resource Centres. SALTO-YOUTH stands for Support, Advanced Learning and Training Opportunities within the Erasmus+ Youth in Action Programme. Established in 2000, SALTO-YOUTH is a network of Resource Centres working on European priority areas within the youth field.

As part of the European Commission's Training Strategy, SALTO-YOUTH provides non-formal learning resources for youth workers and youth leaders and organizes training and contact-making activities to support organizations and National Agencies within the framework of the European Commission's Erasmus+ Youth in Action Programme and beyond. These measures target youth workers and other relevant actors in the field of youth and aim to strengthen their competences in working with young people, to use non-formal learning in youth work, to better use the opportunities offered by the Programme, and to support the participation of young people in youth policy development at different levels.

The SALTO SEE Resource Centre promotes and supports the participation of young people and other actors in the field of youth and non-formal education from the Programme's Partner Countries in the Western Balkans in the Erasmus+ Programme, and it aims to contribute to youth work and youth policy development in the Western Balkan region. It acts as a support service for:

- the network of Erasmus+ Youth in Action National Agencies in the field of co-operation with this region and
- youth organizations, youth leaders, youth workers and other actors in the field who are interested in developing co-operation between Programme countries and Neighbouring Partner Countries in the Western Balkan region.

Within the framework of the European integration of the Western Balkan region, SALTO SEE Resource Centre actively supports the process of accession of all countries of the region to the Erasmus+ Youth in Action Programme. The Centre's Programme of activities is run with the support of pools of trainers and accreditors, in particular in the European Voluntary Service strand of the Programme, as well as Contact Points for the Erasmus+ Youth in Action located in the Programme's partner countries in the Western Balkan region. SALTO SEE Resource Centre carries out EVS accreditations of organizations based in Western Balkan Partner Countries and organizes the EVS training sessions for volunteers hosted in or coming from the region. More information about support activities open to participants from the Western Balkan region: <https://www.salto-youth.net/rc/see/activities/> and in the European Training Calendar at <https://www.salto-youth.net/tools/european-training-calendar/>.

LOCAL CONTACT POINTS IN THE WESTERN BALKAN COUNTRIES

In order to bring knowledge and resources closer to the potential beneficiaries of the Erasmus+ Youth in Action Programme, SALTO SEE resource Centre has nominated Contact Points for the Programme in each Western Balkan Partner country. The Contact Points are local youth organizations with experience in the Programme and the capacities to transfer this knowledge further on to others. Their task is to promote the Programme as well as to provide information, advice and training at the national level.



MORE INFORMATION

- SALTO-YOUTH South East Europe Resource Centre:**
- <https://www.salto-youth.net/rc/see/> , Email: see@salto-youth.net
- Cooperation with Partner countries in the Western Balkan region:**
- <https://www.salto-youth.net/rc/see/seeyia/>
- List of local Contact Points in the Western Balkans Countries:**
- <https://www.salto-youth.net/rc/see/contactpoints/>
- SALTO-YOUTH Resource Centres:**
- <https://www.salto-youth.net/>
- European Commission, Youth homepage:**
- http://ec.europa.eu/youth/index_en.htm
- Erasmus+ Programme Guide:**
- http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/discover/guide/index_en.htm
- European Youth Strategy:**
- http://ec.europa.eu/youth/policy/youth_strategy/index_en.htm
- Erasmus+ National Agencies:**
- http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/tools/national-agencies/index_en.htm
- Eurodesk network:**
- <http://eurodesk.org>
- European Youth Portal:**
- <https://europa.eu/youth/>
- More information about Capacity-building in the field of youth, Western Balkans Youth Window: Website of Education, Audio-visual and Culture Executive Agency:** http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/erasmus-plus_en, E-mail: eacea-youth@ec.europa.eu

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THE END

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SALTO-YOUTH
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RESOURCE CENTRE



Erasmus+



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