TOOLKIT
AllinErasmus

ALLinErasmus

Promoting participation in Erasmus for students at risk of social exclusion

Co-funded by the European Union

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Introduction: AllinErasmus

Project presentation

ALLinErasmus is a project funded by the **Erasmus+ program** of the European Union, which aims to increase the participation of VET students at risk of social exclusion in Erasmus+ mobilities, by providing training content and tools to the VET professionals managing Erasmus+ mobilities.

The project targets VET educators in charge of managing Erasmus+ mobilities, helping them learn how to reach and integrate students at risk of social exclusion in the different stages of Erasmus+ mobilities.

ALLinErasmus has, therefore, the following **objectives**:

1. Providing VET professionals with training on "social exclusion"
2. Increasing the interest in Erasmus+ mobilities of students at risk of social exclusion
3. Facilitating the access to mobility opportunities among students at risk of social exclusion
4. Increasing participation of students at risk of social exclusion in Erasmus+ mobilities
5. Assisting VET professionals in charge of managing Erasmus+ mobilities in their centres

The AllinErasmus Consortium

MEDI TERRA NEO International Center	Mediterraneo Erasmus International Center, from Spain.
KTTT	KULDIGAS TEHNOLOGIJU UN TURISMA TEHNIKUMS, from Latvia.
AKMI	AKMI ANONIMI EKPAIDEFTIKI ETAIRIA, from Greece.

Introduction: AllinErasmus

The AllinErasmus Toolkit

The ALLinErasmus Toolkit is a product created by the ALLinErasmus consortium, providing the necessary knowledge for VET educators to work in the integration of students at risk of social exclusion in Erasmus+ mobilities. The Toolkit has three parts:

- **Part 1** covers the theoretical content regarding the meaning of social exclusion, giving VET educators background and a base.
- **Part 2** encloses a series of practical tools and tricks to reach students at risk of social exclusion and trigger their interest in Erasmus+ mobilities.
- **Part 3** covers real-life Success Stories and Best Practices from all over Europe, either showing the experience of VET students at risk of social exclusion participating in Erasmus+, or the experience of VET educators involving students at risk of social exclusion in mobilities.

Part 1: Theory

Part 2: Practical tools

Part 3: Success Stories

PART 1

Theoretical Guide

Part 1: Theoretical Guide

The first part of this Toolkit has been designed to help VET trainers understand the meaning of social exclusion, its different components, and how it affects the behaviour of VET students.

In the following sub-areas, a theoretical explanation of the most relevant terms linked to social inclusion will be provided. A Glossary with definitions of the key concepts used can also be found at the end of the Toolkit.

1.1. Meaning of social exclusion and social inclusion

To effectively discuss social exclusion, it is necessary to understand the term.

Social exclusion was defined by the European Commission in 1992 as "mechanisms whereby individuals and groups are excluded from taking part in the social exchanges, from the component practices and rights of social integration and of identity. Social exclusion goes beyond participation in working life; it is felt and shown in the fields of housing, education, health, and access to services" (Communities & Communities, 1992).

Translating this into simpler words, people facing social exclusions find themselves unable to participate in social activities, or to benefit from social rights that other people can.

To reach the level of social exclusion, the person needs to be excluded at several levels. And what does this mean? It means social exclusion is not only suffered in one area of a person's life. For example, feeling excluded only in one's workplace, but not in class or when applying for a loan, means the person is probably not suffering social exclusion, but discrimination in the workplace.

Therefore, social exclusion is faced by individuals who see in their life a combination of problems such as: unemployment, discrimination, poor skills, low income, poor housing, high crime, ill-health, and family breakdown. When dealing with all this at the same time, the person faces increasingly complex problems that affect themselves, their families, their environment and finally the entire society. (Social Exclusion, n.d.)

Now that the concept "social exclusion" is clearer, let's move to what could be considered its opposite... what does "social inclusion" mean?

According to the United Nations, "**Social inclusion** is the process by which efforts are made to ensure equal opportunities – that everyone, regardless of their background, can achieve their full potential in life. Such efforts include policies and actions that promote equal access to (public) services as well as enable citizen's participation in the decision-making processes that affect their lives." (Social Inclusion | Poverty Eradication, n.d.)

How does this definition match the one presented for social exclusion? It shows that social inclusion does not mean "hiding" the reasons leading to social exclusion. Social inclusion means openly understanding and seeing the background problems a person is facing, and looking for a key to ensure that the person can still access to the same opportunities as the one who is not facing said problems.

1.2.   Aspects that determine social exclusion

According to the information gathered by the United Nations on social exclusion, there are different factors determining social exclusion. In the following figure, a series of examples for each factor are presented:

Economic
- Income lower than average cost of living
- Impossibility to pay invoices
- No access to adequate housing due to economic constraints
- Unstable employment or unemployment

Political
- Constraints to participate in political life
- Lack of opportunity to vote
- Facing barriers or constrains due to political ideology
- Not being politically represented

Cultural
- Belonging to a minoritary ethnical group
- Belonging to a different culture
- LGTBIQ+ discrimination

Social life
- Being discriminated due to gender
- Constrains to participate due to disabilities
- Facing barriers to access education
- Facing barriers to access social services
- Facing barriers to access health services
- Facing barriers accessing to transport

However, from the view of a VET teacher this division may sometimes be a bit abstract, as it does not provide specific checklists to verify when thinking on a particular case. For this reason, another option to describe the factors behind social exclusion can be the one provided by the paper "Risks and outcomes of social exclusion. Insights from longitudinal data" from John Bynner, available in the OECD library. This list was produced to establish the causes of social exclusion in children, so it can be easily applicable to a VET student.

MATERIAL FACTORS

- Family poverty
- Geographical location

FAMILY FACTORS

- Parents education
- Parental interest and support
- Social class

PROVISION OF SERVICES

- Education
- Social services
- Housing
- Transport
- Health

INDIVIDUAL FACTORS

- Aptitudes and Motivation
- Gender
- Disabilities
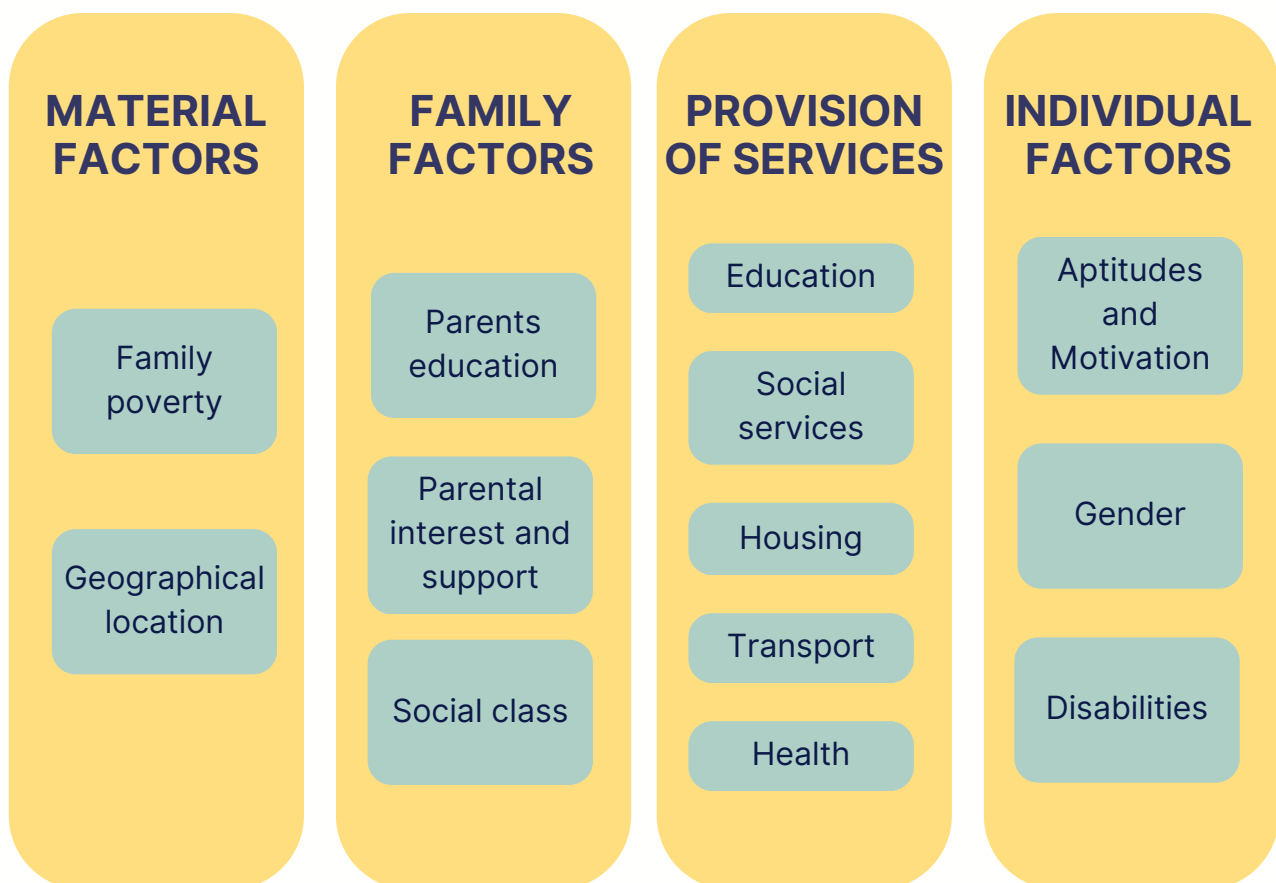
Part 1: Theoretical Guide

1.3.   Groups at risk of social exclusion

The following sub-area covers some of the most common groups at risk of social exclusion found in VET education. These groups have been selected from the data gathered in each of the VET centres participating in ALLinErasmus. For each of the groups, a definition will be provided, together with the key aspects determining that the group is at risk of social exclusion.

Why referring to these groups as "at risk of social exclusion"? As explained in the definition of social exclusion, it depends on the combination of a series of factors. Belonging to one of these groups, therefore, does not necessarily contribute to a person suffering social exclusion. However, it increases their possibilities of also suffering other relevant factors, hence actually feeling social exclusion.

Bearing this in mind, it is relevant to monitor the VET students belonging to any of these groups, to identify whether they are suffering social exclusion.

Groups at risk of social exclusion

- LGTBIQ+ community
- Students from low socio-economic backgrounds
- Students with special needs
- Students from migrant backgrounds
- Students not studying in their mother tongue
- Students from rural areas
- Women
- Refugees, including war refugees from Ukraine
- Orphans/Students with no stable family support
- Ethnic minorities

Students from low socio-economic backgrounds

Students coming from low-income backgrounds or from families below the poverty level are at risk of social exclusion due to the direct relation that economy has with many factors of social exclusion. In fact, economic factors are one of the areas established by the UN in their definition of social exclusion.

A low income can lead to other sources of exclusion, such as:

- Difficulties in accessing high quality education. This can be due to the inability of paying education fees, or due to time constrains. Many students from low-income families need to find part-time jobs to contribute to the family income and subsistence, and sometimes they end up having to apply for full time jobs, with no time left to studying.
- Difficulties in accessing to healthcare. Specific healthcare areas (for example, dentist services) are in many countries private or really difficult to access through public healthcare.
- Difficulties in accessing to specific leisure activities. Social bonds are formed when participating in leisure activities such as sports, art classes... but most times, these are private activities that require paying a fee. Students from low-income families may be unable to attend, complicating their integration with other peers.

Students from migrant backgrounds

When talking about students from migrant backgrounds, we refer to immigrant students (students who were born in a different country), but also to students who, although were born in the country, come from immigrant families.

Students from migrant backgrounds

A migrant background is not necessarily a cause for social exclusion. However, there are some aspects that lead to said exclusion (Molero et al., 2001):

- Issues with documentation recognition. This issue may take many different forms; the clearest one comes from migrants arriving irregularly to the country. A lack of legal documentation leads to the inability to access to regularised employment or adequate salaries, turning into a lack of access to adequate housing and services. It also complicates or even makes impossible to access to certain education levels, healthcare, and other services. However, even if the person or the family is a "legal migrant", there may still be issues with certain documentation, for example with education degrees. Not being able to validate a degree due to a lack of recognition agreement between the home and destiny country can also lead to migrants not accessing to better employment opportunities.

- Differentiation depending on the nationality. The country the migrant comes from has a lot of importance when talking about social exclusion. To begin with, EU country nationals enjoy benefits and opportunities that differ from other countries' nationals, which makes it less probable for them to suffer social exclusion (at least in theory). Also, immigrants from first-world countries usually receive a "better" treatment compared to immigrants from emerging or third-world countries. This can be due to the cultural and ethnical similarities between the countries, the legal facilities to validate documentation, etc. Therefore, social exclusion due to a migrant background will most likely be faced by emerging of third-world country migrants, to which may exist cultural or ethnic prejudices.

- Cultural and ethnical differences. As mentioned in the previous point, cultural differences with the hosting country can lead to prejudice and conflicts that lead to social exclusion. (Martínez & Fernández, 2006)

Women

Although gender should never be a motive for exclusion, the reality is that women still face discrimination:

- In specific sectors still considered "for men", such as mechanics, engineering, sports...
- When accessing to high level employment opportunities (the commonly known as "glass ceiling").
- When becoming mothers (necessary time to recover and take care of the newborn).

LGTBIQ+ community

Although Europe was declared a LGTBIQ+ Freedom Zone in 2021, this action was actually carried out due to the discrimination acts faced by the community in Poland and Hungary since 2019. (Parliament Declares the European Union an '"LGBTIQ Freedom Zone"' │ News │ European Parliament, 2021).

Since 2021 the EU has continued working to ensure equality and non-discrimination for LGBTIQ+ persons, becoming part of the EU core values (LGBTIQ+ │ EEAS, n.d.). However, there are still social exclusion factors faced by the community:

- Not all EU countries have the same level of equality when it comes to the LGTBIQ+ community. According to Statista, in some EU countries more than half of the queer respondents to their surveys had faced discrimination. (Share of LGBT People in Europe Experiencing Discrimination │ Statista, 2023)
- In a survey carried out in 2022, it was shown that some members of the community still face discrimination in the EU labour market. This leads to less chance of accessing to high level job opportunities. (Do LGBTQIA+ People Face EU Labour Market Discrimination?, 2022)
- There are still many cases in the EU of people facing harassment and violent attacks due to their sexual orientation. This leads to discrimination and social exclusion, as they feel unwelcome to be part of the society.

Ethnic minorities

There is currently no internationally agreed definition on "minority". Considering the aim of this Toolkit, we will use the one from UNHCR: an ethnic, religious, and linguistic group, fewer in number than the rest of the population, whose members share a common identity. Some examples are Roma people (the biggest ethnic minority in Europe), African indigen minorities, American indigen minorities...

Ethnic minorities are not necessarily immigrants or coming from immigrant backgrounds; they just share a common identity that differs from the main identity shared in the country they belong to. This can lead to social exclusion, for example:

- Many ethnic minorities face discrimination in accessing to employment, housing, financial opportunities... due to cultural traditional prejudices.
- Prejudices towards specific ethnic minorities can lead to students facing exclusion in the classroom.

Students from rural areas

As explained in other groups, living in a rural area is not necessarily a factor of social exclusion. However, the combination with other actors can lead to said exclusion, such as:

- Rural areas are sometimes not well connected via public transport. This means that people who have no access to a private transport have less opportunities of benefiting from cultural and social offers that usually are available in cities.
- The access to education in rural areas is also lower, as it is most times necessary to move to urban areas to follow medium or higher education courses. This leads to the need of students to search for accommodation or transport possibilities, which is not always possible due to financial/transport constrains.

Students not studying in their mother tongue

Students studying in a language different than their mother tongue may have difficulties understanding the content taught, but also enhancing in social interactions with their peers. This can lead to social exclusion, for example:

- Not adequately understanding the content taught in class creates a wall in the learning ability of the student, as it impedes their correct understanding of the class, but also their ability to communicate with the teacher. This can lead to worse academic results and less opportunities to access to good jobs.
- Having difficulties in socialising leads to a feeling of exclusion and discrimination.
- Having difficulties with the official language of the country can also difficult the fulfilment of official documents for academic and official purposes (for example, the Erasmus+ necessary paperwork).

Students with special needs

Students with some type of cognitive or physical impairment can be victim of social exclusion, either by not being able to participate in specific activities, or because they are discriminated by their peers.

Orphans/Students with no stable family support

Students who live in an unstructured family (either facing family troubles, not having family support...) are prone to social exclusion as this situation is often accompanied by:

- Economic constrains.
- Lack of educational support.
- Lack of support in social or cultural endeavours (like the Erasmus+ project).
- Suffering physical or psychological violence that leads to a lack of ability to engage in the community.

Refugees, including war refugees from Ukraine

When talking about refugees, there is one point that needs to be highlighted. The definition of refugee, according to the UN, is: someone who has been forced to flee his or her country because of persecution, war or violence. (What Is a Refugee? Definition and Meaning | USA for UNHCR, n.d.)

This means, refugees come from a different country (like migrants do), but they are not the same group, and it is essential to understand the differences in order to understand them and help them. The most important one would be that immigrants decide to leave their home country and move to another country to have a better life. Of course, the decision is not always due to positive factors (many times they leave escaping from long-term unemployment, bad living conditions, etc.). But it is still, up to a point, a choice. Refugees, however, are forced to move to another country. They did not have a choice, may not wish to leave, and are not previously prepared to leave their country. Most times they cannot return to their home country, and they have faced a traumatic event with psychological consequences.

There are many aspects that can lead to social exclusion among refugees:
- They mostly do not speak the local language, which makes very difficult for them to communicate.
- They have not had a previous period of understanding the country they are going to be living in, which increases the possibilities of cultural and religious conflict.
- They have not chosen to move to another country, which can mean they are not willing to integrate. This can lead to conflict and social exclusion.
- They may face economic constrains.
- Their psychological situation can have effects in the working environment.

Part 1: Theoretical Guide

1.4.   How does social exclusion affect VET education?

Up to now, we have created an image of the meaning of social exclusion, and the different aspects that can lead to a person facing social exclusion.

Now, it is time to focus on the specific situation of VET education. How can social exclusion be seen in VET education? Does it affect VET students?

Long story short: yes, social exclusion can be found in VET education. All groups previously mentioned as "at risk of social exclusion" are represented in VET education, which leads to believe there will always be students at risk requiring help from the VET centre. (Klasen, n.d.).

Specifically, the VET environment can promote the appearance of situations which, in turn, lead to social exclusion, such as:

- Students coming from a low economic household can feel a discrimination compared to the options that other students have, such as the possibility of having an international internship experience without the Erasmus+ grant.
- In some countries, the school you attend depends on the neighbourhood you live in. This tends to congregate students at risk of social exclusion in the same centre, leading to underperforming classes that decrease their possibilities of a high-level education.
- Students with special needs can face exclusion when the VET centre is not prepared to assist them in any specific way they may need.
- Gender is a very common source of social exclusion in VET. In many countries there are still practical jobs (which are usually taught in VET) which are seen as "male jobs", incurring in discriminatory actions towards women interested in learning. This can sometimes even be seen in the infrastructure of the school: some centres did not have female toilets until very few years ago, as they did not have female staff or students.

- Students coming from migrant backgrounds or belonging to different ethnicities, which can suffer language barriers, feel differences with their peers, and exclusion.
- Students from the LGTBIQ+ community

Social exclusion has different consequences among VET students, socially but also in their academic life. Suffering social exclusion and feeling discriminated in the classroom is a cause of dropout, which detriments the possibilities of the students to access to high-quality employment. This, in turns, increases the chances of suffering social exclusion during the adulthood.

Part 1: Theoretical Guide

1.5. How does social exclusion affect participation in Erasmus+ mobilities?

Focusing on the relation between social exclusion and participation in Erasmus+ mobilities, there are some cases in which being part of one of the groups at social exclusion can lead to having difficulties in participation in Erasmus+ mobilities. This, in fact, is an example of social exclusion: not being able or facing difficulties in accessing an academic opportunity.

Students with disabilities can face difficulties in their participation in Erasmus+ mobilities, if it is not possible for the hosting institution to meet the criteria needed for them to move to another country. For example, a student in a wheelchair will need to stay in a hosting family or flat that is prepared for the wheelchair (elevator, doors big enough, adapted bathroom if needed...). Being unable to meet these expectations may mean that the student cannot benefit from an Erasmus+ mobilities. The same happens to students with specific medical requirements; if they cannot be fully met in the host country, they are unable to participate in the mobility.

Students with teaching or training difficulties that require specific assistance or orientation can feel discrimination if the hosting institution complains or difficulties the procurement o said assistance in the internship, or during the preparatory courses carried out by the student. Feeling a "burden" can lead the student to decide not to participate in the Erasmus+ mobility.

Students from a low socioeconomic environment can be affected by several reasons:

- Many times, they need to look for part-time jobs to help their families economically, or to support themselves. This may difficult or even impede the possibility of them going abroad for an Erasmus+ experience, as they need to maintain the job.
- Although the Erasmus+ mobilities offer a grant to cover the expenses, many times students need to incur in additional expenses during the mobility. Students with low income may not be able to cover said expenses, which impedes their participation in the mobility.

Students facing geographical barriers that difficult or impede the travel to the host country can feel discriminated if the VET institution is not able to assist in overcoming said difficulties. Not offering solutions to reach the airport or transport required (for example, a private vehicle to pick the student from their home and reach the closest well-linked location) may mean that students will not be able to participate in Erasmus+ mobilities.

Ethnic, cultural, and racial differences can lead to several levels of difficulty when accessing the Erasmus+ program. The differences go from language barriers (which will be increased if adding the host country language) to conduct barriers. Sometimes they may limit the ability of the potential participants to ask for help when required during the application process, which can end up meaning they will not fulfil the application. It is also important to remember that not all countries react in the same way to these groups; for example, some ethnic groups may not feel exclusion in the home country but have a negative image in the host country. The student should always be supported if this is the case, both by the home and the host tutor.

PART 2

Practical Guide

Part 2: Practical Guide

In the second part of this Toolkit, you will have the possibility of looking at practical information useful in each step of the Erasmus+ mobility to acknowledge social exclusion, and work to ensure that the Erasmus+ mobilities in your VET centre are more inclusive.

Each category will also include tips to reach inclusion in your mobilities.

STAGE 1	Recruitment of participants
STAGE 2	Selection process
STAGE 3	Preparation of the mobility
STAGE 4	Mobility
STAGE 5	Feedback after the mobility

Erasmus+ Mobility
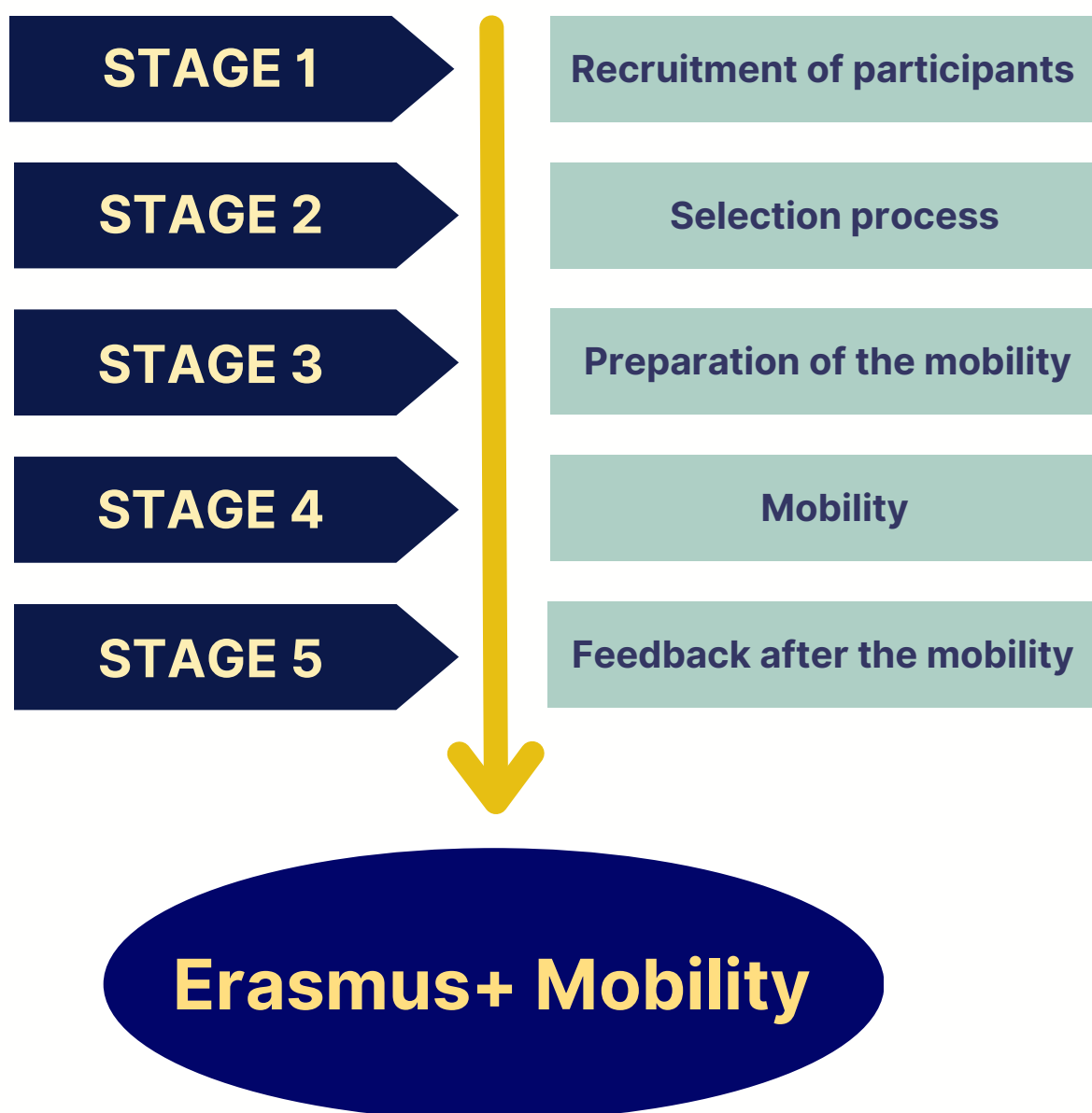
Part 2: Practical Guide

2.1. Recruitment of participants

Recruitment is the first step in the mobility process (once the funding for the mobility has been achieved). It refers to the actions carried out in the VET centre to:

- Disseminate the opportunities available for students and staff to participate in Erasmus+ mobilities.
- Establish procedures for collecting potential candidates for the mobilities.
- Collecting the candidatures.

It is an essential step in the mobility, as it sets whether there will be available candidates or not. Coordinating an Erasmus+ mobility is not possible without Erasmus+ participants!

Recruitment relies deeply on the dissemination, advertising and attractiveness imprinted on the Erasmus+ mobility. Recruitment actions should emphasize the benefits of Erasmus+ mobilities, catch the eye of potential participants, and reassure them of their capacity to participate.

Recruitment is essential in promoting inclusion in Erasmus+ mobilities. It is the starting point for Erasmus+; if no students at risk of social exclusion apply, it is impossible to have an inclusive mobility.

For this reason, when going through the recruitment process it is important to plan actions that will encourage the participation of students at risk of social exclusion. In the following pages, a series of tips for recruitment in general, and for recruiting students at risk of social exclusion, have been collected.

Part 2: Practical Guide

Steps in recruitment

Communication of approval

Once the funding has been approved, share the news on social media, centre's website and other relevant platforms.

Establishment of criteria

Establishment of compulsory criteria for participation
Establishment of criteria for evaluating the adequate candidates

Information notice

Publishing a document specifying the requirements of participation, the functioning of the Erasmus+ scholarship and the deadline for application.

Dissemination of opportunity

Use of social media, website of the centre
Presentation of opportunity in each class
Adding the information in the centre's newsboard/newspaper/newsletter

Formal meetings

Meetings with students
Meetings with parents

Part 2: Practical Guide

RECRUITMENT OF PARTICIPANTS

TIPS FOR ERASMUS+ COORDINATORS

- Establish adequate criteria

- Promote the program in the right classes

- Provide space and time for questions

- Provide very clear and complete information

- Meetings with parents and legal guardians

Part 2: Practical Guide

Establish adequate criteria	
Stage of the mobility to which the tip refers	Recruitment process
Does it relate to a specific group at risk of social exclusion?	Low socio-economic background Not studying in one's mother tongue Rural areas
Target group of the tip (VET teacher, VET student, VET centre...)	VET centre, responsible staff for recruitment
Does it require the collaboration of specific actors? (Director, students, teachers...)	No
Does it require external resources/equipment?	No
Does it require budgetary expenses?	No
Necessary time for implementation	1 month

Establish adequate criteria

Expected results

The criteria included in the recruitment process serve as filter for the candidates who match the requirements in case there are more candidates than mobilities.

Each criteria awards a specific number of points to the student's candidature, and those students with the highest ranking are the ones set to participate in the mobilities. Some general examples are languages (English C1 – 5 points; English B2 – 3 points...).

These criteria can be used to prioritise students at risk of social exclusion without discriminating other students. For example, a criterion can be to prove that due to economic or geographical reasons, it is not possible for a student to have an international experience without the grant.

The language criteria can also benefit those students at risk because they are not studying in their mother tongue, since they will receive points for their own language.

Part 2: Practical Guide

Promote the program in the right classes	
Stage of the mobility to which the tip refers	Recruitment process
Does it relate to a specific group at risk of social exclusion?	All groups at risk
Target group of the tip (VET teacher, VET student, VET centre...)	VET teachers, responsible staff for recruitment
Does it require the collaboration of specific actors? (Director, students, teachers...)	Teachers, students
Does it require external resources/equipment?	No
Does it require budgetary expenses?	No
Necessary time for implementation	2 weeks

Promote the program in the right classes

Expected results	It is essential in recruitment to ensure the possibility of Erasmus+ reaches the students. To achieve so, the responsible person can visit different classes and present the mobilities. When choosing the classes to do so, it is important to consider the number of students attending. Either avoid small, optional classes, or use all optional classes to talk to fewer people at once, but still ensure all students hear it. Also, it can be studied which classes have the higher rate of students at risk and target them. When selecting the times for visiting, look for hours and days with expected fewer absenteeism.

Part 2: Practical Guide

Provide very clear and complete information	
Stage of the mobility to which the tip refers	Recruitment process
Does it relate to a specific group at risk of social exclusion?	Low socio-economic background Migrant background Ethnic minorities Students not studying in their mother tongue Students with special needs Refugees
Target group of the tip (VET teacher, VET student, VET centre...)	VET students, VET teachers
Does it require the collaboration of specific actors? (Director, students, teachers...)	No
Does it require external resources/equipment?	No
Does it require budgetary expenses?	No
Necessary time for implementation	15 days

Part 2: Practical Guide

Provide very clear and complete information

| Expected results | A formal document with all the information about the opportunity needs to be available to all potential participants. This document includes information about the program, the mobility, and requirements for candidates.

This document can be used to facilitate the recruitment process among several groups at risk. By having the complete information written, it is easier for groups who may find challenging understanding the mother tongue of the VET centre (migrants, ethnic minorities), or may have issues with complex information (students with special needs), to read it thoroughly in their own time and make sure they understand everything.

Having all information well explained in a document will also ease the tension in groups with fear of participating. It will convince groups at risk due to low socio-economic backgrounds that the grant covers the mobility. It will convince groups living in rural areas that they will be assisted in the travel procedure. |
|---|---|

Part 2: Practical Guide

Provide space and time for questions	
Stage of the mobility to which the tip refers	Recruitment process
Does it relate to a specific group at risk of social exclusion?	All groups
Target group of the tip (VET teacher, VET student, VET centre...)	VET students
Does it require the collaboration of specific actors? (Director, students, teachers...)	Pedagogical adviser (if the school has any) Financial department (in specific cases)
Does it require external resources/equipment?	No
Does it require budgetary expenses?	No
Necessary time for implementation	The entire time of the recruitment process

Part 2: Practical Guide

Provide space and time for questions

| Expected results | Provide certain times and spaces for students to ask questions. These can be one-to-one tutoring chats, or small groups that have similar questions. By doing so, students will be able to ask without fear, and they will have the option of solving their doubts for specific cases.

For example, LGTBIQ+ students may have questions regarding the host country; students with social needs may have questions regarding the possibilities of internships in the host country; students from low socio-economic backgrounds may have questions regarding the monetary coverage... and many times, they will not feel comfortable asking away in the common events and seminars. |
|---|---|

Part 2: Practical Guide

Meetings with parents and legal guardians

Stage of the mobility to which the tip refers	Recruitment process
Does it relate to a specific group at risk of social exclusion?	Low socio-economic background Migrant background Women LQTBIQ+ Rural areas Special needs Refugees
Target group of the tip (VET teacher, VET student, VET centre...)	Parents and legal guardians of students
Does it require the collaboration of specific actors? (Director, students, teachers...)	Director, relevant teachers and management staff, pedagogic staff if available in the centre
Does it require external resources/equipment?	No
Does it require budgetary expenses?	No
Necessary time for implementation	15 days

Provide space and time for questions

Expected results	Organising meetings to explain parents how Erasmus+ mobilities work is very useful to easy potential doubts they may have. Giving them the specific information first-hand will decrease potential distortion of the message, and it will ensure they have all information. Make sure to provide enough information prior to the meeting, and to leave some time for doubts, either in group or in individual chats if necessary.

Part 2: Practical Guide

2.2. Selection process

The second phase involves the selection of students qualified to participate in an Erasmus+ mobility programme. This process should be carefully organised and structured to ensure equal opportunities for all applicants, regardless of their background or individual characteristics. It should also emphasise the promotion of anti-discrimination policies, stating clearly that no form of discrimination will be accepted either in the selection process or in the mobility programme itself. In addition, a diverse selection committee should be established to minimise bias by ensuring that it is made up of members with different perspectives and backgrounds.

More specifically:

1. Equal Opportunity:
- Emphasizing equal opportunity means ensuring that every applicant, regardless of their background, socio-economic status, gender, sexual orientation, or any other characteristic, has an equal chance to participate in the mobility program. This principle recognizes that everyone should be evaluated based on their merit and qualifications rather than personal attributes.
- In practical terms, this involves designing the selection process in a way that does not inherently advantage or disadvantage any group. It also means creating an environment where applicants feel confident that their backgrounds will not unfairly affect their chances.

2. Anti-Discrimination Policies:

- Communicating anti-discrimination policies is a crucial step to prevent and address discrimination. It involves making it clear from the outset that any form of discrimination, including but not limited to discrimination based on race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, disability, or any other characteristic, is strictly prohibited during the selection process and throughout the mobility program.

- VET professionals should establish a code of conduct or guidelines that explicitly outline what constitutes discrimination and the consequences for engaging in discriminatory behavior. This information should be readily accessible to all participants, and they should be encouraged to report any incidents of discrimination.

3. Diverse Selection Panel:

- Ensuring a diverse selection panel means assembling a group of individuals who come from different backgrounds, have varied experiences, and represent various perspectives. The goal is to minimize biases that may arise from a homogenous group.

- A diverse panel can provide a more comprehensive and fair evaluation of applicants, as different panel members may have unique insights and considerations. For example, having individuals who have experienced social exclusion themselves or who are familiar with the challenges faced by marginalized groups can bring valuable perspectives to the selection process.

Part 2: Practical Guide

Steps in the selection process

Review Selection Criteria

Review and revise selection criteria to be inclusive and relevant to the specific mobility program.
Ensure criteria do not inadvertently exclude any group or create unnecessary barriers.

Application Assistance

Provide support and guidance to applicants who may need assistance with the application process, such as those with language barriers or disabilities.
Offer assistance with documentation and paperwork.

Clear Communication

Clearly communicate the selection process, including timelines and expectations, to all applicants.
Provide information on the skills and qualities sought in participants.

Accessibility

Ensure that the application process is accessible to individuals with disabilities. This includes accessible application forms and digital materials.
Provide alternative formats for information, such as Braille or audio formats.

Part 2: Practical Guide

Steps in the selection process

Inclusivity Training

Train selection panel members and VET staff in inclusivity and diversity awareness.
Equip them with the skills to recognize and mitigate bias.

Monitoring and Reporting

Establish a system for monitoring the selection process to detect any potential biases or issues.
Encourage applicants to report any discrimination or concerns they may have.

Appeals Process

Implement an appeals process that allows applicants to challenge decisions they believe were unfair.
Ensure transparency and fairness in the appeals process.

Feedback and Improvement

Collect feedback from both selected and non-selected applicants to continuously improve the selection process.

Part 2: Practical Guide

SELECTION PROCESS OF PARTICIPANTS

TIPS FOR ERASMUS+ COORDINATORS

- Review Selection Criteria for Inclusivity

- Accessible Application Process

- Support in the application for an easier selection

- Applying for additional funding for people at risk of social exclusion

Part 2: Practical Guide

Review Selection Criteria for Inclusivity

Stage of the mobility to which the tip refers	Pre-application and Application Process
Does it relate to a specific group at risk of social exclusion?	No, it benefits all potential applicants.
Target group of the tip (VET teacher, VET student, VET centre...)	VET Center Staff responsible for designing and reviewing selection criteria.
Does it require the collaboration of specific actors? (Director, students, teachers...)	Collaboration among VET centre leadership, program coordinators, and potentially external stakeholders for input.
Does it require external resources/equipment?	While no external resources are required, the tip suggests reviewing and revising existing selection criteria to make them more inclusive, which may involve internal resources and expertise.
Does it require budgetary expenses?	The tip indicates minimal expenses, primarily associated with meetings and discussions aimed at revising and aligning the criteria with inclusivity goals.

Review Selection Criteria for Inclusivity

Necessary time for implementation	Several weeks are necessary to assess, discuss, and potentially revise the selection criteria as needed to ensure they are inclusive.
Expected results	By reviewing and updating selection criteria, you ensure they are fair, relevant, and inclusive. This benefits all applicants by making the criteria clearer and more aligned with the goals of the mobility program. Inclusivity becomes a central aspect of the selection process, promoting a more diverse and equitable participant pool.

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Accessible Application Process

Stage of the mobility to which the tip refers	This tip addresses the application and selection stage, emphasizing the importance of ensuring accessibility from the outset of the process. It recognizes that this stage directly impacts the inclusivity of the program.
Does it relate to a specific group at risk of social exclusion?	It specifically benefits students with disabilities, acknowledging their potential exclusion from the application process due to accessibility barriers.
Target group of the tip (VET teacher, VET student, VET centre…)	VET Students, VET Center Staff involved in application processing, IT department (for digital accessibility).
Does it require the collaboration of specific actors? (Director, students, teachers…)	Collaboration between VET centre staff and IT department to ensure digital accessibility.
Does it require external resources/equipment?	The tip suggests that it may require software or tools for digital accessibility, which can be considered external resources to ensure that all application materials are accessible.
Does it require budgetary expenses?	While minimal expenses are mentioned for software/tools if they are not already available, the investment in ensuring accessibility is essential to promote inclusivity.

Part 2: Practical Guide

Accessible Application Process

Necessary time for implementation	Time needed to ensure that all application materials are accessible digitally and in alternative formats.
Expected results	An accessible application process ensures that students with disabilities can easily apply for the mobility program. This promotes inclusivity by removing barriers and allows a wider range of applicants to participate.

Part 2: Practical Guide

Support in the application for an easier selection	
Stage of the mobility to which the tip refers	Application and selection process
Does it relate to a specific group at risk of social exclusion?	Any group at risk of exclusion
Target group of the tip (VET teacher, VET student, VET centre…)	VET centre, Erasmus+ manager
Does it require the collaboration of specific actors? (Director, students, teachers…)	Students
Does it require external resources/equipment?	It may require the computer room of the centre
Does it require budgetary expenses?	No
Necessary time for implementation	2-4 weeks

Part 2: Practical Guide

Support in the application for an easier selection

Expected results	The selection process needs to be fair, therefore, it will consider all students equally. However, many students at risk of social exclusion may have difficulties in providing adequate answers to the different phases of the selection process. By assisting them in this process, you give them a chance in being selected, since they will correctly apply and gather the "necessary" points for selection.

Part 2: Practical Guide

Applying for additional funding for people at risk of social exclusion	
Stage of the mobility to which the tip refers	Application and selection process
Does it relate to a specific group at risk of social exclusion?	Any group at risk of exclusion
Target group of the tip (VET teacher, VET student, VET centre...)	VET centre, Erasmus+ manager
Does it require the collaboration of specific actors? (Director, students, teachers...)	Director
Does it require external resources/equipment?	No
Does it require budgetary expenses?	No
Necessary time for implementation	It needs to be implemented since the centre applies for mobilities in the Erasmus+ program

Applying for additional funding for people at risk of social exclusion

Expected results	By applying to additional budget for involving students at risk of social exclusion, you establish a series of vacancies that will be exclusively for this group. This facilitates the selection process, as they will not compete with other students who may have had "easier" ways of accessing to a better language education, for example.

Part 2: Practical Guide

2.3. Preparation of the mobility

To prepare and create an inclusive and supportive Erasmus+ mobility program, several essential steps should be taken. First, comprehensive pre-departure orientation sessions should be organized to equip participants with crucial information about the program, including cultural awareness, code of conduct, safety guidelines, and available support services.

Language support, such as language courses or language exchange opportunities, should be offered, particularly for those not studying in their native tongue. Cultural sensitivity training should be provided to all participants to promote understanding and respect among diverse groups. Accessibility considerations should be a priority, ensuring that all facilities and accommodations are accessible to participants with disabilities.

To foster a sense of community and assistance, peer support networks connecting participants and alumni or mentors from similar backgrounds should be established.

Part 2: Practical Guide

Steps in the preparation of the mobility

Orientation Sessions

Organize comprehensive pre-departure orientation sessions for all participants.
Cover program details, cultural awareness, safety, and support services.
Make these sessions accessible in terms of location and content.

Multilingual Support

Offer language assistance and translation services for participants who are not proficient in the program's primary language.
Ensure that written materials are available in multiple languages, if needed.

Cultural Sensitivity Workshops

Conduct cultural sensitivity workshops that are mandatory for all participants.
Encourage open discussions on cultural differences and stereotypes.
Promote a sense of cultural awareness and appreciation.

Peer Support and Networking

Encourage participants to connect with each other before departure.
Facilitate online or in-person meet-ups, especially for those from underrepresented backgrounds.
Assign mentors or support buddies if possible.

Part 2: Practical Guide

Steps in the preparation of the mobility

Individualized Support Plans

Develop individual support plans for participants based on their unique needs and challenges.
Include emergency contacts, medical information, and accessibility requirements.

Accessible Communication

Use accessible communication tools and platforms for all program-related communication.
Ensure that participants with disabilities have access to communication aids or interpreters as needed.

Financial Planning Resources

Provide resources and guidance on financial planning, budgeting, and accessing financial support.
Offer workshops or consultations for participants to discuss their financial concerns.

Health and Well-being Information

Share information on healthcare services available at the destination.
Provide guidance on health insurance and access to medical support.

Part 2: Practical Guide

RECRUITMENT OF PARTICIPANTS

TIPS FOR ERASMUS+ COORDINATORS

Community Building Activities

Establish a Mentorship Program for Incoming and Outgoing Students

Contact with families and guardians

Part 2: Practical Guide

Community Building Activities

Stage of the mobility to which the tip refers	Pre-Departure and During Mobility
Does it relate to a specific group at risk of social exclusion?	No, it benefits all participants by fostering connections.
Target group of the tip (VET teacher, VET student, VET centre...)	VET Students, VET Center Staff involved in orientation and event planning.
Does it require the collaboration of specific actors? (Director, students, teachers...)	Collaboration with local communities, cultural organizations, or student groups to organize activities.
Does it require external resources/equipment?	Resources for organizing community events and cultural activities.
Does it require budgetary expenses?	Budget allocation is necessary to fund community-building events and activities, ensuring their successful implementation and inclusivity.

Community Building Activities

Necessary time for implementation	Community-building activities should be planned before departure to set a positive tone. Ongoing events should be scheduled throughout the mobility period to maintain and strengthen the sense of community.
Expected results	Participants will have opportunities to build connections, friendships, and a sense of belonging within the mobility program, enhancing the overall inclusive experience.

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Establish a Mentorship Program for Incoming and Outgoing Students

Stage of the mobility to which the tip refers	Preparation for mobility.
Does it relate to a specific group at risk of social exclusion?	All participating students, both incoming and outgoing.
Target group of the tip (VET teacher, VET student, VET centre...)	VET teachers, coordinators, and experienced students.
Does it require the collaboration of specific actors? (Director, students, teachers...)	Collaboration is essential among VET teachers, experienced students, and coordinators to establish and run an effective mentorship program.
Does it require external resources/equipment?	The mentorship program may require guidelines and materials, which can be developed with minimal budgetary expenses.
Does it require budgetary expenses?	The primary expenses associated with this tip are related to the development and printing of mentorship program guidelines and materials, which are generally minimal. An option is for the guidelines to be in a digital form.

Part 2: Practical Guide

Establish a Mentorship Program for Incoming and Outgoing Students

Necessary time for implementation	The mentorship program should be set up and communicated to students before the start of the mobility to ensure that students have access to support from day one.
Expected results	By establishing a mentorship program, the VET professionals aim to create a strong support network, ease the integration process, and reduce feelings of exclusion among incoming and outgoing students. This, in turn, contributes to a more inclusive mobility experience.

Part 2: Practical Guide

Contact with families and guardians

Stage of the mobility to which the tip refers	Preparation of mobility
Does it relate to a specific group at risk of social exclusion?	Any group at risk of social exclusion, especially those with special needs
Target group of the tip (VET teacher, VET student, VET centre…)	Responsible of the Erasmus, VET centre
Does it require the collaboration of specific actors? (Director, students, teachers…)	Teachers, director
Does it require external resources/equipment?	Not necessarily
Does it require budgetary expenses?	Not necessarily
Necessary time for implementation	1-2 weeks

Part 2: Practical Guide

Contact with families and guardians

Expected results	Many times, fears among students come from their families. Especially when working with a student with special needs, families and guardians may fear the student will not have the adequate support in the Erasmus+ experience. By having a one-to-one session with families, and explaining each step of the process and the support provided in the host country, it will be easier for them to ease in the process and therefore, the student will also feel more secure.

2.4. Mobility

Mobility starts with the trip to the land of mobility. This is often the students' first trip outside their home country; therefore, they view it as very complex and worrying. For this reason, it is recommended to include an accompanying person (teacher or project manager) in the first part of mobility (when arriving at the destination). They help participants get used to their first days in a foreign country, the accommodation, and the internship companies. In some cases, young people with special needs may have a teacher present during the entire period of mobility.

When starting the mobility, young people get to know each other, the representatives of the host organisation, their place of living, their place of work. They learn about the responsibilities of mobility. The student starts working at the internship and gets to know the hosting city. Young people themselves or the host organisation can organise excursions to get to know the culture of the host country.

During the mobility, regular communication with the sending organisation by calling or writing is very important in order to understand how the mobility experience is unfolding (relation with the internship, the accommodation...). The sending organisation needs to ensure that the participant goes to work and does not violate the rules at the place of residence.

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Looking specifically at people at risk of social exclusion, it is very positive for them to participate in mobilities. It allows them to participate in activities in which they may have not had the opportunity before (such as traveling, communicating with other cultures, feeling included...). This, in turn, leads to the following benefits:

Higher self-confidence.

Practising in the profession.

Language skills.

New friendships.

Finding possible future jobs (for persons coming from poorer countries).

Willingness to put more effort in studies in order to qualify for mobility.

Breaking away from an environment that does not promote personal development.

Part 2: Practical Guide

Steps in the mobility

Arriving to the host city

It is important to ensure that all required documents are ready for the travel.
Mobility participants need to be aware of their own responsibility (e.g. bringing the ID/Passport)

Getting to know the host city

The accompanying person will assist the participants in getting to know the place of mobility
If possible, representatives of the host partner will also collaborate
The accompanying teacher can leave after a few days, or they can stay for the duration of the mobility, depending on the project and the mobility needs.

Carry out the internship

This is the most relevant point of the mobility. All participants need to follow the expected schedule and comply with the internship rules.

Part 2: Practical Guide

Steps in the mobility

Constant monitoring

Both host and sending institution need to provide constant monitoring of the activities carried out.
There should be regular communication with students and the host organisation.

Participate in cultural activities

If interesting, participants can take local language courses (if necessary)
They can participate in excursions and cultural workshops
They can visit entrepreneurs, participate in creative workshops
They can do activities in the nature

Return

Part 2: Practical Guide

RECRUITMENT OF PARTICIPANTS

TIPS FOR ERASMUS+ COORDINATORS

Financial support for buying products of need

Regular communication during mobility

Accompanying person

Part 2: Practical Guide

Financial support for buying products of need

Stage of the mobility to which the tip refers	Mobility
Does it relate to a specific group at risk of social exclusion?	Low socio-economic background Migrant background Ethnic minorities Students with special needs Refugees
Target group of the tip (VET teacher, VET student, VET centre…)	Project manager
Does it require the collaboration of specific actors? (Director, students, teachers…)	Project manager, students
Does it require external resources/equipment?	Additional funding
Does it require budgetary expenses?	No
Necessary time for implementation	Time before going to the mobility

Financial support for buying products of need

Expected results	If necessary, it is possible for a young person from the lower social strata to buy necessary things that he cannot afford, for example, a travel bag, work clothes or shoes for the place of practice. As a result, young people from acute social exclusion groups would feel equal to others.

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Regular communication during mobility	
Stage of the mobility to which the tip refers	Mobility
Does it relate to a specific group at risk of social exclusion?	All groups
Target group of the tip (VET teacher, VET student, VET centre...)	Teachers, project manager, students
Does it require the collaboration of specific actors? (Director, students, teachers...)	Teachers, project manager, students
Does it require external resources/equipment?	No
Does it require budgetary expenses?	No

Part 2: Practical Guide

Regular communication during mobility	
Necessary time for implementation	All mobility time
Expected results	By regularly communicating, calling or writing to young people, school representatives can keep up-to-date on what is happening in mobility, as well as help with any confusion or complications that may arise.

Part 2: Practical Guide

Accompanying person	
Stage of the mobility to which the tip refers	Mobility
Does it relate to a specific group at risk of social exclusion?	All groups
Target group of the tip (VET teacher, VET student, VET centre...)	Teacher, project manager
Does it require the collaboration of specific actors? (Director, students, teachers...)	No
Does it require external resources/equipment?	Erasmus+ Project funding for accompanying person
Does it require budgetary expenses?	Yes
Necessary time for implementation	All mobility time

Accompanying person

Expected results	On the way to mobility, a teacher accompanies students, who visit the places of work and living of the young people to keep up with the situation and ensure that the young people reach their destination safely. For most young people, going on mobility is their first experience of travelling abroad. During the first days in a foreign country, the teacher provides face-to-face support to the students. If necessary and it is possible in the project, a support person/teacher is available for students with special needs throughout the internship.

Part 2: Practical Guide

2.5. Feedback after the mobility

At the end of the mobility project, each young person must fill out the **electronic report form**. If the student has problems with computer skills, accessibility, or lack of knowledge of the English language, the school project coordinator helps him fill out the questionnaire.

When young people return from foreign mobility, a **project evaluation event** are held, where students show in the form of presentations what kind of practice they have completed abroad. It is a short story and photos from practice and free time. Such a performance in front of schoolmates is not easy, especially for young people from socially excluded groups. However, it is an opportunity to show yourself, to prove your worth in the eyes of other young people as well.

Likewise, group educators ask students who have been on mobility to tell about their experiences in group lessons or professional subject lessons.

Every single experience is different, so we encourage students to all talk about theirs. After their presentation of viewpoints, groupmates get a clearer view of what all of them experienced and that may even bring the socially excluded students to be more socially included. They may gain new friendships in school, get more opportunities to be picked for mobilization and their personality may develop on new levels.

Mobility opens up young people and they are more open to new experiences and practical work. After the travel, they are more motivated than before so they may study better, get better grades and get more creative.

Since they have seen something else that has not been in their usual lives, they think about developing themselves and even teaching others how to achieve more. They inspire other groupmates and they even inspire themselves. They inspire other young people in their school and maintain contacts (in the social environment) with young people they know abroad.

Very important feedback is also from colleagues (teachers, group leaders) who accompany students on mobility. They evaluate not only the suitability of jobs and residences offered in mobility, but also young people (social skills, professional skills etc).

Part 2: Practical Guide

Steps in the feedack after the mobility

Submitting the electronic mobility report

The project manager or teacher will help students who need to translate the questions or have issues with the questionnaire

Mobility reporting event at school

Presentation about practice to school members.

Promoting the project

Promotion of the mobility among student schoolmates and friends.

Meetings of educators and people involved in the project

It allows to share experiences and plan future mobilities

Part 2: Practical Guide

RECRUITMENT OF PARTICIPANTS

TIPS FOR ERASMUS+ COORDINATORS

Sharing the mobility experience

Social media sharing

Testimonial of the accompanying person

Part 2: Practical Guide

Sharing the mobility experience

Stage of the mobility to which the tip refers	Feedback after the mobility
Does it relate to a specific group at risk of social exclusion?	All groups
Target group of the tip (VET teacher, VET student, VET centre...)	Teachers
Does it require the collaboration of specific actors? (Director, students, teachers...)	Teachers, project manager, students
Does it require external resources/equipment?	No
Does it require budgetary expenses?	No
Necessary time for implementation	As soon as students are ready to report.
Expected results	Students tells about their mobility experience, inspiring others. As a result, other students dare to apply for foreign internships.

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Part 2: Practical Guide

Social media sharing	
Stage of the mobility to which the tip refers	Feedback after the mobility
Does it relate to a specific group at risk of social exclusion?	All groups
Target group of the tip (VET teacher, VET student, VET centre...)	Teachers, students
Does it require the collaboration of specific actors? (Director, students, teachers...)	No
Does it require external resources/equipment?	No
Does it require budgetary expenses?	No
Necessary time for implementation	After mobility

Social media sharing

Expected results	The organization reflects the mobilities on its social network accounts. However, the most networking takes place between young people, who communicate on social networks and pass on information to each other about their experiences in mobility. Young people have made friends in other countries and continue to communicate virtually.

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Testimonial of the accompanying person

Stage of the mobility to which the tip refers	Feedback after the mobility
Does it relate to a specific group at risk of social exclusion?	All groups
Target group of the tip (VET teacher, VET student, VET centre...)	Teachers
Does it require the collaboration of specific actors? (Director, students, teachers...)	Teachers
Does it require external resources/equipment?	No
Does it require budgetary expenses?	No
Necessary time for implementation	After mobility

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Testimonial of the accompanying person

Expected results	When the accompanying person (teacher, project manager, etc.) returns from accompanying young people on mobility, discussions with colleagues take place. Then it is possible to evaluate not only the working environment and living conditions, but also the student's attitude, work skills and social abilities. This allows teachers to plan further work in training the young person.

PART 3

Success Stories

Hi! my name is...

Esther Illueca Gimenez

Age
25 years

Country of birth
Spain

Country of residence
Spain

Type of Erasmus+ mobility:

Long-term mobility

Why are you at risk of social exclusion?

I consider myself a person at risk of social exclusion because I live in a rural area at risk of depopulation, where there are not many opportunities for training, learning languages or finding a job.

How was your Erasmus+ experience?

I went on Erasmus in Paris. I trained by attending classes and advanced in my studies. But I also met a lot of people and learned things such as teamwork, social skills, multicultural communication...
In order to afford an Erasmus I had to work while I was there and I had the help of a scholarship and financial support from my parents.

Why would you recommend Erasmus+ mobilities to other students?

I would recommend going on Erasmus+ because for me it was a very enriching experience where I learned a lot of things. I think that going on Erasmus+ brings a lot of good things in many different aspects.

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Hi! my name is...

Francisco Illueca Martínez

Age
24 years

Country of birth
Spain

Country of residence
Spain

Type of Erasmus+ mobility:

Long-term mobility

Why are you at risk of social exclusion?

Because I live in a village of 1000 inhabitants, where there is very little help for young and qualified people.

How was your Erasmus+ experience?

Overall it was pretty good even though I was not in the best of moods.
I got to see amazing places and made friends that will last forever, as well as helping me to get out of my comfort zone.

Why would you recommend Erasmus+ mobilities to other students?

Above all because it helps you to see life from a different perspective, to get to know other ways of living and relating to others.

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Hi! my name is...

Suleman Sayed

Age
30 years

Country of birth
Syria

Country of residence
Germany

Type of Erasmus+ mobility:

Short-term mobility

Why are you at risk of social exclusion?

I consider myself a person at risk of social exclusion because I am a migrant, and I am not studying in my mother tongue.

How was your Erasmus+ experience?

My Erasmus experience was really nice. I liked the lifestyle of the Spanish people and the work was good too.

Why would you recommend Erasmus+ mobilities to other students?

I would recommend going on Erasmus+ because it helps you see more from the world and improve you social skills.

Hi! my name is...

Paula Pliska

Age
20 years

Country of birth
Latvia

Country of residence
Latvia

Type of Erasmus+ mobility:

Short-term mobility

Why are you at risk of social exclusion?

I come from a large family with many children

How was your Erasmus+ experience?

I got a good internship experience in Austria. I got to know Austrian culture. I saw how people work and live there. I met new friends. I saw their living conditions. I eat traditional food. In my free time, I went on excursions by train, visited many natural objects.

Why would you recommend Erasmus+ mobilities to other students?

I advise others to go for foreign internships, because it is cool to learn a profession in another country. You can speak English, German and Russian. There is an opportunity to work in a well-equipped kitchen, as an adult, not a student. To see such nature objects that do not exist in our country. It is a great opportunity to see the world!

Hi! my name is...

Laurita Logina
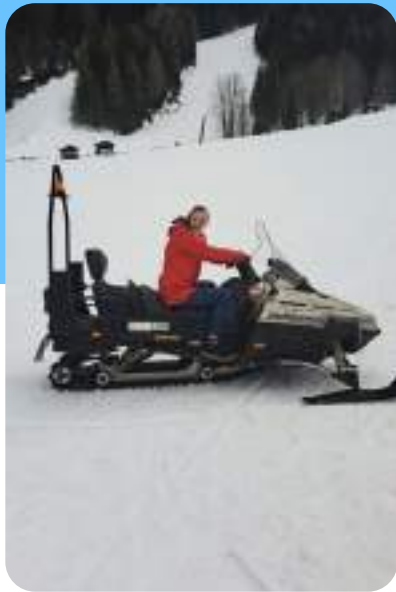
Age

24 years

Country of birth

Latvia

Country of residence

Latvia

Type of Erasmus+ mobility:

Short-term mobility

Why are you at risk of social exclusion?

I have an intellectual developmental disorder. Low cognitive abilities – reasoning, planning, problem solving, abstract thinking, teaching abilities. Abilities develop more slowly than peers.

How was your Erasmus+ experience?

During the Erasmus+ internship in Austria, I gained good experience; saw another country, got to know their culture. I saw the living conditions of people in another country. There was an opportunity to converse in a foreign language, to improve language skills. I learned work skills in the chosen profession, got to know a different work environment in the country.
Went on a snowmobile, which I really wanted to do and had never done before. There was also good entertainment.

Why would you recommend Erasmus+ mobilities to other students?

I advise other young people to go abroad for an internship, because in this way there is an opportunity to see the world, an opportunity to get acquainted with the culture of another country. The opportunity to see the sights of other countries. Meeting with young people of different nationalities. Improve English speaking skills. And to work in a beautiful kitchen, in your profession.

Hi! my name is...

Kaiva Strazdiņa

Age
17 years

Country of birth
Latvia

Country of residence
Latvia

Type of Erasmus+ mobility:

Short-term mobility

Why are you at risk of social exclusion?

I live in a village where there are few opportunities for young and qualified young people to get help.

How was your Erasmus+ experience?

My time spent in an Erasmus project in another country was interesting and informative. I also gained other professional skills, improved my knowledge of a foreign language, saw amazingly beautiful places and made new friends.

Why would you recommend Erasmus+ mobilities to other students?

I recommend participating in the project, because I gained new knowledge and experience. I saw other living conditions, a way of life, got to know another country, it's like a trip where you gain additional experience!

Hi! my name is...

Artūrs Lūsis

Age
17 years

Country of birth
Latvia

Country of residence
Latvia

Type of Erasmus+ mobility:

Short-term mobility

Why are you at risk of social exclusion?

I consider myself a person exposed to social risk. I live in an area where there are few opportunities for training, language learning, and finding a job.

How was your Erasmus+ experience?

I went to Austria. I increased my knowledge practically, learned to cook the dishes of this country. I tried to prove myself as a good intern, and I succeeded because the boss offered to stay in the internship longer. It boosted my self-confidence. I got good financial support.

Why would you recommend Erasmus+ mobilities to other students?

I recommend the opportunities offered by Erasmus, because it gave me an enriching experience in various fields - both professional and domestic.

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Hi! my name is...

Edgars Jasukaitis

Age
17 years

Country of birth
Latvia

Country of residence
Latvia

Type of Erasmus+ mobility:

Short-term mobility

Why are you at risk of social exclusion?

I live in the city, but I consider myself a person exposed to social risk, because it is very difficult to find a well-paid job in my profession.

How was your Erasmus+ experience?

I went to Erasmus+ in Austria. The time spent there gave me confidence in my abilities, it was a great challenge. During the project, I made sure that I was able to perform well the duties assigned to me, I gained new knowledge in the professional field - as a waiter. I am improving my conversation in a foreign language. This was an opportunity to promote your country as well. My dream came true - to go to another country for practice. I gained good experience - how to solve problems if there is no Internet in a specific situation.
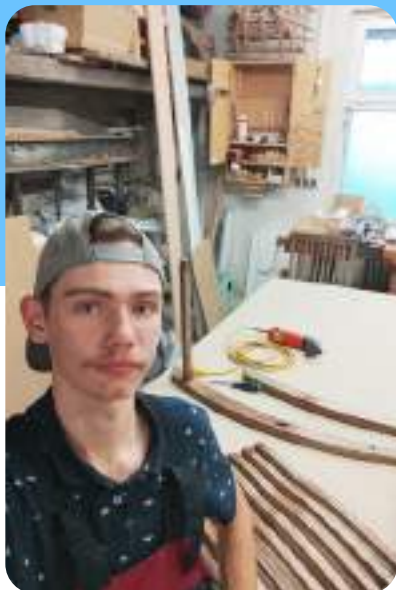
Why would you recommend Erasmus+ mobilities to other students?

I recommend using the opportunities of the project - it is a challenge, self-affirmation, getting to know the living conditions of another country, seeing beautiful places.

Hi! my name is...

Raivo Šteinbergs

Age
18 years

Country of birth
Latvia

Country of residence
Latvia

Type of Erasmus+ mobility:

Short-term mobility

Why are you at risk of social exclusion?

Family comes from the countryside

How was your Erasmus+ experience?

The project was like a good adventure. The company where I was an intern surprised me with its modernism - with modern equipment and people's attitude. I liked living in dormitories, together with others, where there was a lot of freedom. I gained a lot of independence, we cooked our own food, we did what we wanted. I really liked the city, which was big and surprisingly interesting. I was able to get to know German culture and feel its values.

Why would you recommend Erasmus+ mobilities to other students?

I recommend it to others, because in the Erasmus internship you can gain knowledge that you won't get while studying at a technical school. It is possible to live in another country. Learn to be independent, take care of yourself and take responsibility - get up on your own, go to the practice place, go to bed on time.
Participating in an Erasmus project is a good experience that will be remembered for a lifetime.

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Hi! my name is...

Krists Retigs

Age
19 years

Country of birth
Latvia

Country of residence
Latvia

Type of Erasmus+ mobility:

Short-term mobility

Why are you at risk of social exclusion?

Learning disabilities

How was your Erasmus+ experience?

I had the opportunity to live in another country for a month.

During the month, I learned to support myself independently, to buy my own food, to take care of myself. Feel the freedom and be independent of anything. We visited many beautiful places in Germany. The best thing is that I gained new friends and good work experience.

Why would you recommend Erasmus+ mobilities to other students?

I recommend everyone to try to participate. In Erasmus+ projects, you can gain good knowledge about the culture of other countries. You can meet and see how local residents live and work. Other work techniques can be learned.

ALLinErasmus

Hi! my name is...

Valeriya Blagushina

Age
17 years

Country of birth
Russia

Country of residence
Spain

Type of Erasmus+ mobility:

Long-term mobility

Why are you at risk of social exclusion?

I am a migrant, and I study in a language different than my mother tongue.

How was your Erasmus+ experience?

My Erasmus+ experience in Malta has been a great opportunity, both professionally and personally. I have worked hard and faced many challenges, but I have had the opportunity to get to know a wonderful island, where I have met amazing people from other cultures and countries. It has been a unique experience that I will carry with me for the rest of my life.

Why would you recommend Erasmus+ mobilities to other students?

I would recommend an Erasmus+ mobility to everyone. It is a great opportunity to meet other cultures and learn how to face challenges and mature as person.

ALLinErasmus

Hi! my name is...

Oscar Ismael Escobar

Age
18 years

Country of birth
Spain

Country of residence
Spain

Type of Erasmus+ mobility:

Short-term mobility

Why are you at risk of social exclusion?

I consider myself at risk of social exclusion because of my socio-economic background.

How was your Erasmus+ experience?

The experience started with two weeks of work in May in Spain. We worked on aspects of welding and teamwork and how to present work in public. Then we worked through an online platform and ended with a two-week mobility in Munich where we went to the company SWM to carry out tasks related to welding with the same colleagues we worked with in Valencia.

Why would you recommend Erasmus+ mobilities to other students?

Because it has helped me to see how they work in other countries.
because it has forced me to organise my housework
Because I have improved my English
Because I have made friends from other countries

Hi! my name is...

Carlos Antonio Marquez

Age
20 years

Country of birth
Honduras

Country of residence
Spain

Type of Erasmus+ mobility:

Short-term mobility

Why are you at risk of social exclusion?

I consider myself at risk of social exclusion because of my socio-economic background.

How was your Erasmus+ experience?

The experience started with two weeks of work in May in Spain. We worked on aspects of welding and teamwork and how to present work in public. Then we worked through an online platform and ended with a two-week mobility in Munich where we went to the company SWM to carry out tasks related to welding with the same colleagues we worked with in Valencia.

Why would you recommend Erasmus+ mobilities to other students?

Because it has helped me to see how they work in other countries.
Because it has forced me to organise my housework
Because I have improved my English
Because I have made friends from other countries

ALLinErasmus

Hi! my name is...

Giorgia Villamaina

Age
19 years

Country of birth
Italy

Country of residence
Italy

Type of Erasmus+ mobility:

Long-term mobility (Erasmus pro)

Why are you at risk of social exclusion?

I consider myself a person at risk of social exclusion because I am a woman and I come from a very small town in a rural area.

How was your Erasmus+ experience?

The best experience of my life, stepping out of one's comfort zone for personal growth

Why would you recommend Erasmus+ mobilities to other students?

Because it is a unique experience that helps you grow personally

Hi! my name is...

Sara Moretti

Age
19 years

Country of birth
Italy

Country of residence
Italy

Type of Erasmus+ mobility:

Long-term mobility (Erasmus pro)

Why are you at risk of social exclusion?

I consider myself at risk of social exclusion because I come from a rural area

How was your Erasmus+ experience?

Fantastic experience, I really enjoyed it, both in the house and at work

Why would you recommend Erasmus+ mobilities to other students?

Because it is an experience that makes you grow and gives you so much

ALLinErasmus

Hi! my name is...

Chiara Calvi

Age
19 years

Country of birth
Italy

Country of residence
Italy

Type of Erasmus+ mobility:

Long-term mobility (Erasmus pro)

Why are you at risk of social exclusion?

I consider myself at risk of social exclusion because I am a woman coming from a rural area

How was your Erasmus+ experience?

It was a wonderful experience, I had a great time both at work and with my family and Valencia is a fantastic city.

Why would you recommend Erasmus+ mobilities to other students?

This experience makes you grow a lot both on a linguistic and personal level, I come back more mature and aware of what I am worth, what I want and what I am. I highly recommend it also because you make a lot of friends and meet people from other countries.

ALLinErasmus

Hi! my name is...

Erika Tedeschi

Age
19 years

Country of birth
Italy

Country of residence
Italy

Type of Erasmus+ mobility:

Long-term mobility (Erasmus pro)

Why are you at risk of social exclusion?

I consider myself at risk of social exclusion because I come from a rural area

How was your Erasmus+ experience?

My Erasmus experience has been unforgettable, very formative from different personal, social and work points of view.
I am very happy to have made this choice and to have lived this wonderful experience to the full.

Why would you recommend Erasmus+ mobilities to other students?

This experience leads to great personal growth, enriching your personal store of knowledge and fully experiencing every moment

Hi! my name is...

Arianna Di Pilato

Age
19 years

Country of birth
Italy

Country of residence
Italy

Type of Erasmus+ mobility:

Long-term mobility (Erasmus pro)

Why are you at risk of social exclusion?

I consider myself at risk of social exclusion because I come from a rural area

How was your Erasmus+ experience?

It is a fantastic experience that makes you grow a lot, you completely change your life in almost every respect and you face the world of work, especially the one you like

Why would you recommend Erasmus+ mobilities to other students?

I would recommend this experience because it makes you feel so many emotions you never thought you would feel, you meet so many new people and above all you learn to live your own life and be at peace with yourself since you are away from friends and family

ALLinErasmus

Hi! my name is...

Chiara Camporeale

Age
18 years

Country of birth
Italy

Country of residence
Italy

Type of Erasmus+ mobility:

Long-term mobility (Erasmus pro)

Why are you at risk of social exclusion?

I consider myself at risk of social exclusion because I come from a rural area

How was your Erasmus+ experience?

Fantastic in every way, although I left suddenly I would definitely make this choice again because I absolutely did not regret it, I visited the whole city and had fun with all the boys and girls I met

Why would you recommend Erasmus+ mobilities to other students?

because it is an experience that definitely makes you grow and changes you in a positive way, makes you become a more mature and responsible person and gives you unforgettable moments

ALLinErasmus

Hi! my name is...

Grazia Di Benedetto

Age
19 years

Country of birth
Italy

Country of residence
Italy

Type of Erasmus+ mobility:

Long-term mobility (Erasmus pro)

Why are you at risk of social exclusion?

I consider myself at risk of social exclusion because as a woman, I feel sometimes it is more difficult to access to the same opportunities.

How was your Erasmus+ experience?

My Erasmus+ experience was the best I could have done because it taught me that I can do everything on my own if I believe in it to the fullest, I have matured a lot, I have become more responsible for the world around me and if I hadn't done it I wouldn't have met the people I participated with

Why would you recommend Erasmus+ mobilities to other students?

I would recommend it because you become older, more responsible for yourself and much more mature about the world around you

ALLinErasmus

Hi! my name is...

Anne González

Type of Erasmus+ mobility:

Long-term mobility (Erasmus pro)

Age
25 years

Country of birth
Spain

Country of residence
Spain

Why are you at risk of social exclusion?

The language of the destination country is completely unknown to me

How was your Erasmus+ experience?

I did my internship in Athens. I worked for 6 months in a company and learned a lot of things. I saw how people live here and what their living conditions are like. I tasted the delicious traditional food and visited many temples and the amazing islands. I also made good friends and enjoyed the good vibes of Athens.

Why would you recommend Erasmus+ mobilities to other students?

It is the best way to grow both personally and professionally and also to learn Greek and practice English. It is an opportunity to get to know yourself, learn new things working in a company, meet people both local and from other countries and discover a new culture and places.

ALLinErasmus

Hi! my name is...

Sofia Giannari

Age
22 years

Country of birth
Greece

Country of residence
Greece

Type of Erasmus+ mobility:

Short-term mobility

Why are you at risk of social exclusion?

I have dyslexia and sometimes that leads to social exclusion.

How was your Erasmus+ experience?

My internship in AKMI improved my mental and working skills. Especially in the areas of project management, presentation design and research. Furthermore, the work environment is innovative, challenging, and productive. The relationships with my co-workers are based on teamwork and adaptability.

Why would you recommend Erasmus+ mobilities to other students?

I would recommend doing a mobility and especially in AKMI to other student because it offers many valuable opportunities. Students will start their career in an inspiring environment where guidance from co-workers is efficient and helpful. They will have the opportunity to work on many projects, gaining valuable experience and knowledge.

Hi! my name is...

Beñat Beristain

Age
27 years

Country of birth
Spain

Country of residence
Spain

Type of Erasmus+ mobility:

Long-term mobility

Why are you at risk of social exclusion?

I come from a rural area in the north of Spain

How was your Erasmus+ experience?

I was sent to learn about European projects related to VET, what it was a new subject for me. I could there see how the process of writing these projects was and how a company focused on this was working. I also had the opportunity to work in English which it was a challenge for me at that time.

Why would you recommend Erasmus+ mobilities to other students?

In my case in the company it went well. I adapted well to the team and I was felling confortable there. Apart from that, you learn other ways of working and relating.

ALLinErasmus

Hi! my name is...

Aleix

Age
18 years

Country of birth
Spain

Country of residence
Spain

Type of Erasmus+ mobility:

Short-term mobility

Why are you at risk of social exclusion?

I come from a rural area with less access to different options

How was your Erasmus+ experience?

I had been working in AKMI from April 2024 to June 2024 and it has been an amazing experience, learning with qualified college's' help and discovering new tools and working methods that will be useful for my future.

Why would you recommend Erasmus+ mobilities to other students?

Going in another country, with another culture, to work in a real company or school, is a life changing experience. You earn autonomy, abilities to adapt yourself in an unknown country and learn a lot about the area you work in.

Hi! my name is...

Vera Ortiz

Age
18 years

Country of birth
Spain

Country of residence
Spain

Type of Erasmus+ mobility:

Short-term mobility

Why are you at risk of social exclusion?

I come from a rural area

How was your Erasmus+ experience?

Overall it has been a good experience. My favorite part of it has been visiting new places, eating traditional food and learning about greek culture. I also got to see how people work here and how they interact with each other as well.

Why would you recommend Erasmus+ mobilities to other students?

I 100% recommend taking the leap and going on an internship abroad because you will probably only have this opportunity once in a lifetime and you will learn a lot about both the country and yourself.

GLOSSARY

Glossary

TERM	DEFINITION
Erasmus+	**Erasmus+** is the EU's programme to support education, training, youth and sport in Europe.
Mobility	Erasmus+ opportunity to travel to another EU destination for a period of time to participate in learning and training activities.
Social exclusion	Mechanisms whereby individuals and groups are excluded from taking part in social exchanges, It is felt and shown in the fields of housing, education, health, and access to services
Social Inclusion	Process by which efforts are made to ensure equal opportunities – that everyone, regardless of their background, can achieve their full potential in life.
Success Story	Example of a previous participant telling their story and providing feedback for future participants.

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freedom-zone

Parliament declares the European Union an '"LGBTIQ Freedom Zone"' | News |
European Parliament. (2021b, November 3).
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