Erasmus+
International Credit Mobility

Handbook for Participating Organisations

Version 5.1 – September 2022
(Call 2022)

Contents

Acronyms and abbreviations

We have tried to keep the language in this Handbook as simple and as clear as possible. When we have used acronyms or abbreviations, we have made sure to spell these out at least once. Here they are, just in case...

BM: Beneficiary Module EC: European Commission

ECHE: Erasmus Charter for Higher Education

ECTS: European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System

ENFP: Erasmus+ National Focal Points

EU: European Union

FAQ: Frequently Asked Questions

HEI: Higher Education Institution

ICM: International Credit Mobility

IIA: Inter-institutional agreement

IPA: Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance

KA131: Key Action 1 in Higher Education, supported by internal policy funds

KA171: Key Action 1 in Higher Education, supported by external policy instruments (=ICM)

NA: Erasmus+ National Agency

NDICI: Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument

NEO: National Erasmus+ Office

OID: Organisation ID

OS: Organisational Support

Introduction

For 35 years, European Union's Erasmus programme has enabled over 4 million Europeans to study, train and gain experience abroad. Since 2015, Erasmus+ opened up mobility opportunities in the field of higher education to individuals and organisations from other parts of the world. Through "International Credit Mobility" - ICM for short - European HEIs can set up mobility agreements with partners around the world to send and receive students and staff. In the new Erasmus+ 2021-2027, international mobility of higher education students and staff has two strands: one supported by internal policy funds (KA131) and one by the external policy instruments[1] (KA171). The latter is the continuation of ICM (KA107) from the 2015-2020 programme period, and the first call for applications was launched in call 2022 of Erasmus+.

Erasmus+ is an essential tool to promote people-to-people connectivity worldwide through its external dimension, aiming at cementing links between the European Education Area and the rest of the world. Building on the experience and the lessons learnt from the previous programme period, Erasmus+ 2021-2027 is strongly aligned with the EU's geopolitical priorities.

What's in it for individuals?

ICM projects contributes to strengthening societal links through educational exchanges and mobility. The aim is to support students and staff in higher education institutions acquire and enhance key skills, competences and employability. Mobility for studying or training increase students' technical, inter-personal and inter-cultural skills and competences, as well as their confidence, ability to achieve goals, and social and cultural openness. Staff can acquire new competences for their professional development, improve their language skills and learn about new working methods.

What's in it for institutions?

ICM aims to support reinforce the capacities, quality and relevance for the labour market and society at the participating institutions and support the exchange of good practices. ICM projects strengthen international ties between institutions, giving the partners the opportunity to increase their visibility at local and global levels. It helps to improve the quality of higher education.

Purpose of this handbook

This handbook aims to support both Programme and Partner Country HEIs[2] in the implementation of their ICM project, from application to final report. It will provide you with information on the key documents, rules and guidelines. It will guide you through the various steps your institution will be expected to take, and tell you where to go for further information. This handbook does not replace the Erasmus+ Programme Guide[3], which you should refer to for more detailed information.

We hope you find this handbook useful, and wish you every success with your ICM project.

The International Credit Mobility Team

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[1] Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument – Global Europe (NDICI-GE) and Instrument of Pre-accession Assistance III (IPA III)

[2] For the purposes of ICM, there are 33 Erasmus+ Programme Countries (formally EU Member States and third countries associated to the Programme), which are the 27 EU Member States and six countries that have associated to the programme, namely Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, the Republic of North Macedonia, Turkey and Serbia. Partner Countries (formally third countries not associated to the Programme) are all other countries in the world, except for Regions 13 (Andorra, Monaco, San Marino, Vatican City State) and 14 (Switzerland, Faroe Islands and the United Kingdom) not covered by the EU's external financial instruments. For a detailed presentation, see table in p. 6.

[3] https://erasmus-plus.ec.europa.eu/programme-guide/erasmusplus-programme-guide

I – What is ICM and how do I apply?

International Credit Mobility (ICM) supports the mobility of individuals enrolled or employed at a higher education institution (HEI), from a Programme Country to a Partner Country or vice versa, namely:

- **Student mobility for studies**, open to short cycle, first cycle (Bachelor or equivalent) or second cycle (Master or equivalent) students, as well as third cycle doctoral candidates. The physical mobility period can last from 2 months (or one academic term) to 12 months, or from 5 to 30 days for short-term doctoral mobility or if part of a blended mobility[4].
- **Student mobility for traineeships**, open to short cycle, first cycle (Bachelor or equivalent) or second cycle (Master or equivalent) students, recent graduates (who have applied during their last year of studies), as well as third cycle doctoral candidates. The mobility period can last from 2 to 12 months, or from 5 to 30 days for short-term doctoral mobility or if part of blended mobility.
- **Staff mobility for teaching** for academic staff and for invited staff from non-academic organisations to teach at a partner higher education institution (HEI) abroad. The mobility period can last from 5 days to 2 months (60 days) and can also be carried out as blended mobility
- **Staff mobility for training** for teaching and non-teaching staff in the form of training events abroad (excluding conferences), job shadowing, observation periods and/or training at a partner HEI. The mobility period can last from 5 days to 2 months and can also be carried out as blended mobility. This activity also supports the mobility of staff from Partner Country HEIs to train at a non-academic organisation located in a Programme Country.

Student and staff mobility can take place in any subject area or academic discipline. Moreover, HEIs are free to apply for staff mobility or student mobility, or any combination of the two.

Staff teaching and training activities can be combined. A study period and a traineeship can also be combined, for a minimum of 2 months (or one academic term) and a maximum of 12 months.

1. Who can apply?

Any Programme Country HEI with an Erasmus Charter for Higher Education (ECHE) is eligible to apply for ICM funding to its National Agency (NA) as an individual HEI and/or via a consortium application:

- **For an application as an individual HEI**: The applicant HEI must hold a valid Erasmus Charter for Higher Education (ECHE)[5].

- **For an application as a national mobility consortium**: The consortium must hold a higher education consortium accreditation. Organisations that do not hold a valid consortium accreditation can **apply for this accreditation** at the same time as applying for a mobility project. All HEIs involved in the consortium must hold a valid ECHE.

Skip to "*Getting the right accreditation*" under the section Application Process for more information.

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[4] Blended mobility is a combination of physical mobility with a virtual component facilitating a collaborative online learning exchange and teamwork.
[5] Erasmus Charter for Higher Education: https://erasmus-plus.ec.europa.eu/resources-and-tools/erasmus-charter-for-higher-education

2. Erasmus+ Partner Countries eligible for International Credit Mobility

Instrument for Pre-accession (IPA III)	1. Western Balkans	Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo[6], Montenegro
Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument (NDICI-Global Europe)	2. Neighborhood East	Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova, Territory of Ukraine as recognised by international law
	3. South-Mediterranean countries	Algeria, Egypt, Israel[7], Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Palestine[8], Syria, Tunisia
	4. Russian Federation	Territory of Russia as recognised by international law
	5. Asia	Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, China, DPR Korea, India, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Maldives, Mongolia, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Vietnam High Income Countries: Brunei, Hong Kong, Japan, (Republic of) Korea, Macao, Singapore, Taiwan
	6. Central Asia	Afghanistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan
	7. Middle East	Iran, Iraq, Yemen High Income Countries: Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates
	8. Pacific	Cook Islands, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Micronesia, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Timor-Leste, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu High Income Countries: Australia, New Zealand
	9. Sub-Saharan Africa	Angola, Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chad, Comoros, Congo, Congo – Democratic Republic of the, Côte d'Ivoire, Djibouti, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Eswatini, Ethiopia, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Africa, South Sudan, Sudan, Tanzania, Togo, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe
	10. Latin America	Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay, Venezuela
	11. Caribbean	Antigua & Barbuda, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Cuba, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, St Kitts and Nevis, St Lucia, St Vincent & Grenadines, Suriname and Trinidad & Tobago
	12. USA & Canada	Canada, United States of America

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[6] This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo Declaration of Independence.

[7] The eligibility criteria formulated in Commission Notice Nr.2013/C-205/05 (OJEU C-205 of 19/07/2013, pp. 9-11) shall apply for all actions implemented through this Programme Guide, including with respect to third parties receiving financial support in the cases where the respective action involves financial support to third parties by grant beneficiaries in accordance with article 204 of the EU's Financial Regulation.

[8] This designation shall not be construed as recognition of a State of Palestine and is without prejudice to the individual positions of the Member States on this issue.

3. Eligible partner organisations

Only HEIs in Programme Countries are eligible to apply for and receive funds. Higher education institutions from around the world are eligible to take part in ICM as partners, with the exception of those located in regions 13 and 14.[9]

Participating Partner Country HEIs must be recognised as higher education institutions (HEI)[10] by competent authorities. After the project has been selected for funding and before any mobility can take place, the Programme Country HEI must sign an inter-institutional agreement with their Partner Country HEIs. Find out more about this agreement in section II of this Handbook.

If an exchange takes place with a HEI that is not recognised, the mobility is considered ineligible and the funds must be recovered. As the organisation submitting the application and managing the funds, the Programme Country HEI is responsible for verifying the eligibility of all partners in their application, and throughout the project lifecycle.

Other organisations in Programme and Partner Countries are also eligible to take part in an ICM project. These organisations can host students on traineeship or HEI staff in training, while staff from these organisations can be invited to teach at an HEI. These organisations must be active in the labour market or in the fields of education, training and youth. See dedicated section on 'Traineeships'.

4. Roles and responsibilities

Participating organisations involved in the mobility project take on the following roles and responsibilities:

- The applicant organisation (always the Programme Country HEI) submits an application to its NA on behalf of its partner(s). The applicant can also apply on behalf of a consortium of several partners from the same Programme Country.
- Once selected, the beneficiary organisation (always the Programme Country HEI) signs and manages the grant agreement, and reports at the end of the project. The beneficiary is financially responsible for the entirety of the grant.
- The sending organisation (from either a Programme or a Partner Country) is responsible for selecting the students and staff and sending them abroad. This includes preparation, monitoring and recognition activities.
- The receiving organisation (from either a Programme or a Partner Country) hosts the students and staff from abroad, providing support during their stay.

Students and staff apply directly for a grant at the institution where they are enrolled through open calls. The selection criteria for participation in the mobility activities are defined by the HEIs involved in the project in their IIA. Many of these procedures are flexible and institutions are welcome to find the arrangements which work best for their needs, for example, institutions may prefer to establish joint selection procedures. Selection criteria and procedures must be fair and transparent.

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[9] See table in p. 6.

[10] According to the Erasmus+ Programme Guide, this is any type of higher education institution, which in accordance with national law or practice, offers recognised degrees or other recognised tertiary level qualifications, regardless of what such an establishment is called, or a comparable institution at tertiary level which is considered by the national authorities as eligible to participate in the Programme in their respective territories.

This table provides an overview of ICM activities and eligible organisations:

	Student mobility for studies (SMS)	Student mobility for traineeships (SMP)	Staff mobility for teaching (STA)	Staff mobility for training (STT)
Sending organisation can be…	Programme or Partner Country HEI	Programme or Partner Country HEI	Programme or Partner Country HEI *or* Programme or Partner Country public or private organisation	Programme or Partner Country HEI
Receiving organisation can be…	Programme or Partner Country HEI	Programme or Partner Country HEI *or* Programme or Partner Country public or private organisation	Programme or Partner Country HEI	Programme or Partner Country HEI *or* Programme Country public or private organisation

5. EU Budget – what you need to know

For the purposes of ICM and other Erasmus+ actions open to participation of Partner countries, these are grouped into regions, as already presented in the section "Erasmus+ Partner Countries eligible for International Credit Mobility".

The EU budget available for this action is split into 12 discrete 'envelopes' corresponding to the regions of the world[11], covered by the EU's external financing instruments[12]. The size of each envelope is set according to the EU's external action priorities, with some regions benefitting from bigger budget envelopes and therefore funding more mobilities. The largest budgets are allocated to Sub-Saharan Africa and the EU's neighbourhood regions – East and South, and the Western Balkans.
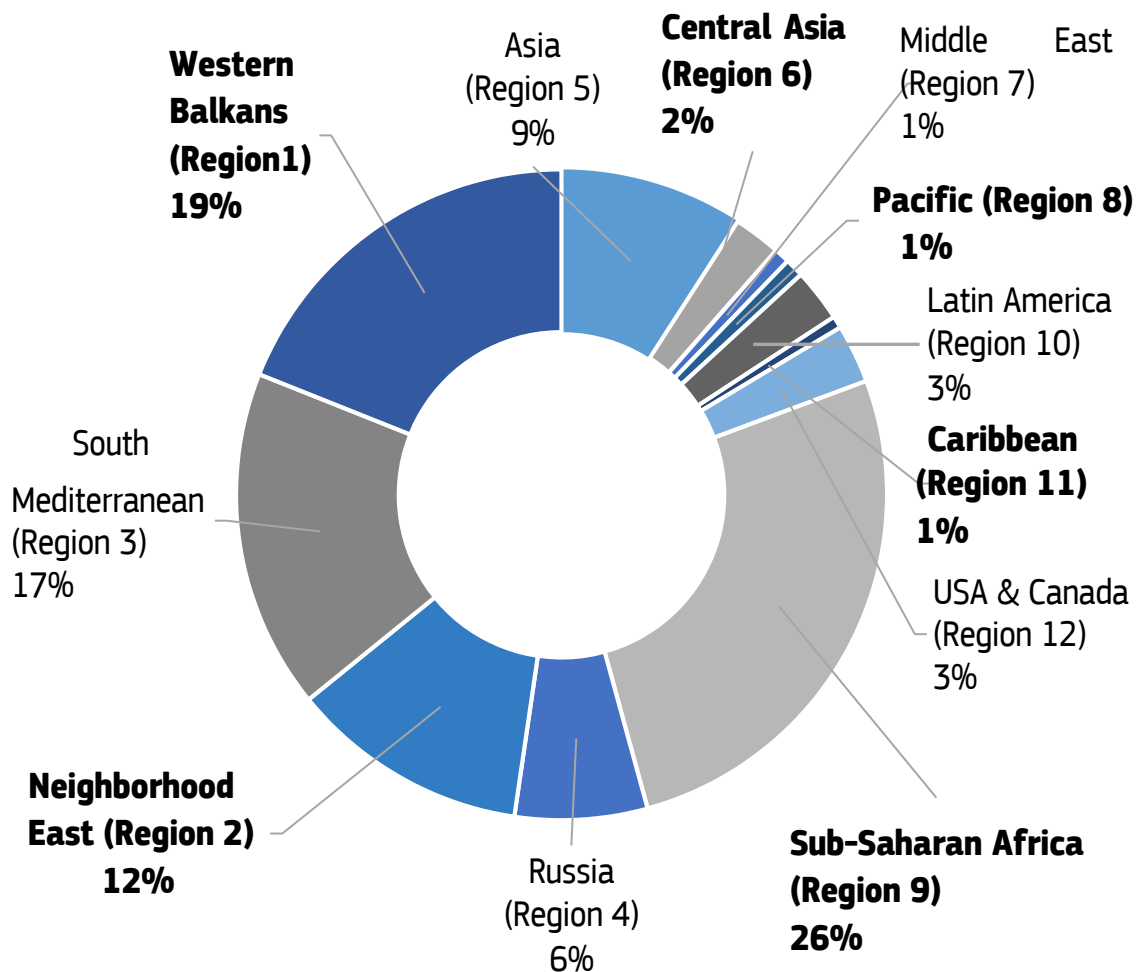
See below a chart pie demonstrating the distribution of the budget between the different regions of the world:

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[11] The number and size of the budget envelopes will remain relatively stable under each call. The detailed budget is communicated each year ahead of the call deadline.
[12] Visit our website to find out more:
https://ec.europa.eu/international-partnerships/funding
https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/enlargement-policy/overview-instrument-pre-accession-assistance_en

Applicants should always keep the different budgets in mind when applying for mobilities. There is little point in applying for the entire national budget available in a smaller envelope (for instance Latin America or Pacific) when the NA, especially in large Programme Countries, will be under pressure to satisfy a large volume of demand from HEIs. On the other hand, competition may be considerably lower for larger budget envelopes, such as Sub-Saharan Africa and Western Balkans.

6. Indicative Geographical Targets for the programme period 2021-2027

Applicants should also be aware that in some regions there are indicative targets to support geographical balance in the use of funds. NAs need to meet these targets by the end of the programme period, but not necessarily in each ICM Call year. Nevertheless, they are required to take into account these indicative targets when allocating funds.

This means that, all things being equal, NAs will be looking to fund projects with partners in low-income and least developed Partner Countries. So if the applicant has the choice between equally strong partners, a strategic decision may be to give preference to the partnerships they have with the least developed countries in a given region.

Below an overview of countries with geographical targets:

Region	Composition of the region	Indicative Geographical Targets
Region 3 – South Mediterranean	Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Palestine , Syria, Tunisia	no more than 15% of the budget available can be allocated to a single country
Region 5 - Asia	Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, China, DPR Korea, India, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Maldives, Mongolia, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Vietnam High income countries: Brunei, Hong Kong, Japan, Korea, Macao, Singapore and Taiwan	at least 25% of the budget available must go to projects with the least developed countries no more than 25% of the budget available can go to projects with High Income Countries no more than 15% with China no more than 10% with India
Region 8 - Pacific	Cook Islands, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Micronesia, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Timor-Leste, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu High income countries: Australia, New Zealand	no more than 86.5% of the budget available can go to projects with High Income Countries
Region 9 – Sub-Saharan Africa	Angola, Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chad, Comoros, Congo, Congo – Democratic Republic of the, Côte d'Ivoire, Djibouti, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Eswatini, Ethiopia, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Africa, South Sudan, Sudan, Tanzania, Togo, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe	at least 35% of the budget available must go to projects with the least developed countries Special emphasis should be put on migration priority countries. Migration priority countries that are also LDCs are marked bold. no more than 8% of the available regional budget for a single country
Region 10 - Latin America	Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay and Venezuela	no more than 30% of the budget available can go to projects with Brazil and Mexico combined

7. Restrictions on outgoing mobilities (from Programme Country to Partner Country)

The financial instrument covering regions 2-12 (NDICI) does not fund short cycle, first cycle (Bachelor or equivalent) or second cycle (Master or equivalent) mobility, from a Programme Country to any of the Partner Countries that are recipients of official development assistance (ODA)[13]. Region 1 is not concerned by this restriction, as the funding comes from IPA III. Please see the **non-restricted countries** in bold in the table below.

This applies to mobility for studies and for traineeships. Outgoing third cycle students (PhD candidates) or staff are eligible to be sent to these Partner Countries, and Programme Country HEIs can receive incoming students and staff without any restriction.

These restricted mobilities under ICM may be funded by your mobility project supported by internal policy funds, through the international opening of KA131 within the ceiling of the 20% of the awarded budget.

All eligible Partner Countries are listed on the next page. For more information on the funding rules, budget restrictions and country priorities, please visit the NA's website[14] or see the relevant section in the Erasmus+ Programme Guide.

Instrument for Pre-accession (IPA III)	1. Western Balkans	**Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo[15], Montenegro**
Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument (NDICI-Global Europe)	2. Neighborhood East	Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova, Territory of Ukraine as recognised by international law
	3. South-Mediterranean countries	Algeria, Egypt, Israel[16], Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Palestine[17], Syria, Tunisia
	4. Russian Federation	**Territory of Russia as recognised by international law**
	5. Asia	Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, China, DPR Korea, India, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Maldives, Mongolia, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Vietnam High Income Countries: **Brunei, Hong Kong, Japan, (Republic of) Korea, Macao, Singapore, Taiwan**
	6. Central Asia	Afghanistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan
	7. Middle East	Iran, Iraq, Yemen High Income Countries: **Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates**
	8. Pacific	**Cook Islands**, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Micronesia, Nauru, Niue, **Palau**, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Timor-Leste, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu High Income Countries: **Australia, New Zealand**

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[13] https://www.oecd.org/dac/financing-sustainable-development/development-finance-standards/DAC-List-of-ODA-Recipients-for-reporting-2022-23-flows.pdf

[14] National Agencies: https://erasmus-plus.ec.europa.eu/national-agencies

[15] This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo Declaration of Independence.

[16] The eligibility criteria formulated in Commission Notice Nr.2013/C-205/05 (OJEU C-205 of 19/07/2013, pp. 9-11) shall apply for all actions implemented through this Programme Guide, including with respect to third parties receiving financial support in the cases where the respective action involves financial support to third parties by grant beneficiaries in accordance with article 204 of the EU's Financial Regulation.

[17] This designation shall not be construed as recognition of a State of Palestine and is without prejudice to the individual positions of the Member States on this issue.

9. Sub-Saharan Africa	Angola, Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chad, Comoros, Congo, Congo - Democratic Republic of the, Côte d'Ivoire, Djibouti, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Eswatini, Ethiopia, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, **Seychelles**, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Africa, South Sudan, Sudan, Tanzania, Togo, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe	
10. Latin America	Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, **Chile**, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, **Uruguay**, Venezuela	
11. Caribbean	**Antigua & Barbuda, Bahamas, Barbados**, Belize, Cuba, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, **St Kitts and Nevis**, St Lucia, St Vincent & Grenadines, Suriname and **Trinidad & Tobago**	
12. USA & Canada	**Canada, United States of America**	

8. Grant breakdown

The applicant organisation applies for a number of student and/or staff mobilities, based on which a grant is calculated. This grant will cover the following costs:

8.1. Individual support

Mobility to…	Student monthly rate[18]	Student daily rate[19]	Staff daily rate[20]
Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Ireland, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Norway, Sweden	€ 900	€ 70 (5-14th day) € 50 (15th-30th day)	€ 180
Austria, Belgium, Cyprus, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Malta, Netherlands, Portugal, Spain	€ 850		€ 160
Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Estonia, the Republic of North Macedonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Turkey	€ 800		€ 140
All Partner Countries	€ 700		€ 180

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[18] The rates for student mobility for studies and for traineeships are the same. In ICM, there is no "top-up" grant for traineeship mobility.
[19] The daily student rate applies on the physical component of a short-term blended mobility or a short-term doctoral mobility.
[20] These staff mobility rates apply up to the 14th day of activity, after which the grant drops to 70% of the amount shown.

8.2. Travel support

Travel distances[21]	In case of standard travel	In case of green travel[22]
Between 10 and 99 KM	€23 per participant	Not applicable
Between 100 and 499 KM	€ 180 per participant	€ 210 per participant
Between 500 and 1999 KM	€ 275 per participant	€ 320 per participant
Between 2000 and 2999 KM	€ 360 per participant	€ 410 per participant
Between 3000 and 3999 KM	€ 530 per participant	€ 610 per participant
Between 4000 and 7999 KM	€ 820 per participant	Not applicable
8000 KM or more	€ 1,500 per participant	Not applicable

8.3. Organisational support

The grant foresees an organisational support (OS) contribution of €500 per participant to cover costs directly linked to the implementation of mobility activities, such as the selection of participants, linguistic preparation, visa and insurance costs. It is important that the distribution of the OS grant reflect as far as possible each partner's workload in support of the mobility project. The cooperating institutions should agree on how to use or share the OS grant and include the details in the inter-institutional agreement.

The rules of the programme allow transferring OS funds to travel and individual support (in order to fund longer or new mobilities). The use of this possibility presupposes that the HEIs are already providing high quality student and staff mobility, including visa and insurance support, as well as linguistic and cultural preparation for all participants. In case that flexibility is used, it cannot exceed 50% of the OS funds allocated to the whole project.

For more information on the grant, please refer to Part B of the Erasmus+ Programme Guide.

9. Timeline

The selection of projects for ICM is based on an annual call for proposals issued by the European Commission and published on the Erasmus+ website in the autumn of the year preceding the projects' start date. The application and selection process is managed by each NA. This is the NA in the country where the applicant organisation (or consortium coordinator) is based.

Applicants must submit their grant application to their NA by the deadline specified in the call for proposals published on the Erasmus+ website for projects starting on 1 August of the same year.

ICM projects can run for either 24 or 36 months, and the duration is selected by the applicant at application stage. The start and end dates of all mobility activities must fall within the start and end dates of the project.

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[21] Travel distances must be calculated using the distance calculator supported by the European Commission (https://erasmus-plus.ec.europa.eu/resources-and-tools/distance-calculator). The travel distance for one direction is used to calculate the EU grant amount for the round trip.
[22] Use of sustainable means of transport for mobility.

10. Inclusion and diversity

The Erasmus+ Programme aims at promoting equity and inclusion by facilitating access to participants with fewer opportunities compared to their peers. To meet this objective in international credit mobility, it is essential that partners take inclusion and diversity into account from the start of the project's inception.

Therefore, this Handbook will also highlight different elements that institutions should consider, from outreach and participant selection, to grant management and support.

Before you get started, check the Programme Guide and see the list of examples of what can constitute a barrier for participation in its section on "Inclusion and Diversity"[23], under Priorities of the Erasmus+ Programme:

- Disabilities;
- Health problems;
- Barriers linked to education and training systems;
- Cultural differences;
- Social barriers;
- Economic barriers;
- Barriers linked to discrimination
- Geographical barriers.

The criteria to be used for the selection of participants with fewer opportunities are defined at national level by the National Agencies in agreement with National Authorities. The list of national criteria, established by each NA, can focus on certain inclusion aspects of their national context. Please check with your National Agency whether such list applies in your country.

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[23] Part A of the Erasmus+ Programme Guide 2022 provides a non-exhaustive list of potential barriers. Additionally, ICM applicants and beneficiaries are invited to consult the Implementation guidelines – Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps Inclusion and Diversity Strategy: https://erasmus-plus.ec.europa.eu/document/implementation-guidelines-erasmus-and-european-solidarity-corps-inclusion-and-diversity-strategy

11. Application process

The Programme Country HEI will fill in the application form on behalf of its partner(s) and submit the form to its National Agency. The person who starts the application, need to have an EU Login registration. We encourage involving all partners in the application process, as the applicant will be asked to provide detailed information on their cooperation arrangements and on the wider impact of their mobility project.

11.1. Finding a partner

To find a partner, we recommend you look at current or past cooperation agreements your institution might have, either at the level of the institution (typically via the international relations office), or at the level of individual faculties.

If you are looking for new partnerships, we encourage you to contact the relevant National Agency, who might know of interested partners, as well as the National Erasmus+ Offices[24] in a number of countries neighbouring the EU. The EU partner search tool may also prove helpful.

> *Tips on choosing the right partner*
>
> The institution offers transparent descriptions of its programmes, including learning outcomes, credits, learning and teaching approaches and assessment methods;
>
> Its learning, teaching and assessment procedures are quality assured and can be accepted by your institution without requiring students to take any additional work or examination;
>
> Agreements may not only be made with institutions offering similar programmes, but also with institutions providing complementary programmes.

If you are reluctant to enter into new cooperation arrangements, you can think about starting with staff mobility to build mutual trust before extending the partnership to sending and receiving students.

11.2. Getting the right accreditation

Having a valid Erasmus Charter for Higher Education (ECHE) is a pre-requisite for all HEIs established in a Programme Country that wish to participate in a mobility project either as a single HEI or as a member of a national mobility consortium. A call for proposals for the ECHE is held annually, and this is managed by the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA)[25]. The award of an ECHE is valid for the whole duration of the Erasmus+ programme.

HEIs established in a Partner Country must be accredited by the relevant national accreditation organisation and should not be subject to EU sanctions[26]. As they are not eligible to receive an ECHE, the principles of the ECHE are enshrined in the inter-institutional agreement that they sign with their partner(s). You can find more information on this agreement under section II.

An organisation from a Programme Country, applying on behalf of a national mobility consortium, must hold a valid consortium accreditation. A call for consortium accreditation is published on an annual basis by the NAs. A consortium accreditation is valid for the whole duration of the Erasmus+ programme. Organisations must request an accreditation before applying for a grant. Please read the relevant section in the Erasmus+ Programme Guide to find out more about the conditions to obtain a consortium accreditation.

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[24] National Erasmus+ Offices are responsible for the local management of the international dimension of the higher education aspects of the Erasmus+ programme in neighbouring Partner Countries outside the EU. https://erasmus-plus.ec.europa.eu/national-erasmus-offices
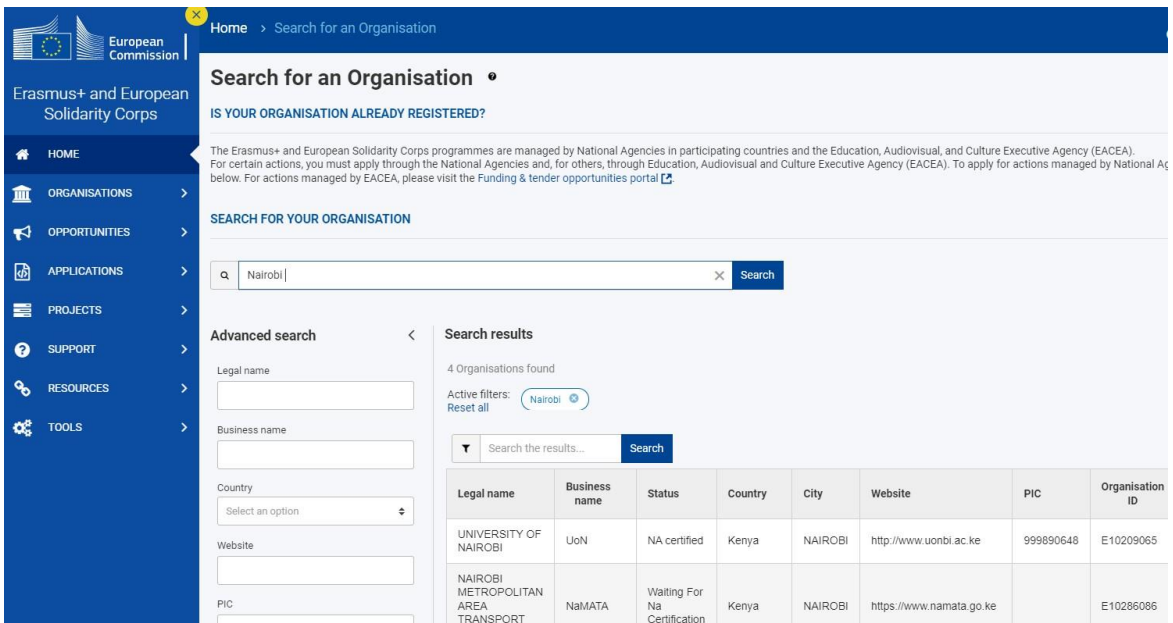[25] Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency: https://erasmus-plus.ec.europa.eu/resources-and-tools/erasmus-charter-for-higher-education
26   ink to be provided.

11.3. The Organisation ID (OID)

OIDs replace the existing Participant Identification Codes (PIC) for decentralised actions like ICM (PICs will remain valid for centralised actions). The Organisation ID is an 8-digit unique identifier preceded by the letter E. It is mandatory for applicants, as well as for every organisation involved in an ICM application, including non-academic organisations (for traineeships or staff mobility).

All the organisations that already had a PIC in the previous programme period (before call 2020), have received a new OID automatically which can be consulted at the Organisation Registration website providing the PIC or other contact details of the Organisation. Straightforward registration of new OIDs is also possible through that tool.

Before filling in the application form, the Programme Country applicant will need to register for an Organisation ID (OID), if not existing already. The Partner Country organisations to be included in the ICM project proposal should also have an OID at application stage. Otherwise, partners without OID (especially non-academic for traineeships/training) may be added later during implementation, as long as they are based in a country included in the project. Partner HEIs should acquire an OID at the moment of encoding mobilities into Beneficiary Module[27], while for non-academic partners this remains optional.

Please check carefully whether your institution or your partner already have an OID before registering a new one.

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27   Beneficiary Module is the web platform tool for collaboration, management and reporting for mobility projects under Erasmus+.

11.4.   The application form: Context and Applicant Organisation(s)

The Programme Country institution can only submit one application for ICM per Call for Proposals, which should contain information on all the mobility activities they intend to carry out with their partner(s) in one or more regions HEIs should discuss and agree upon the details of their cooperation before writing the application.

There is no limit to the number of regions in the proposal. The same institution can also apply for ICM as part of a consortium of HEIs in that Programme country, in which case they are responsible for preventing double funding of the same mobility.

In case of multiple submissions of the same application in the same selection round, the National Agency will consider as valid the last version submitted before the application deadline.

The applicant should first indicate under "Context": its ICM project duration, the National Agency to which they apply (always in the same country as the applicant) and the language used to fill in the form.

Then, under "Applicant Organisation", the applicant will have to provide its OID and indicate if they apply on behalf of a mobility consortium or not. Once the applicant's OID is entered, the fields Legal name and Country will be automatically filled in. The applicant will need to select if they apply on behalf of a mobility consortium.

If applying as a single HEI, under the sub-section with their name the applicant will see the fields entitled "Profile" and "Accreditation " automatically filled in and the corresponding Erasmus Code (e.g. A WIEN01) appearing under "Accreditation". If the "Accreditation Reference" field remains empty, the OID entered is not linked to an Erasmus Code. Please go to the EACEA website for the most recent list of ECHE-awarded HEIs to ensure the correct OID is filled in.

The Programme Country institution (or organisation) may apply on behalf of a higher education mobility consortium, if it has a valid "Higher Education Mobility Consortium Accreditation" (from call 2021) or if it has submitted an application for a consortium accreditation (KA130) in the current call. An accreditation reference number is structured as follows: 2021-1-AT01-KA130-HED-000004464.

If the applicant has a valid consortium accreditation reference number from a successful application for accreditation and it remains valid for the current call, it will be possible to select the consortium accreditation reference number in the dropdown menu of the field "Mobility Consortium". This section appears automatically when a mobility consortium option is selected. If the mobility consortium has no consortium accreditation yet, it must submit a KA130 application for the accreditation of the consortium before filling in this part of the application. Once it is done, it will be possible to select the draft "Higher Education Mobility Consortium Accreditation" as described above. In the case of national mobility consortia for Higher education student and staff mobility, the coordinator of the consortium applies on behalf of the whole consortium. The members of the consortium linked to the accreditation reference will be automatically displayed.

Last necessary information, before moving to the project's details, is the identification of associated persons. There are three distinct roles: legal representative, primary contact point and contact point for OLS (Online Language Support). At least two associated persons should be inserted to ensure smooth and uninterrupted communication between the NA and the future beneficiary, but one associated person could be in charge of two roles (e.g. primary contact point and contact point for OLS).

11.5. The application form: Regional Partnerships and Project description

This section includes the award criteria determining which projects will ultimately be selected for funding by the National Agency. To complete this section successfully, the applicant must have a clear idea of whom they are going to work with and how the responsibilities will be divided.

Under Regional Partnerships, the applicant will first list the regions with which they intend to cooperate. For every added region, a new sub-section appears in the Content Menu on the left side called "Details for cooperation with Region X". For each region at least one partner institution (HEI or non-academic partner) should be inserted with their OID, based on which their full legal name and country will be displayed automatically. Therefore, the applicant does not need to insert partner countries separately.

The applicant is also encouraged to include their non-academic partners that will host trainees or support staff mobility. This information is not mandatory at application stage, if the non-academic partners do not have an OID, and they can be added during implementation phase. Nevertheless, in this case at least one partner HEI in the same country should be identified in the application, so that the country can be considered for funding.

In case the project is selected for funding, the names of all partner institutions provided in the application form will be included in Annex II of the grant agreement between the National Agency and the beneficiary institution, and will therefore become legally binding. During implementation phase, beneficiaries will have the chance to add/ change partner institutions based on the project's needs in the countries approved already at application stage.

Once all regions and partner institutions are identified, the applicant can move to the next section "Project description", and answer questions corresponding to the following three award criteria: Quality of the project design and cooperation arrangements, Relevance of the strategy, Impact and Dissemination. Below there is a more detailed presentation of the three award criteria, but additional guidance text can be found also in the relevant part of the Application form.

1) Quality of the project design and cooperation arrangements

(once per application)

40 PTS

"Present the **different phases** of the mobility project and summarise what partner organisations plan in terms of **selection** of participants, the **support** provided to them and the **recognition** of their mobility period (in particular in the countries of your partner institutions)., and explain how, for the planned mobility project, **responsibilities, roles and tasks** will be defined in the **Inter-institutional Agreement**."

2) Relevance of the strategy (per region included in the application)

40PTS

"Explain why the planned mobility project is relevant to the **internationalisation strategy** of the higher education institutions involved. Present **previous experience** of similar projects with higher education institutions in the selected regions and countries, if any. Present the proposed **type(s) of mobility** (studies, traineeship, staff teaching or staff training), the subject areas and other specificities. If diverting, please detail the relevance of your strategy for different partner countries in the same region."

3) Impact and dissemination (per region included in the application)

20 PTS

""Explain the desired **impact** of the mobility project on **participants, beneficiaries, partner organisations** and at **local, regional and national levels**. Describe the measures, which will be taken to **disseminate the results** of the mobility project **at faculty and institution levels**, and beyond where applicable. If diverting, please detail the relevance of your strategy for different partner countries in the same region.."

After "Project Description", the applicant will have to fill in the different "Activities". For each Partner Country, the applicant will need to enter at least one activity and for each activity at least one mobility flow. When entering the activity, only the general activity category is required (Learner or Staff mobility), as specifying between activity types (studies/ traineeship, teaching/training) will be required during implementation when the actual mobilities will be encoded in the Beneficiary Module. Nevertheless, applicants are encouraged to reflect the diversity of their planned activities in their answers for the relevant award criteria. Especially, if non-academic partners are not included in the application due to lack of an OID, this will be the optimal way to refer to them and their involvement.

Once an activity is entered, the number and duration of mobility flows will be requested, generating the corresponding EU grant. The applicant may indicate an estimation about the participants with fewer opportunities and indicate the use of Green Travel by the participants[28]. These estimations will not be binding for the applicants, of course, but they serve two purposes. First, an indication about the project's contribution to the Erasmus+ horizontal priorities (inclusion and diversity, environment and fight against climate change) and second, the calculation of additional funds to cover the associated top-ups to the individual and travel support of the participants. While these estimations will be taken into account in the overall quality evaluation of the project, applicants are encouraged to be realistic and study carefully the relevant parts of the Programme Guide (e.g. for eligible distance bands for Green Travel), as well as list of criteria established on national level by the NA for the allocation of the additional support to participants with fewer opportunities.

Regarding learner mobility flows, the requested EU grant is calculated on the basis of the monthly rate for long-term learner mobility. If the applicant would like to plan short-term blended mobility as well, they should reflect the necessary grant for these short-term mobilities in a number of monthly rates and not insert the equivalent in duration (e.g. one monthly rate of long-term mobility is not sufficient to fund 30 days of short-term blended mobility).

> ### *Example for calculating short-term mobility grant*
>
> To plan 6 incoming learner mobilities : 2 long-term (each for 5 months) and 4 short-term mobilities (each for 20 days), calculation of the individual support would be:
>
> - 2 x 800 EUR x 5 = 8 000 EUR
>
> - 4 x 14 x 70 EUR + 4 x 6 x 50 EUR = 5 120 EUR
>
> For the long-term, applicant fills in 2 mobilities for 10 months. For the short-term mobilities, applicant should request 5 120/800 = 6,4 months (rounded upwards to 7 months to ensure enough funding).
>
> In total, 6 mobilities for 17 months are encoded.

Due to limited budget availability, National Agencies may limit: i) mobility flows in (a) particular degree level(s), for example limiting applications to one or two cycles only – short, first, second or third cycle,[29] ii) mobility for staff only or students only, and iii) the duration of mobility periods. Please consult the National Agency's website to find out if any of these secondary criteria apply.

Applicants should use the Distance Calculator[30] to calculate travel distances. If the city of origin and the host city are the same for all mobility activities in a flow, you should introduce the travel distance between those two cities. If there is more than one city of origin and/or host city, applicants may (a) encode a single flow using the average distance band or (b) encode several flows with different distance bands.

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28 Please check Glossary of terms in Programme Guide 2022.

29 First cycle (Bachelor or equivalent), second cycle (Master or equivalent), third or doctoral cycle.

30 Distance Calculator: https://erasmus-plus.ec.europa.eu/resources-and-tools/distance-calculator

As clarified already at the end of the section "EU Budget – what you need to know", certain countries face a restriction regarding the eligible outgoing student mobility flows. Contrary to the previous programme period, budget transfers from the Erasmus+ internal funds is no longer possible. These flows may be now funded under the international opening of KA131. If inserting an outgoing learner mobility flow towards one of these countries, the applicant will see a warning that the selected flow is only eligible for third (doctoral) cycle of studies.

12. Evaluation procedure

Once the application has been submitted to the National Agency, it will undergo an evaluation procedure. The NA will appoint experts to verify the eligibility and quality of the application, supported by the Guide for Experts on Quality Assessment[31] prepared by the European Commission.

Experts will start by assessing the eligibility of all mobility flows requested, taking into account any secondary criteria outlined by the NA (see previous section "Activities").

If the application passes the eligibility check, all planned mobilities with a particular region will be assessed separately according to the three award criteria. Each criterion will be given a mark as indicated above. A total score per region will be calculated on this basis: the score of the Quality of the project design and cooperation arrangements + the scores of the Relevance of the Strategy and Impact and Dissemination. The total aggregated score per region must be minimum 60/100 in order to be considered eligible for funding. Each award criteria also has a 50 % threshold meaning that the applicant needs to score minimum 10/20 and 20/40 to be considered eligible.

The expert may recommend that the NA select only mobilities with certain regions in the same application (e.g. funding mobilities with Sub-Saharan Africa, but not with Latin America), or only some mobility flows within a given region (only students or staff, incoming or outgoing). The expert can also recommend reducing the length of the proposed mobilities.

Based on the expert's assessment, an evaluation committee will decide which projects are ultimately selected for funding. The NA might decide to fund mobilities with one country and not the other, or reduce the number of mobilities requested following the experts recommendations, due to lack of funds or for reasons of geographical balance. Countries with no funded activities under a Region, which has passed the minimum quality threshold, will be included in the project's reserve list and may be allowed mobilities during implementation: 1) through a redistribution of funds by the NA; 2) through an internal budget shift among the project's countries of the same region, upon NA approval; 3) through the zero-grant option. See also Grant Award decision below.

In keeping with the indicative targets for geographical balance, the committee can modify the ranked order of sub-projects within a given region in order to ensure a better geographical spread. Where possible and in addition to the overarching criteria of merit and geographical balance, the NA will seek to spread the available budget widely to avoid a small number of HEIs dominating. The NA will strive to be as inclusive as possible, maximising participation of stakeholders without undermining quality, geographic balance or the minimum critical size per mobility project to ensure feasibility.

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[31] Link to be provided.

13. Grant award decision

NAs will notify the institutions of their final grant award decision. Successful applicants will be invited to sign a beneficiary grant agreement with their NA.

If you have not signed an inter-institutional agreement with each of your partners yet, you should do so at this point, and in any case before the start of the first mobility. You will find more information in the next section.

The total awarded EU grant will be spread on the regions that have passed the minimum quality threshold and were selected. The beneficiary will have to respect the maximum amounts awarded per region, but between countries within a given region, a flexible budget management will be allowed. In order to respond to changing circumstances beyond the control of the beneficiary (travel restrictions or unsafe conditions in a certain country, problematic cooperation with a certain partner institution, etc.), the beneficiary will be invited to seek NA approval for a budget shift between countries in the same region and which were included in the application, regardless of their initial funding status. To allow this flexibility mechanism, the NA will need to be presented with the factual difficulties encountered in the specific third country and that efforts to identify a new partner institution in the same country have already been explored. Overall, the beneficiary's and the NA's objective shall be to ensure that the project can go ahead as close as possible to its description at application stage.

If one of your regional sub-projects passed the quality threshold (60 points), but is rejected due to lack of funds in the given budget envelope, it may be placed at a reserve list. In the event that any of the beneficiaries should abstain from receiving funding, NAs can offer the funds to the applicant that is next on the reserve list for the same budget envelope. The deadline for this is the 31 December of the call year.

Your Grant Agreement will include the regions, which successfully passed the qualitative assessment and could not be granted funds due to insufficient funding or for geographical balance reasons, in a "List of non-funded Countries". The condition for this is to receive funding for cooperation with at least one region. The objective is to allow for future budget shifts within the project or thanks to redistribution of funds by the NA at interim report stage and for the organisation of mobilities as "zero-grant from EU funds" within the quality framework of the programme. More details are available in the section "Zero-grants from EU funds" in part II of this Handbook.

II – Preparing and implementing the mobility

This section covers the main elements that relate to the management of your International Credit Mobility (ICM) project, using the experience of HEIs and their international offices. Please pay attention to the contractual documents listed below, and note that National Agencies will request to see the documents during monitoring visits and/or checks.

1. Contractual documents

1.1. The beneficiary grant agreement

If the ICM project has been selected for funding, the beneficiary HEI will sign a mono-beneficiary grant agreement (or multi-beneficiary, if they are part of a national consortium) with their National Agency (NA).

This agreement links the beneficiary HEI to its NA and provides the financial support for their mobility project. The partner institutions are not direct parties to this agreement but their mobility project is described within the grant agreement and is subject to the quality framework of the programme. This grant agreement captures the core of the project and is based on the information that was provided in the application form, assessed by a team of evaluators who will have selected the project – or parts of it – for funding.

The annexes to the grant agreement detail the activities that have been selected for funding and specify the breakdown of the grant. As indicated above, the approved activities and the names of all partner institutions provided in the successful application form will be included under Annex II of this grant agreement and will therefore be **legally binding**.

Annex II also includes a "**List of non-funded countries**". This list contains countries that successfully passed the qualitative assessment, but no funds could be allocated due to insufficient funding or for geographical balance reasons. Mobilities with these non-funded countries may be organised thanks to budget transfers within the same region, as long as at least one country from the region has been selected for funding. If all the countries belonging to the same region are in the list of non-funded countries, then mobilities with this region may be organised only as "zero-grant from EU funds"; for more details on zero-grants please read the dedicated section.

In principle, the **selected mobility flows must be implemented in accordance with this annex.** However, certain modifications of the project are possible with or even without an amendment; for more details on project modifications, please read the dedicated section.

1.2. The inter-institutional agreement

Before any mobility activity can take place, **your institution must sign an** inter-institutional agreement with the partner institution(s) involved in the project. It is crucial that the partners discuss the content of the agreement from the moment they start preparing their application. You should sign this agreement once your project has been selected for funding, and **at the latest before the start of the first exchange**. Inter-institutional agreements must be made available by the beneficiary HEI during monitoring visits of the National Agencies.

Please use the template **on the Erasmus+ website**.[32] Beyond the minimum requirements laid out in this template, the partners are free to customise it as they see fit, detailing how they will select participants; recognise study credits; share the organisational support grant; and so on.

By signing an inter-institutional agreement, institutions commit themselves to respecting the principles and quality requirements of the Erasmus Charter for Higher Education (ECHE) relating to the organisation and management of mobility.

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[32] IIA template: https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/resources/documents/erasmus-inter-institutional-agreement-doc_en

Only the central authority at the institution can officially apply for ICM and sign documents related to the application and the beneficiary grant agreement, not the individual faculties or departments. This legal representative is typically the rector of that institution.

The signature of official documents can be delegated to another representative (such as the dean of a faculty) in **exceptional cases** and on the condition that the signature by duly delegated deans also commits other services of the institution, such as the admissions office, international office, student support functions, where necessary to the fully implementing and respecting the inter-institutional agreement and learning/mobility agreements.

If cooperation with other faculties at that institution are covered by separate inter-institutional agreements, they need to be signed by their respective Deans (i.e. one Dean cannot sign for the whole institution).The European Commission has not set any rules concerning the use of electronic signatures. National Agencies may accept scanned signatures in accordance with national legislation.

Unlike partner HEIs, non-academic partners do not sign an interinstitutional agreement. The rules and obligations of all parties should be detailed in the Learning Agreement for Traineeships or the Mobility agreement.

1.3. The participant grant agreement

The participant grant agreement sets out the financial support and payment arrangements to the participant. This agreement is signed by the participant and the beneficiary HEI The grant agreement template will be provided by the NA.

The agreement must be signed by both parties **before** the start of the mobility. **The beneficiary HEI administers all grant payments for incoming mobility to and outgoing mobility from their country.**

For more information, please refer to the section '*Grant payment to the participant*'.

1.4. The Learning and Mobility Agreements

Before a mobility can start, the participant, the sending and the receiving organisations must agree on the activities that the participant will undertake during the period abroad.

1.4.1.   Learning agreement

The **Learning Agreements for Studies and for Traineeships**[33] set out the study or traineeship programme to be followed by the student, defines the target learning outcomes and specifies how learning abroad will be recognised by the sending institution.

The Learning Agreement must include the names of participating institutions, as well as the names and contact details of the student and contact persons at **both the sending and receiving institutions**, and the coordinating beneficiary HEI (if different)**.**

Both types of Learning agreement templates, for studies and for traineeships, share the same structure, comprising parts on general information, information about the study or traineeship programme before, during and after the mobility.

The Learning agreement must be approved and signed by the student, the sending and the receiving organisation, and the beneficiary HEI (if different).

All parties signing the Learning Agreement commit to complying with all agreed arrangements, thereby ensuring that the student will receive the recognition for the studies or traineeship carried out abroad without any further requirements.

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[33] Learning and Traineeship Agreements: ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/resources/documents-for-applicants/learning-agreement_en

We recommend using the templates provided as a basis for the Learning Agreement, however:

- Institutions currently producing Learning Agreements or Transcripts of Records using their own IT system may continue to do so.

- Institutions are free to **customise the template** provided by adding additional fields (such as information on the coordinator of a consortium) or adapting the format (e.g. font size and colours). Institutions may also decide to request less information in the Learning Agreement, if such information is already provided in other documents.

a) Learning agreement for studies

First, the student must select a type of mobility they plan to undertake and the estimated duration of the planned mobility. They can select from the following mobility types:

- **Semester(s)**: a long-term physical mobility abroad with a duration from 2 months (60 days) to 12 months. A virtual component could be added before, during or after the study mobility.

- **Blended mobility with short-term physical mobility**: short-term physical mobility abroad of 5-30 days combined with a compulsory virtual component.

- **Short-term doctoral mobility**: short-term physical mobility of 5-30 days for Doctoral candidates. A virtual component could be also added before, during or after the study mobility.

The **Learning Agreement for studies** sets out the educational components (including virtual, if applicable) that will be recognised by the sending institution (i.e. replaced in the student's degree) upon successful completion of the study programme abroad. The three parties (the student, sending and receiving organisations) must agree on these *before the mobility takes place*.

Changes to the study programme *during the mobility* should be exceptional. However, if they arise, they must be introduced in the respective part of the Learning agreement and be approved by all parties.

After the mobility, the Receiving Institution should send a Transcript of Records to the student and to the Sending Institution. Following the receipt of the Transcript of Records from the Receiving Institution, the Sending Institution should recognise automatically the student's academic outcomes successfully completed at the Receiving Institution.

A study period abroad could be **combined** with a traineeship, in which case the Learning agreement for studies template should be adjusted to fit both activity types.

b) Learning agreement for traineeships

The Learning Agreement for traineeships sets out the rights and responsibilities of the various parties, a detailed programme of the traineeship, information on insurance, and how the traineeship will be recognised upon successful completion.

Before the mobility, it is necessary to fill in information on the trainee, the beneficiary HEI, the Receiving Organisation/Enterprise[34] (and the sending institution, if different than the beneficiary).
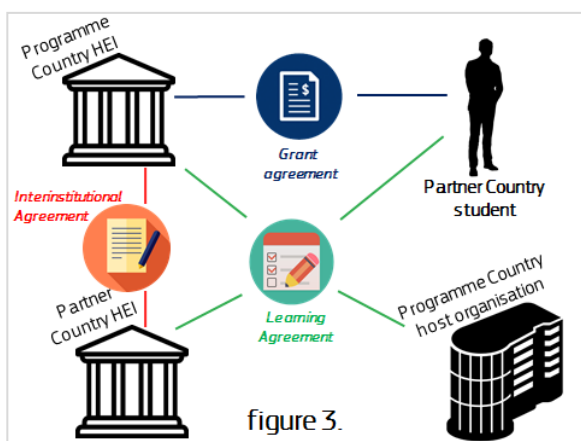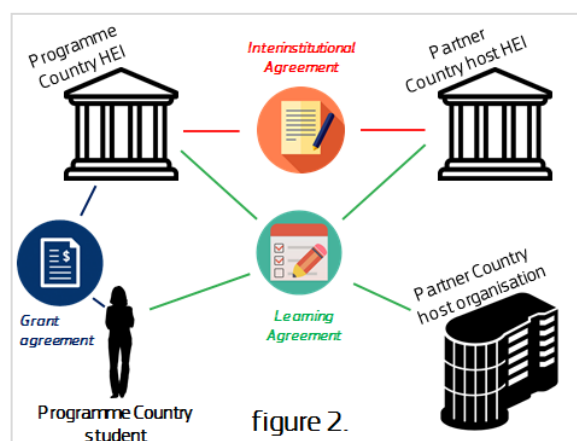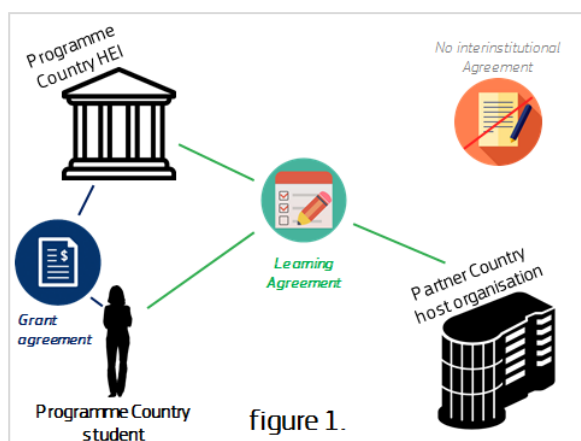
Depending on the direction of the mobility and whether it is combined with a study period, the Learning Agreement could be tripartite or quadripartite:

- **Programme Country trainees** would sign either a tripartite Learning Agreement for Traineeships involving the trainee, beneficiary HEI and non-academic Partner organisation

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[34] For more information on eligibility for traineeship receiving organisations, please see the dedicated section "Specific eligibility criteria for student mobility" of the Erasmus+ Programme Guide 2022, p. 51.

(see figure 1) or, if combined with a study period at a Partner Country HEI, a quadripartite Learning Agreement for studies also involving the Partner HEI (see figure 2).

- **Partner Country trainees** would always sign a quadripartite Learning Agreement involving the trainee, the Partner HEI, the beneficiary HEI and the Programme non-academic organisation, regardless of whether the traineeship is combined with a study period, since the Programme HEI is the beneficiary and must be party to the agreement (see figure 3).

figure 1.

figure 2.

figure 3.

When applying for ICM funding for traineeships, you may already have identified a host organisation for your students and recent graduates.

Alternatively, it is possible for students and recent graduates to find their own work placement, provided this is approved by the participating HEIs. Erasmusintern.org, developed by the Erasmus Student Network, can help them find an Erasmus+ traineeship.

Before the mobility, the detailed programme of the traineeship period should be presented with the tasks/deliverables to be carried out by the trainee, with their associated timing. If applicable, the added value of the virtual component of the traineeship should be clearly described.

Changes to the traineeship programme *during the mobility* should be exceptional. However, if they arise they must be introduced in the respective part of the Learning agreement and be approved by all parties.

After the traineeship abroad, the Sending Institution should recognise the traineeship according to the commitments agreed upon in the Learning agreement, if it is embedded in the curriculum (it counts

towards the student's degree). If applicable, the Sending Institution should provide the Transcript of Records to the trainee or record the results in a database (or other means) accessible to the student, normally five weeks after receiving the Traineeship Certificate, without further requirements than those agreed upon before the mobility. Recognition by the Sending Institution is not applicable if the traineeship is taken on a voluntary basis (not obligatory for the degree / recent graduates), but the Receiving Institution should provide relevant documentation.

For more detailed information, please refer to these <u>Guidelines on how to use the Learning Agreement,</u> available for both type of student mobility[35].

1.4.2. Mobility agreements

The <u>Mobility Agreement</u>[36] for members of staff sets out the teaching or training programme to be followed, and lists the rights and obligations of each party.

The selection of staff members will be made by the sending institution (or jointly with the receiving institution, if agreed) on the basis of a draft mobility programme submitted by the staff member after consultation with the receiving institution. Prior to start of the mobility, the **final mobility programme shall be formally agreed by both the sending and receiving institution** (by exchange of letters or electronic messages). In the case of invited staff from enterprises[37] and staff training at enterprises, the enterprise must also sign this agreement.

Both the sending and receiving institution are responsible for the quality of the mobility period abroad.

   a)   Mobility agreement for teaching

For staff teaching mobility, a minimum of 8 hours of teaching per week (or any shorter period of stay) has to be respected. If the mobility is longer than one week, the minimum number of teaching hours for an incomplete week should be proportional to the duration of that week.

If the teaching activity is combined with a training activity during a single period abroad, the minimum number of hours of teaching per week is reduced to 4 hours (or any shorter period of stay). There is no minimum number of teaching hours for invited staff from non-academic organisations.
In case the mobility combines teaching and training, the Mobility agreement for teaching template should be adjusted to fit both activity types.

Before the mobility, it is necessary to fill in information on the teaching staff member, the Sending Institution/ Enterprise and the Receiving Institution.

- In the case of mobility for teaching between HEIs, the agreement must be always signed by the staff member, the sending and the receiving HEI.

- In the case of mobility of invited Programme country staff from enterprises to teach in a Partner country HEI, the agreement must be signed by the participant, the beneficiary HEI, the HEI receiving the staff member and the enterprise they belong to (figure 4).

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[35] Leaning Agreement templates and guidelines: https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/resources/documents-for-applicants/learning-agreement_en
[36] Mobility Agreement: https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/resources/documents-for-applicants/mobility-agreement_en
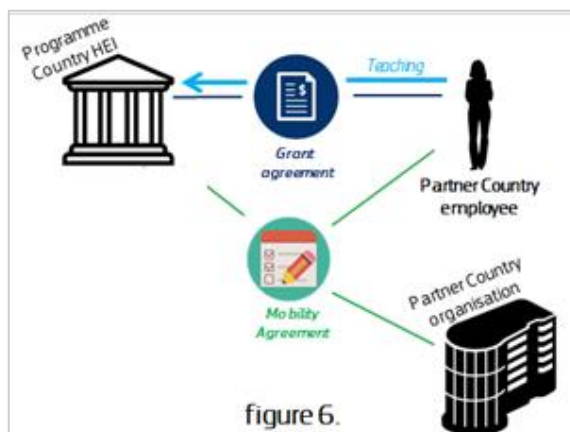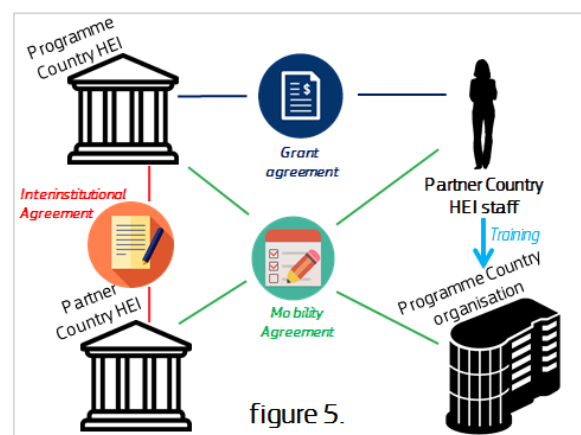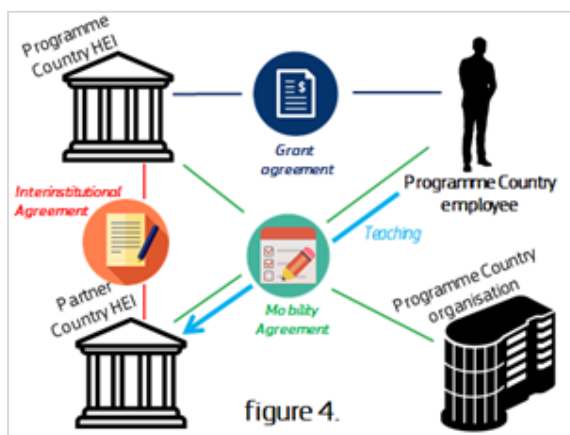[37] Any enterprise or more generally any public or private organisation active in the labour market or in the fields of education, training and youth.

- In the case of mobility of invited staff from Partner country enterprises to teach in a Programme country HEI, it will be sufficient with the signature of the staff member, the beneficiary HEI and the sending organisation (figure 6). .

b) Mobility agreement for training

Before the mobility, it is necessary to fill in information on the staff member, the Sending Institution and the Receiving Institution/ Enterprise.

- In the case of mobility between HEIs, the agreement must be always signed by the staff member, the sending and the receiving HEI.

- In the case of mobility of Higher education staff from a Partner country to a Programme country enterprise, the agreement must be signed by the participant, the beneficiary HEI, the sending HEI and the enterprise receiving the staff member (figure 5).

figure 4.

figure 5.

figure 6.

2. Erasmus+ Quality standards

2.1. The Erasmus Charter for Higher Education

The Erasmus Charter for Higher Education (ECHE) provides the general quality framework for European and international cooperation activities an HEI may carry out with Erasmus+. The award of an ECHE is a pre-requisite for all HEIs located in a Programme Country and willing to participate in learning mobility of individuals and/or cooperation among organisations and institutions under Erasmus+. The Charter is awarded for the full duration of Erasmus+.

The ECHE Annotated guidelines[38] outline the requirements your institution must fulfil in order to comply with the Charter principles. Please also refer to the ECHE Monitoring Guide[39] and to the ECHE self-assessment tool[40] for more information.

Since the ECHE is not required for Partner Country HEIs, the quality framework will be established through inter-institutional agreements signed by all partners.

2.2. The Erasmus+ Student Charter

The beneficiary HEI must make sure that every Erasmus+ student and trainee receives a copy of the Erasmus+ Student Charter,[41] once they have been selected. The Student Charter highlights the students' rights and obligations, and is available in all languages of Programme countries.

3. Selection of participants

3.1. Selection procedure

Normally, the sending HEI selects participants, and nominates them to be accepted or rejected by the receiving institution. Some institutions may prefer to set joint procedures, including for example joint selection panels to ensure consistent selection of participants

The **selection procedure** must be **fair**, **transparent** and well-documented, as they will be checked during monitoring visits by the National Agencies. The calls for applications and the **selection criteria** (e.g. academic performance of the candidate, motivation, relevant experience etc.) **shall be made public**. The sending and the receiving institution should have a common understanding regarding selection of participants and should have set a basic timeline and identified the colleagues responsible for the nomination of students and staff. **Fees may not be charged under any circumstance** to applicants for the organisation or administration of their Erasmus+ mobility period. Any reported cases will be thoroughly examined by the European Commission and the relevant NA, and may lead to a suspension or termination of the ECHE (and therefore of the Grant Agreement). If this should occur at a partner HEI, the beneficiary HEI may discontinue their partnership and seek for alternative partner HEIs in the same country.

The HEI shall take the necessary measures to prevent any conflict of interest with regard to persons who may be invited to take part in the selection bodies or selection process. There should be appeal procedures in place.

3.2. **Inclusion**

The Erasmus+ Programme aims at promoting equity and **inclusion** by facilitating access to participants with fewer opportunities compared to their peers. Therefore, in the case of student mobility, partners are encouraged to take other elements beyond academic merit into account to ensure participation of these students. In the evaluation and selection process in case of equivalent academic merit, preference should be assigned to students with fewer opportunities, commonly agreed by the partner HEIs as target groups in their IIA.

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[38] ECHE guidelines: https://erasmus-plus.ec.europa.eu/document/erasmus-charter-for-higher-education-2021-2027-guidelines

[39] ECHE monitoring: https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/resources/documents/erasmus-charter-higher-education-monitoring-guide_en_

[40] ECHE self-assessment tool: https://erasmus-plus.ec.europa.eu/self-assessment-for-the-erasmus-charter-for-higher-education

[41] Erasmus+ Student Charter: https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/resources/documents/applicants/student-charter_en

3.3. Duration of the mobility

A student can go on mobility several times, **up to a maximum of 12 months per study cycle** (excluding time covered by virtual components during a blended mobility). Prior experience under LLP-Erasmus Programme; Erasmus+ mobility for higher education students (both KA103 and KA107) and as scholarship holders of Erasmus Mundus Master Courses and Erasmus Mundus Joint Master Degrees is taken into account for the maximum of 12 months. However, participation in Erasmus Mundus Master Courses and Erasmus Mundus Joint Master Degrees as self-financing participants is not taken into account.

4. Beneficiary Module

Once the participants are selected, the beneficiary HEI must encode general information on each participant and the type of mobility activity they will carry out into an online tool, called **Beneficiary Module.**

Beneficiary Module is an information system designed, developed and maintained by the European Commission. It allows Erasmus+ beneficiary organisations to access and manage information on their project, request individual participant reports and submit their final report to their NA. NAs also use **Beneficiary Module** to monitor and validate the project information entered by beneficiary organisations at any time.

As stated in the beneficiary grant agreement, the beneficiary HEI is responsible for updating the tool **at least once a month** during the lifetime of the mobility project with any new information regarding the participants and the mobility activities.

Partner HEIs of the beneficiary in regions that have passed the qualitative assessment (included those in the list of non-funded countries) will be automatically registered in Beneficiary Module; new partners to be added during the implementation of the project should be added with the use of their OID. Non-academic partners may be exceptionally added without an OID. Please refer to 'The Organisation ID' section above under 'Application Process'. Once registered, the partners can be granted view-only access to information on individual mobilities and participant reports for which their institution is either the sending or receiving organisation.

> *Did you know?*
>
> The names and email addresses of participants in Beneficiary Module are shared securely with European Union Delegations around the world. With this information, they organise pre-departure events for students and staff before they go abroad. They also put returning participants in touch with those about to leave, to provide support and advice. The list of Partner HEIs registered in Beneficiary Module is shared with National Erasmus+ Offices, Erasmus+ National Focal Points, and European Union Delegations around the world who provide assistance to the institutions in their respective countries.

5. Support to participants

Support should be provided by both sending and receiving institutions - before the start of mobility (visa, residence permit, accommodation, linguistic and cultural preparation etc.), during the mobility (institutional mentoring, buddy systems with peer students and alumni, etc.), and after the mobility (recognition, transfer of records, etc.).
The inter-institutional agreement details the obligations of each institution.

5.1. Financial support to participants (individual and travel support)

The participants receive individual and travel support as a contribution to their costs for travel and subsistence related to their period of study or traineeship, teaching or training abroad. Please find the applicable rates in Part I Grant breakdown of this Handbook, also available in the Programme guide.

5.2. Additional support for students with fewer opportunities
The Erasmus+ programme foresees a top-up grant of 250 EUR per month for students with fewer opportunities according to national criteria set by each National Agency.

If such additional support is needed, you may award such top-ups using the funds available in your

contract for cooperation with the specific region. Already at application stage, your institution has applied for an indicative number of participants with fewer opportunities. Based on the number of funded individuals, a separate budget item (Top-up for participants with fewer opportunities) is created within your project for such purpose on a regional level. You should first use this budget item and if not sufficient, you may proceed with transfers from other budget items. Please carefully check the section "Making changes to your project" in this Handbook. Any transfers will need to respect the general limitations applying to transfers incoming and outgoing mobility. If there were no sufficient funds for cooperation with that Country or within the region this country belongs to allocate the top-up, you may transfer OS funds or apply for additional funding to your National Agency.

5.3. Inclusion Support for participants and organisations

For certain participants with fewer opportunities, in particular those with **physical, mental or health-related conditions**, the top-up for fewer opportunities may not suffice to allow their participation in the mobility, as well as preparatory visits and accompanying persons. As this would prevent them from participating in a mobility activity unless extra financial support was made available, the beneficiary HEI may request **inclusion support for participants** from their NA based on real costs incurred. These requestes will be assessed by the National Agencies and satisfied based on the available funds.

In case of accompanying persons, the daily rate for staff applies for their subsistence costs up to 60 days; in exceptional cases, where the accompanying person needs to stay abroad for more than 60 days, these extra subsistence costs will be supported by inclusion support as real costs.

The NA will evaluate the request according to its established procedures and satisfy it provided funds are available. For every participant with fewer opportunities receiving inclusion support (based on real costs), the organisation will receive a unit cost of 100 EUR as **inclusion support for organisations**.

You will find further information in Part B of the Erasmus+ Programme Guide.

5.4. Online Language Support (OLS)

The Erasmus+ programme offers an Online Language Support[42] for its participants, hosted by the EU Academy portal. All languages of Programme countries will be available, while other international languages will be added in the future. To promote multilingualism among Erarmus+ participants, access to language learning is not restricted only to the language(s) of the receiving country or the ones used during the activity.
The Beneficiary HEI must ensure that OLS accesses are awarded to all eligible participants, as soon as possible after their selection.
Participants can take as many language courses (and assessments) as they wish, in the languages of their choice available in the OLS tool. Students undertaking activity of 14 days or more should take a self-assessment in their language of mobility in the OLS tool prior to departure However, if the language is not available in the OLS tool, the self-assessment is not mandatory.

The Beneficiary HEI should make effort to ensure that all the OLS accesses (which include both assessments and courses) are actively used by the selected participants.

5.5. Visa

Participants in Erasmus+ projects may need to obtain a visa for staying abroad in the country hosting the activity. Participating organisations are responsible for ensuring that all required authorisations (short or long-stay visas or residence permits) are in order before the planned activity takes place. These should be requested in good time, since the process may take several weeks or even months.

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[42] For more information and to access the OLS: https://erasmus-plus.ec.europa.eu/resources-and-tools/online-language-support

The EU Immigration Portal[43] contains general information on visas and residence permits, for both short and long stays (more than 90 days). NAs may also provide advice and support concerning visas, residence permits, social security, and so on.

HEIs must provide assistance, when required, in securing visas for incoming and outgoing participants. Information and documentation should be available on their website. Where possible, the HEI should provide a contact person who may assist with visa-related issues, with a description of the services offered and the support that can be provided.

In cases in which it is difficult to obtain visas (e.g. where diplomatic missions are not located in the countries of residence or if postal applications are not accepted), institutions should attempt to help by providing assistance in contacting diplomatic representatives. The European Commission encourages institutions to **use their OS grant to offset participants' visa expenses,** where possible. Participants themselves remain responsible for their visa application.

Note that higher education students from third countries who come to the EU for a period of study or for a traineeship are covered in almost all EU Member States[44] by **Directive (EU) 2016/801** of 11 May 2016 for the purposes of research, studies, training, voluntary service, pupil exchange schemes or educational projects and au pairing. This Directive provides that, where all the general and relevant specific conditions are fulfilled, the non-EU citizens are entitled to a residence permit or visa.

Generally speaking, participants in Erasmus+ projects staying in the destination country for more than **three months** will need a long-stay visa and/or a residence permit before travelling. A short-stay visa is not an appropriate authorisation when the stay exceeds three months. In these cases, the documents necessary for applying for the relevant authorisation to enter and stay depend on the purpose of the stay and on the rules of the destination country. The following table provides general **guidelines** on issuing visas and residence permits to Erasmus+ participants coming from Partner countries:

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[43] EU Immigration Portal: https://ec.europa.eu/immigration/
[44] With the exception of Denmark and Ireland.

Destination Country	If short stay – three months or less	If long stay – over three months
Erasmus+ Countries which are members of the **Schengen Area**: Austria Belgium Czechia Denmark Estonia Finland France Germany Greece Hungary Iceland Italy Latvia Liechtenstein Lithuania Luxembourg Malta Netherlands Norway Poland Portugal Slovakia Slovenia Spain Sweden	Non-EU nationals may need a **short-stay visa (or 'Schengen visa')** depending on their nationality. Check if a visa is needed[45]. In principle, Schengen visa holders can travel freely within Schengen area countries. Anybody holding a single-entry visa can enter the Schengen area only once. Whereas holding a multiple-entry visa allows re-entry to the Schengen area a number of times during the validity period of the visa, while respecting the maximum period of allowed stay. General requirements for application (indicative list[46]): - A completed and signed application form - A valid travel document and a photograph in the right format - Documents related to the purpose of the trip (e.g. the Erasmus+ documentation) - Evidence of financial means to cover travel and stay - Documents related to accommodation - Travel medical insurance covering a minimum of €30,000 and valid for the entire Schengen area and for the duration of the stay. The **administrative fee** (in most cases €80 at the time of writing) is waived for students, postgraduate students and accompanying teachers who undertake stays for the purpose of study or educational training, as well as for researchers travelling for the purpose of carrying out scientific research. See the website of the competent Programme Country for detailed information. The EU Immigration Portal[47] contains links to the national authorities of the destination countries which are members of the EU.	Non-EU national participants need **a long-stay visa or a residence permit** issued by destination country. Sometimes the destination country issues a residence permit replacing the long-stay visa once the non-EU national arrives in its territory. The rules differ depending on the length of the stay and on the country of destination. The EU Immigration Portal contains links to the national authorities of the Programme Countries that are members of the EU. If participants hold a residence permit or a long-stay visa issued by a Schengen area country, they can move within the Schengen area up to 90 days in any 180-day period. Non-EU nationals travelling to a Schengen area country via another Schengen area country must make sure that they have a long-stay visa or residence permit issued by the destination country. Higher education institutions should cover fees, insurance and bank transfer costs (or part of these) using Erasmus+ organisational support funds, i.e. not deducting these from the participant's individual support grant. Any cost charged to the participant's individual support grant should be clearly explained to the participant and agreed, in advance, by both parties.
Destination Country	If short stay – three months or less	If long stay – over three months
Erasmus+ Countries which are **not members** of the Schengen Area: Bulgaria Croatia[48] Cyprus North Macedonia Ireland Romania Serbia Turkey	Non-EU national participants will need a **national short-stay visa** or not, depending on the rules of the country of destination.	As above, accounting for national legislation in the host country.

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[45] https://ec.europa.eu/immigration/general-information/do-i-need-visa_en
[46] https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/borders-and-visas/visa-policy/required_documents_en
[47] https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/borders-and-visas/visa-policy/how_to_apply_en
[48] Croatia is expected to join the Schengen zone in 2023.

6. Grant payment to the participant

The beneficiary HEI will be responsible for signing the grant agreement with the participant and, unless specified otherwise in the inter-institutional agreement, they will administer all grant payments for both incoming and outgoing mobility. The grant agreements leave flexibility to institutions in view of fixing the most appropriate calendar for the payment of the grants. It is important to make sure that students are aware of the planned calendar and the requirements that they need to fulfil to receive the payments.

The following measures are considered best practice to reduce the costs that students need to cover upfront:

- **Arranging travels** or providing a pre-financing of the student grant.

- Regarding accommodation, when the students are hosted in dormitories, using the student grant to **pay for the deposit.**

- **Provide students with their grant as soon as possible upon arrival** and, if necessary by other means than bank transfers (e.g. cash cards and, provided there is a clear audit trail, cash payments).

When organising mobility of participants HEIs have the option to either provide the unit costs (travel, individual support) directly to the participant or via provision of services-in-kind, for instance by purchasing travel tickets in advance. All payment procedures and deadlines must be agreed upon before the mobility and included in the grant agreement.

If a mobility needs to be cancelled, the beneficiary HEI should contact the NA. Costs incurred before the start of the mobility will be eligible if the NA accepts the cause of "**force majeure**". This means that the mobility is not taking place due to an unforeseeable exceptional situation or event beyond the participant's control and not attributable to error or negligence on his/her part (e.g. delay or rejection of a visa application).

When the beneficiary HEI has implemented 100% of what was promised, any remaining funds belong to them, and they are free to use them, as they see fit, e.g. to support participants currently in mobility by offering a longer duration or implement new mobilities.

> *Can OS funds be used to support a zero-grant student?*
>
> Institutions are welcome to use their institutional funds to support zero-grant students. However, organisational support (OS) funds should primarily be used by the beneficiary HEI and partners to contribute to the organisation of granted mobilities.
> If the beneficiary HEI transfers a share of OS funds to create a new mobility, that mobility will be considered a normal mobility in Beneficiary Module and will receive a grant according to Erasmus+ rates. Please bear in mind when reporting the overall OS for the project in Beneficiary Module that such a new mobility is not entitled to organisational support .

7. Zero-grants from EU funds

Mobilities with a zero-grant from Erasmus+ funds are possible under the International Credit Mobility action. However, there are certain conditions aiming at limiting their scope and number to ensure inclusiveness of international mobility:

7.1. Timing and duration

Beneficiaries can organise zero-grant mobilites from EU funds for participants that receive funding from other sources or who are self-funded. Please be aware of the following:

1) **Once on mobility**, a zero-grant extension is possible if the participant requests an extension of the mobility period (because the exam period is delayed, for instance) and the beneficiary HEI does not have sufficient funds to meet the request.

2) **Before a mobility starts,** it is not possible to plan a period covered by an Erasmus+ grant combined with a zero-grant period, (e.g. sending the participant for twelve months, but paying for only six, effectively reducing the grant by half).

7.2. Destination

Zero-grant mobilities can only be organised with partner institutions that are already part of the Grant Agreement (either as funded or as non-funded countries).

7.3. Mobility types

Any secondary criteria that your National Agency may have set as well as the restrictions for short, first and second cycle outgoing student mobility (see dedicated section on p. 11) do not apply to zero-grant mobilities, as the participants do not receive a grant from Erasmus+ EU funds.

7.4. Other funds and grant levels

You are encouraged to use other available funds to organise mobilities with a **zero-grant from EU funds**. For example, participants may receive a regional or national grant, or any other type of financial contribution. If possible, it is recommended to provide grants of similar amount to the Erasmus+ grant rates.

7.5. Organisational support funds

Zero-grant mobilities do not automatically trigger organisational support. You may request such additional support for mobilities, which are organised with countries in Annex II. These requests will be assessed by the National Agencies and satisfied based on the available funds.

8. Interruption, early termination and extension of the mobility

8.1. Interruption of the mobility

When a mobility period of a participant is interrupted, for example because the student decides to take a break in their mobility to pursue another short project, the number of days of interruption shall be encoded in Beneficiary Module and the grant amount adapted accordingly. Interruptions are not common, as other breaks such as holidays, are considered a part of the normal academic period.

8.2. Early termination of the mobility and force majeure

According to the General conditions of the Participant Grant agreement, Article 2: Termination of the agreement :
In the event of failure by the participant to perform any of the obligations arising from the agreement, and regardless of the consequences provided for under the applicable law, the beneficiary HEI is legally entitled to terminate or cancel the agreement without any further legal formality where no action is taken by the participant within one month of receiving notification by registered letter.
If the participant terminates the agreement before its agreement ends or if they fail to follow the agreement in accordance with the rules, they shall have to refund the amount of the grant already paid, except if agreed differently with the beneficiary HEI.
In case of termination by the participant due to "force majeure", i.e. an unforeseeable exceptional situation or event beyond the participant's control and not attributable to error or negligence on their part, the participant shall be entitled to receive at least the amount of the grant corresponding to the actual duration of the mobility period. Any remaining funds shall have to be refunded.
If the termination of the mobility is due to force majeure, the mobility has to be marked as force majeure in Beneficiary Module and a short justification needs to be provided.

8.3. Extension of the mobility

An extension of an ongoing mobility period may be agreed between the sending and the receiving organisations subject to the following:

1) the request for extension of the mobility period must be introduced at the latest one month before the end of the mobility period initially planned (only for student mobility);

2) if the request is accepted by all parties, the grant agreement must be amended and all the arrangements completed;

3) if the participant receives an Erasmus+ grant, the sending institution may either amend the grant amount to take into account the longer duration, or reach an agreement with the participant that the additional days are considered as "zero-grant from EU funds" period;

4) the actual start and end dates of the mobility period shall be included in the receiving institution's Transcript of Records/ Mobility certificate accordingly:
   a) the start date should be the first day that the participant needs to be present at the receiving organisation (for example, this could be the start date of the first course);
   b) the end date should be the last day the participant needs to be present at the receiving organisation (for example, this could be the date of the last exam session).

5) the actual duration defined as indicated above is the period to be indicated by the HEIs in their final reports and is the maximum number of months to be covered through the EU grant. When the prolongation of the mobility is considered as "zero-grant from EU funds" days or as virtual component of a blended mobility, these days shall be deducted from the total duration of the mobility period to calculate the final grant amount;

6) the additional period must follow immediately after the ongoing mobility period.

9. Making changes to your project

Once the grant agreement has been signed and your project is underway, you may find that some of the planned activities can no longer be implemented as foreseen. The following section highlights which changes are possible (with or without an amendment) and which are not[49].

WITHOUT AMENDMENT

You may:

- ✓ Increase or reduce the number of mobilities specified in Annex II of the Grant Agreement and set the duration of each mobility within the eligible durations, as per the Programme Guide

- ✓ Change between activity categories (student / staff) and activity types (studies/traineeship, teaching/training) provided the type of mobility is eligible

- ✓ Transfer funds allocated for individual and travel support (including if applicable, top-ups for participants with fewer opportunities) between Partner countries, provided that these are within the same region and are listed in Annex II

- ✓ Transfer up to 100% of funds allocated for individual support to travel support, and vice versa, as well from these categories to top-ups for students and recent graduates with fewer opportunities. This is possible also between student and staff mobility, provided funds are used for cooperation with the same region.

- ✓ Change incoming mobility flows to outgoing, and vice versa, provided the sum total of the changes incurred does not exceed 40% of the total project budget allocated in Annex II, and provided that the type and direction of the mobility is eligible (see below). The 40% threshold is set to ensure that the core of the mobility project is respected.

- ✓ Transfer up to 50% of the funds allocated for organisational support to individual support (including, if applicable, top-ups for participants with fewer opportunities) and travel for student/staff mobility as well as inclusion support for participants

- ✓ Change or add non-academic organisations to the project, provided the NA is notified.

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[49] These changes are possible as long as the minimum and maximum durations set out in the Erasmus+ Programme Guide and any possible secondary criteria set by the NA are respected. Please note that the final grant after amendment can never exceed the grant requested at application stage for the entire project, unless additional funds are granted for inclusion purposes.

WITH AMENDMENT

Conditional upon the NA's approval, you may, with an amendment:

✓ Change <u>incoming mobility flows to outgoing</u>, and vice versa, where the sum total of the changes incurred exceeds 40% of the total project budget allocated in Annex II, provided that the type and direction of the mobility is eligible.

✓ Add new HEI(s) from Partner country(ies) indicated in Annex II, that did not figure in the original application.

✓ Change the duration of your project, from 24 to 36 months and vice versa.

✓ Transfer funds allocated for top-ups for students and recent graduates with fewer opportunities to other budget categories. The beneficiary HEI has to provide a justification why these funds could not be used for their initial purpose.

NOT POSSIBLE

✗ You may not, under any circumstances, transfer funds between regions
✗ Addition of countries not indicated in Annex II is not allowed or You may not add new countries to the project
✗ It is not possible to transfer funds to short-, first- and second cycle outgoing student mobility to any of the Partner Countries that are recipients of official development assistance (ODA). Please see table on p. 11.

10. Support and monitoring

10.1. In Programme Countries

The **National Agency (NA)** will provide support and guidance to the beneficiaries throughout the project, and will conduct regular monitoring of ICM projects, both remotely and through on-site visits. Monitoring visits will be used primarily to support and counsel the beneficiary HEI as well as to gather and disseminate good practice examples. They can also contribute to collecting information on qualitative aspects of programme management and on the effectiveness and impact of the granted project on the beneficiary HEI. The NA may, if it wishes to, complement these monitoring visits with fact-finding missions to Partner Countries to gather information on project implementation.

10.2. In Partner Countries

National Erasmus+ Offices (NEOs) assist the Commission, the Executive Agency and the local authorities in the countries concerned (located in Western Balkans, Eastern and Southern Neighbourhoods and Central Asia) with the implementation of the Erasmus+ programme.

They are responsible for:

- providing information on Erasmus+

- assisting applicants and participants;

- supporting policy dialogue;

- maintaining contact with the local authorities and EU Delegations.

Erasmus+ National Focal Points
In Partner countries concerned (Latin America and the Caribbean, Sub-Saharan Africa, Middle East, Afghanistan, Asia and Pacific) the network of National Focal Points (NFPs) support the Commission, the Executive Agency and the local authorities to provide guidance, practical information and assistance on all aspects of participation in Erasmus+ in the field of higher education, youth, vocational education and training and sport. They act as focal points for the stakeholders in their country and contribute to improving awareness, visibility, relevance, effectiveness and impact of the international dimension of Erasmus+.

III – After the mobility: recognition and reporting

1. Credit recognition

1.1. Recognition of credits and enhancing quality

Mobility periods must be **recognised by both HEIs** as stipulated in the **inter-institutional agreement and in the Learning Agreement**. The receiving institution provides the sending institution and the student with a **Transcript of Records** (or equivalent document) within a reasonably short period of time (stipulated between the two institutions) after the issuing of the student's results at the receiving institution. The beneficiary is responsible for encoding the number or recognised credits or equivalent units in Beneficiary Module.

Upon successful completion of the set of educational components included in the Learning Agreement and confirmed by the Transcript of Records sent by the receiving institution and made available to the student, **the sending institution should fully recognise the agreed number of credits**. It must then transfer them into the student's programme and use them to satisfy the qualification requirements. The sending institution should specify clearly how the educational components taken

abroad have been integrated into the home degree programme (when applicable, grades are converted).

In case the students have not completed them successfully at the receiving institution, **institutional procedures should be defined for assessment of educational components**. Such procedures should be communicated to students before the beginning of the mobility.

Another important document used in the European Higher Education Area is the Diploma Supplement. This document is designed to provide graduates with a transparent record of their achievements. Therefore, the educational components successfully completed abroad will be attached to the Diploma Supplement with their original titles (and their translation into the language(s) in which the Diploma Supplement is issued), the indication of the institution where they have been taken, and the credits and grades awarded.

Experience has shown that **these good practices facilitate the management of credit mobility and recognition**. Specific institutional rules should be developed to deal with the recognition of other learning experiences, to allow for credit accumulation and transfer through various types of mobility, work experience, virtual learning, prior and informal learning.

The institution should clearly define responsibilities for implementing and monitoring credit mobility and ensure that application procedures and selection criteria for credit mobility are transparent and fair, and that an appeal mechanism is in place. A staff member should be appointed in each department or subject area and formally authorised to discuss the programme of study abroad with the student and to approve and sign the Learning Agreement on behalf of the sending institution, before the start of the mobility period and the Transcript of Records after the mobility period. Individuals should not be asked to negotiate academic recognition with staff members who are not authorised to do so or with a committee, before or after their study abroad period, neither should the student be asked to sit for any other examinations or have to do extra work after having returned.

1.2. Integration of credit mobility into programmes

Structuring credit mobility in the curricula facilitates recognition. Institutions can:
1. identify the semester or year when a period of study abroad would best fit into the programme (mobility window);
2. schedule in that semester/year the educational components with learning outcomes that can be easily achieved abroad (e.g. international or comparative courses, supplementary/ elective courses, preparation of dissertation, language courses, work placements);
3. identify partner institutions, where compatible/complementary learning outcomes could be achieved.

1.3. Grade distribution

European educational systems have developed **different national grading scales** and **different ways of using them** within the same country. While it is essential to acknowledge these differences, it is also important to make them transparent within the European Higher Education Area, so that grades awarded in all countries, subject areas or institutions can be properly understood and correctly compared.

Mobile students have the right to fair treatment and to transparency of their grades when credits are transferred from one institution to another. Transparency of performance levels is particularly important for graduates applying for a job in their own or in another country.

To ensure transparent and coherent information on the performance of the individual student, each HEI should provide **a statistical distribution table of the passing grades** awarded in the programme or field of study attended by the student (grade distribution table) showing how the grading scale is actually used in that programme.

Even in cases when transferring the grades is not necessary in the local academic tradition of

receiving institutions, **calculating a grade distribution table will facilitate fair treatment** of the incoming students upon their return to the sending institution. It should be noted that it is also good practice to **provide internal boards of examiners with detailed statistical data on examination grading** in order to make the process more transparent and indicate any disparities which may indicate issues for further consideration.

Partners in joint degree programmes should agree in advance within their consortium how they will deal with grading and transfer of grades.
Grade distribution tables have to be developed in a standardised format for reference groups of students enrolled in degree programmes belonging to the same field of studies. Such groups should be of reliable size in terms of number of students and number of years considered.
Calculating the grade distribution tables is a task that will be undertaken at **centralised level in many institutions**. The production of distribution tables should not cause undue difficulties in institutions as the required data are generally available in institutional information systems and the calculation of percentages is easily done with simple software. It only requires the following:

1. **Identify the reference groups within your institution** by using objective and transparent criteria which should be attached to the grade distribution tables produced. In the absence of methods based on comparable learning outcomes, it is recommended to use the ISCED-F classification which offers a standardised and hierarchical classification of fields of study.

2. **Calculate the absolute number of passing grades awarded to each reference group identified in at least the last two years**. Remember that information on success rates may be provided in general terms but not in this calculation.

3. **Calculate the grade distribution in terms of percentages of the passing grades awarded to the reference group and develop cumulative percentage**s. As a result, there will be a grade distribution table with percentages and cumulative percentages for each reference group identified.

The following is an illustrative example of a **grading table**:

Grades used in institution (from highest to lowest passing grade)	Number of passing grades awarded to the reference group	Percentage of each grade with respect to the total passing grades awarded	Cumulative percentage of passing grades awarded
10	50	5%	5%
9	100	10%	15%
8	350	35%	50%
7	300	30%	80%
6	200	20%	100%
Total	*1,000*	*100%*	

When included in a student's Transcript of Records and Diploma Supplement, **the table facilitates the interpretation of each grade** awarded and will not require any further calculation.

1.3. Grade conversion

When institutions decide to transfer their mobile students' grades, the staff responsible for credit transfer should compare the grade distribution table from their reference group with the one developed by the other institution for the parallel reference group. **The position of each grade within the two tables can be compared and**, on the basis of this comparison, **individual grades are converted**. Typically, the percentage ranges of the grades overlap. The objective of the exercise is
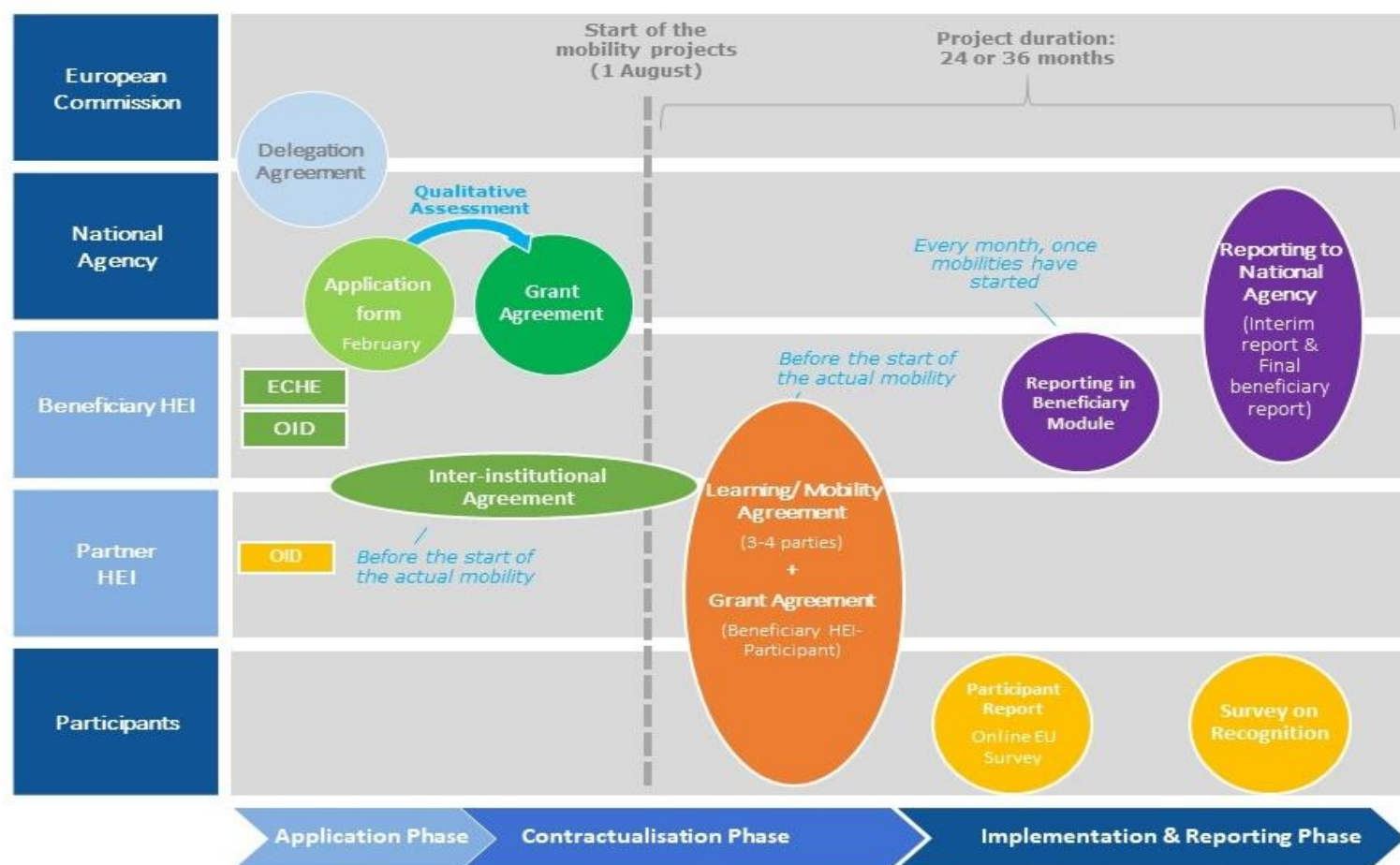
transparency. Therefore, the receiving institution should decide in advance whether they will take the minimum, average or maximum comparable grade.

The European Grade Conversion System project (EGRACONS) has developed an online tool to facilitate grade conversion and is free for universities to use.

For more information on credit transfer and recognition, we encourage you to read the ECTS Users' Guide.

2. Reporting <mark>(to be revised for version 5.2)</mark>

    2.1. The participant report

    2.2. The interim report

    2.3. The final beneficiary report

Project timeline

Useful resources

Erasmus+ Programme Guide:

http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/resources/programme-guide_en

All guidelines & supporting documents:

http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/resources/documents_en

Information on opportunities for individuals under Erasmus+

https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/opportunities/individuals_en

Contact

National Agencies in the Programme Countries:

https://erasmus-plus.ec.europa.eu/contacts/national-agencies

National Erasmus+ Offices

https://erasmus-plus.ec.europa.eu/contacts/national-erasmus-offices

Erasmus+ National Focal Points (web page in preparation)