



Erasmus+ Programme Annual Report 2015

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Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture
Directorate B — Youth, Education and Erasmus+
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1. Political Context

Erasmus+ aims to support the Member States' efforts to develop and make efficient use of Europe's human resources. It is based on the premise that investing in education, training and youth is the key to unlocking citizens' potential regardless of age or background. The programme finances learning mobility and activities conducive to policy developments and supports Member States' reforms in the education, training, youth and sport fields.

In the aftermath of the terrorist attacks in Europe in 2015 and of the massive migration flows entering the EU, the role of education, training, youth and sport for promoting shared values, intercultural understanding and social inclusion has been vested with a renewed importance.

Hence, several strategic documents directly impacting on the policy areas covered by Erasmus+ were adopted in 2015:

- In their joint **Paris Declaration**¹ on promoting citizenship and the common values of freedom, tolerance and non-discrimination, the EU education ministers and the EU Commissioner for education, culture, youth and sport stressed the pivotal role of education in instilling and promoting human and civic values. The Paris Declaration also set a number of European-level objectives: to ensure children and young people acquire social, civic and intercultural competences; to enhance critical thinking and media literacy; to foster the education of disadvantaged children and young people; and to promote intercultural dialogue through all forms of learning in cooperation with other relevant policies and stakeholders.
- In response to these and other key challenges on the European policy agenda, the **Joint Report**² of the Council and the

Commission on the implementation of the **Framework for European Cooperation in education and training (ET 2020)**

identified six priority areas for European cooperation in education and training: improving people's skills and employment prospects, creating open, innovative and digital learning environments and providing support for teachers and trainers, cultivating the fundamental values of equality, non-discrimination and active citizenship, the transparency and recognition of skills and the sustainable investment, quality and efficiency of education and training systems.

- In the field of youth, the Council and Commission's **joint report on the European cooperation framework**³ set priorities for the 2016-2018 work cycle which focus on equal education, jobs and participatory opportunities in inclusive communities, especially on including people with a migrant background or at risk of marginalisation. The European cooperation framework will use existing instruments and synergies with other policies to promote the participation of young people in democratic processes and help them develop skills such as citizenship and intercultural understanding.
- The **Inclusion and Diversity Strategy**⁴ for the Erasmus+ youth field, adopted late 2014 and implemented in 2015, also highlights and strengthens the commitment to inclusion and diversity throughout the programme.
- An **updated European Training Strategy (ETS)**⁵ has been adopted in 2015, responding to the increased role of Erasmus+ to support EU youth policy initiatives. The strategy is an instrument for sustainable capacity building in the field of youth and aims at

¹ "Declaration on Promoting citizenship and the common values of freedom, tolerance and non-discrimination through education" Informal meeting of European Union Education Ministers, Paris 17 March 2015

http://ec.europa.eu/education/news/2015/documents/citizenship-education-declaration_en.pdf

² 2015 Joint Report of the Council and the Commission on the implementation of the Strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training (ET 2020)- New priorities for

European cooperation in education and training - Council conclusions (23 November 2015)

<http://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-14440-2015-INIT/en/pdf>

³ Draft 2015 Joint Report of the Council and the Commission on the implementation of the renewed framework for European cooperation in the youth field (2010-2018)

<http://ec.europa.eu/transparency/regdoc/rep/1/2015/EN/1-2015-429-EN-F1-1.PDF>

⁴ <https://www.salto-youth.net/downloads/4-17-3103/InclusionAndDiversityStrategy.pdf>

⁵ https://www.salto-youth.net/downloads/4-17-3301/European%20Training%20Strategy%20in%20the%20field%20of%20Youth_en.pdf

establishing peer learning processes in which stakeholders on both the national and the European level can exchange existing concepts and good practices.

In parallel, the adoption in 2015 of two broad policy agendas, respectively on security and migration, and of one financial instrument, the European Fund for Strategic Investment, have had significant implications for the sectors covered by Erasmus+:

- The **European agenda on security**⁶ put a strong emphasis on the complementary contribution of the various policies to security objectives. Building on existing sectoral strategies and actions, it gives inclusive education, youth participation, volunteering, intercultural dialogue and sport a key role in preventing violent radicalisation and in enhancing social inclusion, mutual understanding and tolerance. The actions funded by Erasmus+ under the Strategic Framework for European Cooperation on Education and Training (ET 2020), the European Youth Strategy, and the EU Work Plan for Sport contribute to these objectives.
- The **European Migration Agenda**⁷ pinpointed the role of legal migration in addressing skills shortages and mismatches linked to the long-term economic and demographic challenges in the EU. The needs arising from the significant migration flows into the EU in 2015 actually led to a reprioritisation of the Erasmus+ actions to support the integration of newly-arrived migrants in the socioeconomic environment of the host countries.
- The **European Fund for Strategic Investment (EFSI)**⁸, adopted in 2015 in the framework of the Investment Plan for Europe, includes human capital development among its objectives, in particular through education and training as part of the necessary efforts to restore jobs and sustainable growth.

⁶ The European Agenda on Security COM(2015) 185 final
http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/e-library/documents/basic-documents/docs/eu_agenda_on_security_en.pdf

⁷ Communication on a European Agenda on Migration 13/5/2015
<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?qid=1449677641016&uri=CELEX:52015DC0240>

⁸ Investment Plan for Europe
http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-15-5420_en.htm

Furthermore, **country-specific recommendations** (CSRs)⁹ on education, affecting 12 EU Member States, were adopted in the framework of the 2015 European Semester as a vehicle for modernising education systems and achieving the Europe 2020 strategy targets in the field of education.

Throughout 2015 Erasmus+ implemented the existing EU policy agendas of promoting inclusive learning mobility and cooperation between the various stakeholders involved in the education, training and youth sectors. Furthermore, the programme was also attuned to the emerged challenges, providing integrated support for achieving the strategic objectives of developing individual talent and active citizenship, improving skills and employability, and enhancing the EU's potential for innovation and competitiveness.

⁹ Commission communication - 2015 European Semester: Country-specific recommendations
http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/pdf/csr2015/eccom2015_en.pdf

2. Introduction

This report covers the second year of implementation of Erasmus+, the EU programme for education, training, youth and sport. It aims to give an overview of all the activities implemented so far with regard to the Erasmus+ 2015 calls, planned under the 2015 Erasmus+ Annual Work Programme.

In 2015, programme priorities were shaped by the Paris Declaration of EU education ministers and the European Commissioner for education, culture, youth and sport; the EU pledge to tackle intolerance, discrimination and radicalisation; and by the massive inflow of migrants in Europe. The Commission undertook to mobilise all possible legal flexibility to re-orientate EU programmes and instruments so as to increase their focus on the integration of migrants and on social inclusion measures, as well as to promote social and intercultural competences to address diversity.

Education, training, youth and sport policies are instrumental in promoting social inclusion, common European values and active citizenship; The Erasmus+ programme was acknowledged as playing a major role in this regard. Erasmus+ can also help to overcome these challenges and restore confidence in the EU, especially among young people. Hence, a series of measures were prepared to be implemented through Erasmus+ calls and contacts were taken with stakeholders across sectors to take on board the new priorities and put a stronger focus on the needs of migrants in education, on the prevention of youth radicalisation and on addressing educational poverty, both in ongoing and future actions.

The first part of the report details the implementation of the programme and is structured around the three Key Actions, the Jean Monnet activities and Sport. It provides concise information on the political context, on the implementation of the Erasmus+ programme, and gives a quantitative and qualitative overview of the 2015 Erasmus+ calls.

The statistical annex sets out information on the budget and financial commitments, as well as the calls' results and outputs per sector and per country for each action implemented under the Erasmus+ budget.

Finally, a project annex describes, in full, the project examples used in the first part of the report to illustrate the implementation of the Programme.

Erasmus+ 2015 Calls	Reference	Publication date
Erasmus+ 2015 General Call for Proposals	EAC/A04/2014	02.10.2014
Structured Dialogue Youth 2015 - Restricted call	EACEA 44-2014	30.09.2014
KA3 prospective initiatives - policy experimentation in school education sector	EACEA 30-2014	18.12.2014
KA3 - Civil Society cooperation in the field of Education training and youth 2015	EACEA 31-2014	28.10.2014
KA3 Forward-Looking Cooperation Projects	EACEA 33-2014	27.11.2014
KA3 - Quality assurance for enhanced transparency and recognition of skills and qualifications is	EACEA 48-2015	15.12.2015
Support for policy reform - support for small and medium-sized enterprises engaging in apprenticeships	EACEA 41-2015	15.10.2015
Comprehensive policy frameworks for continuing VET	EACEA 04-2015	30.01.2015
Erasmus Charter for Higher Education	EACEA/15/2014	10.04.2014
Erasmus+ VET Mobility Charter	EAC/A05/2014	22.12.2014

Table 1.1: Erasmus+ 2015 calls

List of acronyms used in the report

AWP	Annual Work Programme	IO	Intellectual Outputs
CEFR	<i>Common European Framework of Reference for Languages</i>	IPA	Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance
CoE	Council of Europe	LGBT	Lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender
DCI	Development Cooperation Instrument	LLP	Lifelong Learning Programme
EACEA	Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency	LTT	Erasmus+ learning, training and teaching activities
EC	European Commission	LT LTT	Erasmus+ long-term learning, training and teaching activities
ECHE	Erasmus Charter for Higher Education	ME	Multiplier events
ECVET	European Credit system for Vocational Education and Training	NA	National Agency
ECTS	European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System	NARIC	National Academic Recognition Information Centres
EDC/HRE	Education for Democratic Citizenship/Human Rights Education	NEO	National Erasmus Office
EDF	European Development Fund	NGO	Non-governmental organisation
EIF	European Investment Fund	OECD	Organisation of Economic Cooperation and Development
EIT	European Institute of Innovation and Technology	OLS	Online Linguistic Support
EMJD	Erasmus Mundus Joint Doctorates	PI	Partnership Instrument
EMJMD	Erasmus Mundus Joint Master Degrees	SALTO	Support, Advanced Learning and Training Opportunities
EMMC	Erasmus Mundus Master Courses	ST LTT	Erasmus+ short-term learning, training and teaching activities
ENI	European Neighbourhood Instrument	ROMED	European Training Programme for Roma Mediators
EPALE	Electronic Platform for Adult Learning in Europe	TCA	Transnational Cooperation Activities
EQAVET	European Quality Assurance in Vocational Education and Training	TEC	Training and Evaluation Cycle
EQF	European Qualifications Framework	TOI	Transfer of Innovation
E&T	Education and Training	VET	Vocational Education and Training
ET 2020	Education and Training 2020 strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training		
EVS	European Voluntary Service		
EU	European Union		
EUR	Euro		
EWoS	European Week of Sport		
EYCA	European Youth Card Association		
EYP	European Youth Portal		
HEREs	Higher Education Reform Experts		
HEIs	Higher Education Institutions		
KA1	Erasmus+ Key Action 1		
KA2	Erasmus+ Key Action 2		
KA3	Erasmus+ Key Action 3		
ICT	Information and communication technologies		

3. Programme implementation

3.1 Programme priorities

In 2015, Erasmus+ continued to ensure that the implementation of all its Key Actions strategically serves the EU policy priorities through the specific goals of modernisation of education, training, youth and sport systems. The medium-term nature of these goals, and the urgent need to respond to new economic/social demands and emerging policy priorities, called for both stability and flexibility.

In response to the tragic events of 2015, Erasmus+ was called upon to contribute to the urgent EU-level priorities of tackling youth radicalisation, migrants' education needs, and educational poverty at large. These priorities were promptly accommodated through adjustments to Erasmus+ calls and through cooperation with the National Agencies and various stakeholders.

Meanwhile, the ongoing priorities concerning the reform processes continued to focus on increasing the labour-market relevance of education and training systems; on raising the quality of vocational skills; on the development of youth work and on non-formal and informal learning as a means to improve the access of young people to rights, autonomy and active citizenship within and outside the EU.

3.2 Optimisation of successful actions

Throughout 2015 the efforts continued to significantly simplify the programme (e.g. unit costs, preparatory work for e-applications) and streamline rules across sectors. 2015 was also a year of consolidation, stability and clarification of potentially ambiguous principles and rules of the programme.

In parallel, the two essential operational objectives of the **Strategic Partnerships** action – fostering innovation and promoting cooperation, peer-learning and exchanges of practices – were further emphasised and the action was further simplified.

3.3 Launch of new actions in 2015

Under KA1, several new actions were launched:

- The **International Credit Mobility** action expanded the Erasmus+ learners and staff mobility to non-European partner countries around the world.
- The new **Master Loan scheme** now gives students the opportunity to get EU-guaranteed loans with favourable pay-back terms, helping them to finance a Master course in an Erasmus+ Programme country.
- The **Erasmus+ VET Mobility Charter**, was awarded for the first time in 2015 to high-quality VET providers across the programme countries. The Charter recognises and strengthens these VET providers' commitment to increasing the quality of VET mobility and to enhancing their internationalisation strategies.

Under KA2, the new **capacity building action in higher education** funded transnational cooperation projects between higher education institutions from programme and eligible partner countries. The action includes the possibility to involve non-academic partners, thereby strengthening the links with society and business. In the youth field, a specific 'Western Balkans Youth Window' was introduced.

Under KA3, the first Erasmus+ call for proposals for **forward-looking cooperation projects** – aiming to identify, test, develop and assess innovative approaches in the fields of education, training and youth – was published in 2015.

Finally, the **School Education Gateway** opened to the public in 2015. This European platform intends to engage schools, teachers, policy makers and other school education stakeholders at European, national and regional level and to provide professional development opportunities to teachers and educators.

3.4 Erasmus+ budget and commitments

Budget

Erasmus+ was allocated EUR 18.2 billion for the 2014-2020 period; EUR 16.4 billion was financed under budget heading 1 (of which EUR 14.5 billion from EU-28 appropriations) and EUR 1.8 billion under heading 4 and the European Development Fund (EDF) to reinforce the international dimension of the programme.

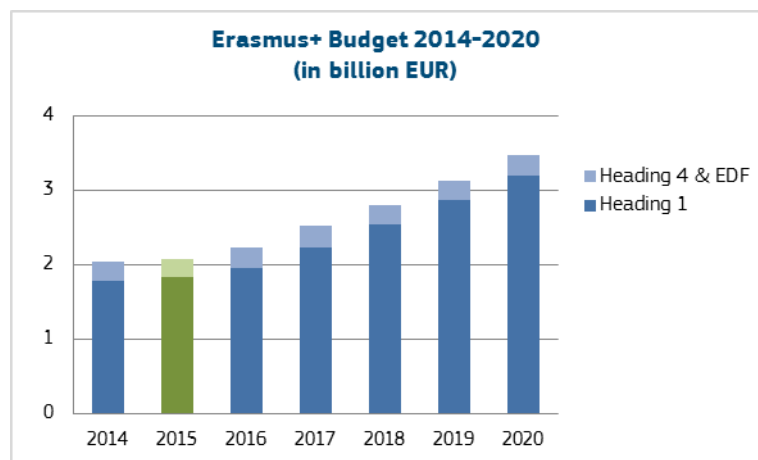


Figure 3.1: Erasmus+ Budget 2014-2020

Despite the overall significant budget increase compared to the previous programming period (+40%), the programme's budgetary profile expects only a limited increase in the first half of the programming period. Consequently, the final budget available to cover Erasmus + actions in 2015 – EUR 2.115 billion – represents only a slight increase compared to 2014 (+2.1%).

This budget includes appropriations from the budget of the Union (EU 28) but also appropriations arising from the participation of the EFTA/EEA countries, appropriations from external assigned revenues arising from the participation of other countries into the Programme and appropriations corresponding to internal assigned revenues from recoveries.

Similarly to 2014, this budget covers both the operational (98%) and administrative (2%) expenditures under the programme, 3% of the budget is again allocated to the National Agencies management fees (see details in Annex 1).

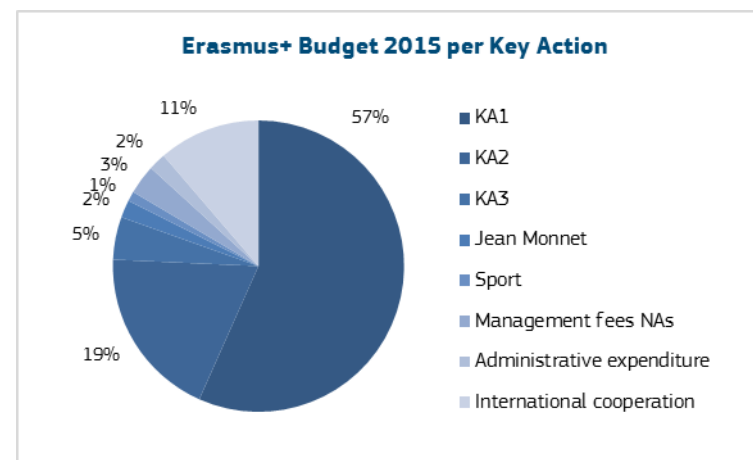


Figure 3.2: Erasmus+ Budget 2015 per Key Action

Commitments

During this second year of implementation, a total amount of **EUR 2.080 billion** was committed by the Commission and the Executive Agency (see Figure 3.3).

The difference of EUR 35 million between the budget approved in the 2015 work programme and the EU commitments comes from the minor under-execution of various actions directly managed by the Commission and the Executive Agency under KA3 but also under KA1 due in part to the cancellation of the participation of the Greek youth national agency to the programme. Consequently the total EU commitments remained flat compared to 2014 (see Table 3.1).

However, considering the political situation and the commitments taken by Directorate General for Education and Culture to contribute to the resolution

of the migrants/refugees crisis, the unused funds¹⁰ were transferred in full to the 2016 work programme to support the activities relating to migrant and refugees.

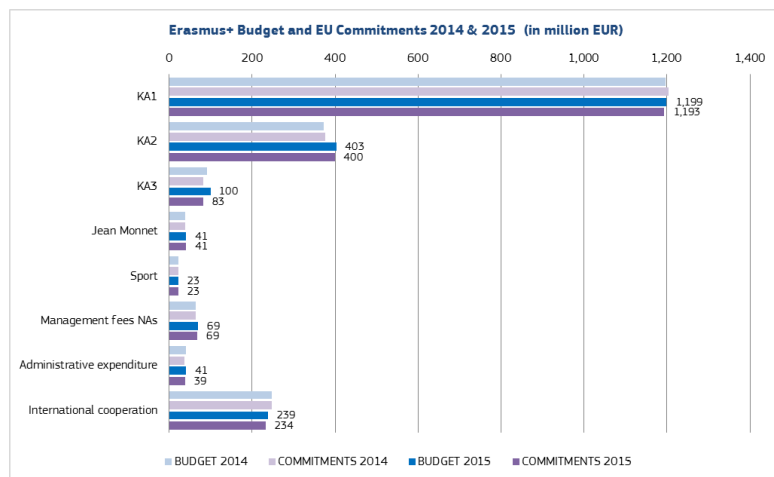


Figure 3.3: Erasmus+ Budget and EU Commitments 2014-2015

¹⁰ The unused funds relate only to appropriations arising from external and/or internal assigned revenues which can be carried-over to the successive year. Other appropriations (EU-28 and EFTA/EEA) are used in full the same year.

Similarly to 2014, the education and training sector received the largest budget share with almost 70% of the commitments; the youth sector received around 10%, while the remaining budget was distributed between Jean Monnet, sport, international cooperation, administrative expenditure and management fees for the National Agencies (see details in Annex 2).

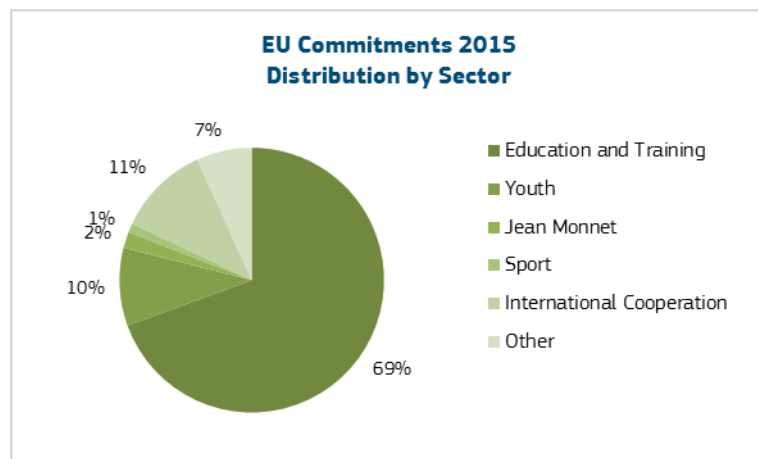


Figure 3.4: EU Commitments 2015 per Sector

In 2015, the split of the funds across the actions was very similar to 2014:

- 57% to support the learning opportunities abroad for individuals within the EU and beyond (Key Action 1),
- 19% for partnerships between educational institutions, youth organisations, businesses, local and regional authorities and NGOs (Key Action 2),
- 4% for reforms to modernise education and training and to promote innovation, entrepreneurship and employability (Key Action 3),
- From the remaining 20%: support to international cooperation accounted for 11%, Jean Monnet 2%, Sport activities 1%; while management fees for National Agencies and administrative expenses accounted for 5%.

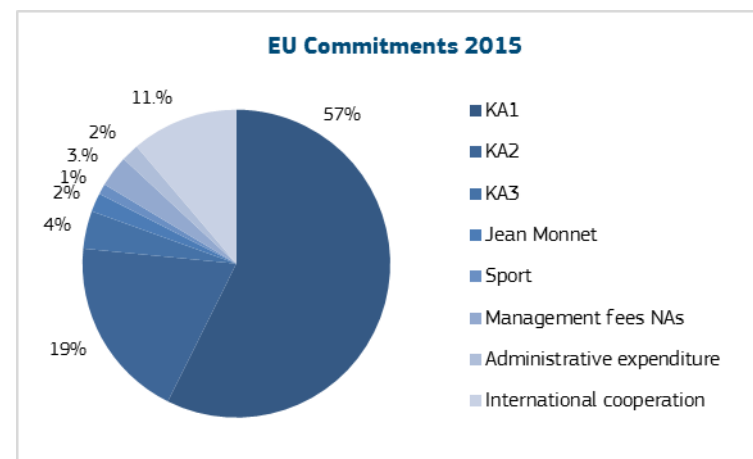


Figure 3.5: EU Commitments under Erasmus+ in 2015

In absolute value however, the amount of funds allocated slightly decreased for KA1, KA3 and international cooperation, mainly in favour of KA2. In addition, funds allocation was increased for Jean Monnet, Sport and for administrative purposes¹¹.

EU commitments (EUR)	YEAR 2014	YEAR 2015	Diff.
KA1	1,203,103,923	1,193,219,340	-1%
KA2	375,888,040	399,779,704	6%
KA3	83,232,619	82,615,344	-1%
Jean Monnet	38,789,324	40,948,251	6%
Sport	22,434,981	22,927,324	2%
Management fees NAs	64,565,236	68,739,632	6%
Administrative expenditure	36,888,434	38,729,084	5%
International cooperation (Heading 4)	246,877,625	233,653,369	-5%
TOTAL	2,071,780,182	2,080,612,049	0.4%

Table 3.1: EU Commitments under Erasmus+ 2014 and 2015

¹¹ The administrative expenditure was frontloaded in view of the increase of the programme budget in the second half of the programming period.

3.5 Programme implementation

The Erasmus+ programme implementation in the programme countries is mainly entrusted to the National Agencies (indirect management mode), but is also carried out in direct mode by the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA) and to a lesser extent by the European Commission.

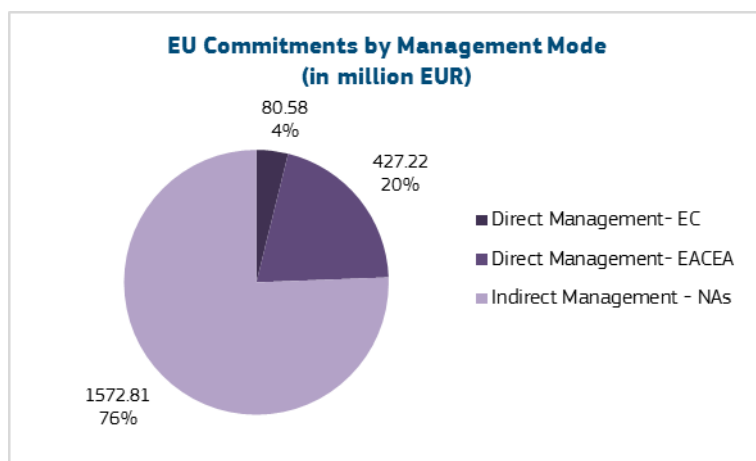


Figure 3.5: 2014 Commitments under Erasmus+ by Management mode

In 2015 the actions implemented through NAs represented nearly 76% of the Erasmus+ budget. The National Agencies managed to commit entirely the heading 1 and heading 4 budgets allocated to them (see details in Annex 3).

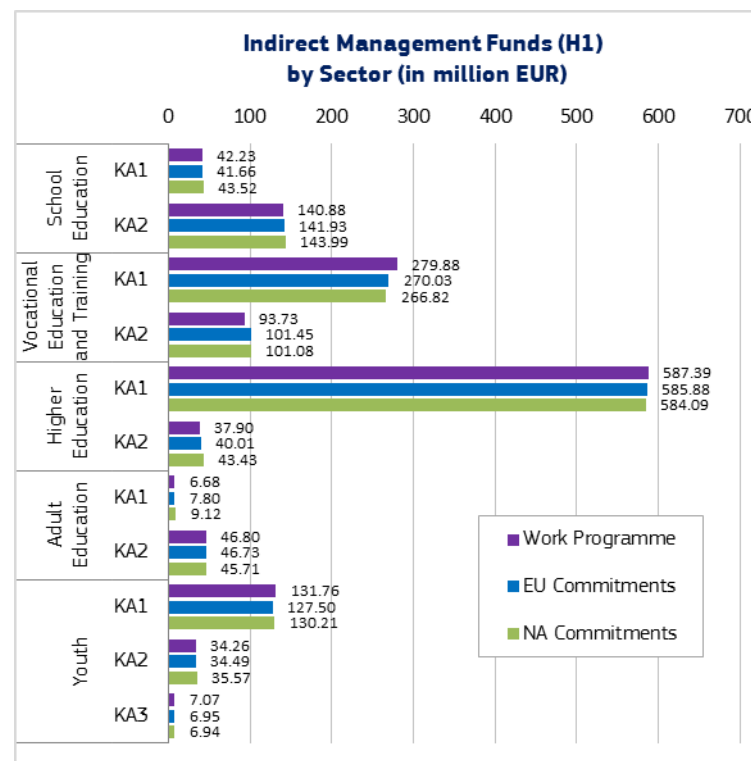


Figure 3.6: Usage of the indirect funds

3.5.1 Improving the programme implementation: bottom-up cooperation

From the outset, the Commission responded to the various challenges encountered by the stakeholders, largely due to the transition to the new programme, by ad hoc specific measures and by enhancing cooperation with the National Agencies.

Working groups

At the end of 2014, DG EAC set up a number of consultative working groups to ensure cooperation between the European Commission, the National Agencies and some beneficiaries, and continuously improve the overall programme implementation.

The feedback generated within the **cross-sectoral working groups**¹² made significant contributions to a number of new horizontal initiatives in the domains of communication (including an NAConnect collaboration platform, Yammer communication network and a programme results dissemination platform), of IT (IT Action Plan¹³, enhanced reporting capabilities, streamlining of the programme's rules) and staff training.

Moreover, a number of **sector-specific working groups** were established in the higher education, VET and youth fields:

- In its three 2015 meetings, the working group devoted to the **international actions of Erasmus+** concentrated on i) ensuring National Agencies' input into the contractual documents for the first call and the subsequent grant selection processes and ii) on the need for a second round of applications for the international credit mobility action, including constructive discussions on how to make the application form in 2016 more user-friendly and less repetitive.
- The **NA working group on ECHE monitoring** developed an ECHE Monitoring Manual for the National Agencies; a "Make it work for you!" self-assessment tool for higher education institutions; gathered good practices from HEIs concerning the safety and security of Erasmus+ students and provided input for a massive open online course (MOOC) on internationalisation and overall Erasmus+ quality enhancement in HEIs and other actors involved in their internationalisation activities.

- The **NA working group on Special Needs** contributed to the ECHE self-assessment tool for HEIs; developed recommendations for NAs¹⁴ and HEIs¹⁵ on participants with disabilities and promoted the programme among them; identified current obstacles, gaps and needs for improvement.
- In its two meetings held in 2015, the **recent graduate traineeships working group** discussed the benefits, obstacles and management of graduate traineeships and agreed to launch a survey for HEIs to better identify the obstacles, to students taking up graduate traineeships but also to collect good practices in the management of graduate traineeships.
- The **NA working group for HE interim reports** examined the different national approaches and identified requirements for a possible common IT solution to help NAs process mobility project interim reports more efficiently, once the Mobility Tool+ is fully stable.
- The two first meetings of the **Inclusion and Diversity Strategy Steering Group** were held in 2015. The Steering Group examined and identified areas where actions could be initiated; it also further concentrated on elements that could lead towards an even more inclusive EVS.
- The **Youthpass Advisory group** discussed the current implementation status of Youthpass at national level as well as the results of the impact study. It made proposals to better support the use of Youthpass and steer the learning process. The Advisory Group also concentrated on the future of Youthpass based on the draft "Vision Paper for Youthpass 2020", presented by SALTO Training and Cooperation.

¹² Programme management; Strategic Partnerships; Reporting, Monitoring and Evaluation; Platform for the dissemination and exploitation of results; Online linguistic support; Communication and information between DG EAC, EACEA and NAs; IT tools

¹³ Ares(2016)1193975 - 09/03/2016

¹⁴ https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/sites/erasmusplus/files/erasmus-plus-recommendations-national-agencies_en.pdf

¹⁵ : https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/sites/erasmusplus/files/erasmus-plus-recommendations-higher-education_en.pdf

Stakeholders' experiences

In addition to the aforementioned cooperation, the beneficiaries' experiences collected via the participant reports, the final beneficiary reports and also the NAs' Yearly Reports are not only an important source of information for the improvement of the programme but also for the corroboration of its successful elements.

The overview of the NAs' 2015 feedback highlighted a number of difficulties associated with the complexity of the programme, the administrative burden, and too low a budget to meet the growing demand. A number of their beneficiaries made specific reference to the complex KA2 structure affecting the understanding, bidding and project coordination in school education. Nevertheless, the simplification of this action compared to the Lifelong Learning Programme, and the increased partnership scope and opportunities for schools were also reported.

Further comments referred to the rules and their uneven interpretation, the administrative burden related to the financial aspects, and the KA1 and KA2 application and reporting procedures.

Shortcomings in IT tools and the need to make them more user-friendly was a recurrent remark. However, stakeholders also pointed out their appreciation, of the online application of the budget calculation function and the overall improvement in the tools since 2014.

The NAs equally expressed their satisfaction with the overall impact of the programme or with particular actions and tools, while beneficiaries unanimously praised the quality of the NAs support in providing information and guidance throughout the pre- and post-application processes.

Echoing the programme's objectives, the feedback emphasized the mobility projects' potential to address needs at all three levels, professional, personal and institutional. Youth field beneficiaries confirmed that youth needs are well addressed, while VET beneficiaries reported improved skills, competences, motivation and synergies with employment and entrepreneurship.

In the area of higher education, the beneficiaries singled out the contribution of Erasmus+ mobility to improving employability, and its strong impact on

personal development and cultural openness. The enhanced strategic potential of partnerships across sectors was highly appreciated as was Erasmus+'s impact in terms of increasing the competitiveness and internationalisation of beneficiaries.

Additionally, through the surveys, 96% of the 2015 mobility participants expressed their general satisfaction with the programme and that they had improved their basic skills (94%) and language skills (96%). The additional support granted to those from a disadvantaged background or with fewer opportunities was highly appreciated as was the OLS to help them improve their language skills.

3.5.2 Strengthening the links between policy and the programme

To date, the new, integrated, programme has put a stronger emphasis on EU added value and impact as compared to its predecessors, by strengthening the link between the relevant policy agendas and the actions of the programme. Indeed, EU policy priorities were recognised as being well addressed by the overwhelming majority of the NAs' 2015 annual work programmes.

Further to beneficiaries' testimonies, a number of Erasmus student mobility impact studies¹⁶ carried out throughout the first two years of Erasmus+ strongly confirm the programme's impact concerning the political priorities and objectives.

Mobility has been found to equip young people in Europe with skills, European identity and citizenship values, also impacting on their social integration, inclusion and openness to other cultures.

¹⁶ Erasmus impact study - Effects of mobility on the skills and employability of students and the internationalisation of higher education:

http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/education_culture/repository/education/library/study/2014/erasmus-impact_en.pdf

Erasmus impact study - regional analysis:

http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/education_culture/repository/education/library/study/2016/erasmus-impact_en.pdf

Erasmus Mundus Graduate Impact Survey:

http://www.em-a.eu/fileadmin/content/GIS/Graduate_Impact_Survey_2015.pdf

As Erasmus+ creates synergies between education and the labour market, its actions prepare graduates, in various ways, to satisfy the needs of the labour market. As a result the programme's impact on career prospects is equally high, and graduates with Erasmus experience fare better on the job market than the non-mobile especially in the countries with a high rate of unemployment.

Furthermore, mobile higher education students are half as likely to experience long-term unemployment after graduation. One in three higher education trainees – rising up to one in two in southern Europe – is offered a position by their host company. In the VET field, mobile students find their first job much more quickly than their non-mobile peers (2.9 compared to 4.6 months), they have a significantly higher salary (+25%), while more than half of unemployed VET participants found a job following their mobility experience.

4. Key Action 1 – Learning mobility of individuals

4.1 Introduction

By funding transnational mobility activities, Key Action 1 aims to enhance the skills, employability and intercultural awareness of the participants. It provides support for young people to engage in democratic life and promotes the inclusion of learners with fewer opportunities¹⁷. It also reinforces the professional development of staff working in education, training and youth.

Furthermore, it enables participating organisations to improve their innovation capacity, the quality of their teaching and their capacity to work with young people. It also helps them modernise their curricula and to strengthen their international network and institutional leadership and management skills.

In 2015, KA1, the largest action in Erasmus+, received 57% of the Erasmus+ total budget and was mainly implemented by the National Agencies. The EU committed EUR 1.193 billion under heading 1 for KA1, slightly less than in 2014.

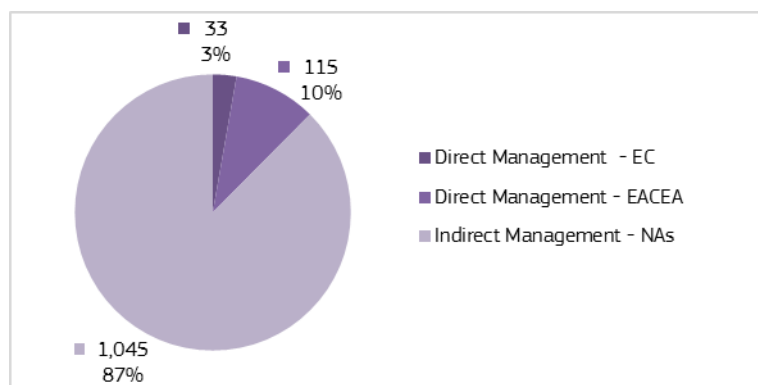


Fig 4.1 EU Commitments for KA1 (in million EUR)

¹⁷ Participants with fewer opportunities also refer to participants from a disadvantaged background for the higher education sector

Two main types of activities are funded under KA1:

- **Mobility of learners and staff**, which provides opportunities for students, trainees, young people and volunteers, professors, teachers, trainers, youth workers, staff of education institutions and civil society organisations to undertake learning and/or professional experience in another country; and
- **Erasmus Mundus Joint Degrees** promoting excellence, quality improvements and the internationalisation of higher education, by offering students mobility opportunities within a highly-integrated study programme delivered by an international consortium of higher education institutions.

In addition, KA1 provides increased access to loans on favourable terms for students following a Master's programme in another participating country, through the **Erasmus+ Master Loans scheme**. It also provides **on-line linguistic support (OLS)**, for participants to improve their knowledge of the language in which they will undertake their Erasmus+ experience.

4.2 Results of the 2015 calls

Compared to 2014, the interest for the KA1 actions increased by 11% in 2015 as demonstrated by the number of applications received (+3,700, including 1,400 new applications for the new action 'international credit mobility').

Overall, with a budget increase of 10%, coming mainly from heading 4 funds, 16,266 projects could be granted, which represents a 2% increase compared to 2014. The number of participants also increased in 2015 to reach above 678,000. However, the total number of organisations involved in KA1 projects fell by almost 6%; 3.3 organisations participating on average in a project in 2015 compared to 3.6 in 2014.

Overall, the results presented by action type in the following sections, demonstrate that with a relatively low average funding amount per participant this action has a strong impact at both individual and organisational levels.

Table 4.1 - KA1 Learning mobility of individuals - Results of the calls 2015

	PROJECTS 2015			GRANT	ORGANISATIONS	PARTICIPANTS
	Received	Granted	Success rate	in million EUR		
School education staff mobility	7,204	2,542	35%	43.52	3,865	21,101
VET learners and staff mobility	6,530	3,086	47%	266.82	15,659	130,070
Higher education student and staff mobility within Programme countries	3,843	3,731	70%	584.09	3,731	339,799
Higher education student and staff mobility between Programme and Partner Countries	1,403	825	59%	109.81	825	28,282
Adult education staff mobility	1,554	386	25%	9.12	832	5,077
Youth mobility (including TECs)	15,731	5,543	35%	130.21	28,922	150,522
Subtotal for decentralised actions	36,265	16,113	44%	1,143.57	53,834	674,851
Large-Scale Volunteering Events	8	4	50%	0.24	4	171
Erasmus Mundus Joint Master Degrees	76	15	20%	35.65	67	931
Erasmus Mundus Joint Master Degrees Quality Review (new)		17		15.26	99	508
Erasmus Mundus Joint Doctorates (on-going)		29		20.95	166	153
Erasmus Mundus Master Courses		88		51.76	455	1,433
Master Loans				33.00		
Other actions (OLS,EVS insurance, support ...)				16.50		
Subtotal for centralised actions	84	153		173.37	791	3,196
TOTAL	36,349	16,266		1,316.93	54,625	678,047

4.3 Mobility of learners and staff

The two first years of the programme

Since the beginning of the programme, and by the end of 2015, over 30,000 mobility projects received grant support under Erasmus+ KA1 for a total amount of EUR 2.13 billion. Most of the projects (87%) were still on-going in 2016 and around 1,270,000 participants and 103,000 organisations were engaged in the projects. These results show that Erasmus+ is well on track to meet its target of 4 million participants by 2020.

	CALL 2014	CALL 2015
Projects	15,756	14,494
Grant (in billion €)	1.036	1.095
Participants	641,860	628,149
Organisations	56,908	45,975

Table 4.2: Mobility of learners and staff from 1.1.2014 to 31.12.2015

Over the two first years of the programme 559,000 learners and 166,000 staff have already returned from their Erasmus+ experience. The majority of those participants were female (58%). People with special needs and with fewer opportunities are also well represented (~10%).

While the top three destinations for learners were Spain (12%), Germany (11%) and the United Kingdom (10%), staff mainly went to the United Kingdom (11%), Italy (9%) and Spain (9%).

Preliminary statistics also indicate that the participants are satisfied about the programme (96%), improved their skills (94%) and feel better prepared for finding a job (80%).

Results for the call 2015

2015 was a year of consolidation, stability and clarification of potentially ambiguous principles and rules of the programme. Focus was also put on the development and improvement of the tools (IT tools, guidance documents, trainings, workshops etc.) supporting the management of the programme.

A total of EUR 1.148 billion was made available to the National Agencies through the delegation agreements to support mobility projects (EUR 1.033 billion under heading 1 and EUR 115 million¹⁸ under heading 4). This allowed them to grant mobility projects for a total amount of EUR 1.143 billion (+11% compared to 2014) including EUR 5.2 million for training and evaluation cycles in the field of youth.

Additionally, EUR 238,000 was committed for "Large scale volunteering events in the field of youth", a mobility action which is managed by EACEA.

Details for the decentralised actions can be found in Annexes 4 to 11 and in Annex 12 for the centralised action.

4.3.1 Mobility in the field of education and training

A new feature in 2015, was the introduction in the field of higher education of the action for student and staff mobility between programme and partner countries, called in short '**international credit mobility**'. This brings the number of mobility actions supported under KA1 in the education and training fields to five:

- School education staff mobility (KA101)
- VET learners and staff mobility (KA102)
- Higher education students and staff mobility within programme countries (KA103)
- Higher education students and staff mobility between programme and partner countries (KA107)
- Adult Education staff mobility (KA104)

¹⁸ The call budget was EUR 121 million but delegation agreements were amended and the remainder (~EUR 6 million) was transferred forward to the 2016 call.

Table 4.3 – KA1 Mobility in the field of education and training – Results of the call 2015

	APPLICATIONS RECEIVED			PROJECTS GRANTED			SUCESS RATE	
	2014	2015	% increase	2014	2015	% increase	2014	2015
School education staff mobility	8,978	7,204	-20%	2,806	2,542	-9%	31%	35%
VET learner and staff mobility	5,912	6,530	10%	3,156	3,086	-2%	53%	47%
Higher education student and staff mobility within programme countries	3,765	3,843	2%	3,620	3,731	3%	71%	70%
Higher education student and staff mobility between programme and partner countries		1,403			825			59%
Adult education staff mobility	2,296	1,554	-32%	424	386	-9%	18%	25%
TOTAL FOR MOBILITY IN THE FIELD OF EDUCATION & TRAINING	20,951	20,534	-2%	10,006	10,570	6%	48%	51%

	GRANT (in million EUR)			ORGANISATIONS			PARTICIPANTS		
	2014	2015	% increase	2014	2015	% increase	2014	2015	% increase
School education staff mobility	43.01	43.52	1%	4,252	3,865	-9%	21,037	21,101	0%
VET learner and staff mobility	264.12	266.82	1%	18,094	15,659	-13%	126,004	130,070	3%
Higher education student and staff mobility within programme countries	600.82	584.09	-3%	3,620	3,731	3%	341,393	339,799	0%
Higher education student and staff mobility between programme and partner countries		109.81			825			28,282	
Adult education staff mobility	9.92	9.12	-8%	961	832	-13%	5,593	5,077	-9%
TOTAL FOR MOBILITY IN THE FIELD OF EDUCATION & TRAINING	917.86	1,013.36	10%	26,927	24,912	-7%	494,027	524,329	6%

The overall number of applications for the four actions continued from 2014 (KA101, KA102, KA103 and KA104), decreased by 9% compared to 2014. The lower number of applications in the fields of school (~20%) and adult education (~32%) was not compensated by the increase registered in the field of VET (+10%). However, the new 'international credit mobility' action attracted over 1,400 new applicants.

As a result, over EUR 1 billion was granted to more than 10,500 projects, involving around 25,000 organisations and supporting the mobility of 524,000 learners and staff to study, train, and gain work experience abroad (see details in Table 4.3).

a) School education staff mobility

In the first two years of Erasmus+, the budget for staff mobility in school education has been relatively stable. A slight increase brought the 2015 budget to EUR 43.5 million (+1%).

In 2015, the lower number of applications led to the somewhat higher success rate of 35%. However, a wide margin of variation still exists between countries, with a success rate ranging from 100% in some of the smaller countries and 84% in Germany, to only 9% in Italy (see Annex 5A).

Even though the absolute number of approved projects has been reduced, the average size of a project has increased in terms of conducted activities. This trend is also in line with the organisation-oriented strategic approach promoted under Erasmus+. As a consequence of the increase in the project size, the number of participants remained stable at around 21,000.

Preliminary data on 2014 projects indicate that over 17,300 staff have finalised their mobility so far. Details by country are available in Annex 5B.

As in 2014, the top five topics covered by the approved projects were:

- Teaching and learning foreign languages (19%)
- New innovative curricula/educational methods/development of training courses (13%)
- ICT - new technologies - digital competences (11%)
- Pedagogy and didactics (10%)

- Quality Improvement Institutions and/or methods (including school development) (9%)

Among the participants, 78% are planning to go abroad to participate in a structured course or other type of training event, 21% will undertake a job shadowing, while the remaining 1% will conduct a teaching assignment in a partner organisation in another country.

The average funding per participant amounts to around EUR 1,700, with training courses having a comparatively higher cost at a rate of EUR 1,850 per participant, compared to EUR 1,200 – 1,250 for job shadowing or teaching assignments. In addition, around EUR 7.3 million was spent on organisational support and exceptional costs (see Annex 4).

In the 2015 call for proposals, national consortia were able to apply under KA1 for school education for the first time. Depending on the structure of the education system in a given country, local or regional school authorities and other school coordinating bodies could apply as consortium leaders on behalf of a number of schools. This change was intended to provide easier access for small and inexperienced schools that may not have the administrative capacity to apply on their own behalf. The opportunity was positively received and 96 projects (~4%) involving national consortia were funded under the 2015 call.

Example of KA1 school education mobility project

Project title: *Professionalisierung der internationalen Zusammenarbeit*

Project number: 2015-1-DE03-KA101-013447

Coordinating organisation: *Staatliche Wirtschaftsschule Neuburg a. d. Donau (Germany)*

EU contribution: EUR 8,515

The beneficiary school plans to run a combination of different continuing education courses including training in international project management. It also plans to offer training in the use of new media aiming at improving its staff's skills for foreign school activities. This is, especially important for their new staff members in order to increase

the currently limited knowledge and experience of the team-members in this field.

b) VET learners and staff mobility

The continuing strong interest in the action is reflected in the number of applications, which has increased by 600 applications compared to the previous call and has reached the total figure of 6,530.

In 2015, 3,086 VET mobility projects were funded for a total grant of EUR 267 million, representing a success rate of 47%. This is slightly lower in absolute numbers compared to 2014 (-2%), but the average size of the project has increased, leading to a higher total number of participants. Details can be found in Annexes 4 and 6A.

Over 103,900 VET learners and staff have finalised their mobilities so far in projects funded under the 2014 call. Details by country can be found in Annex 6B.

Under the 2015 call, 85% of the 130,000 participants were VET learners performing traineeships abroad (of which 75% in companies and 25% in VET institutions), while the remaining 15% were VET staff. The access to the programme by people with special needs or fewer opportunities continued to be promoted in 2015, meaning these groups represented 9% of the participants compared to only 1% in 2014.

As regards the duration of the mobility, for three out of four learners the Erasmus+ experience lasted less than one month, for only three out of 1,000 more than 6 months and for the remaining learners between one and six months. This can be partly explained by the limitations imposed by the national education and curriculum systems.

The main topics covered by the projects were:

- Teaching and learning of foreign languages (11%)
- Intercultural/intergenerational education and lifelong learning (9%)
- Labour market issues including career guidance / youth unemployment (9%)

- International cooperation, international relations, development cooperation (7%)
- New innovative curricula/educational methods/development of training courses (6%)

Almost 15% of the selected projects involve national consortia made up of three or more organisations active in the field of VET. The aim of this cooperation format is to further develop the internationalisation and improve the quality and management of the mobility activities.

Erasmus+ VET mobility charters were awarded for the first time in 2015 both as recognition of well-established internationalisation strategies of the VET institutions and a tool for further developing them while enhancing the quality of the mobility on offer. In 2015, 276 charters were awarded to organisations or consortia with a strong record of successful and high-quality mobility projects. The chartered organisations were subsequently able to apply through a simplified application procedure under the 2016 call for VET learners and staff mobility.

Example of Erasmus+ KA1 VET learner mobility project

Project title: *Expanding Horizons in Templemore College*

Project number: 2015-1-IE01-KA102-008594

Coordinating organisation: *Templemore College of Further Education (Ireland)*

EU contribution: EUR 105,279

Templemore College of Further Education is a further education college which delivers a range of full-time and part-time educational services. Since 2009 the number of students taking part in work placement abroad has risen from 3, reaching 35 in 2015. In addition to learners, College staff have also benefitted from Erasmus+ funding.

c) Higher education student and staff mobility within programme countries

Intra-European mobility activities in the field of higher education were extremely popular in the first two years of Erasmus+. Data from finalised projects funded in 2014 shows that more than 290,000 students benefitted from the programme, which is a new record (see details in Annex 7B). In 2015, a total of 3,731 beneficiaries were awarded mobility grants (details can be found in Annex 7A).

74% of the institutions awarded with the Erasmus Charter for Higher Education (ECHE) took part in mobility projects in 2015.

The feedback received from the 377,000 participants who completed their Erasmus+ experience over the first two years of the programme, provides valuable support for evaluating the success of the programme and identifying how to improve it. The preliminary analysis of this data shows that the programme has made significant progress towards quality and impact:

- 95% of students and 99% of staff are satisfied with their experience in general;
- Many of the ECHE provisions have been implemented with great success: feedback from participants shows that 94% of students in study mobility felt integrated at the receiving institution and 97% felt that they were treated equally as other students during the mobility. Recognition rates are also growing with currently 85% of the study periods being fully recognised.

However, there is still room for improvement in other areas: only 48% of the students who replied to this question report receiving information on how grades will be converted before the mobility, and only 58% stated that the course catalogue of the receiving institution was available in time for the preparation of their learning agreements. Furthermore, only 82% of staff members are satisfied with the recognition they received for their period abroad.

The launch of *ECHE Make it work for you!* self-assessment platform in early 2017 should help HEIs to advance in the areas they need to improve. The

platform will provide tailored suggestions to improve performance in applying the ECHE, and make it easier to compare the institution's results with its peers'.

The results of the first two calls also reveal that compared to its predecessor, the new programme supports participants that have been underrepresented in the past due to various barriers. Over the last two years support has been given to:

- 1,000 students and staff with special needs, with more than half having received a grant for special needs
- 33,500 students from disadvantaged backgrounds
- 5,700 students and staff from outermost countries and regions and overseas territories.

Preliminary results also show that traineeships continue to grow in popularity, accounting for 27% of all study mobility in 2015. Moreover, 7% of the traineeships were undertaken by recent graduates.

The European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System User Guide was updated in 2015 to align the system with the latest developments in higher education. It is being widely used - further to the transfer of credits - for designing and evaluating study programmes in formal, informal and non-formal learning contexts.

Examples of KA1 Higher education institutions with good results

Coordinating organisation: Katholieke Universiteit Leuven (KU Leuven), Belgium

KU Leuven is Belgium's largest university, sending and receiving around 1,100 Erasmus+ students each year. The automation of many of the university's administrative procedures has led to greater consistency in registration, assessment, and recognition of student mobility. This ensures that applications for student mobility are processed quickly, and that there is greater central support from the university. The successful use of both top-down and bottom-up approaches are reflected in the high proportion of students receiving full recognition of their mobility (96% in 2015 project).

Coordinating organisation: WorkSpace Europe, Slovakia

'WorkSpace Europe' is a Slovak mobility consortium supported by Erasmus+. A high share (more than 80%) of the trainees sent abroad by the consortium are recent graduates which reflects the focus of the consortium on boosting the employability of young people. As well as sending Slovak students abroad, WorkSpace works with consortia in other countries to attract human capital to Slovakia to boost its economic development. Such initiatives could help balance labour flows which typically operate in the opposite direction.

d) Higher education student and staff mobility between programme and partner countries

The first call for higher education mobility between programme and partner countries – **international credit mobility** for short – received very positive responses from HEIs in Europe and beyond. Great efforts were made to ensure a geographical balance in the budget allocated and to include low-income and least developed countries in Asia and Latin America, flagged as priority countries for the Erasmus+ programme.

Under the first round of applications, a total of 1,100 applications were submitted for bilateral mobility projects with partner institutions around the world. With 10 different budget sources and three different sets of rules on how these budgets could be used, it is a testament to the HEIs that there was such a high demand for this new action.

Following this first round, National Agencies signed grant agreements with 625 HEIs in programme countries¹⁹.

However, the first deadline for applications in March 2015 saw uneven demand compared to the available budgets. Some regions like North America, Latin America and most parts of Asia were universally popular in all programme countries, while the demand for other neighbourhood regions,

¹⁹ The 33 Programme Countries are: the 28 EU Member States, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Turkey. Partner Countries are all the other countries in the world. For a complete list of Partner Countries, see the Erasmus+ Programme Guide.

such as the Western Balkans, was modest although they had relatively generous budgets. With more than EUR 30 million unspent after the March deadline, a second round of applications was opened in September 2015 resulting in a better take-up in most participating programme countries. In total, 303 applications were submitted and 200 additional grant agreements were signed for a total budget of EUR 16 million.

Overall, a EUR 110 million grant will fund mobility for over 28,000 individual mobilities to and from Europe (see details in Annexes 4 and 8). Under these EU-funded projects, over 19,000 partner country nationals will come to study, teach or train in programme countries, while almost 9,000 European nationals will go to Partner Countries. Student mobility represents 54% and staff mobility 46% of the participants, while the average grant per participant was approximately EUR 4,000.

Example of KA1 International credit mobility projects with good results

Coordinating organisation: Vienna-based University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences (Universität für Bodenkultur Wien - BOKU)

The Austrian university (BOKU) was awarded around EUR 60,000 for staff and student exchanges with HEIs in a wide variety of countries around the world. The university is exchanging teaching staff with partners in Bhutan, Indonesia, Nepal and Uzbekistan, and exchanging teaching staff and students (in both directions) with partners in Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan.

Apart from the interesting spread of emerging economy and developing country partners, BOKU was rare in that in its application it made a virtue of its focus on development co-operation as part of its holistic internationalisation strategy. The Himalaya region is one of BOKU's geographic focus areas and in this geographic area containing some of the least developed countries in Asia they were building on longstanding bilateral cooperation with the Royal University of Agriculture in Bhutan and Kathmandu University and Tribhuvan University in Nepa. The project, which is now half way through, is running well.

e) Adult education staff mobility

There has been a marked decrease in the number of applications for adult education staff mobility in 2015, accompanied by a less steep – but visible – drop in the number of projects approved and the number of participating organisations and individuals.

This change could be partly due to the low success rate for this action in 2014, which may have discouraged potential applicants. The success rates remain largely country-dependent, with most countries seeing higher rates of success thanks to smaller demand, while others still receive a disproportionately large number of applications and can approve less than 10% of the proposals (see details in Annexes 4 and 9A).

With a total grant amount of EUR 9.1 million, 386 projects could be funded, out of which 44 involve national consortia (11%).

The main topics covered by the projects are:

- New innovative curricula/educational methods/development of training courses (12%)
- Intercultural/intergenerational education and (lifelong) learning (11%)
- ICT – new technologies – digital competences (7%)
- International cooperation international relations, development cooperation (6%)
- Teaching and learning of foreign languages (6%)

Overall, 5,077 adult education staff participated in 2015 project activities with an average funding of around EUR 1,450 per participant. At a rate of EUR 1,600 per participant, training courses are significantly more expensive compared to teaching assignments (EUR 1,300) or job shadowing (EUR 1,100). Additionally, EUR 1.7 million was spent on organisational support and exceptional costs guarantees.

Around 68% of the participants took part in a structured course or training event, 26% of the participants undertook job shadowing, while the remaining 6% had planned to deliver teaching or training at partner organisations abroad.

Under the 2014 call, preliminary results indicate that above 4,600 adult education staff have finalised their mobility so far. Details by country can be found in Annex 9B.

Example of KA1 Adult education mobility project

Project title: *Kontinuálne vzdelávanie učiteľov ako kľúč modernizácie vzdelávacieho procesu*

Project number: 2014-1-SK01-KA104-000229

Beneficiary: Mgr. Daniela Kocajdova Jazykova skola Progres

EU contribution: EUR 17,610

JŠ Progres, a language school for children, young adults and adults in Slovakia, involved 6 English teachers, each with 10 – 20 years teaching experience who are highly motivated to maintain personal development via career growth. The participants' goal was to boost their key competences (language skills, teaching skills, social skills, managerial, human resource skills) and a better use of ICT through participation in selected courses.

4.3.2 Mobility in the field of youth

a) Mobility for young people and youth workers

Erasmus+ in the field of youth supports mainly grass-root projects under Key Action 1, with an average funding of EUR 22,500 per project.

The demand in KA1 youth mobility action increased significantly in 2015. Almost 16,000 projects were submitted representing an increase of more than 35% compared to 2014, and showing the high interest in non-formal learning activities in the field of youth (see details in Table 4.4).

As the available budget for this action (EUR 130 million) remained stable compared to 2014, the success rate decreased from 49% to 35%. Details can be found in Annexes 4, 10A and 11.

Table 4.4 – KA1 - Mobility actions in the field of youth - Results of the calls 2014 and 2015

	PROJECTS			GRANT	ORGANISATIONS	PARTICIPANTS
	<i>Received</i>	<i>Granted</i>	<i>Success rate</i>	<i>in million EUR</i>		
Mobility of young people and youth workers - Call 2014	11,616	5,749	49%	125.70	29,851	151,395
Mobility of young people and youth workers - Call 2015	15,731	5,543	35%	130.21	28,922	150,522
Subtotal	27,347	11,292	41%	255.91	58,773	301,917
Large-scale Volunteering Events - Call 2014	10	5	50%	0.35	5	196
Large-scale Volunteering Events - Call 2015	8	4	50%	0.24	4	171
Subtotal	18	9	50%	0.59	9	367
TOTAL for mobility actions in the field of youth	27,365	11,301	41%	256.50	58,782	302,284

Activities and participants

So far, more than 127,000 participants granted in 2014 projects (representing 84% of the total number of granted participants) have returned from their Youth Exchange, EVS or Youth Worker experience. Preliminary results by country can be found in Annex 10B.

In 2015, applicants began using more the opportunity to develop **larger scale projects** by combining several activities. This led to a decrease, compared to 2014, in the total number of projects granted (-4%) but to an increase in the number of activities (+12%).

Whereas the trend for **youth exchanges** remained the same in 2015 as in 2014 and still attracting the largest number of participants. The Mobility of Youth Workers has the lowest success rate, though still at a satisfying level.

	ACTIVITIES		PARTICIPANTS	
	number	%	number	%
Youth Exchanges	2,563	25%	95,466	50%
Mobility of Youth Workers	1,499	14%	38,577	20%
European Voluntary Service (EVS)	3,343	32%	9,643	5%
<i>Out of which activities with Partner Countries</i>	<i>1,898</i>	<i>26%</i>	<i>39,747</i>	<i>28%</i>
Advance Planning Visit – EVS	100	1%	353	0.2%
Advance Planning Visit – Youth Exchange	1,022	10%	6,483	3%
TOTAL	10,425		190,269	

Table 4.5: Activities and participants by activity type

In parallel, the number of **European Voluntary Services (EVS) activities** in granted projects rose significantly bringing the number of volunteers to close to 10,000, the highest level ever in a call year. This important increase in granted projects involving EVS led to a slightly higher average grant amount for KA1 projects and explains the marginal decrease in the total number of contracted participants.

The number of accredited organisations rose to 1,907 (out of 2,854 submitted) out of which 86% received accreditation for hosting volunteers and 55% for sending and coordinating.

2015 was also the preparation year for the 20th anniversary of the EVS. In this framework, the current and future challenges of EVS were analysed and the decision was taken to design a campaign aiming to attract new actors as well as to support even more EVS projects for inclusion groups. National Agencies were actively involved in the preparation of this anniversary.

National Agencies took part in a consultation on how to strengthen the quality and harmonisation of EVS. As a result, a common checklist for EVS accreditors has been validated and all National Agencies were encouraged to use it.

Also, a new insurance company has taken over as provider of insurance to EVS volunteers as from August 2015. A total amount of EUR 3 million was allocated for this insurance scheme in 2015.

Organisations

More than half of the submitted applications came from newcomers (55%) involved in 41% of the granted projects. This is a very satisfying level and shows that the programme attracts new stakeholders.

The main profile of the applicants continued to be non-profit youth organisations but it is worth noting that 15% of the beneficiaries were public bodies, 6% informal groups of young people and 1% regional or national public bodies.

Cooperation with partner countries

The international dimension of the programme in the field of youth remains strong, contributing to the mutual understanding between participants from programme and neighbouring partner countries and also to the development of quality systems that support youth activities in the countries concerned.

In 2015 Erasmus+ National Agencies used about 30% of the KA1 funds for activities that foster youth **cooperation with partner countries** neighbouring the EU. This budget enabled 40,000 young people and youth workers to participate in projects funded from the Erasmus+ programme's Youth in Action strand. More than 14,600 of these participants came from partner countries neighbouring the EU.

Participants with fewer opportunities and refugees

Projects in the field of youth have a high potential of addressing current challenges around inclusion and integration of migrants and refugees.

In line with the trends of the previous years, the participation of young people with **fewer opportunities** in 2015 is substantial, reaching 36% of all the young KA1 participants. The main obstacles faced by these young people – excluding those with special needs – are economic and social (50%), followed by geographical ones.

In late 2015, the role of the programme within the context of the **refugee crisis** in Europe was further discussed with the National Agencies, who were invited to raise awareness of the programme opportunities among this target group and to encourage projects addressing this issue for Round 3. As a result, 5% of the granted projects were flagged as addressing refugees in the October deadline.

Topics and priorities

As in the year before and in line with the above, the 2015 projects contributed significantly to the promotion of social and cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue (more than 3,200 projects) and of social inclusion and solidarity (around 2,000 projects), as well as to the improvement of the key competences of young people (3,000 projects).

The main topics tackled by the granted projects were:

- Youth (Participation, Youth Work, Youth Policy) (17%)
- Creativity and culture (12%)
- EU Citizenship, EU awareness and democracy (10%)
- Intercultural/intergenerational education and (lifelong) learning (7%)
- Inclusion – equity (7%)

Recognition

In 2015 Youthpass, the European recognition tool for non-formal and informal learning activities reached the threshold of half a million certificates. 2015 was also a record year with around 110,000 certificates issued.

Impact

The analysis of the participants' feedback provide a very positive picture of the qualitative impact of the programme as regards the skills and competences developed by the participants and the values acquired (tolerance, solidarity etc.). Participation in the programme also stimulates active citizenship and a sense of initiative and autonomy. Some concrete outcomes:

- Close to 94% of the participants who had returned from their Erasmus+ experience before the end of 2015 have improved their key competences and skills relevant for employability
- 85% of young people feel more receptive to European multiculturalism
- 69% of the young people intend to participate more actively in social and political life of my community
- 85% are more willing to take action to change things that are not working in their surroundings
- 87% are more committed to work against discrimination, intolerance, xenophobia or racism
- 92% are more tolerant towards other people's values and behaviour

Examples of KA1 Youth mobility projects

Project title: *Everyone is a Foreigner Somewhere*

Project number: 2015-3-SE02-KA105-001322

Coordinating organisation: Youth In (Sweden)

EU contribution: EUR 21,320

The purpose of the youth mobility project is to raise awareness about the rising xenophobia across Europe due to recent migration crises and the intensification of nationalism. The project will take place in Sparta, Greece, with the project ending the day after the Greek National Day for Refugees on 5 April 2017. Greece was chosen as the programme destination due to its important political and geographical position in the ongoing migration crisis. The European Union represents unity and through the support of Erasmus+, the project seeks to allow youth to be involved in supporting and helping refugees and other migrants in need.

Project title: YW-Shared Responsibility

Project number: 2015-1-NO02-KA105-000502

Coordinating organisation: Hordaland Fylkeskommune (Norway)

EU contribution: EUR 10,891

'Shared responsibility' is a youth mobility project that aims to fight rising levels of youth unemployment. The specific target group of the project are young people (16+) who have dropped out of formal education systems. To guide this group of youth people in a positive direction, the project aims to facilitate transition of young drop-outs to employment or formal education. The pedagogical basis of the programme was a method called 'dragon dreaming' – to help dreams turn into concrete plans. The project 'Shared Responsibility' was one of the instruments used to support the Europe 2020 Strategy to include more young people into the education system and increase youth employability.

b) Large-scale volunteering events

The "Large-scale EVS events" action introduced in 2014 and managed by EACEA was continued without substantial changes in 2015.

Building on the principles of the EVS, the projects could include activities such as conferences, seminars, meetings, workshops etc., aimed at promoting the value of volunteering and notably the EVS in the fields of youth, culture and sport.

Within the 2015 call, out of the eight evaluated applications only five passed the threshold but due to budgetary constraints only four of them were funded for a total grant of EUR 238,000. The selected projects are from Bulgaria, Italy, Poland and Turkey and involve 171 volunteers (see details in Annex 12).

Example of large-scale EVS events

Project title: [Youngsters Originate Unique Team of Harmony](#)

Project number: 554477-EPP-1-2014-1-PL-EPPKAI-LARG-EVS

Coordinating organisation: EUROPEJSKIE FORUM MŁODZIEŻY STOWARZYSZENIE (Poland)

EU contribution: EUR 40,233

36 volunteers from twelve different countries helped the Polish Federation of Athletics, the Department of Sport Promotion in Municipality of Bystrzyca Kłodzka, the Commission for Street and Mountain Cross-country, the Village Council and EFM, the coordinating organisation, to organise the 23rd edition of the Mountain Running Championship, which took place in Miedzygorze, Poland, on 25-26 July 2015. The project aimed to help young people become youth leaders by providing them with more opportunities through non-formal learning and mobilising local authorities to actively support them. Volunteers were expected to become more self-confident, self-sufficient, and aware of the role of young people in the future social and economic situation in Europe and the rest of the world.

4.3.3 Online Linguistic Support (OLS)

The Erasmus+ OLS promotes language learning and linguistic diversity. It allows Erasmus+ participants to improve their knowledge of the language in which they will work, study or volunteer abroad, and to measure their progress between the start and the end of the mobility.

OLS was launched in October 2014 for higher education students and youth-EVS volunteers planning an Erasmus+ experience lasting more than two months. OLS language assessments (before and after mobility) became compulsory in January 2015, while participants can volunteer to follow OLS language courses. VET learners planning to undertake an Erasmus+ experience of more than one month also started using OLS in June 2015.

OLS covers German, English, Spanish, French, Italian, Dutch, and since 2016 also Czech, Danish, Greek, Polish, Portuguese and Swedish, while more EU official languages will be gradually added by 2020.

Under the 2015 call, 264,000 Erasmus+ participants assessed their language level using OLS. More than 107,000 (41%) of them followed an OLS language course (see details in Table 4.6).

Further to online language courses, massive open online courses, tutoring sessions and forums were introduced in 2015, providing additional opportunities for students, VET learners and volunteers to boost their progress in the language. An audit was also carried out, followed by concrete actions to improve the accuracy and precision of the language assessment.

The results of the final assessments demonstrated that the participants' proficiency improved significantly depending on their initial level, the selected language, the mobility duration and course assiduity. Course participants starting at an A level were found to improve their proficiency by one Common European Framework of Reference for Languages level on average. Participants following OLS courses in Italian and Spanish showed the highest

progress, while around 65% of participants used OLS to assess and improve their English skills.

In 2015, the OLS Working Group delivered clear guidelines and recommendations for HEIs; further flexibility in OLS processes; a simplification of the reference documents and IT procedures; and the definition of business requirements for the seven OLS versions released. It also identified measures to improve the relevance and accessibility of OLS for VET learners and teachers (gradually implemented as from January 2016). Finally, the Working Group was consulted at the early stage of the design of the OLS for Refugees initiative to assess its feasibility and the practical modalities.

Field	Participants who completed the 1st assessment	Participants who completed the 2nd assessment		Participants who followed courses	
	<i>number</i>	<i>number</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>number</i>	<i>%</i>
Higher Education	129,263	111,967	87%	57,965	45%
Vocational Education and Training	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Youth	552	307	56%	400	72%
TOTAL CALL 2014	129,815	112,274	86%	58,365	45%
Higher Education	243,482	212,844	78%	97,251	39%
Vocational Education and Training	18,310	13,044	63%	8,890	47%
Youth	2,040	1,042	26%	1,514	74%
TOTAL CALL 2015	263,832	226,930	86%	107,655	41%

Table 4.6: OLS participants for Calls 2014 and 2015

4.4 Erasmus Mundus Joint Degrees

4.4.1 Erasmus Mundus Joint Master Degrees

Erasmus Mundus Joint Master Degrees (EMJMDs) are highly integrated study programmes delivered by an international consortium of higher education institutions, and, where relevant, other public or private organisations. EMJMDs aim to foster excellence, innovation, and internationalisation in higher education institutions and improve the competences, skills and employability of Master students.

The EMJMDs were selected following the publication of the Erasmus+ call for proposals in October 2014 (see details in Annex 13). The 15 granted projects will provide 931 scholarships from 2016 over three intakes: 751 student scholarships and 180 scholar scholarships.

In 2015, the first intake of the Joint Master Degrees awarded in 2014 also took place with 143 student scholarships already realised of the 437 planned over 3 intakes (2015, 2016 and 2017).

4.4.2 Erasmus Mundus Joint Master Degrees Quality Review

In addition to the previous call, a specific call for proposal was launched, which was a pilot exercise under Erasmus+. It addressed former Erasmus Mundus Master courses which had undergone a quality review and were deemed of sufficiently high quality to be included in the EMJMD catalogue. It was decided not to repeat the quality review exercise under future calls for Erasmus+ in order to maximise funds available for the annual EMJMD calls.

In 2015 the 17 granted projects awarded a total of 508 scholarships, 304 student and 204 scholar scholarships, over three intakes. During the first intake 84 student scholarships were taken up. Data on scholar scholarships is not available to date.

Overall, the 32 EMJMDs projects selected by EACEA represent a good mix of academic disciplines in the broader areas of humanities, hard sciences and

life sciences. There is a wide geographical distribution of projects, and 137 different HEIs from 24 Programme countries are involved (see Annexes 13 and 14).

4.4.3 Erasmus Mundus Master Courses (EMMCs) and Erasmus Mundus Joint Doctorates (EMJDs)

In 2015, there were 88 ongoing EMMC and 29 ongoing EMJD recruiting respectively master students and PhD candidates. These consortia were selected under the previous programme phase prior to 2014, but continue to be supported with Erasmus+ funds.

A total amount of EUR 51.8 million was allocated to the ongoing EMMCs and EUR 21 million to the ongoing EMJDs.

Erasmus Mundus scholarships were awarded to 1,081 master students and Doctoral fellowships were awarded to 153 PhD candidates from programme and partner countries. The total awarded amount also included funding for 352 scholar/guest lecturers planned for the Masters courses (see Figure 4.2).

Example of former Erasmus Mundus Master course selected under the EMJMD-QR call for proposals

Project title: *Global Studies - A European Perspective Master Programme (EMGS)*

Project number: 2015-1688 (former FPA 2010-0120)

Coordinating organisation: University of Leipzig (Germany)

EU contribution: EUR 1,186,800

The Global Studies - A European Perspective Master programme (EMGS) is a two-years Master programme. Its objective is to train highly-qualified students to deal on an advanced scientific level with the phenomena of globalisation and accompanying processes and to contribute to a forward-looking debate.

The course combines findings, theories and methods from the humanities and social science, history and cultural science. It offers the opportunity to specialise in particular areas of globalisation research, such as historical and comparative analysis of global entanglements,

methods of global history, economic and social history of globalisation, global political economy, global governance, analysis of transformation processes in Central and Eastern Europe and development studies.

The design of the programme and the experiences of former graduates suggest that the fields of employment for EMGS graduates are broad: the public sector (diplomatic service, development cooperation, and consultancy), NGOs, the private sector and research.

Since 2007 more than 500 students have graduated successfully from the programme. Students come from all parts of the world: EU, USA, South Africa, Brazil, Japan, China, Kenya, Ecuador, China, Colombia, India, China, Armenia, Russian Federation, Azerbaijan and many others. In 2008 the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) awarded the programme with the quality label “TOP 10 International Master’s degree courses” for its innovative concept, high-quality teaching, high degree of internationalisation, comprehensive quality assurance mechanisms, excellent support service and convincing alumni results.

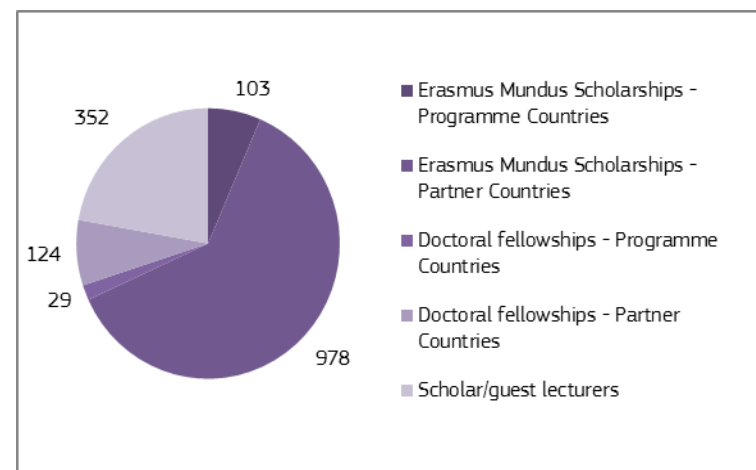


Figure 4.2: 2015 EMCCs and EMJDs scholarships

Table 4.7 - Erasmus Mundus Joint Degrees

	PROJECTS			GRANT	ORGANISATIONS	SCHOLARSHIPS
	Received	Granted	Success rate	in EUR		
Erasmus Mundus Joint Master Degrees	76	15	20%	35,650,800	67	931
Erasmus Mundus Joint Master Degrees Quality review	18	17	94%	15,264,600	99	508
Erasmus Mundus Master Courses		88		51,756,182	455	1433
Erasmus Mundus Joint Doctorates (on-going)		29		20,951,200	166	153
TOTAL		149		123,622,782	787	3,025

4.5 Erasmus+ Master Loans

[Erasmus+ Master Loans](#) are a new feature of Erasmus+. They provide partial guarantees in order to expand access to affordable finance for students who will take a full Master's degree in another Erasmus+ programme country.

2015 saw the first ever students moving abroad with an Erasmus+ guaranteed Master loan at affordable rates, allowing postgraduate students to obtain a full Master's degree (1 or 2 years) in a European ECHE-certified university abroad. This Master Loan scheme is a new initiative under the Erasmus+ programme. It represents a step forward for student mobility in Europe.

MicroBank in Spain signed up to the scheme in June 2015 and began disbursing loans in the 2015-16 academic year. The bank provided over EUR 1 million in loans to 85 students in 2015, with incoming and outgoing participants from nearly 20 Erasmus+ countries.

BPCE (Banques Populaires, France) joined the Erasmus+ Master Loan Scheme at the end of 2015. By the end of the year a total of EUR 60 million in student loans was available through EUR 10 million in EU guarantees. In total, EUR 33 million has been set aside in 2015 for guarantees under this initiative (also available for agreements to be signed at a later stage).

As several other applications were received and signed in the meantime by the European Investment Fund²⁰ a wider range of options will be available in 2016.

²⁰ EIF is implementing the Erasmus+ Master Loan Scheme on behalf of the European Commission

5. Key Action 2 - Cooperation for innovation and the exchange of good practices

5.1 Introduction

Key Action 2 (KA2) promotes the cooperation for innovation and exchange of good practices in the fields of education, training and youth, aiming at a long-lasting impact on organisations, individuals and policy systems. It supports:

- Transnational **strategic partnerships** between organisations, public authorities, enterprises and civil society organisations active in various socio-economic sectors, in order to promote institutional modernisation and societal innovation.
- **Capacity-building** transnational cooperation projects between organisations from Programme and Partner Countries, with the aim of helping the modernisation and internationalisation of their higher education institutions and of fostering cooperation and exchanges in the field of youth;
- **Knowledge alliances**: international projects between higher education institutions and enterprises that stimulate innovation, entrepreneurship, creativity, employability, knowledge exchange and multidisciplinary teaching and learning.
- **Sector skills alliances**: transnational projects for designing and delivering joint vocational training curricula.

In 2015, a total amount of EUR 400 million was committed under KA2, representing around 19 % of the total commitments for the Erasmus+ Programme and an increase of around EUR 24 million (+6 %) compared to the previous year (see details in Annex 15).

Close to 90 % of the KA2-funds were allocated to the National Agencies (see Figure 5.1); the Agencies managed to commit fully the amounts made available to them through the delegation agreements.

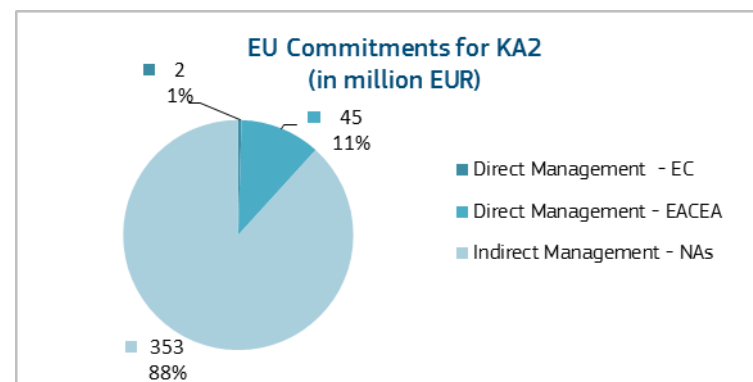


Figure 5.1: 2015 EU Commitments by management mode for Key Action 2

5.2 Strategic Partnerships

5.2.1 Introduction

The Erasmus+ KA2-strategic partnerships action supports the development, transfer and/or implementation of innovative practices and promotes cooperation, peer learning and exchanges of experience at European level. Open to any type of organisation active in the fields of education, training and youth or other socioeconomic sectors, strategic partnerships encourage the most diverse possible partnerships including public and private organisations established in a programme country or any partner country.

The action introduced in 2014 was further improved in 2015 to address issues such as its complexity and low success rate. For example, the distinct action for cross-sectoral partnerships was removed and embedded in the field-specific actions, with horizontal priorities and priorities relevant to each field; the two essential operational objectives of the strategic partnerships – fostering innovation and promoting cooperation, peer-learning and exchanges of practices – were further emphasised; the proportionality principle of assessing the KA2 project proposals was further clarified, the requirements for the assessment of applications above EUR 60,000 were made more flexible, the maximum project duration was extended to 36 months in the

field of youth, to allow for bigger, more ambitious projects and the project duration was made more flexible in the fields of education and training

Table 5.1 – KA2 Strategic partnerships granted between 1.1.2014 and 31.12.2015 under the calls 2014 and 2015

	PROJECTS			GRANT	PARTICIPANTS		ORGANISATIONS
	Submitted	Granted	SuccessRate	in mio EUR	Total	in LTTs	
Strategic Partnerships for School Education	2,270	433	19%	97.00	113,628	31,324	2,902
Strategic Partnerships for Schools Only	6,188	1,193	19%	169.02	243,027	192,196	5,898
Strategic Partnerships for Vocational Education and Training	3,531	774	22%	194.89	180,479	24,328	5,070
Strategic Partnerships for Higher Education	1,903	314	17%	85.65	89,478	36,137	2,039
Strategic Partnerships for Adult Education	2,577	430	17%	89.81	96,467	16,199	2,610
Strategic Partnerships for Youth	3,848	402	10%	46.76	60,497	11,052	1,814
TOTAL	20,317	3,546	17%	683.14	783,576	311,236	20,333

The first two years of the programme

In total, over 20,000 applications were submitted in replies to the calls issued in 2014 and 2015. This demonstrates the high level of interest in this new action promoting the strategic internationalisation of the participating institutions (see details in Table 5.1 above).

By the end of 2015, a total of EUR 683 million had been granted to around 3,550 projects involving 784,000 participants (of which 40% in learning, training and teaching activities) and more than 20,000 organisations.

A third of the budget was allocated to the production of intellectual outputs, a fifth to project management and another fifth to Learning, training and teaching (LTTs) activities (see Figure 5.2)

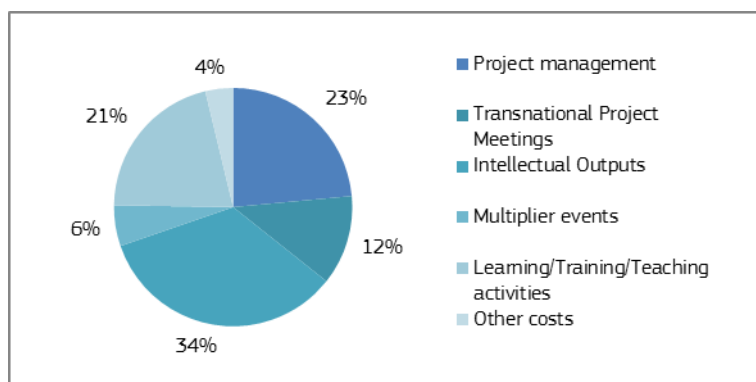


Figure 5.2: Budget Breakdown

As regards **priorities**, the top 3 main priorities addressed in 2014 by the selected projects were:

- Promoting the take-up of practical entrepreneurial experiences in education, training and youth work (15%)
- Supporting the production and adoption of Open Educational Resources in diverse European languages (12.5%) and
- Fostering the assessment of transversal skills (12%)

However, 2015 saw a shift towards other priorities :

- developing basic and transversal skills using innovative methods (32%)
- contributing to the development of a European Area of Skills and Qualifications (9%)
- enhancing digital integration in learning, teaching, training and youth works at various levels

Cross sectoral²¹ projects are defined as covering at least one horizontal priority or at least two specific priorities relevant to two different fields. They represent the vast majority (91%) of the partnerships granted in 2015 in contrast with the 2014 trend. However, impact studies pointed out some room for improvement in this area which highlights the need for a clearer definition of cross-sectoral projects..

As for the **topics**, almost half of the projects cover **inclusion and tolerance**. The main topics of the projects selected can be grouped under the following clusters:

- quality in teaching and training (69%)
- inclusion and tolerance (46%)
- employability (37%)
- new technologies and digital competences (32%)
- improving education and training systems (26%)

Results for the call 2015

In 2015, a total amount of over EUR 370 million was granted to over 1,900 projects involving around 11,000 organisations, and directly benefitting around 460,000 participants (researchers, project managers, learners etc). Details can be found in Table 5.2 below and in Annex 15.

The countries with the highest number of selected projects were Germany (231) and Spain (209), followed by France (149) Poland (143), and the United Kingdom (137) (see Annex 16)

The cooperation between organisations targeted by this action is also well achieved, each selected project involving on average 5.7 organisations, out of

²¹ https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/sites/erasmusplus/files/files/resources/2015-guide-v-3_en.pdf (pp. 106-115, 274-279).

which more than 4 coming from other programme countries. The countries' participation in strategic partnerships varies widely from 0.1% for Lichtenstein to 10% for Italy. Except Lichtenstein, all countries could fund minimum 10 projects covering all fields (see Annex 17).

Table 5.2 – KA2 Strategic partnerships granted following the call 2015

	PROJECTS			GRANT	PARTICIPANTS		ORGANISATIONS	
	<i>Submitted</i>	<i>Granted</i>	<i>Success Rate</i>	<i>in Mio EUR</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>in LTTs</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Average per Project</i>
Strategic Partnerships for School Education	1,215	241	20%	54.47	65,890	18,612	1,720	7.1
Strategic Partnerships for Schools Only	3,163	659	21%	89.05	122,838	97,352	3,273	5.0
Strategic Partnerships for Vocational Education and Training	1,868	402	22%	100.34	98,473	14,647	2,598	6.5
Strategic Partnerships for Higher Education	988	159	16%	43.43	45,434	18,990	982	6.2
Strategic Partnerships for Adult Education	1,258	222	18%	45.47	51,122	8,428	1,364	6.1
Strategic Partnerships for Youth	2,121	227	11%	26.38	33,241	6,544	1,051	4.6
Transnational Cooperation Activities for Youth				9.19	38,545	38,545		
Transnational Cooperation Activities for other Sectors				1.45	3,269	3,269		
TOTAL	10,613	1,910	18%	369.78	458,812	206,387	10,988	5.8

Around 90% of the total budget, including transnational cooperation activities was allocated to the education and training sector while the remaining amount went to Youth.

The strategic partnerships budget (EUR 359 million) was mainly allocated to the production of intellectual outputs, to project management and to learning, training and teaching activities:

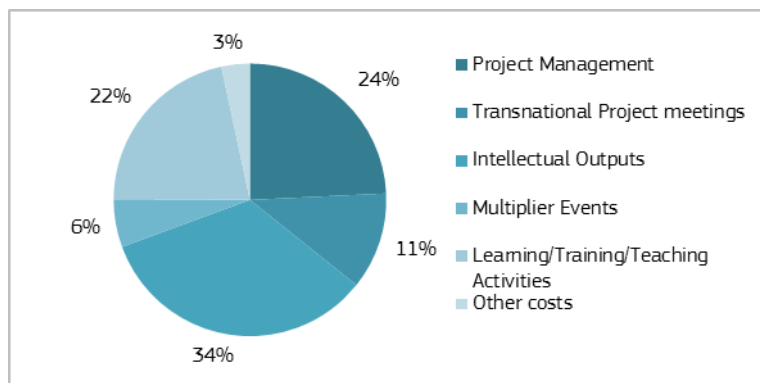


Figure 5.3: Budget allocation for the strategic partnerships - call 2015

As regards the activities, 69% of the selected projects are producing intellectual outputs such as open educational resources, curricula, IT tools or other pedagogical materials. This is slightly less than in 2014. Also, 75% of the 2015 projects include learning, training and teaching activities compared to 69% in the previous year.

A sharp increase in the number of multiplier events is also noteworthy, indicating the beneficiaries' better understanding of the rules and better quality of applications in the second year of the programme

Finally, transnational cooperation activities were allocated a much higher budget than in 2014 (+23%), mainly in the field of youth (see Annex 18).

Almost half of the projects address one of the following main priorities: developing basic and transversal skills using innovative methods (32%); contributing to the development of a European area of skills and

qualifications (9%); or enhancing digital integration in LTT and youth work at various levels (8%).

2015 projects address, overall, priorities well balanced across sectors (see Figure 5.4)

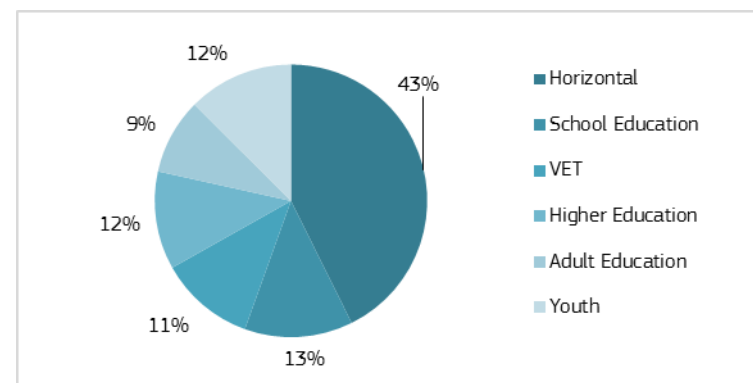


Figure 5.4: Type of priorities addressed by the 2015 Strategic Partnerships

5.2.3 School education

The demand for funding under this action continues to be very high, with a very large number of high-quality applications. In 2015 a total grant amount of around EUR 143.5 million was awarded to 900 strategic partnerships in school education. Among these, 659 partnerships belong to a special format, involving exclusively schools. The remaining 241 projects are working on topics in school education through partnerships between various organisations, including schools, local and regional authorities, universities, enterprises, NGOs, and other organisations.

SCHOOL EDUCATION	CALL 2014	CALL 2015
Projects Received	4,055	4,378
Projects Granted	728	900
Success Rate	18%	21%
Grant (in million EUR)	124.40	143.52
Organisations	3,831	4,993
Participants		188,728
out of which in LTTs	106,914	115,964

Table 5.3: School Education Strategic Partnerships

Even though both the budget for this action and the number of approved projects have increased compared to 2014, it is clear that the area of school education is able to consume considerably larger funds. At 86.5%, the average score of approved projects is the highest among the five sectors of education, training and youth. Due to budget shortage, more than 240 applications achieving scores higher than 85% had to be rejected. At the same time, the strong competition ensures a high overall quality of projects and also indicates that the National Agencies have been performing well in promoting the programme in the school education sector.

In terms of current participation, close to 5,000 organisations are participating in the successful projects: 3,273 schools in school-only partnerships and 1,720 schools and other organisations in mixed consortia. During the first two years of the Erasmus+ programme, there have been concerns that the number of funded organisations might not be sufficient to create a real impact on the school education field. This has been addressed by a number of measures taken in the subsequent 2015 and 2016 calls. For the 2015 call, National Agencies were given the possibility to involve internal staff as part of evaluator pairs which has resulted in increased cost-effectiveness of granted projects.

The aforementioned two types of school partnerships differ in structure, with school-only projects being generally simpler and focused on peer exchanges. Typically, these projects will include pupil mobility, as well as blended mobility – combining physical and virtual activities. Approved projects plan to involve a total of 87,000 pupils solely through these activities. Short-term staff training events are also common, with one third of projects organising this kind of activities. At the same time, intellectual outputs are less common compared

to other types of strategic partnerships, having been included in only 161 approved school-only partnerships.

On the other hand, intellectual outputs are a key focus of mixed consortia, with a large majority of selected partnerships (91%) including intellectual outputs in their project plans. 965 individual products will be co-funded with close to EUR 20 million of Erasmus+ funds. A considerable number of these projects also include learning, teaching and training activities, most commonly short staff training events (147 projects) or pupil exchanges (55 projects, involving around 7,000 pupils).

The top five main priorities addressed by the projects are a mix of field specific and horizontal priorities:

- developing basic and transversal skills using innovative methods (47%)
- supporting schools to tackle early school leaving (ESL) and disadvantage as well as to address all students from the lowest to the highest end of academic spectrum (11%)
- enhancing digital integration in learning, teaching, training and youth work at various levels (10%)
- addressing low achievement in basic skills through more effective teaching methods (9%)
- contributing to the development of a European Area of Skills and Qualifications (7%)

Overall, a quarter of the priorities addressed by the school education partnerships are also relevant to other fields.

As regards the topics, school education partnerships mainly address the following policy clusters:

- quality in teaching and training (80%)
- inclusion and tolerance (51%)
- new technologies and digital competences (39%)
- employability (22%)
- education for sustainable development (14%)

Example of KA2 strategic partnership in the field of school education

Project title: *Moving Europe- Moving oneself and each other through sports, art and culture across borders*

Project number: 2015-1-FI01-KA201-009076

Coordinating organisation: Tähtiniityn koulu, Espoon kaupunki

EC contribution: EUR 119,610

Three schools with special needs pupils each team up with a leisure activities organization in their respective countries (Finland/art, Germany/karate, Denmark/soccer), so that pupils get engaged in sports, cultural activities, and exchanges with the other teachers and students in the project. Often having experienced several school “drop-outs”, they also have difficulties finding suitable leisure time clubs as they have a poor body image/consciousness. The project objective is to help them improve their self-esteem and well-being with the aim to keep them in lifelong learning and enable them to be perseverant in reaching their future goals.

5.2.4 Vocational education and training

Strategic partnerships in the vocational education and training (VET) field seek to further enhance cooperation across a diverse range of participating institutions, by adopting a more strategic approach to project implementation. They consist of both larger-scale projects aiming to produce tangible intellectual outputs and smaller cooperation projects.

The smaller-scale partnerships can be a catalyst for the first internationalisation attempts of newer institutions, and allow for building cooperation and international networks as well as transnational mobility. They can also act as a stepping stone for future participation in larger strategic partnerships with intellectual outputs.

In 2015, there was an increase compared to the previous year in terms of both the number of proposals submitted (+8%) and the number of funded projects (+13%). Overall, more than EUR 100 million was awarded to 402 VET strategic partnerships.

VET	CALL 2014	CALL 2015
Projects Received	1,657	1,868
Projects Granted	377	402
Success Rate	23%	22%
Grant (in million EUR)	96.03	100.34
Organisations	2,492	2,598
Participants		98,473
out of which in LTTs	9,575	14,647

Table 5.4: VET Strategic Partnerships

The average grant per project amounted to approximately EUR 250,000, ranging from around EUR 50,000 for very small projects, up to the maximum grant of EUR 450,000 for the largest ones. Most projects (around 25%) fall in the category between EUR 250,000 and EUR 300,000.

In terms of participation, on average 6.5 organisations are involved per project, which makes the VET partnerships somewhat larger than the average partnership in Erasmus+. Even though no extra funding is provided for consortia of more than 10 organisations, a small number of partnerships (10 projects in 2015) applied and were approved with more involved organisations (up to 15) in a single consortium.

Most approved projects (61.5%) will last two years, while a quarter of the approved partnerships have chosen the longest possible duration of three years.

In terms of activities and outputs, 97% of the projects aim to produce intellectual outputs, amounting to over 2,000 individual products in total. Many projects also include learning, teaching and training activities. Most often, the beneficiaries foresee short-term staff training events (45% of approved projects involving 8,700 participants in 363 separate activities) and blended mobility for VET learners (20% of approved projects, 4,800 learners in 218 activities).

In 2015 the activities organised by the projects were also disseminated more widely. The number of approved multiplier events for the promotion of outputs and results of VET Erasmus+ partnerships almost doubled, from 1,041 in 2014 to 1,938 in 2015. At the same time, the funds allocated for

multiplier events increased by only 16%. The rise in the number of dissemination events should therefore not be linked to higher spending, but rather to a better understanding of funding rules and opportunities by the applicants and to the development of more detailed work plans.

The top five main priorities addressed by the projects are a mix of horizontal and field specific priorities:

- developing of high quality work-based VET (20%)
- developing basic and transversal skills using innovative methods (18%)
- contributing to the development of a European Area of Skills and Qualifications (17%)
- increasing labour market relevance of VET (17%)
- professional development of VET teachers and trainers (9%)

As regards the topics, the top five policy clusters addressed by the VET Strategic Partnerships are

- quality in teaching and training (69%)
- employability (64%)
- improving the quality of education/training systems (35%)
- new technologies and digital competences (32%)
- inclusion and tolerance (24%)

Example of VET strategic partnership

Project Title: Coderdojo - Training in ICT programming skills
Project number: 2014-1-IE01-KA200-000358
Coordinating organisation: Cork Institute of Technology (Ireland)
EC contribution: EUR 316,380

[CoderDojo](#) is a global movement of free, volunteer-led, community-based programming clubs for young people. At a Dojo, young people aged between 7 and 17 learn how to code and develop websites, apps, programs and games, and explore technology in an informal and creative environment. The project's aim is to examine how evidence of learning gained by CoderDojo participants might be recognised and to ultimately develop an International Toolkit with recommendations,

methodologies and guidelines on how to establish and operate a CoderDojo Chapter.

5.2.5 Higher Education

In 2015, a total of 159 higher education projects were funded under the strategic partnerships action. Compared to 2014, the numbers of both applications and of selected projects increased slightly.

HIGHER EDUCATION	CALL 2014	CALL 2015
Projects Received	917	988
Projects Granted	154	159
Success Rate	17%	16%
Grant (in million EUR)	42.02	43.43
Organisations	1,046	982
Participants		45,434
out of which in LTTs	17,130	18,990

Table 5.5: Higher Education Strategic Partnerships

While four countries selected for funding 10 projects or more, the majority of the countries (20) could fund between 1 and 3 projects (see Annex 16 for details).

The size of the selected projects ranges from EUR 72,000 to EUR 450,000 in a very similar way to the previous year; the average project size is around EUR 273,000. Project partnership also varies between 3 and 14 partners, with an average of around six partners per project.

In a total of 982 participating organisations, more than two thirds of them are Higher Education Institutions, the remaining being enterprises, research institutes, associations and public authorities.

The main priorities addressed by the projects are a mix of horizontal (32%) and higher education specific priorities (54%) but youth priorities are also addressed by the projects (7%).

The topics covered are quite similar to those of the previous year and thus remain very relevant to the EU policy agenda, addressing the following broad policy clusters: employability (61), new technologies and digital competencies (60), and inclusion/tolerance (31).

In 2015 there was also a growing interest in KA2- mobility activities ("Learning, Teaching and Training") that are complementary to KA1- activities. These were included in around 78% of the projects (against 69% the previous year) and involving around 19,000 participants. Around 2,200 participants benefited from blended mobility and 14,500 from intensive study programmes. Almost all projects (92%) include "Multiplier Events" for the dissemination of their results.

Examples of "promising" KA2 strategic partnerships in the area of higher education

Project Title: CARPE European Sustainable Solutions for Existing and New City Environments

Project number: 2014-1-NL01-KA203-001292

Coordinating organisation: University Applied Sciences Utrecht (Netherlands)

EC contribution: EUR 450,000

The main objective of the project is to develop integrated sustainable solutions for economic, social and environment problems in urban areas. In short, the development of smart sustainable cities. To achieve this, a combination of cooperation between Higher education institutions (HEIs) and local authorities is needed, and academic programmes that educate professionals in viable solutions for creating smart sustainable cities must be reinforced. The project has been designed to facilitate such cooperation, and develop an interdisciplinary teaching programme in the process. ESSENCE aims to: 1) accelerate the design, development and uptake of viable solutions for sustainable cities (e.g. by introducing an international Sustainable City student competition and a Start-Up competition for students). 2) develop a joint international course programme on creating sustainable cities, involving HEIs and regional authorities and disseminate large parts as open course ware and setting an example for other regions. 3)

investigate, exchange and test best practices of innovative teaching approaches, blended learning, distance learning, flipped classroom and ICT methods, and implement those in a joint course (30 ECTS) on creating sustainable cities

Project Title: LEARNING TOURISM: Creating Innovative and Permanent Methods and Practices for Multidimensional Education Collaboration

Project number: 2014-1-FI01-KA200-000893

Coordinating organisation: Lapin ammattikorkeakoulu Oy (Finland)

EC contribution: EUR 375,450

The project aims at strengthening the partnerships between education and working life by involving actors from the tourism industry in research and teaching activities; improving both teaching staff's and students' proficiency in ICT technologies; and the acquisition of practical entrepreneurial experience through internship placements – both of HEI and VET students. Activities include – joint student research programme on working life case development to enhance students' knowledge of international tourism; – launching interactive, co-operation among participating organisations facilitated through mobility initiatives and joint eLearning; – investigate and benefit from the participating educational organizations' and the working life partnership's structure, stakeholder cooperation practices and the utilisation of their operational model.

5.2.6 Adult education

The 1,258 applications submitted in 2015 show that the demand for Strategic Partnerships in the Adult Education sector remains high. From these applications, 222 projects were awarded funding and 1,360 organisations are involved in European cooperation in the field of adult education. Despite the increase in the number of projects funded, the budget still remains a limiting factor for this action, as fewer than 1 in 5 projects can be approved.

ADULT EDUCATION	CALL 2014	CALL 2015
Projects Received	1,317	1,258
Projects Granted	215	222
Success Rate	16%	18%
Grant (in million EUR)	45.76	45.47
Organisations	1,289	1,364
Participants		51,122
out of which in LTTs	8,238	8,428

Table 5.6: Adult Education Strategic Partnerships

Under the 2015 call for proposals, an average partnership in adult education is composed of six organisations and receives funding in the range of EUR 200,000. Very large projects are an exception, with only around 20 projects receiving more than EUR 300,000. Accordingly, more than 70% of approved projects chose the shortest possible duration of two years, while approximately 17% of projects will last for three years. To a certain extent, the figures seem to reflect the structure of the adult education sector where organisations typically have to balance their ambitions with limited operational capacity.

As to the activities, almost 60% of the strategic partnerships projects aim to organise learning, teaching or training activities. The preference is for short-term joint staff training events (involving around 4,000 staff in 113 projects) and blended mobility of adult learners (2,800 participants in 46 projects). A vast majority of partnerships (93%) aim at producing intellectual outputs: 867 products in total, an average of four outputs per project. Adult education projects tend to organise more dissemination events although with an increase of around 67% compared to 2015, this trend is less pronounced than in VET.

Similarly to VET, the number of multiplier events has increased disproportionately to the funds allocated which have only grown by 13%.

Overall, the priorities addressed by the projects are a mix of horizontal (45%) and field-specific priorities (37%). The top five main priorities addressed are:

- developing basic and transversal skills using innovative methods (30%)
- adult educators' competences (22%)

- high-quality learning opportunities (13%)
- contributing to the development of a European Area of Skills and Qualifications (9%)
- reducing disparities in learning outcomes affecting disadvantaged learners (9.17%)

As regards the topics, adult education partnerships mainly address the following policy clusters:

- inclusion and tolerance (85%)
- quality in teaching and training (70%)
- enNew technologies and digital competences (34%)
- improving the quality of education/training systems (19%)

Example of KA2 strategic partnerships in the field of adult education

Project Title: *Creativity, The Connected Economy and Offenders*

Project number: 2015-1-UK01-KA204-013755

Coordinating organisation: *Pictora Ltd, UK*

EC contribution: EUR 53,635

This project, is a partnership of organisations working in the criminal justice system, each partner developing innovative approaches to support offenders in resettlement and to reduce the likelihood of reoffending. The a training programme hosted for partner organisations, will develop innovative training ideas and concepts around how to ignite creativity; develop trust and sharing; promote Social Return on Investment (SROI); link creativity to The Connected Economy, employability and resettlement; develop social capital.

5.2.7 Youth

Similarly to KA1, the interest for this action increased (+23%) in 2015. Overall, 227 high- quality applications, with a score higher than 80, were granted a total amount of EUR 26 million. A total of 32,700 participants was involved. It is worth noting that 30% of the projects are small scale, receiving grants under EUR 50,000, while the average grant is EUR 100,000.

YOUTH	CALL 2014	CALL 2015
Projects Received	1,730	2,121
Projects Granted	258	227
Sucess Rate	15%	11%
Grant (in million EUR)	30.03	26.38
Organisations	1,165	1,051
Participants		33,241
out of which in LTTs	16,948	6,544

Table 5.7: Youth Strategic Partnerships

Youth projects mainly address youth and horizontal priorities but 8% of the priorities addressed are also relevant to the field of higher education. The most popular priorities are specific to the youth field :

- promoting empowerment, participation and the active citizenship of young people (31%),
- promoting high quality youth work (17%)
- promoting entrepreneurship education and social entrepreneurship among young people.(16 %)

However, projects also address horizontal priorities such as developing basic and transversal skills using innovative methods (15%) and strengthening education and training paths of educators and youth workers (7%)

The top five policy clusters covered by the granted projects' topics are:

- Inclusion and tolerance (60%)
- Youth / Youth empowerment (56%)
- Employability (43%)
- Quality in teaching and training (37%)
- New technologies and digital competences (17%)

Almost 80% of the granted projects are producing intellectual outputs (such as courses, methodologies, training material) and around 60% include learning, training and teaching activities.

In 2015 it was also made possible for Transnational Youth Initiatives projects to be identified at the selection stage. Their number (30) clearly demonstrated the need to address the insufficient demand coming from informal groups of young people.

Example of KA2 Strategic Partnership in the field of Youth

Project Title: ABEONA

Project number: 2015-1-FR02-KA205-009802

Coordinating organisation: S.O.S Insertion et Alternatives (France)

EC contribution: EUR 260, 947

The ABEONA project aims to promote social inclusion and well-being among young people by fostering successful transition into adulthood. The target group of this project is young people in foster or residential care because they are at greater risk of social exclusion. An idea instigated by the UNESCO Youth Forum in Paris in 2013, the project aspires to forge a continuous partnership between young people and policy-makers. ABEONA gathers field organisations and federations of care institutions, scholars, school of social workers and EUROCEF INGO. Each partner is involved in regards of its skills and asset in the different project's phases: (1) Study on care leavers and social workers needs and collection of good practices (2) European Conference on children at risks (3) Training material and tool kits designing (4) Experimentation: training of 160 youth workers and testing the practices with 300 young people aged 15-21 (5) Evaluation of the programme (6) Dissemination and consolidation of a European Network. The ultimate impact of the ABEONA project is to help youth leaving care systems access to an autonomous and balanced adult life.

5.2.8 Transnational cooperation activities

Transnational Cooperation Activities (TCAs) are an instrument for National Agencies to support the Erasmus + programme in fulfilling its objectives and priorities. Through TCAs, and with an overall budget of EUR 10.6 million, the National Agencies organised more than 2,600 activities in 2015. The biggest part of this budget, EUR 9.2 million, was allocated to the youth field for the organisation of almost 2,200 activities involving 38,500 participants aiming at developing quality in the Programme implementation.(see Annex 18).

The seventh edition of European Youth Week ran from 27 April to 10 May 2015 under the broad theme of "Unlocking young people's potential as a key to participation, in working life and in society". In the aftermath of the Paris Declaration and the EU Agenda on Security, the European Youth Week also focused on the key issue of "embracing diversity through education and youth participation".

The Commission organised a number of events in Brussels such as the High Level Debate and the Youth Projects Awards Ceremony and Exhibition. Additionally to those, National Agencies in partnership with Eurodesks, youth NGOs, local authorities and schools, coordinated the organisation of 1,124 national events involving 137,000 young people, policy makers and politicians. Those events were mainly supported through TCAs.

TCAs also enabled the active participation of National Agencies in the European Youth Work Convention, another major large-scale event held in the field of youth in 2015. Stakeholders from all over Europe were gathered to exchange views and analyse the challenges faced by youth work, and to draft a common Declaration aiming to develop and renew youth work in Europe.

5.3 Capacity building

This action provides support for the modernisation, accessibility and internationalisation of higher education in partner countries and for fostering cooperation and exchanges between partner and programme countries in the field of youth.

In the field of higher education this action was implemented for the first time in 2015 within the framework of the EU's external policies and is supported by the corresponding financial instruments²².

Capacity building contributes to the development of sustainable and inclusive socioeconomic growth in partner countries and aims to promote the EU's external action objectives and principles of national ownership, social cohesion, equity, proper geographical balance and diversity. Special attention is given to the least developed countries,, disadvantaged people from disadvantaged socioeconomic backgrounds and to participants with special needs.

5.3.1 Capacity building for higher education

Capacity-building projects in higher education are transnational cooperation projects based on multilateral partnerships primarily between HEIs from programme and eligible partner countries financed through the above-mentioned instruments. They can also involve non-academic partners, to strengthen the links with society and business and to reinforce the systemic impact of the projects.

The first call for proposals in 2015 received 515 applications, of which 63 were ineligible. A total of 140 applications were recommended for funding: 122 joint projects²³ and 18 structural projects, representing a success rate of 31% of the 452 eligible applications. Finally, 138 grant agreements were signed for a total amount of EUR 120 million (see Table 5.8 and Annex 19).

²² European Neighbourhood Instrument (ENI), the Development Cooperation Instrument (DCI) and the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA) in 2015.

²³ Joint Projects aim at producing outcomes that benefit principally and directly the organisations from eligible Partner Countries involved in the project while Structural Projects aim at producing an impact on higher education systems and promoting reforms at national and/or regional level in the eligible Partner Countries

The regional dimension within the funded projects was well covered with 87 (62%) multi-country (targeting more than one partner country) and 53 (38%) national projects (targeting a single partner country).

Overall, 911 distinct HEIs from 94 countries are involved in the projects selected: 601 HEIs from 62 partner countries covering all 9 eligible regions under the call and 310 HEIs from 32 programme countries. In total, 29 selected proposals (20%) were coordinated and submitted by HEIs from the Partner Countries

The projects targeting curriculum reform were the most popular (44%); 28% of the projects address the modernisation of the governance and management of HEIs and systems, and 27% will strengthen the relations between higher education and wider society. The curriculum development projects concern mainly the fields of engineering (26%, health sciences (15%) and environmental protection (13%), but other subject areas are also covered as shown below

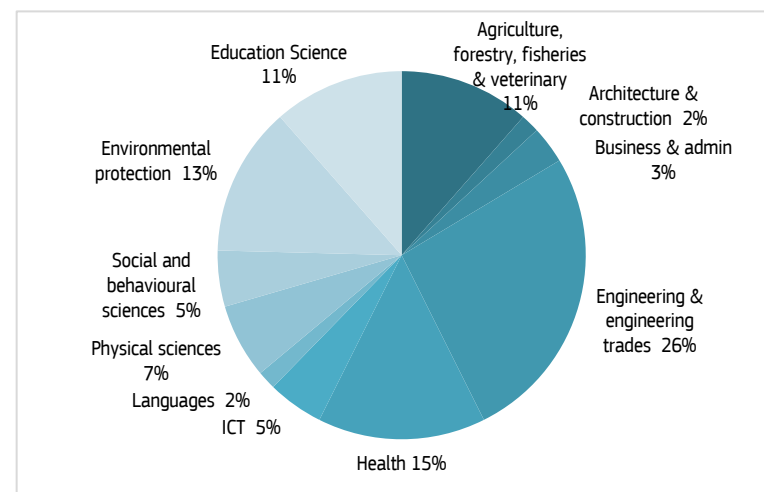


Figure 5.5: Topics addressed by Capacity-Building projects in Higher Education

Given the level of competition among the different regions (number of applications compared to the available regional budget), the success rate of the eligible applications varies from 15% in the "Eastern Partnership

Countries" and 24% in the "Russian Federation", to 80% in "South Africa", 90% in "Asia" and 100% in the "Iran, Iraq, Yemen" region (see Figure 5.6).

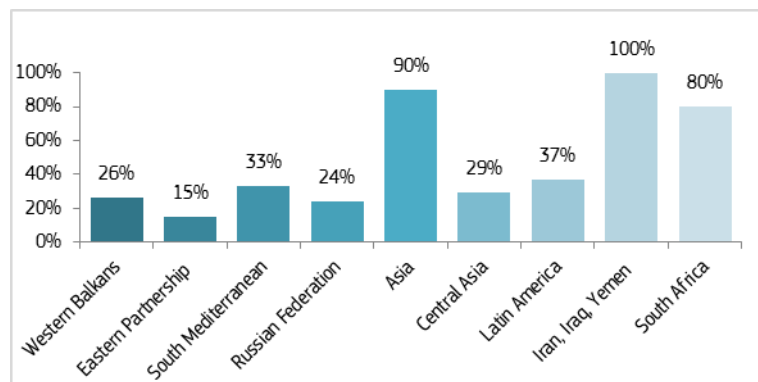


Figure 5.6: Success Rate by Region

5.3.2 Capacity building in the field of youth

As a distinct project format of KA2 -, 'Capacity building in the field of youth' - fosters youth cooperation and exchanges between Erasmus+ programme countries and other partner countries from different regions of the world.

Capacity building projects aim to improve the quality and recognition of youth work, non-formal learning and volunteering. They foster the development of schemes and programmes of non-formal learning and allow for the promotion of transnational non-formal learning mobility between programme and partner Countries. They especially target young people with fewer opportunities.

They also aim to enhance synergies and complementarities with other education systems, the labour market and society. Projects therefore bring together NGOs, National Youth Councils and public bodies at local, regional or national level as well as a wide range of stakeholders from education and the labour market.

In 2015 a specific 'Western Balkans Youth Window' was introduced, funded by the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA II, 2014 – 2020). It contributes to strengthening youth cooperation between Erasmus+

programme countries and Western Balkan countries. Western Balkans Youth Window projects are required to include a mobility component such as Youth exchange, European Voluntary Service, or Youth workers' training and networking.

Overall, a total grant of EUR 11.9 million was allocated to 141 projects. The funding increased by 27% compared to 2014 and involved 141 organisations from 26 different countries: 74 from 20 different programme countries and 67 from six different partner countries (see details in Table 5.8 below and in Annex 19.)

Table 5.8 – Capacity-building projects– call 2015

	PROJECTS			GRANT	ORGANISATIONS
	<i>Received</i>	<i>Granted</i>	<i>Success rate</i>	<i>in million EUR</i>	
Capacity Building for Higher Education	515	138	27%	120.31	1,698
Capacity Building for Youth	346	75	22%	8.96	
Western Balkans Youth Window	325	66	20%	2.94	
Capacity Building for Youth	671	141	21%	11.90	141
TOTAL	1,186	279	24%	132.21	1,839

5.4 Knowledge alliances

Knowledge alliances are structured partnerships bringing together companies and HEIs in order to develop new ways of creating, producing and sharing knowledge. They collaborate to design and deliver new curricula which encourage creativity, employability and entrepreneurship. As a result, more innovative and entrepreneurial graduates, staff and institutions, plus the enhanced co-operation between higher education and business will contribute to Europe's innovation capacity.

Knowledge alliances cover a wide range of study areas, and economic and social activities. Their main added value comes from their focus on innovation excellence and their responsiveness to society's needs. They stimulate and facilitate inter- and multidisciplinary activities to benefit to both academia and the business sector.

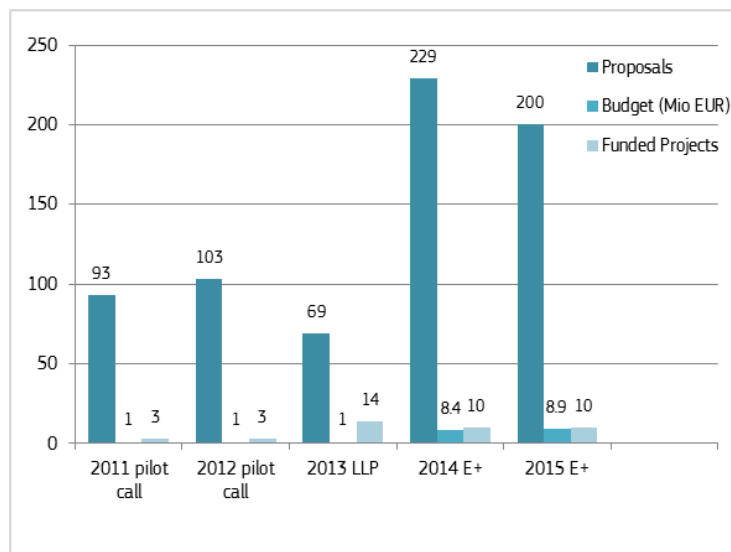


Figure 5.7.: Evolution over years for the Knowledge Alliances

In 2015 the interest in Knowledge Alliances was again extremely high, resulting in a very strong competition for funding. A total budget of **EUR 8.9 million** was granted to **10 projects** through that action by the Executive Agency, i.e. a success rate of precisely 5% in relation to the number of proposals submitted.

The 2015 projects cover sectors such as big data, innovation pedagogy, virtual education in medicine, ecosystems and bio-diversity, urbanism, regional development and geo-informatics. In addition, quite a number of projects aim to foster entrepreneurial attitudes based on cross-disciplinary collaboration.

The selected projects involve **110 organisations** from 22 programme countries plus one American organisation. It is worth noting the high participation of organisations from Germany (13), Italy (13) and UK (12) (see Annex 20).

Example of KA2 Knowledge alliances project

Project Title: Innovative Open Data Education and Training based on problem-based learning and Learning Analytics

Project number: 562604-EPP-1-2015-1-EL-EPPKA2-KA

Coordinating organisation: UNIVERSITY OF MACEDONIA (Greece)

EC contribution: EUR 796,527

This Knowledge Alliance between academia, business and the public sector aims to boost Open Data education and training. The project results include:

- a novel learning model based on Problem Based Learning (PBL) and learning analytics, termed Data Driven PBL (DD_PBL)
- an open-source platform to support DD_PBL, underpinning flexible learning pathways and course re-design-co-created, freely available for any use, multimodal and multilingual (five languages) content on the Open Data publication and reuse
- innovative activities, e.g. university courses, trainings, workshops, hackathlons etc. in academia, businesses and the public sector to boost innovation, knowledge exchange and transversal skills.

5.5 Sector skills alliances

Sector skills alliances aim to identify and close skills gaps in occupations by enhancing the responsiveness of initial and continuing VET systems to sector-specific labour market needs and demand for new skills. They aim to agree on sector-wide training content for European professional core profiles based on commonly defined competence standards, and to integrate work-based learning, thereby facilitating cross-border certification and easing professional mobility in the sector.

In 2015 the total amount granted to projects for this action was nearly **EUR 7 million**. A budget increase of 44% compared to 2014 allowed for granting more proposals, but considering that out of the 36 submitted applications only **eight proposals** received a grant, the earmarked budget for this action is still limited.

However, it is worth noting the increased quality of applications. Following the clarifications in the Programme Guide, only four proposals were deemed ineligible this year. This indicates that the overwhelming majority of applicants understood the new concept of the action as well as the topics of interest and the political priorities of the European Commission.

The majority of applications (60%) involved 11-19 partners, the minimum number being 10 partners. Among the 36 applications received from 13 countries the majority were submitted by Italian (9), Portuguese (5) and Spanish (6) applicants

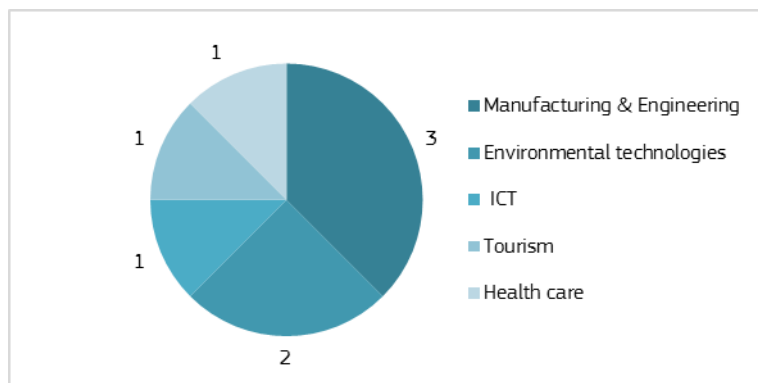


Fig.5.8: Sectors addressed by the Sector Skills Alliances

The selected projects involve **103 organisations** from 15 Programme Countries with a high participation of Spain (27), Italy (23) and Portugal (10) and are addressing various sectors (see Figure 5.8 and Annex 21)

Example of KA2 Sector skills alliances project

Project Title: *Delivery and recognition of an EU joint curriculum for concentrated solar power operators*

Project number: 562595-EPP-1-2015-1-ES-EPPKA2-SSA

Coordinating organisation.: AGENCIA EXTREMEÑA DE LA ENERGÍA AVDA (Spain)

EC contribution: EUR 796,769

Concentrated Solar Power (CSP) is an emerging technology where solar-field operations suffer from considerable skills gaps. Spain is the leading European country in installed CSP power, with a fully developed labour market, while Italy and Greece, starting plants construction in 2014, will be requiring solar-field operators in 2 years coming but have neither formal nor in-formal vocational training in place yet. This Sector Skill Alliance has been established among key representatives of the CSP sector, in order to cover these emerging labour market needs. This project promises interesting results: (1) definition of a European vocational curriculum for solar-field operators with strong work-based learning elements, (2) delivery of a methodology for the recognition of learning outcomes, and (3) the promotion of national qualifications for CSP plant operators in each country. This Alliance is fully in line with the European Union's environmental policy.

6. Key Action 3 – Support for policy reform

6.1 Introduction

Key Action 3 (KA3) supports policy reforms in line with the overall European policy agenda, the Strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training (ET 2020) and the European Youth Strategy. It aims to enhance the quality and modernisation of education and training systems and the development of European youth policy, through policy cooperation between Member States, in particular through the Open Method of Coordination and structured dialogue with young people.

KA3 covers a variety of strands such as **knowledge in the fields of education, training and youth** to support evidence-based policy making and monitoring, and **initiatives for policy innovation** such as policy experimentations and forward-looking cooperation projects.

It also encourages the **cooperation with international organisations**, the **dialogue with stakeholders** and policy makers, and **awareness-raising and dissemination activities** about education, training and youth policies and the Erasmus+ programme. KA3 also **supports networks and tools** fostering transparency and recognition of skills and qualifications.

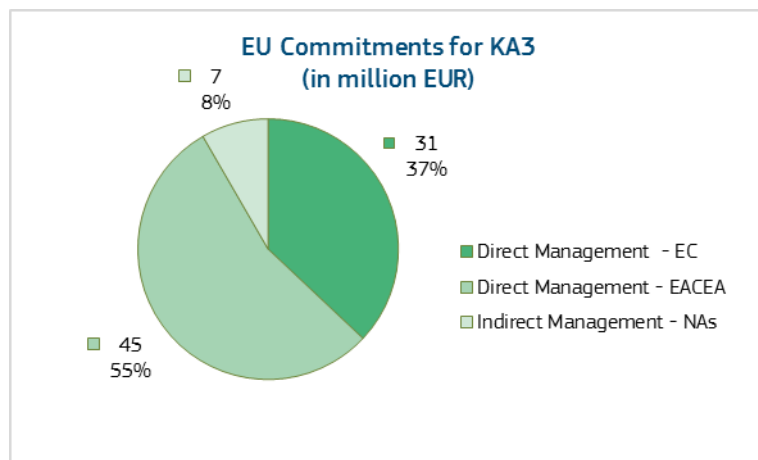


Fig. 6.1: 2015 EU Commitments by Management Mode for Key Action 3

In 2015, an overall budget of EUR 83 million was committed under Key Action 3 (see budget details in Annex 1 and activity details in Table 6.1).

Most of the activities are implemented in direct management mode either by the EU Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA) or by the European Commission services. Only the activities under the action 'Structured dialogue between young people and policy-makers' are implemented by the National Agencies.

6.2 Knowledge the fields of education, training and youth

The **Eurydice network** supports and facilitates European cooperation in the field of lifelong learning by providing information on education systems and policies in 37 countries and by producing studies on issues common to the European education systems. It consists of 42 national units based in 38 countries participating in the Erasmus+ Programme and a coordinating unit based in the EACEA in Brussels.

Similarly to 2014, a total amount of EUR 2.5 million was granted to 40 organisations in 2015. Eurydice outputs for 2015 were published according to schedule and were, as usual, divided into thematic publications²⁴, annual updates and country specific information on national education systems. These reports can be downloaded free of charge from Eurydice's website²⁵.

Furthermore, the central Eurydice unit at the EACEA and the Commission jointly organised and participated in several conferences to discuss the outcomes of these reports and how to follow them up. Particularly relevant examples are the June 2015 conference dedicated to the analysis of the teaching profession and the September 2015 conference on national language tests.

²⁴ "Assuring quality in Education: Policies and approaches to School Evaluation in Europe", "Adult education and training in Europe", the 2015 Bologna process implementation report for the EHEA, "the Teaching Profession in Europe: Practices, Perceptions and Policies", "Languages in Secondary Education: an overview of national tests in Europe", - and "Structural indicators for Monitoring Education and training systems in Europe".

²⁵ http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/education/eurydice/index_en.php

Table 6.1 – KA3 Support for policy reform 2015

	MNGT MODE	CALL TYPE	PROJECTS			GRANT	PARTICIPANTS	ORGANISATIONS
			Received	Contracted	Success Rate	in million EUR		
Knowledge in the fields of education, training and youth								
Eurydice network	DM - EACEA	Restricted	40	40	100%	2.54		40
Support to the better knowledge in the youth policy	DM - EACEA	Restricted	28	27	96%	0.42		27
Initiatives for policy innovation								
European Policy Experimentations	DM - EACEA	Specific	6	1	17%	2.50		14
Forward-looking cooperation projects - E&T	DM - EACEA	Specific	78	36	46%	16.43		271
Forward-looking cooperation projects - Youth	DM - EACEA	Specific	23	4	17%	1.63		23
Stakeholder dialogue and policy promotion								
Education, Training and Youth Forum 2015	DM - EC	-				0.39	62,286	
Support to the European Youth Forum (EYF)	DM - EC	-				2.60		
Civil Society Cooperation - E&T	DM - EACEA	Specific	29	20	69%	2.43		
Civil Society Cooperation - Youth	DM - EACEA	Specific	115	85	74%	3.74		
Structured Dialogue - decentralised grants	IM	General	978	269	28%	6.94		
Structured Dialogue (Youth) - centralised grants	DM - EACEA	Restricted	30	30	100%	1.00		
Presidency Events	DM - EC	-				1.27		
Network of Higher Education Reform Experts (HEREs)	DM - EACEA	Restricted	26	26	100%	1.35		
Support to European Policy Tools and Networks								
SALTOS	DM - EC	-				1.95		
Eurodesk Network	DM - EC	-				1.63		
Eurodesk Brussels Link	DM - EACEA	Restricted	1	1	100%	0.59		
Euroguidance, Europass, EQF	DM - EACEA	Restricted	113	112	99%	6.33		
ECVET	DM - EC	-				1.11		
ECVET and EQAVET Networks Support	DM - EC	-				2.42		
National Coordinators for the implementation of the Europ	DM - EACEA	Restricted	29	29	100%	4.64		
Transparency and recognition of skills and qualifications	DM - EACEA	Specific	7	3	43%	0.39		
Other								
Miscellaneous	DM - EACEA	Restricted	43	39	91%	2.45		39
Miscellaneous	DM - EACEA	Specific	10	2	20%	0.38		11
Miscellaneous	DM - EC	-				19.21		
TOTAL			1,556	724		84.32	62,286	1,683

6.3 Initiatives for policy innovation

6.3.1 European policy experimentations

European policy experimentations are transnational cooperation projects that involve testing innovative measures through field trials based on (semi-) experimental methods under the leadership of high-level public authorities responsible for education, training or youth.

In 2015, the EACEA 30/2014 call for proposals on European policy experimentations in the school education sector led to the selection of one project (*New Way for New Talents in Teaching/NEWTT*) for a grant amount of EUR 2.5 million. (see Annex 22). Led by a Bulgarian organisation and involving partners from Austria, Germany, Spain, Latvia and Romania, the project is exploring promising alternative pathways to the teaching profession, supported by an innovative experimentation approach and a large partnership

6.3.2 Forward-looking cooperation projects

Forward-looking transnational cooperation projects are led by major stakeholders and aim at identifying, testing, developing and assessing innovative approaches – including methodologies and tools – in the fields of education, training and youth. Such approaches should have the potential to become mainstreamed and thus support systemic improvements through a bottom-up approach.

The first Erasmus+ call for proposals for forward-looking cooperation projects was published in 2015. It covered six priorities in the Education and Training fields and addressed issues such as disparities in learning outcomes of disadvantaged learners; learning analytics and semantics, collaborative teaching and learning; opening up education and training institutions to adult learning, quality and excellence in vocational education and training; and higher education reforms.

Examples of forward-looking cooperation project

Project Title: *Erasmus Without Paper*

Project number: 562264-EPP-1-2015-1-BE-EPPKA3-PI-

Coordinating organisation: UNIVERSITEIT GENT (Belgium)

EC contribution: EUR 499,982

The Erasmus Without Paper (EWP) project aims to create a network supporting the electronic exchange of student data and documents by interlinking HEIs and their student information systems. This innovative solution has an unprecedented potential to link all HEIs, resulting in cost reduction, efficiency of labour, and better access to student data across Europe. This could ultimately lead to the permanent migration of student data from the paper world to the electronic world.

The call also featured one priority in the Youth field, namely e-participation for fostering young people's empowerment and participation in democratic life.

A grant amount of respectively EUR 16.4 million for Education and training and EUR 1.6 million for youth were granted respectively to 36 high-quality projects in education and training and four projects in Youth. The projects involve altogether 294 organisations from 31 different countries (see details in Annex 23).

6.4 Cooperation with International Organisations

6.4.1 Council of Europe

a) Human rights/citizenship education: "Democracy in Action"

In 2015 Erasmus+ continued to co-fund a joint programme to support small-scale pilot projects focussing on citizenship and education as a means to foster democratic values. The contribution from Erasmus+ to the project was 65%, while the contribution from the Council of Europe, which was in charge of running the programme, was 35%.

In 2015, two projects were selected for a total grant amount of EUR 210,000. They are led by national coordinators for Education of Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights (EDC/HRE co-ordinators), the majority of them being representatives of ministries of education or of influential professional bodies:

Projects selected

1) Addressing violence in schools through education for democratic citizenship and human rights education.

Countries involved: Greece, Hungary, Montenegro, Poland and Romania

Objective: To raise awareness of violence in schools, to explore educational policies and practices which address and prevent violence in school and to develop a scheme which both promotes democratic citizenship and combats school violence.

2) Managing controversy: A whole-school training tool

Countries involved: Austria, Cyprus, Ireland, Montenegro, United Kingdom, with the support of Albania, France and Sweden.

Objective: To develop a training tool for managing controversy in Schools, which offers practical support to school leaders/senior managers on how to proactively manage and react to controversial

issues in and beyond the school.

b) ROMED Programme

ROMED is a training programme for mediators in school, culture and health, that aims to promote dialogue between Roma communities and mainstream society. It has trained more than 1,300 mediators since 2011.

Erasmus+ supports ROMED in connection with the EU Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies, which recognises and promotes mediation as an instrument for restoring dialogue and trust in education with the Roma communities.

In 2015 Erasmus+ co-funded 50% of the ROMED budget (EUR 1 million), while the Council of Europe co-funded the remaining 50%. The 2015 grant agreement featured in particular a programme evaluation to be performed in 2016.

As a result of the increasing importance of mediation in school, ROMED training is now well established and stakeholders view ROMED as an effective and visible mediation instrument which is pinpointed in several Member State national Roma integration strategies and reports.

c) Cooperation in the field of youth

Some of the key deliverables of the Council of Europe and Commission partnership in the youth field in 2015 are:

- a seminar hosted by Bosnia and Herzegovina on the social inclusion of young people in vulnerable situations in the Western Balkans, leading to research on the situation of young people in the region, the presentation of good practice examples and support for youth work and other non-formal learning tools.
- support to the 2nd European Youth Work Convention 2015 in Brussels mainly through the production of an animated short film on the characteristics and challenges of youth work and a Youth Knowledge Book on the results of the Convention.

- the bi-annual conference of the European Learning Mobility Platform (EPLM) in Istanbul that explored obstacles to learning mobility and developed supporting opportunities. Subsequently the partner institutions updated the EPLM website with the latest knowledge on youth mobility.
- the Report on Developments of Recognition of Youth Work and Non-formal Learning.

The main event in 2015 was a symposium on "Youth Participation in a Digitalised World" in Budapest with Commissioner Navracsics, Council of Europe Director-General Markovics and the Hungarian Parliamentary State Secretary and Deputy Minister in the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and Trade Laszlo Szabo. The symposium succeeded in providing innovative ideas for and experiences on young people's participation in the digital era. It delivered key messages on online and offline participation of young people, highlighting their specific participation needs and challenges in the digital era.

6.4.2 Cooperation with OECD

The cooperation between the Commission and OECD has proved to offer better knowledge on education systems and to provide scientific support to education policies through the results of large international surveys such as the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), the Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC) and Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS).

The 2015 Erasmus+ Work Programme designed a set of common activities largely centred on the surveys or more in-depth reviews related to school efficiency and the national skills strategies.

A major highlight of the cooperation with OECD under the Work Programme 2015 is the **TALIS survey** on teachers' opinions regarding their careers, working conditions, school environment and classroom practices. Based on the results of the *TALIS 2013* cycle, DG EAC has produced a note on the EU results of the survey and their policy implications; a press release; and two

reports based on secondary analysis of the data set, on the *Teaching Profession* and *Teaching Practices*.

Under Erasmus+ 2015 TALIS also run its third, "*TALIS 2018*" cycle and its EUR 645,000 grant made it possible to reimburse of up to 80% of the international costs of the following Member States participating in that cycle:

Twenty EU MS participate in the TALIS 2018 cycle (BE, BG, HR, CZ, DK, EE, FI, FR, HU, IT, LT, LV, NL, PT, RO, SK, SI, ES, SE, UK-ENG) as well as 3 Erasmus+ non EU programme countries: IS, NO, TR

Another important example of cooperation with the OECD is related to the secondary analyses of the **PISA 2012** data. Having the merit that, in 2012, 27 out of the 28 EU Member States (all except Malta) participated, the PISA data on low performers are the basis for the ET 2020 Benchmark on reducing the percentage of underachievement in reading, maths and science.

PISA 2015, the results of which will be published in December 2016, is the first time all EU Member States have participated in this important study.

The secondary analysis done by the OECD PISA team with support from the European Commission led to three thematic reports based on PISA 2012 data. The reports cover three different topics of special interest to EAC and the EU Member States: Low Performers ("Low-Performing Students: Why they fall behind and how to help them succeed"); teaching and learning practices ("Beyond memorisation: teaching and learning strategies for excellence"); and opportunities to learn. The report on teaching and learning practices will be practice-oriented and will address practitioners in the field. All reports are published to a wide audience, with translations of the summaries, to ensure maximal outreach.

6.5. Stakeholder dialogue and policy promotion

6.5.1 Introduction

The actions grouped under the umbrella "Dialogue with stakeholders and policy promotion" contribute to the implementation of European policy agendas in education, training and youth, particularly via exchanges of views

and consultations on topical subjects. They also support the dissemination and exploitation of policy and programme results.

Additionally, this action contributes to the implementation of the international dimension of European education and training policies by supporting policy dialogue through the network of Higher Education Reform Experts in Partner Countries neighbouring the EU, the international alumni association, policy dialogue with partner countries and international attractiveness and promotion events.

6.5.2 Education, Training and Youth Forum 2015

The Education, Training and Youth Forum is an annual event gathering public authorities, education and training stakeholders, organisations representing civil society, youth, social partners and business, from the Erasmus+ programme and partner countries, to discuss major themes of common interest. The 2015 edition focussed on the implementation of the new priority areas for cooperation under the Education and Training 2020 strategic framework and the EU Youth Strategy. The event, involved around 400 participants and received EUR 389,000 in funding. It took place on 19-20 October 2015 in Brussels and included a preliminary exchange of views with European civil society organisations.

The Forum agenda reflected in particular the increased emphasis on the role of education, training and youth work for promoting equity, non-discrimination, intercultural competences and active citizenship, but also for preventing violent radicalisation and safeguarding fundamental values. This is in line with the Paris Declaration by European education ministers and the European Commissioner for education, culture, youth and sport, of 17 March 2015, and the Commission's European Agenda Security.

6.5.3 Support to the European Youth Forum (YFJ)

The positive assessment of the European Youth Forum's work plan by the European Commission led to the award of a EUR 2.6 million operating grant to the European Youth Forum.

The operating grant supports the European Youth Forum's activities in 2015 in areas such as: youth participation, the strengthening of youth organisations, youth autonomy and inclusion, contribution to international youth policy making (e.g. through cooperation with the EU institutions, the Council of Europe and the United Nations), the empowerment of member organisations and the support to a rights-based and cross-sectorial approach in youth policy making.

6.5.4 Civil society cooperation

Civil society cooperation supports European NGOs and EU-wide networks in the fields of education, training and youth through a specific call for proposals managed by EACEA.

Following the 2015 call for proposals (EACEA 31/2014) and with an overall budget of EUR 6.2 million, framework partnership agreements and one-year agreements for operating grants were concluded with 20 civil society organisations active in the fields of education and training and 85 active in the field of youth (see details in Annexes 24 and 25).

This action is meant to reinforce cooperation between the EU and civil society for the implementation of the EU policy agendas, in particular Europe 2020, Education and Training 2020 and the EU Youth Strategy.

It also aims at increasing stakeholder commitment and cooperation with public authorities for the implementation of policies and reforms in the fields of education, training and youth in the participating countries.

6.5.5 Structured Dialogue for youth

2015 was the second year of the 4th Structured dialogue cycle. The theme of that cycle was "Youth empowerment – from youth rights to political participation". This was also the theme of the two Youth Conferences which took place in Riga (23-24 March) and Luxembourg (21-24 September) in the context of the Latvian and Luxembourg presidencies. The Final Joint Recommendations of the 4th cycle were adopted at the Luxembourg Conference and were subsequently discussed by the Council in November 2015.

As in 2014, there were two major grant formats under the Structured Dialogue action:

- centralised annual grants of around EUR 1 million awarded to the National Working Groups of Structured Dialogue which are bodies designated by the Member States..
- decentralised grants implemented as a follow-up to the former Youth in Action for a total amount of EUR 6.9 million.

At decentralised level, the number of grants increased by 28% compared to 2014, to reach 269 thanks to the higher available budget (EUR 6.9 million compared to 5.9). It allowed for 62,000 people to participate, out of which more than 80% were young people and 31% with special needs or fewer opportunities. As to the activities, projects mainly consist of national (647) but also of transnational meetings (115). Details can be found in Annex 26.

Projects contracted under this action have notably contributed to promote active citizenship and youth participation in democratic life and improve the level of key competences of young people. 41 % of them are strongly linked to the EU structured Dialogue in the field of youth.

Example of KA3 Structured Dialogue project

Project Title: Preparatory Youth Meeting of UNESCO Youth Europe

Project number: 2015-1-BE05-KA347-001608

Key Action/Action type: Support for Policy Reform/ Dialogue between Young People and Policy Makers

Coordinating organisation: VZW EduKrea (Belgium)

EC contribution: EUR 14,175.81

The Preparatory Youth Meeting (PYM) of UNESCO Youth Europe aims to introduce the idea of a structured dialogue between youth and policy-makers on the UNESCO platform. The idea originated from the flawed UNESCO Youth Forum that took place in 2013 in Paris. By developing a spirit of empowerment among the participants, the project aspires to normalise youth participation at the UNESCO level to consolidate a continuous partnership between youth and policy-makers. The

preparatory youth meeting will gather 31 young people from 26 European countries in Brussels, two weeks prior to the 9th UNESCO Youth Forum.

6.5.6 International Dialogue Platforms

In 2015, the Commission undertook a number of policy dialogue activities with individual partner countries or regional groups of countries. The aim was always to provide a forum for policy dialogue on all levels of education and training and to agree upon common issues and priorities for future cooperation with the EU.

2015 Policy dialogue activities

- *The Ministerial meeting of the **Western Balkans Platform on Education and Training** held in Vlora, Albania in July 2015 was the first time ministers reported on reforms undertaken in higher education. The Ministers agreed on 11 regional projects to be conducted until 2020. In addition a mapping study on higher education provision and labour market opportunities for graduates was conducted and results will be presented at the 2016 ministerial meeting.*

- *Two **Eastern Partnership Platform** four meetings took place in June and December 2015 and concentrated on youth and school education respectively. In addition, a conference on the implementation of National Qualification Frameworks in **Eastern Partnership** countries was organised in Batumi, Georgia, in October 2015.*

- *The third meeting of the **EU-China** High-Level People-to-People Dialogue (HPPD) was held on 15 September, 2015 in Brussels and celebrated the 40th anniversary of EU-China diplomatic relations. It allowed the two sides to review the commitments undertaken in previous meetings.*

*-In the context of the dialogue with **Southern Mediterranean** countries, a seminar on Recognition of Credits and Qualifications was held in Brussels on 1-2 June 2015.*

*- The scaled up EU-Africa Harmonisation and Tuning initiative was launched by the EU Commissioner and the **African Union** education Commissioner in April 2015. The Harmonisation, Quality and Accreditation initiative (HAQAA) which will support the Pan African Quality and Accreditation Framework began in December 2015.*

*- The 3rd Senior Officials' Meeting with **South Africa** was held in October 2015 and discussed education and training policy development and cooperation. This was accompanied by a seminar on the professionalisation of teachers and lecturers which discussed challenges and good practice.*

*- The first **Central Asia** Ministerial meeting took place in Riga in June 2015 and agreed measures to support higher education and VET modernisation and boost the mobility of individuals.*

6.5.7 International attractiveness projects

Throughout 2015 a consortium of higher education promotion agencies contracted in 2014 by the Commission has been rolling out a range of activities²⁶ to promote Europe as a high-quality study and research destination. The activities include higher education fairs, a Study in Europe portal and social media

6.5.8 Presidency events

In 2015 Erasmus+ co-funded conferences and meetings of Directors-General for education, training and youth, organised by Latvia, Luxembourg and

(partly) the Netherlands during their respective presidencies of the Council of the EU. The total support provided by Erasmus+ was EUR 1.3 million.

Latvian Presidency (1st half of 2015):

Conference of Rectors, Vice-Chancellors and Presidents of African Universities and selection of Universities for the Africa-EU Harmonisation and Tuning initiative 2-5 June 2015, EU Youth Conference 24-26 March 2015

Luxembourg Presidency (2nd half of 2015)

Conference on "Diversity and multilingualism in early childhood education and care" 10-11 September 2015

Symposium on the prevention of early school leaving "Staying on Track" 9-10 July 2015

EU Youth conference, Luxembourg 22-24 September 2015

Youth and VET Conference "Reach out and move" 17-18 November 2015

Dutch Presidency (1st half of 2016):

Conference on "The future of Higher Education"

EU Youth conference, Amsterdam 5-7 April 2016

6.5.9 National Erasmus+ Offices (NEO) in partner countries

The network of National Tempus Offices that supported the implementation of the Tempus Programme in 27 partner countries²⁷ has been maintained under Erasmus+, with an extended mandate covering all higher education international cooperation and mobility activities (i.e. International Credit Mobility, Capacity Building in Higher Education, Erasmus Mundus Joint Degrees and the Jean Monnet actions).

²⁶ Information about the events can be found on the web portal, which is also fed by the consortium: <http://ec.europa.eu/education/study-in-europe/>

²⁷ All Partner Countries from regions 1 to 4 as identified in the Erasmus+ Programme Guide.

As of 2015 and with a three-year budget of almost EUR 10 million, 26²⁸ newly created NEOs designated by their National Authorities with the endorsement of the EU Delegations, started implementing Erasmus+ promotion activities in their respective countries. Between August and December 2015 around 50 promotion events were organised in these countries by, or with the support of, the NEOs and half of these events were attended by Commission or Executive Agency staff.

In addition, NEOs continued to monitor ongoing Tempus projects implemented in their country. In total, more than 300 field monitoring visits were carried out by the NEOs, covering 240 Tempus projects.

Finally, the NEO mandate includes supporting the higher education modernisation efforts carried out in their country. This support is organised through the network of Higher Education Reform Experts, funded by the Erasmus+ programme, and whose activities are coordinated and monitored by the NEOs.

6.5.10 Network of Higher Education Reform Experts (HEREs)

Building on the results achieved by the HEREs network under the Tempus Programme, new teams of experts designated by their National Authorities with the support of the NEO and the endorsement of the EU Delegation, have been put in place in 26 partner countries.

Each HEREs team, which varies in size varies from 5 to 15 members according to the size of the higher education sector in the country, is composed of representatives from the academic sector and from the public authorities in charge of higher education. Their role is to provide a pool of expertise in order to promote reforms and enhance progress in higher education in their country.

In 2015 five international training seminars with the participation of more than 250 HEREs were organised by the Executive Agency, with the support of an external service provider composed of the Universitat de Barcelona and the European University Association. Those training activities covered important

themes relevant to the ongoing modernisation of higher education in the partner countries concerned (e.g. internationalisation, mobility and recognition, link between higher education and vocational training, eLearning, lifelong learning, etc.)

In addition and under the coordination of their NEO, HEREs teams have been implementing promotion and dissemination activities in their respective countries. These activities included the follow-up and dissemination of the international training seminars among the relevant stakeholders, the organisation of events on higher education strategies (conferences, seminars, workshops, etc.), the publication of articles and the contribution to higher education reform initiatives carried out by their national authorities in charge of higher education.

6.6. Support to European Policy tools and networks

Erasmus+ supports a number of European policy tools and the networks that provide support for their implementation. European policy tools aim to improve and facilitate the transparency of skills and qualifications and the transfer of credits, to foster quality assurance, and to support skills management and guidance.

6.6.1 SALTOS

SALTOS, a network of eight resource centres, provide non-formal learning resources for youth workers and youth leaders and organise training and contact-making activities to support organisations and National Agencies within the frame of the Erasmus+ Youth Programme and beyond.

In 2015, SALTOS were key to the success of the 2nd Eastern Partnership Youth Forum (Riga/Latvia, 9-12 February 2015) and the 1st Erasmus+ Youth in Action Forum for the Western Balkans Region (Podgorica/Montenegro, 17 – 18 November 2015). They supported the implementation of the European Training Strategy and the Inclusion and Diversity Strategy; developed and disseminated educational support to assist youth workers in improving their competences; organised events exploring and promoting the different forms

²⁸For reasons linked to the political situation in the country, no NEO grant agreement was issued for Libya.

of participation and civic engagement; and undertook the monitoring and development of tools and portals supporting the youth field (OTLAS partner finding tool, European Youth Work Expert Portal).

The regional SALTOs also continued to support the European Voluntary Service accreditation system as well as the European Voluntary Service training cycle in the partner countries neighbouring the EU.

6.6.2 Eurodesk Network

The Eurodesk Network offers information services to young people and to those who work with them. The Network supports of the Erasmus+ objective to raise young people's awareness of mobility opportunities and encourage them to become active citizens.

In 2015, a total amount of EUR 2.2 million was granted to the Eurodesk organisations. The 34 national Eurodesk organisations and Eurodesk Brussels Link reported that together with their network of over 1,000 multipliers, they replied to 266,000 enquiries and attended over 3,900 events. This enabled them to reach a total audience of over 1.4 million people. It is worth noting that in 2015 Eurodesk performance in answering information inquiries greatly outstripped the 2020 target of 140,000 answered inquiries.

The Eurodesk network was also heavily involved in the 2015 European Youth Week. It organised 336 events together with their networks of multipliers, and contributed to reaching out to 137,000 people during the week.

Moreover, Eurodesk presented EU information and programmes directly to more than 102,000 people during over 1,500 information sessions and workshops.

These figures include the annual Eurodesk "Time to Move" campaign which took place again in late summer 2015, and highlighted the benefits of cross-border mobility. The campaign was coordinated by Eurodesk Brussels Link, and involved 17 national Eurodesk organisations. Together with 225 multipliers, they ran more than 324 separate events reaching 135,000 young people at schools, universities and in the organisations' communities.

The Eurodesk network also continued to publish and maintain core information content on the European Youth Portal at European and national

levels. Over 2,600 new articles were published in 2015 along with over 2,400 news items and 2,450 events.

6.6.3 Euroguidance, Europass, European Qualifications Framework

These three networks deal with different but closely-related issues on skills and qualifications, namely

- lifelong guidance and mobility for learning purposes (Euroguidance);
- communication and understanding of skills and qualifications (European network of National Europass Centres);
- support to national authorities to translate, make understandable and link countries' qualifications systems (European Qualifications Framework Contact Points).

In 2015 a common approach in the management of those policy networks was adopted and reports were prepared presenting the impact and outcomes of each network along with the simplified and harmonised supporting tools.

The monitoring strategy developed for policy networks was successfully implemented and there has also been a continuous improvement in their operations, notably in terms of steadily increasing numbers of direct and indirect beneficiaries over the years across all countries. For example, in 2015 there were five million hits on the Euroguidance websites and 10,000 participants at their seminars and workshops.

As a general trend, the centres are improving in promoting the European dimension. They are increasing their sphere of impact through making more extensive use of social media and they are progressively adopting effective evaluation procedures. Synergies are continuously pursued and continued collaboration and knowledge exchange rely on peer networking within and beyond the networks.

In 2015, a large number of events also took place, with a view to marketing and promoting the activities to a broad range of stakeholder audiences. Overall, EUR 6.3 million was allocated to the three networks.

In total, 96 action plans presented by the designated national centres were successfully implemented in 2015 (see Table 6.2).

Furthermore, 35 projects related to the setting up or development of national databases that will be interconnected through the Commission's *Learning Opportunities and Qualifications in Europe* portal, were granted funding for two years and are being closely monitored.

	Activities	Databases
Euroguidance	34	
Europass	33	
EQF	29	16
TOTAL	96	16

Table 6.2 – 2015 activities of the three networks

6.6.4 Networks – ECVET

National teams of ECVET experts promote the principles of the ECVET framework for credit accumulation and transfer in VET among policy makers, VET providers and other relevant stakeholders.

With a budget of over EUR 1.1 million in 2015, Erasmus+ supported various activities deployed by the teams of experts including networking with their target audiences, training opportunities and communication events.

Examples of activities organised by national teams of ECVET experts:

- Training workshops for experienced mobility practitioners and their partners
- Surveys on VET providers and project promoters to investigate the level of knowledge, practical experience, perception of added value possible obstacles, information and support needed to put in practice the ECVET principles
- Creation of an ECVET label for mobility projects that apply the ECVET principles in an exemplary way

- Case studies on successful experience of validation of informal and non-formal learning in relation to the use of ECVET

6.6.5 Networks – ECVET and EQAVET Networks Support

In 2015 Erasmus+ also provided EUR 2.4 million to fund the organisational and expert support provided by two contractors for implementing the framework for credit accumulation and transfer (ECVET) and the European framework for quality assurance in VET (EQAVET).

The 2015 ECVET activities included three meetings of the main policy group, one peer learning activity, a working group on the assessment and validation of units of learning outcomes, the 2015 ECVET Forum, the ECVET website²⁹ and three ECVET magazines.

The EQAVET activities included the annual meeting of the EQAVET national reference points, two peer learning activities, the annual EQAVET Forum, a thematic working group on quality in adult learning, and updating and maintaining the EQAVET website.

A common peer learning activity between ECVET and EQAVET was also organised in the framework of a joint working group exploring opportunities for cooperation.

Examples of the action's activities

The PLA on the assessment and validation of units of learning outcomes, held in June in Dublin, and the 2015 ECVET Forum, in November in Barcelona, were characterised by a strong involvement of participants from the labour market – business, unions, chambers – and by the presentation and discussion of real life experiences. This provided insight in how the ECVET principles are actually used and how they can be better applied to facilitate flexible learning in initial training and the requalification of adults.

²⁹ <http://www.ecvet-secretariat.eu/en>

6.6.6 National Coordinators for the implementation of the European Agenda for Adult Learning

Erasmus+ supports National Coordinators in the implementation of the European Agenda for Adult Learning. In 2015 the National Coordinators continued to engage with stakeholders, establish structures for better coordination of policies at national level, develop information and dissemination activities and raise awareness of EU policy at national, regional and often local level, particularly in relation to improving adult participation in learning and the overall basic skills levels.

A total budget of EUR 4.6 million was granted to 29 organisations.

Examples of National Coordinators' activities:

- *Engagement with and outreach to stakeholders regarding the need for adult learning and the priorities of European Agenda for Adult Learning*
- *Organising or participating in adult/ lifelong learning days or weeks*
- *Awareness-raising campaigns targeting specific low-skilled groups or the population in general*
- *Setting up a counselling centre with a free phone line and tailored advice*
- *Publishing printed or digital materials/resources on adult learning needs and benefits*
- *Exploiting EU tools, engaging in mutual learning and exchange, e.g. study visits, conferences*
- *Cooperating with the Electronic Platform for Adult Learning in Europe (EPALE) National Support Services*
- *Building and strengthening national mechanisms for the coordination of adult learning policy*

6.6.7 National Academic Recognition Information Centres (NARIC)

NARIC provide services for individuals and organisations, advising on comparisons of international qualifications against national qualification framework levels.

In 2015, all activities relating to the eight NARIC projects selected for the period of 2014-2015 have been successfully implemented. The projects covered activities such as the annual ENIC-NARIC meetings, maintenance of the website, a database collecting diplomas and certificates of the participating countries, developing and hosting seminars for the benefit of new staff, identifying typology used.

6.6.8 Bologna Process

Twelve of the 20 projects selected in the 2014 European Higher Education Area (EHEA) call are still half way through their implementation process as their deadline was postponed. The projects include a variety of initiatives ranging from establishing national expert groups to supporting the implementation of EHEA tools in higher education institutions.

The EHEA call for the period of 2016-2018 was launched in 2015 (two rounds) and proposals evaluated. All applicants were successful in receiving funding for their proposed activities.

6.6.9 Erasmus Charter for Higher Education (ECHE)

Higher education institutions must be holders of an ECHE in order to be eligible to apply for any KA1 or KA2 activity in the field of higher education under Erasmus+. The objective of the Charter is to reinforce the overall quality and impact of the programme, with clear commitments before, during and after mobility and cooperation projects.

The large majority of ECHE holders were awarded the accreditation following the 2014 call, which is valid for the entire duration of Erasmus+. Through the following successive calls additional charter holders were selected, mostly

small higher education institutions amounting to 5,141 HEIs being able to apply for the upcoming Erasmus+ call in 2016.

Table 6.1 – Erasmus Charter for Higher Education (ECHE)

	APPLICATIONS					SUCCESS RATE
	<i>Received</i>	<i>Eligible</i>	<i>Non eligible</i>	<i>Selected</i>	<i>Rejected</i>	
Call 2014	4,886	4,574	312	4,308	266	94,2 %
Call 2015	695	671	24	539	132	80,3 %
Call 2016	383	362	21	294	67	81,2 %
Total ECHE	5,964	5,607	357	5,141	465	

6.6.10 Comprehensive policy framework for continuing VET

This call for proposals was published on 30 January 2015 and addressed to the national authorities in charge of continuing vocational education and training (CVET) policies. Its aim was to support the development of policies that coordinate the provision of quality CVET and to ensure an increase in take-up of these training opportunities, as part of national, regional or local skills strategies. A key characteristic of the call was that it required the direct involvement of relevant ministries.

A very low number of applications was received (10) of which six were ineligible. The overall quality of applications was poor. Only two projects were selected, for a total amount of EUR 375,000. The budget allocated in the Work Programme (EUR 4.2 million) was therefore not consumed.

The evaluators made a number of suggestions for improvements including greater clarity in the description of the aims of the call and more efforts to explain to relevant government ministries the potential benefits of taking part. The suggestions will be taken on board in future calls.

6.6.11 Quality assurance for enhanced transparency and recognition of skills and qualifications

The objective of this pilot call was to support procedures, mechanisms and quality criteria at European level to provide quality assurance for the enhanced transparency and recognition of skills and qualifications. An information day was organised via webinar in January 2016. The webinar was recorded and published on the Executive Agency's website. Experts assisted the Agency in the evaluation of the seven eligible proposals submitted. Three pilot projects were selected for a two-year period for a total grant of EUR 390,000. The pilot projects selected will be closely monitored, in cooperation with the Commission's Directorate General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion.

7. Horizontal activities

IT platforms and the **Erasmus+ Project Results platform** facilitate the communication within and about the programme and promote the dissemination of its results.

7.1 IT support platforms

The electronic platform for adult learning in Europe (EPALE), eTwinning, the School Education Gateway and the European Youth Portal offer multilingual information and opportunities to the programme stakeholders to get involved and exchange news, ideas and practices across Europe. The platforms also provide a wide range of useful educational resources, events, networking tools and interactive features.

7.1.1 eTwinning

eTwinning³⁰ is a community of teachers from pre-primary to upper secondary schools. It is hosted on a secure platform accessible only to teachers and is vetted by national authorities.

Participants can involve themselves in many activities such as projects with other schools and classrooms; discussions with colleagues and development of professional networking; a variety of professional development opportunities (online and face-to-face) etc.

The eTwinning platform is available in 26 languages and supported under KA2 with a budget of around EUR 13.7 million for 2015 – including the School Education Gateway (see 7.1.2).

In 2015, eTwinning celebrated its 10th anniversary with special events across all the participating countries and at European level. A high level meeting was organised with representatives of the participating countries, focussing on the contribution of eTwinning to the objectives of the Paris Declaration.

³⁰ <https://www.etwinning.net/en/pub/index.htm>

Since eTwinning was launched in 2005, about 350,000 teachers from over 45% of schools across Europe have registered, and more than 46,000 collaborative projects have taken place between classrooms in two or more schools, teaching nearly 2,000,000 pupils how to work together. Since 2013, the reach of eTwinning has extended to five neighbouring countries of the Eastern Partnership and Tunisia (eTwinningPlus).

7.1.2 The School Education Gateway

The School Education Gateway³¹ (SEG) is Europe's online platform for school education. It aims to provide everything that teachers need in terms of information, learning and professional development, peer support and networking, collaborative project and mobility opportunities, policy insights.

Apart from the teacher community, the SEG's target user base includes all school education stakeholders participating in activities under the Erasmus+ programme such as schools and other educational actors / organizations, policy makers and national authorities, NGOs and businesses.

In 2015, the SEG offered a wide range of content in line with policy and programme priorities in the area of school education. These included good practices from European projects; monthly blog contributions of European school education experts; tutorials, Entrepreneurship and Schools and the European Toolkit for Schools; information on school education policy developments; topical news and events. It also listed more than 4,800 on-site courses for teacher professional development, 200 mobility opportunities and 150 strategic partnership requests.

The School Education Gateway went live in February 2015, and by the end of the year it had attracted about 150,000 visitors and 6,500 registered users. It is available in 23 EU languages and as a public website, it can be accessed by anyone worldwide. It is funded as part of the budget allocated to eTwinning under Key Action 2 (see 7.1.1).

³¹ <http://www.schooleducationgateway.eu/en/pub/index.htm>

7.1.3 EPALE

EPALE³² is an interactive and multilingual platform (available in 24 languages) supporting Europe's adult learning community. It aims to build an online community for the adult learning sector and adult learning professionals across Europe, including teachers and trainers, researchers, policy-makers, human resources professionals, media, etc. Its open membership enables them to connect with their peers and share ideas and practices related to adult learning.

Launched in 2014, EPALE is supported under KA2 of the Erasmus+ programme, with a budget of EUR 7.2 million for the years 2014-2015. There are currently around 13,000 members of the platform and almost 40,000 single viewers per month.

EPALE offers a very rich content covering 24 themes, as well as a variety of tools offering particular support to Erasmus+ existing and potential beneficiaries. These include a calendar of courses and events, a partner-search tool and other partner-finding features, an e-library, a glossary related to adult learning in all EU languages, communities of practice, and the possibility to request private collaborative spaces. All of these tools are available free of charge to EPALE registered users and can be used to prepare and implement Erasmus+ projects and disseminate their results to a growing specialised audience.

7.1.4 European Youth Portal

The European Youth Portal (EYP) offers both European and national information and opportunities that are of interest to young people who live, learn and work in Europe. It provides information structured around eight main themes, covers 34 countries and is available in 28 languages.

During 2015, the EYP continued to provide young people aged 13-30, across Europe with information and opportunities related to the themes of the EU Youth Strategy. This was done in partnership with the Eurodesk organisation, which provided the core European and national levels content for the site.

³² <https://ec.europa.eu/epale/>

More than 17.2 million pages were viewed on the site in 2.3 million separate visits from 1.5 million individual visitors.

The EYP also hosted the support website for European Youth Week 2015. A great deal of work was also done to review the first version of the volunteering database and create a much improved, web-responsive version ready for re-launch at the beginning of 2016.

The EYP also supported the structured dialogue with young people by piloting a new online participation platform, which helped National Working Groups to reach out to more young people than before. The results of this pilot project were analysed in 2015 and will form the basis for an enhanced consultation toolkit to be launched in 2016.

7.2 Dissemination and exploitation of results

The programme's results must be disseminated if it is to inspire genuine improvements in systems and policies and provide concrete responses to beneficiaries' needs.

Preparations for the transparency and communication to the public of projects financed by the European Union in the field of education, training and youth started in 2014, through the construction of the new **Erasmus+ Project Results** Platform³³. The platform has since been updated, aiming to offer user-friendly services both to the officers validating results and to the beneficiaries uploading them.

The platform includes a comprehensive database containing information on all projects financed under Erasmus+ and previous programmes (LLP, YiA, Tempus and Erasmus Mundus programmes). It has a powerful search function: relevant projects can be found by entering key words and/or by specific fields/areas and the results can be extracted in excel files that can be further processed by researchers in the fields related to education, training youth and sports. Project information – the so-called "project card" – can also be extracted in PDF files. It is also possible to find projects flagged as good practices or as success stories. Success stories include projects that have

³³ <http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/projects/>

distinguished themselves by their impact, contribution to policy-making, innovative results or creative approach, and can be a source of inspiration for others.

In this way the Erasmus+ Project Results Platform ensures the accountability and the transparency of the EU money spent in the field of education, training, youth, culture and sport in a cost-efficient way. The final improvements are expected to be made in 2016, when the development efforts will be completed and the project will enter the maintenance phase.

8. Jean Monnet Activities

8.1 Introduction

The Jean Monnet Activities are an integral part of the Erasmus+ Programme (Art. 10 of the legal basis) and aim at promoting excellence in teaching and research in the field of European Union studies worldwide. They consist of **actions** (teaching and research, supporting associations and institutions, fostering the dialogue between the academic world and policy-makers) **and operating grants** to specified institutions.

8.2 Actions

A new communication strategy implying the National Agencies and EU-delegations was put in place and promotion of the programme was made in less represented countries and regions. Consequently, the number of applications doubled compared to 2014, reaching 879 on the deadline of the 26 March 2015 call. This deadline had been postponed by 1 month to ensure equal conditions for potential applicants from the 7 countries³⁴ covered by the Partnership Instrument supplementary funds of EUR 3.5 million, which were made available after the call was published in late 2014 (see Table 8.1 for details).

The trend of 2014 was confirmed: two thirds of the applications concerned the core of the actions (namely teaching and research), with a vast majority of Chairs and Modules, while one third related to the newer, broader actions of Networks and Projects, offering new methodologies and spreading knowledge about the European integration process to a wider target audience.

In terms of geographical spread the trend of recent years was confirmed with a large number of applications from Italy and Spain and a relatively low participation of the Nordic countries. Outside the Member States there were strong participation from Ukraine, the Russian Federation, the United States and Turkey. However, more should be done in future to promote Jean Monnet

action in Latin America, Africa and Asian as well as in the Western Balkan and neighbouring countries (see Annex 27). Nevertheless, due to an increase in applications from non-EU countries of around 200%, non-EU applications nearly balance those from EU countries for the first time.

While the Russian Federation, the United States and Taiwan were very successful in the selection, Italy, Spain and the United Kingdom were granted fewer projects than in 2014.

Overall, 260 projects were granted in 2015 for a total amount of EUR 14.4 million. Those projects involve 335 organisations and more than 267, 000 participants in 43 countries worldwide.

Example of a Jean Monnet Centre of Excellence

The Queen's University of Belfast, UK, implements a Jean Monnet Centre of Excellence under the title "Tensions at the Fringes of the European Union – Regaining the EU's Purpose" (TREUP),

The objective is to link cross-cutting normative visions for the EU with the empirical exploration of current tensions emanating from political, geographical, economic and social integration, thus developing new and innovative perspectives on interdisciplinary European studies. The Jean Monnet Centre of Excellence will develop the tension theme in a series of research seminars and conferences, enhancing international research networks.

Findings will be disseminated through high quality academic publications as well as easily accessible internet-based media such as blogs, and podcasts.

The target groups are researchers, postgraduate students, policy makers, civil servants, organised civil society and the general public at large.

8.3 Operating grants

As in 2014, seven institutions pursuing an aim of European interest submitted their applications and work programme to the Executive Agency of the

³⁴ Brazil, Japan, Mexico, Russian Federation, Singapore, Taiwan, USA

European Commission for this Jean Monnet activity for a total grant of EUR 29.23 million. Since 2014 the management of these operating grants has been transferred to the Executive Agency.

not just in the EU, but worldwide. The Conference centred on the question: what can education do to safeguard the fundamental values and human rights that unite us ?

8.4 Jean Monnet Annual Conference

The Conference, which took place on 9 and 10 November 2015, focused on the theme of 'A Union of shared values – the role of education and civil society'.

Nearly 300 people (mostly Jean Monnet Community members) attended the event and the participants examined crucial issues of immediate relevance,

Table 8.1 - Jean Monnet Activities 2015

	PROJECTS			GRANT	PARTICIPANTS	ORGANISATIONS
	Received	Contracted	Success Rate	in million EUR		
Jean Monnet Modules	409	108	26%	2.66	91,368	108
Jean Monnet Chairs	156	41	26%	1.85	48,216	41
Jean Monnet Centres of Excellence	63	32	51%	3.00	54,176	34
Jean Monnet Associations	19	10	53%	0.47	3,910	10
Jean Monnet Institutions	18	4	22%	0.96	1,744	4
Jean Monnet Network	39	10	26%	2.69	20,440	82
Jean Monnet Information Project	175	55	31%	2.83	47,685	56
SUBTOTAL	879	260	30%	14.45	267,539	335
Operating Grants to support Specified Institutions	7	7	1	29.23		7
TOTAL	886	267	30%	43.67	267,539	342

9. Sport Activities

With the entry into force of the Treaty of Lisbon in December 2009, the European Union acquired a new competence in the field of sport. Consequently a sport chapter was introduced in the Erasmus+ Programme. Within this context, since 2014, activities aimed at promoting the European dimension in sport have been implemented in line with the priorities listed in the Erasmus+ Regulation.

The Erasmus+ Sport chapter allows support to be granted to collaborative partnerships, not-for-profit European sport events, initiatives strengthening the evidence base for policy-making in sport (studies and networks) and the dialogue with relevant European stakeholders. Compared to the first year of implementation, 2015 focused more on grassroots sport, and in general on all sport projects aimed at increasing the level of participation in sport and physical activity. A total budget of EUR 22.9 million was earmarked for the whole sport chapter in 2015.

9.1 Collaborative partnerships and Not-for-profit European sport events

Erasmus+ supports **collaborative partnerships** in order to develop, transfer and/or implement innovative practices in sport and physical activity between various organisations and actors in and outside sport including public authorities, sport-related organisations and educational bodies. Projects may cover anti-doping; match-fixing; dual career of athletes; the fight against violence, racism, discrimination and intolerance; social inclusion; and equal opportunities in sport.

Erasmus+ also supports **not-for-profit European-wide sport events** through grants for event organisation and other communication activities.

In 2015, the call for proposals has foreseen two rounds, for both the above actions (see details in Table 9.1). The first round, with a deadline of 22 January 2015, invited applications for projects related to the European Week of Sport (EWoS) 2015, while the second, with a deadline of 14 May, concerned applications not related to the EWoS 2015.

Following the call for projects related to the EWoS 2015, five not-for-profit events and five collaborative partnerships projects were selected. This represented a success rate of 12.3%. The first edition of the EWoS took place between 7 and 13 September. With more than 7,000 events taking place across Europe and approximately 5 million participants, it was deemed to be a major success.

For the second round of the call, concerning applications not related to the EWoS 2015, out of the 341 applications received 334 were considered eligible. 40 projects were finally selected, representing a success rate of 11.7%.

In line with the 2015 Annual Work Programme, 50% of the budget available to the collaborative partnerships not related to the EWoS was devoted to areas where EU Guidelines are issued, i.e. health-enhancing physical activity (HEPA) and the dual career of athletes.

AREA	PROJECTS	GRANT (EUR)
HEPA	10	4,481,632
Social inclusion, equal opportunities, volunteering and participation in sports	9	3,492,680
Approaches to contain violence and tackle racism and intolerance in sport	4	1,664,745
EU guidelines on dual careers of athletes	9	3,301,534
EU principles on good governance in sport	4	1,231,612
promoting voluntary activity in sport	1	284,639
Fight against the match-fixing.	3	1,227,169
TOTAL	40	15,684,010

Table 9.2: Support for collaborative partnerships by Area

Similarly to 2014, the number of projects selected was lower than anticipated in the 2015 annual work programme as a very high number of applicants requested the maximum grant amount (EUR 500,000). The projects cover a broad spectrum of the sport landscape and stakeholders involving many programme countries with a variety of the beneficiaries (sport clubs and federations, NGO's, universities, local and regional authorities), and covering also a good number of sport disciplines (see Annex 28).

Table 9.1 – Results of the calls 2015 for Erasmus+ Sport

ACTION	PROJECTS			GRANT		ORGANISATIONS
	Received	Granted	Success rate	in million EUR	per project (EUR)	
Not-for-profit European Sport Events 2015	154	8	5%	1.88	12,239	8
round 1	67	5	7%	0.99	14,745	5
round 2	87	3	3%	0.90	10,310	3
Collaborative partnerships	268	45	17%	16.96	63,295	415
round 1	14	5	36%	1.28	91,368	43
round 2	254	40	16%	15.68	61,748	372
Total	422	53	13%	18.848	44,664	423

9.2 Support for strengthening the evidence-base for policy making

Erasmus+ sport also supports actions strengthening the evidence base for policy-making, such as studies, data gathering and surveys. As provided for in the Annual Work Programme 2015, two studies in the area of sport were commissioned as well as three extra studies called "Mappings". These studies focused on:

- the contribution of sport to the employability of young people in the context of the Europe 2020 strategy
- gender based violence.
- mapping of existing international qualification standards of international sport federations' exercise
- mapping of research and studies on the link between the level of physical activity of school-age children and their school results
- mapping of existing professional qualifications and relevant training for the profession of ski instructor in all Member States

All the extra studies ("mapping") have been finalised and published online³⁵ and can be downloaded free of charge.

9.3 Dialogue with relevant European stakeholders

This action is implemented through support for the organisation of the EU Sport Forum, EU Presidency events, conferences, meetings etc. Exceptionally no EU Sport Forum took place in 2015, as the previous one had been organised in Milan in December 2014 and the following was planned to be held in The Hague in March 2016.

9.4 Policy dialogue (Presidency events)

In 2015, the second year of the implementation of this action, the Latvian and Luxembourg Presidencies of the Council organised respectively one and three events on the various contemporary challenges in sport. The Latvian Presidency organised the International sport conference and the meeting of Directors General for sport, while the events organised by Luxembourg were dedicated to the dual career of athletes, to sport as an economic factor contributing to growth and development in Europe, and to the issue of motor skills of small children.

³⁵ http://ec.europa.eu/sport/library/index_en.htm

10. Conclusion

2015 was the second year of implementation of the Erasmus+ programme: a year of consolidation and simplification. All the foreseen activities were successfully launched and new features such as the international credit mobility action, capacity building projects in higher education, the Western Balkans Youth Window for capacity building projects in the field of youth, VET mobility charters or forward looking cooperation projects were well absorbed.

The increasing interest in the programme was demonstrated by a rise in the number of applications received for almost all actions. However, although the quality of many applications was high, the success rates remained low due to insufficient budget to meet the demand.

A successful budgetary execution could be noted both by the Commission and by the National agencies. Overall with a budget of over 2 billion EUR, close to 20,000 projects were selected with 1.4 million participants and 69,000 organisations involved.

The feedback received from the 725,000 participants who lived an Erasmus+ experience over the two first years of implementation, demonstrates the positive impact of the programme: 96% of the participants were satisfied with their learning mobility experience, 96% improved their skills and 80% felt better prepared for finding a job.

Erasmus+ also proved to be a flexible instrument to respond rapidly to new policy challenges. The programme reacted to a need for more actions promoting social inclusion through education and non-formal learning, by giving increased emphasis on this priority under strategic partnerships and by the preparation of the launch of a dedicated call on social inclusion, integration of refugees and the prevention of violent radicalisation.

Finally, the efforts made in 2015 to further simplify the IT processes and other procedures started to have an impact, but they will have to be pursued, targeting primarily beneficiaries and National Agencies.

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