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Erasmus+ Programme Annual Report 2014

Erasmus+

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Erasmus+ Programme Annual Report 2014

Executive Summary

Erasmus+ started in January 2014 as one single EU programme for education, training, youth and, for the first time, sport. Covering the period 2014-2020 it integrates the seven previous programmes¹ in those areas into three Key Actions

- Key Action 1 - Learning Mobility of individuals
- Key Action 2 - Cooperation for innovation and the exchange of good practices,
- Key Action 3 - Support for policy reform

and two dedicated areas, i.e. Jean Monnet and Sport.

In the context of the Europe 2020, ET 2020 and Youth strategies, the Erasmus+ programme was developed to support their objectives as well as support the education, training, youth and sport policy agendas. The programme was also designed with the objective to increase the added value and the impact of the EU actions by exploiting synergies between fields and actions, via efficiency gains and through simplification.

Implementation

With total budget of EUR 16.374 billion under heading 1 and EUR 1.836 billion under heading 4 to support its strong international dimension, Erasmus+ implementation successfully started in 2014. A total amount of EUR 2.071 billion was committed by the Commission and the Executive Agency, achieving a commitment rate of 99.88% of the foreseen budget. Heading 4 funds were only available at the end of 2014 delaying the launch of some actions like capacity building.

The National Agencies, entrusted with the implementation of more than three quarters of the funds in the programme countries, also managed to commit 99.93% of the amounts delegated to them despite the difficulties encountered with the transition to the new programme.

The late adoption of the Erasmus+ legal base in December 2013, the new harmonised rules, documents and forms, the new integrated IT Tools as well as, hampered the smooth implementation of the programme, particularly in the first months of 2014.

In response, the Commission applied more flexible deadlines for the calls, invested more resources in the programme implementation and worked in close cooperation with the National Agencies, through the establishment of working groups for example, to continuously improve the programme and facilitate its implementation. Those efforts will be pursued in 2015.

Preliminary results

Erasmus+ optimised successful actions already implemented in previous programmes and launched new ones, placing its 2014 priorities under the overarching principle of strengthening the links between political objectives and the programme and by adopting a new structure enabling an increased impact of the actions.

Most of the Erasmus+ projects launched in 2014 are not yet finalised as they have an average duration of 18-month to 2 years. It is therefore too early to make today a qualitative assessment of the impact of the new programme but the outputs are

¹ The Lifelong Learning Programme, The Youth in Action Programme, The Erasmus Mundus Programme, Tempus, Alfa, Edulink, Programmes of cooperation with industrialised countries in the field of higher education.

already tangible. An in-depth analysis will be possible in a next edition of the report and preliminarily results are presented below.

KA1 – Learning Mobility of Individuals

Mobility actions remained the highest priority with 66% the Erasmus+ budget or EUR 1,2 billion allocated to those actions. In line with the overall flat budget, the number of applications remained stable compared to the previous programmes and in 2014, around 500,000 young people studied, were trained, volunteered or participated in youth-exchanges abroad. 150,000 staff members of educational institutions and youth organisations also got the opportunity to improve their competencies by teaching and training abroad.

Additionally, some 170 Erasmus Mundus Masters Degrees/ Joint Doctorates, which had initially been funded under the LLP programme were also financed under KA1, as well as 11 new Erasmus Mundus Joint Masters Degrees.

In higher education, results show that mobilities are of higher quality and higher impact than previously and use a strengthened quality framework.

In the school, VET and adult fields, an important change was the institutional approach to mobility. The participating organisations and not the individual participant anymore now apply for funding. They must submit a European Development Plan, outlining how the planned activities will contribute to their strategic development. This change was overall well perceived in all fields.

In the youth field, youth exchanges remained as successful as in the past and mobility of youth workers saw a large increase due to its simplified format. Overall, all projects addressed very well the objectives of the Youth Chapter.

In KA1, financial support to people with special needs, fewer opportunities, from a disadvantaged background or from remote areas is now foreseen in most fields. In 2014, over 6,000 participants with special needs and over 47,000 young people with fewer opportunities benefitted from those top-up grants.

Furthermore, the On-line Linguistic Support (OLS) was also introduced to promote language learning and linguistic diversity. It allowed 126,000 participants to assess their knowledge of the language in which they will work or study. 30% followed and OLS language course afterwards.

Finally, the launch of the Erasmus master loans aiming at providing access to loans on favourable terms for students following a Master's programme in another country, initially foreseen for 2014, was postponed to February 2015 as the delegation agreement with the EIF could only be signed end of December.

KA2 – Cooperation for Innovation and the Exchange of good Practises

Under Key Action 2, **Strategic Partnerships** continued and further encouraged the cross sectorial activities of the previous LLP. Over 1,700 projects, involving around 10,000 organisations and 160,000 participants in learning, teaching and training (LTT) activities and 13,000 more in transnational cooperation activities received support (EUR 345.96 million) for enhancing the labour market relevance of education and training systems and for tackling the skills gaps Europe is facing. Over three quarters of the projects are producing intellectual outputs and in LTTs, preference is given to short term learning, training and teaching activities (65% of the projects).

Promoting this new action was quite a challenge for the NAs, with the new rules and provisions. Nevertheless, the high demand of high quality demonstrates the interest across all fields. This, combined with the limited budget, results in a rather low success rate (18%) so far.

Also, some concerns were raised about the proportionality principle applied during the selection process as the number of organisations selected might not be sufficient to create a real impact on the field. This comment was taken into account in the preparation of the 2015 and 2016 calls.

In addition to the strategic partnerships, 79 **Capacity Building** cooperation projects with youth organisations in partner countries were financed in 2014, aiming at helping the modernisation and internationalisation of their youth systems. As heading 4 funds were not yet available, higher education projects or international credit mobility could not be financed in 2014.

Furthermore, following two pilot calls in 2011 and 20112 and one call under LLP in 2013, the interest for **Knowledge Alliances** was extremely high in 2014 leading to very strong competition for funding. A total budget of EUR 8.4 million was granted to 10 projects (4% success rate) bringing businesses and higher education institutions together to develop new ways of creating, producing and sharing knowledge.

Finally, the new action **Sector Skills Alliances** was launched in 2014 under KA2. In 2014, 6 transnational projects for designing and delivering joint vocational training curricula were awarded a total amount of EUR 4.6 million. However, the evaluation revealed that many applicants had not yet understood the new concept, underestimating the importance of the right mix in the composition of the Alliance. The 2015 Programme Guide provided clarifications to applicants to help understanding in future calls.

KA3 – Support to Policy Reform

European Policy experimentations are a new trans-national cooperation action aiming at testing innovative measures through rigorous methods. The first call in 2014 was very successful and resulted in the selection of 8 projects having a 3-year duration for a total of EUR 13.2 million.

Cooperation with international organisations was pursued in particular with the OECD on country analysis and with the Council of Europe in the field of Human rights/citizenship education, of youth participation, citizenship and social inclusion and of dialogue between with Roma communities and mainstream society.

Under KA3, several other actions also contributed to **stakeholder dialogue and policy promotion**: the ET&Y Forum, support to YFJ, support 98 to EU NGOs and EU-wide networks active in the field of education and training or youth and structured dialogue in the field of youth. The later benefitted in decentralised mode of a the new simplified grants format but saw a decrease number of grants (221 instead of 447) due to a lower budget available (EUR 5.9 million)

Networks (i.e. SALTOS, Eurodesks, EQF, EQVET, EQAVET, NARIC, etc.) continued to support the programme and policy implementation in various sectors.

Under the action **National Authorities for apprenticeships**, 10 projects were financed (EUR 2.2 million) aiming at encouraging the development of high-quality

apprenticeship-type training and excellence in work-based learning in VET, through partnerships with other relevant stakeholders.

Finally, **IT platforms** such as eTwinning, the European Platform for Adult Learning (EPAL) or the European Youth Portal, and the VALOR project **dissemination platform** were further developed and used to facilitate the communication within and about the programme and promote the dissemination of its results.

Jean Monnet Activities

212 **Jean Monnet projects** aiming at promoting excellence in teaching and research in the field of European Union studies worldwide, were financed in 2014 for a total budget of EUR 11.3 million.

65% of the applications concerned the core of the actions, which is teaching and research with a vast majority of Chairs and Modules, while 25% were Projects aiming at creating and applying new methodologies or spreading knowledge on the European integration process among a wider target audience.

Additionally, 7 institutions pursuing an aim of European interest received an **operating grant** for a total amount of EUR 3.8 million

Sport Activities

Following the Lisbon Treaty, sport was introduced in 2014 as a new field of European level competence in the Erasmus+ Programme.

Within Erasmus+, the Sport action aims at promoting the European dimension in sport by supporting activities such as not-for-profit European sport events, collaborative partnerships, the strengthening of evidence-based policy-making in sport and dialogue with relevant European stakeholders.

A total budget of EUR 22.43 million was committed for this Action in 2014, funding **6 not-for-profit sport events, 39 collaborative partnerships and 5 studies.**

A **conference** took also place in June 2014 to launch the communication campaign for the first European Week for Sport to be held in September 2015 as well as the **EU Sport forum** in Milan in December.

Conclusion

During this first year of implementation of the Erasmus+ Programme and despite the difficulties described above, the joint efforts of all Programme stakeholders made it possible to deliver at the expected level. All the foreseen activities, except international credit mobility and student loan guarantee postponed to early 2015, were successfully launched in 2014. Novelties were also well absorbed although lessons were learned and adjustments had to be implemented, in particular in the field of strategic partnerships.

The merge of the former 7 programmes has become a reality. Although it is too early to have a qualitative assessment of the impact of the new programme, the outputs are already tangible: more than 18,000 projects were selected with just under 1 million participants and 70,000 organisations involved.

The budgetary execution and the selection success rates for the various actions also show that the interest and expectations of the potential beneficiaries remain as high as in the previous programmes.

However, to make the new programme even more accessible, the efforts will have to be maintained and reinforced in order to further simplify the processes and procedures and to improve the user-friendliness of the IT tools, targeting primarily beneficiaries and National Agencies.

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1. Introduction

This report covers the first year of implementation of Erasmus+, the new EU programme for education, training, youth and, for the first time, sport.

Erasmus+ started in January 2014 as one single programme for the period 2014-2020. It integrates the seven previous EU programmes² covering those fields into three Key Actions (Key Action 1 - Learning Mobility of individuals, Key Action 2 - Cooperation for innovation and the exchange of good practices, Key Action 3 - Support for policy reform) and two dedicated areas, i.e. Jean Monnet and Sport.

The structure of the new programme brings together actions and tools of the different fields with an in-built international dimension. It links and simplifies support to formal, non-formal and informal learning across the board in the fields of education, training and youth. It integrates the involvement and international cooperation of multiple stakeholders, and supports policy reforms through a dedicated key action.

The Programme also takes into account the findings on the previous programming period that highlighted the benefits and need to strengthen European cooperation, making the case for closer links between EU funding programmes and policy. These also stressed the importance of the lifelong learning component, the need for more user-friendly and flexible implementation, accessibility of funding, administrative transparency, management streamlining and reduced administrative expenditure.

The aim of this report is to give an overview of all the activities implemented so far with regard to the Erasmus+ 2014 calls, as foreseen in the Erasmus+ Annual Work Programme 2014.

Erasmus+ 2014 Calls	Reference	Publication date
Erasmus+ 2014 - General Call for Proposals	EAC/S11/2013	12.12.2013
Erasmus Charter for Higher Education 2014	EAC/S06/13	23.03.2013
Erasmus Mundus 2009-13 action programme implementation in 2014	EACEA/18/2013	22.11.2013
Civil Society Cooperation	EACEA/05/2014	29.01.2014
Prospective Initiatives - European policy experimentations	EACEA/10/2014	22.02.2014
Support for Policy Reform/National Authorities for Apprenticeships	EACEA/13/2014	26.03.2014
Support to the Implementation of EHEA reforms	EACEA/20/2014	22.07.2014
Call for Erasmus+ VET mobility Charter	EAC/A05/2014	22.12.2014

Table 1.1: Erasmus+ 2014 Calls

The report is made up of three parts:

- A narrative section detailing the implementation of the programme, structured around the three key Actions, the Jean Monnet activities and Sport activities. It provides concise information on the political context, the priorities of the new Programme, a quantitative and, when possible, qualitative overview of the 2014 Erasmus+ calls results. Some examples of projects are also presented.
- A statistical annex, made up of graphs and tables, providing detailed information for each action implemented under the Erasmus+ budget, the financial commitments, the results of the calls and the outputs by sector and by National Agency.

² The Lifelong Learning Programme, Youth in Action Programme, Erasmus Mundus Programme, Tempus, Alfa, Edulink, Programmes of cooperation with industrialised countries in the field of higher education.

- A projects annex with detailed information on examples of successful projects mentioned in the narrative part to illustrate the implementation of the Programme.

List of acronyms used in the report

AWP	Annual Work Programme
CEFR	Common European Framework <i>of Reference for Languages</i>
CoE	Council of Europe
DCI	Development Cooperation Instrument
EACEA	Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency
EC	European Commission
ECHE	Erasmus Charter for Higher Education
ECVET	European Credit system for Vocational Education and Training
EDC/HRE	Education for Democratic Citizenship/Human Rights Education
EDF	European Development Fund
EIF	European Investment Fund
EIT	European Institute of Innovation and Technology
EMJD	Erasmus Mundus Joint Doctorates
EMJMD	Erasmus Mundus Joint Master Degrees
EMMC	Erasmus Mundus Master Courses
ENI	European Neighbourhood Instrument
EQAVET	European Quality Assurance in Vocational Education and Training
EQF	European Qualifications Framework
E&T	Education and Training
ET 2020	Education and Training 2020 strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training
EVS	European Voluntary Service
EU	European Union
EUR	Euro
EYCA	European Youth Card Association
EYP	European Youth Portal
KA1	Erasmus+ Key Action 1
KA2	Erasmus+ Key Action 2
KA3	Erasmus+ Key Action 3
ICT	Information and communications technology
IO	Intellectual Outputs
IPA2	Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance
LGBT	Lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender
LLP	Lifelong Learning Programme
LTT	Erasmus+ learning, training and teaching activities
LT LTT	Erasmus+ long-term learning, training and teaching activities
ME	Multiplier events
NA	National Agency
NARIC	National Academic Recognition Information Centres
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
OECD	Organisation of Economic Cooperation and Development
OLS	Online Linguistic Support
PI	Partnership Instrument
ST LTT	Erasmus+ short-term learning, training and teaching activities
ROMED	European Training Programme for Roma Mediators
TCA	Transnational Cooperation Activities
TEC	Training and Evaluation Cycle
TOI	Transfer of Innovation

2. Political Context

2014 was the first year of implementation of the Erasmus+ programme. The Programme reflects the priorities of the *Europe 2020* strategy³ adopted in 2010 and the European Commission's will to invest in human capital by aligning the 2014-2020 expenditure with the Europe 2020 priorities⁴.

The pivotal role of the EU as a catalyst to generate economic dynamism and political stability relies on a knowledge-based environment that promotes social cohesion. The many challenges the EU is facing – the aftermath of the economic crisis coupled with high unemployment rates, demographic ageing, skills shortages, technological developments, global competition - prompted the EU to set a broad agenda for growth and jobs for a whole decade: to become a smart, sustainable and inclusive economy. These three overarching priorities have been translated into measurable EU targets, to be reflected in national policies and to be achieved by 2020 across the fields of employment, research and innovation, education, climate change and energy, and combating poverty.

Europe 2020 highlighted the key, cross-cutting role of education and lifelong learning, not only for individual fulfilment and social cohesion, but also as drivers of economic growth and upward convergence. Setting the targets of lowering the early school-leaving rate below 10% and raising the proportion of tertiary degree holders above 40% by 2020 clearly illustrates this correlation.

The 2013 *Annual Growth Survey*⁵ showed that Europe's economic performance was lagging behind the Europe 2020 objectives, underpinning the necessity to intensify action to enhance growth and competitiveness, tackle unemployment and social exclusion. The policy recommendations of the European Commission highlighted the opportunities created by the synergies between education, training, lifelong learning and the economy.

2014 saw a renewed political impetus to addressing the enduring challenges: a new European Parliament elected the new Commission *President, Jean Claude Juncker*, who endorsed the *ten-priority agenda*⁶ in which jobs and growth rank at the top. The new Commissioner for Education, Culture, Youth and Sport, Tibor Navracsics, committed to implementing and further pursuing these priorities in the policy areas under his responsibility.

Against this backdrop, Erasmus+ is supporting the EU strategic agenda by promoting investment in people benefitting both individuals and society and contributing to growth and prosperity. It helps young people and adults acquire and improve skills, enhances the quality of teaching and learning and the effectiveness and efficiency of education and training systems. It also promotes youth participation in society and the European dimension of grassroots sport. The Programme supports both equity and excellence through learning mobility and cooperation among stakeholders, contributing to shape a European identity which values diversity.

Erasmus+ has been instrumental in promoting the broader EU strategic agenda by supporting specific actions in Education, Training, Youth and Sport. It fosters European

³ "EUROPE 2020, A strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth" COM(2010) 2020 final, <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex:52010DC2020>

⁴ A budget for Europe 2020 COM(2011) 500 final <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=URISERV:bu0001>

⁵ "Annual Growth Survey 2013" COM(2012) 750 final

⁶ http://ec.europa.eu/priorities/index_en.htm

values, active citizenship and dialogue between people and cultures, strengthening the role of the EU on the global scene.

The Education and Training 2020 (ET 2020)⁷ cooperation framework, sustains the overarching socio-economic goals of the EU. Structured around common objectives for lifelong learning, mobility, social cohesion, active citizenship, creativity and innovation, it helps Member States to improve the quality and efficiency of their education and training systems by exchanging experience and best practice, and by monitoring progress.

Along with education and training, the EU also recognizes the key role of youth policies and youth work to achieve its objectives. The EU Youth Cooperation Framework⁸ covers the years 2010-2018, with two main objectives: to provide more and equal opportunities for young people in education and the job market and to encourage young people to actively participate in society.

Structured dialogue with young people was set up to serve as a forum for continuous reflection on the priorities, implementation and follow-up of European cooperation. Several expert groups were also established to reinforce mutual learning.

Furthermore, to address urgently the high youth unemployment rates and the consequences of the current crisis for young people, in 2014 the Council adopted the EU Work Plan for Youth 2014-2015⁹. It also agreed on Council conclusions on promoting youth entrepreneurship to foster social inclusion, focusing on creativity, innovation and green jobs as well as on young people's access to rights in order to foster their autonomy and participation in civil society.

In the field of sport, the political priorities are defined in the EU Work Plan 2014-2017. They correspond well with and contribute to President Juncker's agenda, such as policy directives translated into the priorities of Erasmus+ sport action.

Reflecting the linkages between distinct but interrelated policy agendas, the Erasmus+ programme increases the potential for cross-fertilisation, synergies and systemic impact, so as to tackle more effectively the interdependent challenges of unemployment, social exclusion and skills development, and to achieve the common EU objectives for growth and jobs.

The significant budget increase allocated to Erasmus+ in the 2014-2020 programming period, compared to the resources allocated in previous programmes, reflects its high political and economic relevance and the steady EU efforts to align priorities and resources.

⁷ Council Conclusions of 12 May 2009 on a "Strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training (ET 2020)" Official Journal C 119 of 28.5.2009]

⁸ http://ec.europa.eu/youth/policy/youth_strategy/index_en.htm

⁹ OJ C183, 14.6.2014

3. Programme Implementation

The new Erasmus+ Programme was developed within the context of the Europe 2020, ET 2020 and Youth strategic goals, and supports the Education, Training, Youth and Sport policy agendas. The guiding aim was to increase the EU added value and to focus on impact by exploiting synergies between fields and actions, via efficiency gains and through simplification.

As a consequence, the most successful actions from previous programmes were continued, new actions were introduced where necessary and certain former activities were discontinued.

3.1 Budget and EU commitments

In support of the strengthened political priorities, Erasmus+ was allocated a 40% budget increase for the 2014-2020 financing period, with an overall indicative financial envelope of EUR 14.774 billion under Heading 1(EU-28).

In addition to the international activities in the field of youth funded from Heading 1, a strong international dimension for higher education was also embedded in the programme funded under Heading 4 (EUR 1.836 billion). Budget allocations come from the Development Cooperation Instrument (DCI), the European Neighbourhood Instrument (ENI), the instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA2), the Partnership Instrument (PI) and the European Development Fund (EDF).

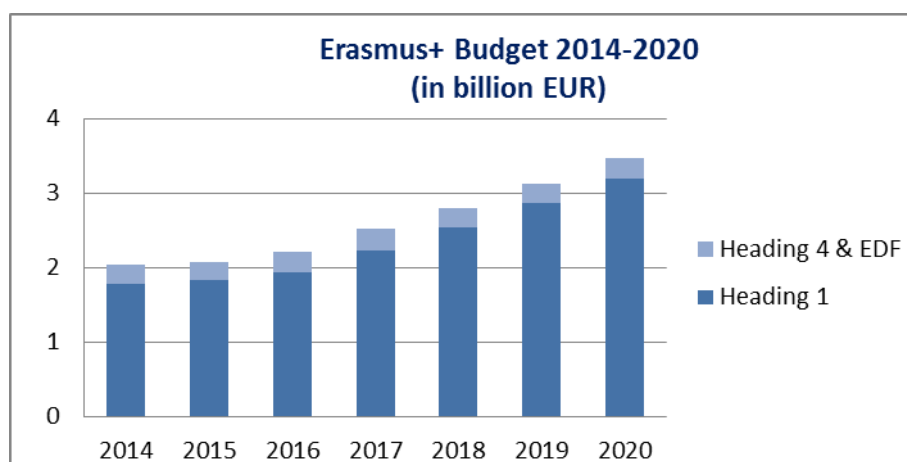


Figure 3.1: Erasmus+ Budget 2014-2020

Despite the overall significant increase in budget, the programme budgetary profile (as foreseen in the Multiannual Financial Framework) indicates a limited increase in the first half of the programming period.

In 2014, a final budget of EUR 2.071 billion was available to cover Erasmus+ actions (see details in annex 2.1). This budget covers both operational (98%) and administrative expenditures (2%) of the Programme, 3% of the budget being allocated to the National Agencies management fees.

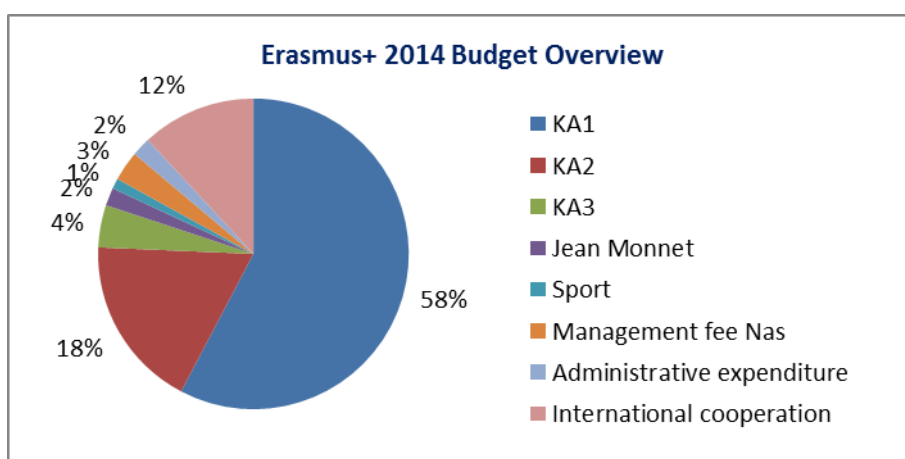


Figure 3.2: Erasmus+ Budget 2014

During this first year of implementation, a total amount of EUR 2.071 billion was committed by the Commission and the Executive Agency, achieving a commitment rate of 99.9%.

Around two-thirds of the Erasmus+ funds available were allocated to the support of learning opportunities abroad for individuals, within the EU and beyond (Key Action 1). 21% was allocated to partnerships between educational institutions, youth organisations, businesses, local and regional authorities and NGOs (Key Action 2), while the remaining funds were used to support reforms to modernise education and training and to promote innovation, entrepreneurship and employability (Key Action 3 - 5%), Jean Monnet (~2%) and Sport activities (~1%).

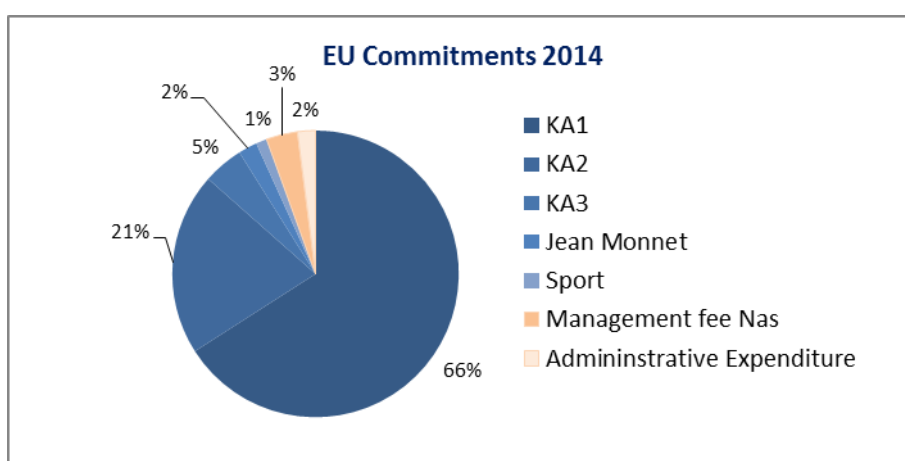


Figure 3.3: EU Commitments under Erasmus+ in 2014

As the Heading 4 funds were only available at the end of 2014 due to the late adoption of the legal base, the implementation of several actions like Capacity Building in the field of Higher Education or International Credit Mobility had to be postponed to 2015.

Education and Training has the largest budget share with almost 70% of the budget; the youth sector received around 10%, while the remaining budget was distributed between Jean Monnet, Sport, International cooperation (12%), administrative expenditure and management fees for the NAs (see details in annex 2.2).

The Erasmus+ programme has been largely committed as foreseen, though more slowly than planned especially concerning the Erasmus+ Master Loan and the international cooperation, both foreseen for actual implementation in 2015.

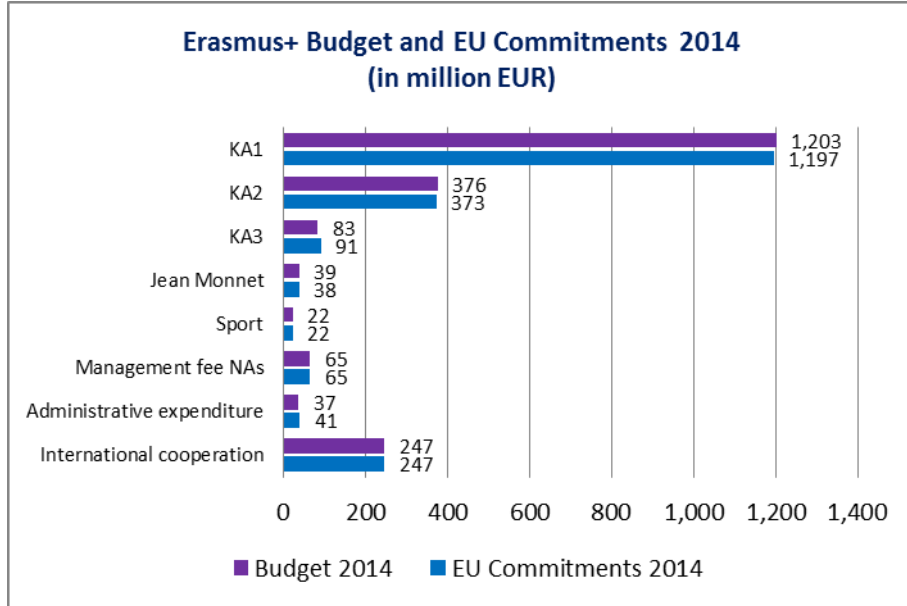


Figure 3.4: Erasmus+ 2014 Budget and EU Commitments

3.2 Programme implementation

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

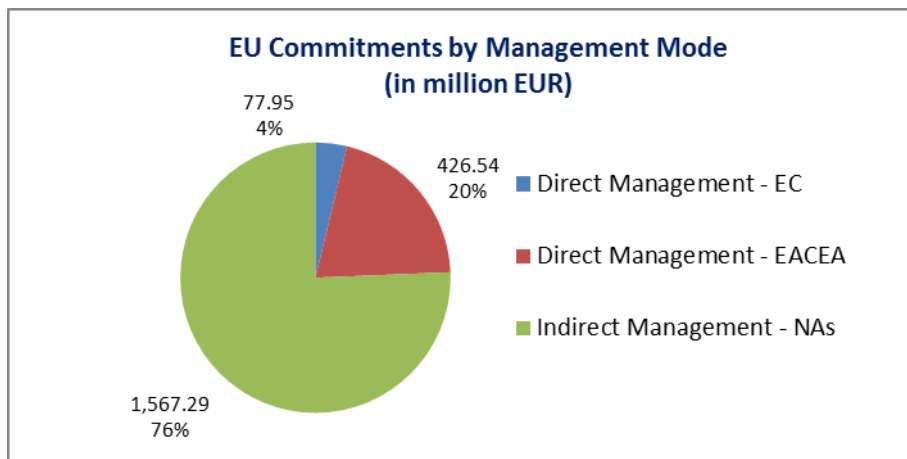


Figure 3.5: 2014 Commitments under Erasmus+ by Management mode

In 2014, the transition to the new programme certainly generated some challenges for the stakeholders, particularly in relation to the new rules and supporting tools¹⁰.

¹⁰ a new single programme guide, simplified grants procedure, new E-applications and reporting forms, online Expert Evaluation Tool, newly integrated IT systems etc.

Furthermore, the late adoption of the Erasmus+ legal base in December 2013 hampered the timely preparation and release of the necessary legal documents, tools and processes¹¹.

The Commission responded to these challenges by applying more flexible deadlines to the 2014 management schedule of the actions, by investing more resources in programme implementation and by working in close cooperation with the NAs in order to continuously improve the programme management. In 2014, topics such as impact analysis, strategic partnerships, dissemination and communication and IT tools were already tackled.

These efforts are being pursued in 2015 to ensure the stability and predictability of the developed tools and to ensure that the new features and common rules will lead to future simplification of the programme administration. To this extent, consultative working groups were established end of 2014, where European Commission services, the National Agencies and some beneficiaries are working together on specific aspects of the Programme.

Notwithstanding the challenges, National agencies managed to commit 99.9% all the indirect funds allocated to them through the delegations agreements, to support projects under Key Actions 1,2 and 3 (see details in annexes 2.3.to 2.9). They also felt – as indicated in their yearly reports – that the foreseen increased budget allocation, the harmonisation of the rules across sectors and of the application forms were positive key elements of the new programme.

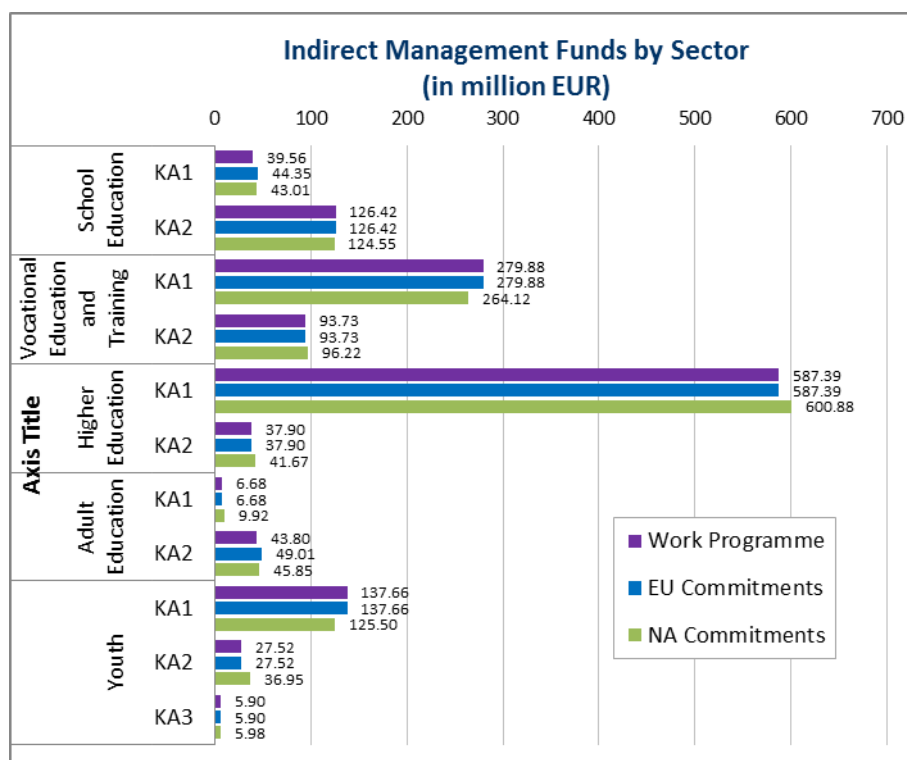


Figure 3.6: Usage of the Indirect Funds by Sector

¹¹ Delegation and grant agreements, guide for experts on quality assessment, NA work programmes etc.

3.3 Programme priorities and results

In 2014, Erasmus+ optimised successful actions already implemented in previous programmes and launched new ones, with the objective of strengthening the links between political objectives and the programme and by adopting a new structure enabling an increased impact of the actions.

Optimising successful actions

Under Erasmus+, **mobility activities (KA1)** continued to be the highest priority; most of the funds (66%) being dedicated to participants across the education, training and youth fields. In 2014, KA1 enabled around 500,000 young people to study, train, volunteer or participate in youth-exchanges abroad. It also gave the opportunity to around 150,000 staff members of educational institutions and youth organisations to improve their competencies by teaching and training abroad (see annex 3.1).

The 2014 budget allowed the continued financing of some 138 Erasmus Mundus Masters Degrees and 42 Erasmus Mundus Joint Doctorates, which had initially been funded under the LLP programme. In addition, there was sufficient budget in 2014 to fund 11 new Erasmus Mundus Joint Masters Degrees, representing an additional 46 organisations which received funding to finance around 440 additional Masters scholarships over the next 5 years.

Under **Key Action 2**, Strategic Partnerships go beyond the previous generation of programmes by fostering synergies and cross-sectorial activities through the different fields of education, training and youth. In 2014, over 1,700 projects, involving around 10,000 organisations and 170,000 participants received support to enhance the labour market relevance of education and training systems and to tackle the skills gaps Europe is facing (see annex 4.1).

	Projects	Grant (million EUR)	Participants	Organisations
KA1 - Mobility	15951	1191	647694	57825
KA2 - Cooperation	1732	346	172681	9823

Table 3.1: KA1 and KA2 overview

The eTwinning, EPALE, Youth Portal and VALOR electronic platforms of virtual collaboration continued to contribute horizontally to the various programme actions.

Launching new actions

Erasmus+ also introduced some new actions to increase the impact of EU funding on education, training and youth policy, in particular: the Erasmus+ Master Loan under KA1; the National Support Services for EPALE under KA2; country specific expertise and policy experimentations under KA3; Policy debate with the academic world under Jean Monnet; new actions in the sport sector. The results of these actions are further described under their respective chapters.

Strengthening links between policy and programme

In their yearly reports, National Agencies recognise that the programme clearly addresses European needs such as the development of basic and transversal skills - teachers' qualifications, pupils' creativity and entrepreneurship- and the improvement of young people's employability.

Several NAs also acknowledge the role of the programme as a catalyst for the integration of the European dimension in many on-going policy reforms at national/ local level, as well as its contribution to the recognition of mobility and to the culture of learning, the professional development of educational staff and its role in connecting the education and training with the labour market. On the other hand, they testify to the cross-fertilisation and synergies between the national and European levels in the implementation of Erasmus+ (PT, IS, BE, NL, ES, CY, IT, DK, SK, NO, BG, LV, UK, PL, CZ, MK).

Moreover, all indicators linked to Europe 2020 headline targets, except employability and youth out-of-school targets, showed progress in 2014 (see DG EAC Annual activity report 2014¹²): higher education attainment, early school leaving, the level of basic skills, the share of pupils studying at least two foreign languages, the share of adults taking part in lifelong learning or the share of non-EU students or researchers in the EU.

Furthermore, NA's feedback confirms that the EU policies and Erasmus+ programme address issues with political and economic relevance and are very close to the concerns of citizens. The rising trend in demand for programme support demonstrates its high potential which, combined with the political commitment to invest in Education, Training and Youth policies could arguably make the case for the deployment of more funds in the future.

¹²http://ec.europa.eu/atwork/synthesis/aar/doc/rtd_aar_2014.pdf

4. Key Action 1 – Learning Mobility of Individuals

4.1 Introduction

Key Action 1 (KA1) is the largest action in Erasmus+, receiving over two-thirds of the total Erasmus+ budget appropriations in 2014. It is mainly implemented via the National Agencies. Commitments made by the EU in 2014 under Key Action 1 amount to EUR 1.2 billion (see annex 2.1).

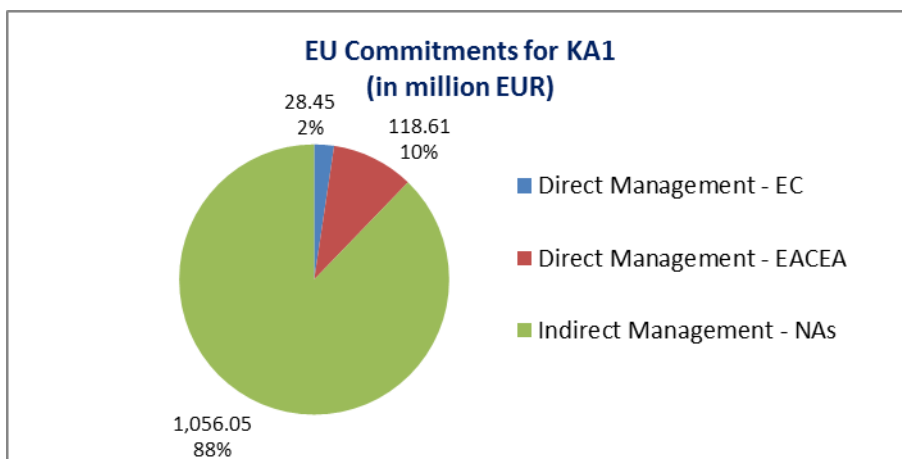


Figure 4.1: 2014 EU Commitments for KA1

At the individual level, the action aims to enhance the skills, including linguistic skills, employability and intercultural awareness of the participants. It reinforces the participation of young people in democratic life and promotes the inclusion of learners with disadvantaged backgrounds and fewer opportunities.

Through funding the mobility of staff in transnational projects, the action reinforces the professional development of those who work in education, training and youth. It enables participating organisations to improve their innovation capacity, the quality of teaching and their capacity in working with young people, to modernise their curricula and strengthen their international network and their institutional leadership and management.

Two main types of activities are funded under KA1:

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

In addition, KA1 foresees to provide increased access to loans on favourable terms for students following a Master's programme in another participating country through the Erasmus+ Master Loan.

KA 1 - Action Types	PROJECTS			TOTAL GRANT in million EUR	ORGANISATIONS	PARTICIPANTS
	Submitted	Granted	Success rate*			
School education staff mobility	8,978	2,806	31%	43.01	4,252	21,037
VET learner and staff mobility	5,973	3,156	53%	264.12	18,094	126,004
Higher education student and staff mobility	3,765	3,620	71%	600.82	3,620	341,393
Adult education staff mobility	2,296	424	18%	9.92	961	5,593
Youth mobility	11,616	5,749	49%	125.70	29,851	151,395
Large-Scale Volunteering Events	10	5	50%	0.35	5	199
Erasmus+ Joint Master Degrees	61	11	18%	21.24	46	437
Erasmus Mundus Joint Doctorates		42	100%	32.51	246	257
Erasmus Mundus Master Degrees		138	100%	48.76	750	1,379
Other actions (OLS, ...)				44.19		
Total	32,699	15,951		1,190.61	57,825	647,694

Table¹³ 4.1: Overview of the actions under Key Action 1

In 2014, Erasmus+ KA1 extended to other action fields, beyond youth, the additional financial support to people with fewer opportunities, from a disadvantaged background or from remote areas in order to make the mobility programme more accessible and inclusive. The action keeps supporting participants with special needs.

Furthermore, it strengthened the linguistic support to reduce the language skills barriers for the participants and to help them improve the knowledge of the language in which they will work, study or volunteer abroad.

4.2 Mobility in the field of education and training

Building on the positive experiences under the Lifelong Learning (LLP) programme, and to ensure greater synergies, efficiency and simplification, KA1 supports the following action types in the education and training fields:

- School education staff mobility;
- VET learners and staff mobility;
- Higher Education students and staff mobility within Programme Countries; and
- Adult Education staff mobility.

In the school and adult education fields, an important change compared to the previous programmes is the institutional approach to mobility for School Education, VET and Adult Education fields. In Erasmus+, the participating organisation now applies for funding rather than the individual participant .

Erasmus+ introduced the European Development Plan in the applications, to ensure that the planned activities are relevant both for the individual participants and for the organisation as a whole, and are integrated in the organisation's strategic development. This change was implemented to increase the impact of the project on the organisations involved.

¹³ *Success rate = percentage of projects granted compared to submitted except for higher education where the number of participants in the projects granted is compared to the number of participants in the applications. All higher institutions accredited with the ECHE indeed see their applications for funding under KA103 granted (if eligible) but they do not always receive what the request.

Overall, the number of applications for mobility remained stable compared to the previous programmes.

A total of EUR 918 million was granted to over 10,000 projects which support the mobility of learners and staff to study, train, and gain work experience abroad. Around 27,000 organisations are involved in the projects. With a relatively low average amount of funding per participant, this action has a strong impact at both the individual and organisation levels.

Preliminary¹⁴ statistics on the realised mobilities show that 98% of the participants come from programme countries while the other 2% come from partner countries (see annex 3.7). The higher education field continues to attract the highest number of participants (59%) followed by the youth field (21%).

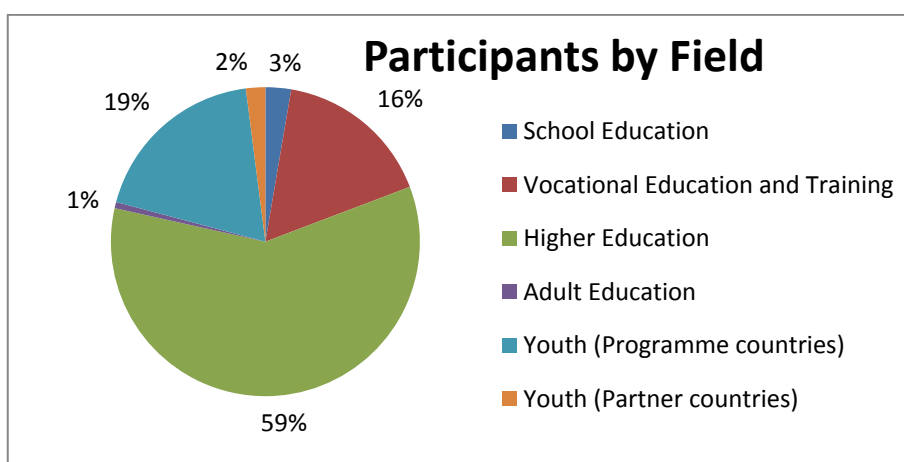


Figure 4.1: KA1 participants by field of action

The majority of the programme country participants are sent from 6 countries: Germany (11.6%), France (10 %), Spain (9.3%), Poland (8.2%), Italy (7.3%) and Turkey (5.3%) and 99.2% of these participants travel to another programme country (see annex 3.8).

Concerning the Partner countries, participants mainly come from the Eastern Partnership Countries (41%) to participate in youth actions as youth workers (50%) or in youth exchanges (45%). They travel to programme countries (74%) and also to other partner countries (26%).

4.2.1 School education staff mobility

The budget for staff mobility in school education has seen a significant increase compared to the previous LLP Comenius programme. In 2014, it amounted to EUR 43 million, compared to EUR 27.6 million in 2013 for the previous LLP action, Comenius In-Service Training.

Despite the increased budget, the high demand led to a relatively low global success rate of only 31%. There was however a large variation between countries with a success rate ranging from 100% in Lichtenstein and Luxembourg, 89% in Germany, to only 9% in Italy and 7% in Turkey (see annex 3.2).

¹⁴ Final results will be known once all mobilities will be finalised. The sample used to produce the statistics represent around 80% of all 2014 mobilities.

In most countries, the total number of mobile school education staff increased and over 21,000 mobilities are planned in the 2,806 projects selected in 2014. In comparison, around 13,200 mobilities were funded through the Comenius In-Service Training action in 2013.

A total of 91% of the participants are going abroad for staff training (participation in a structured course or job shadowing), while 9% are undertaking a teaching assignment in a partner organisation in another country. The average funding per participant amounts to approximately EUR 2,000.

The most important change in Erasmus+ is the increased involvement of the sending institutions, i.e. the schools. Whereas previously, individual staff members applied for funding for specific activities, schools now apply for funding for mobility projects which may comprise different activities and involve several participants. The sending school must submit a European Development Plan, outlining how the planned activities will contribute to the school's strategic development. The aim is to ensure that the learning outcomes are recognised by the sending school and that they not only benefit the individual participant, but also contribute to the development of the organisation as a whole. This change has been well received overall and according to the feedback received from National Agencies, the experience is positive so far. The action is likely to enhance the international and organisational capacity of schools.

Example of LLP Comenius mobility projects equivalent for KA1 School Education

Project number: 2013-3-ROI-COM02-34869 (details in Projects Annex)

Sending school: Școala cu clasele I-VIII "Puiu Sever", Ineu (RO)

EC contribution: EUR 2,000

A French teacher from Romania attended the course "Formation pedagogique pour professeurs de FLE" (French as a Foreign Language), which took place in Cavilam, France in April 2014. The course was attended by 18 teachers from 8 countries: Finland, Germany, Italy, Poland, Romania, Russia, Spain, and Sweden. It consisted of 62 hours of training using theoretical and interactive methods such as debates, workshops and new ICT methods adapted for language teaching. The participant reported that her linguistic and cultural skill improved considerably. She gave presentations, published media articles, and conducted targeted activities after her return home.

Project number: 2013-3-GB1-COM02-28928 (details in Projects Annex)

Sending school: Professional Education Centre, Ceredigion County Council (Wales, UK)

EC contribution: EUR 1,470

This project was on Early Year care and school systems and the use of the outdoors to develop children's education. As part of the project, an Advisory Teacher working in the pre-school sector undertook job shadowing in the Oulu area of Finland and visited a number of schools and pre-schools / kindergartens on March-April 2014. According to the participant, the course helped her improve the knowledge of her subject, refreshed her attitude to teaching and inspired her with new ideas and approaches which she is disseminating widely within her home context. The participant is motivated and engaged to further develop European links.

4.2.2 VET learners and staff mobility

The high number of applications (5,912) demonstrates a strong interest in the action. As a result, 3156 VET mobility projects were funded in 2014, representing a success rate of 53%. More than 50% of the participants are VET Learners doing traineeships in companies, who also get the highest average grant (just over EUR 2,000). Details can be found in annexes 3.1 and 3.3.

Of the total number of participants (126,004), more than 1% had special needs. The access for those participants will continue to be promoted.

Almost 17% of the selected projects (528) include consortia made up of three or more organisations active in the field of VET. The aim of this cooperation is to develop their internationalisation and improve the quality and organisation of the mobility activities.

Finally, the first Call for the Erasmus+ VET Mobility Charter was also published in 2014. The Charter provides a new push for increased internationalisation in the VET sector and better quality mobility. It will allow for the accreditation of bodies with a strong record of successful and high-quality mobility projects for VET learners and staff. The first Charters will be awarded in 2015, giving VET Mobility Charter Holders the possibility to apply through a separate and simplified application form under the future Erasmus+ General calls for VET learners and staff mobility.

Example of Erasmus+ KA1 VET learner mobility project

Project title: *Craft 'n' Skills*

Project number: *2014-1-FI01-KA102-000208 (details in Projects Annex)*

Coordinating organisation: *Vantaa Vocational College VARIA (FI)*

EC contribution: *EUR 145,976*

The Crafts 'n' Skills mobility project is a consortium coordinated by the Vantaa Vocational College in Varja, Finland, bringing together 8 Finnish VET providers. The project participants, 83 VET students in the cultural field (crafts and design), will carry out 3 to 12 week on-the-job learning periods in several European countries (i.e. ES, FR, IE, UK, DE, and HU). As a result of this project, students will improve key skills and competences and their employment prospects. The project promotes ECVET in order to ensure the recognition of learners' skills and qualifications. The network aims to develop a standard student assessment procedure for the mobility periods in the cultural sector between the VET institutions in Europe.

4.2.3 Higher education student and staff mobility

The first call of Erasmus+ mobility in the field of higher education attracted a great deal of interest. In total, over EUR 600 million was granted to higher education institutions to support over 341,000 students and staff, resulting in a success rate of 71%¹⁵.

Of the 3,620 contracted mobility projects, 126 involved higher education mobility consortia, which are eligible to apply to all actions of higher education mobility for the first time. This results in a 35% increase of contracted mobility projects by consortia in comparison with the last year of the LLP. Details can be found in annexes 3.1 and 3.4.

Concerning information on the participants, their flows are not identified at the application stage. The complete picture of mobilities supported under 2014 Erasmus+ projects will be available when all mobilities are finalised. Nevertheless, with over 270,000 students and 50,000 staff having already returned from their stay abroad, the preliminary results of finalised activities indicate that the programme is breaking down barriers and reaching people that were facing obstacles in the past:

- More than 10,000 mobile European students for studies have received a top-up grant for people from disadvantaged backgrounds in countries where such support is not provided through national funding or other sources. These top-up grants currently amount to almost EUR 6 million;

¹⁵ All higher education institutions accredited with the ECHE saw their application for funding to KA103 granted (if eligible), but they received on average 71% of what they requested.

- More than 2,000 mobile students come from outermost countries and regions (Martinique, Guadeloupe, Madeira etc). Geographically very distant from the European continent, their remoteness is compensated with higher grants to ensure that they are not excluded from mobility actions;
- More than 800 students and staff with special needs have participated so far, benefitting from the increased emphasis on accessibility in the new Erasmus Charter for Higher Education and inter-institutional agreements. This includes around 240 participants who receive additional financial support that enables them to participate in the programme.

After only one year of implementation, results show that Erasmus+ mobilities are of higher quality and higher impact than in previous programmes and use a strengthened quality framework. So far, 85% of Erasmus+ students report that they have received full recognition for their ECTS credits awarded abroad, compared to 73% in 2013 under LLP.

Examples of KA1 Higher Education institutions with good results

Coordinating organisation: *Universitat de València (ES)*

Universitat de València provides graduates with traineeship opportunities abroad and gives this new action of Erasmus+ a strong emphasis throughout its promotional activities. As a result, the institution has sent abroad the highest number of recent graduates in Spain on traineeship so far, with more than 150 recent graduates under the 2014 call.

Coordinating organisation: *JAMK University of Applied Sciences (FI)*

Internationalisation is one of the three strategic priorities of the JAMK University of Applied Sciences. The University aims to achieve a high level of mobility with 70% of its staff going abroad on a yearly basis. The staff exchanges are monitored through internal performance and national indicators to ensure quality and maximise impact.

4.2.4 Adult education staff mobility

Interest remained high for training and study mobility in the adult education field, despite the main change in the application which must be submitted by an adult education organisation instead of individual application in the previous LLP Grundtvig Programme. The professional development of adult education staff is embedded in the European Development Plan of the sending organisations aiming at modernising and internationalising their teaching and learning capacities. This new framework was well received by the target organisations according to the feedback received from National Agencies during meetings and in reports.

The results of the 2014 call show a smooth transition from LLP to Erasmus+. The participation of 5,593 adult education staff is planned in 424 projects with an average funding of EUR 1,773 per participant. Most participants (94%) are undertaking staff training abroad (participation in a structured course or job shadowing), while the other 6% are delivering teaching or training at partner organisations abroad. Five countries register more than half of the adult education staff participants: Germany, Poland, Turkey, France and Italy. Details can be found in annex 3.5.

National Agencies made use of the flexibility rule foreseen in the Work Programme and about EUR 3 million were transferred from other Erasmus+ actions to mobility projects for adult education staff. Nonetheless, the success rate of 18.5% remains the lowest amongst the Erasmus+ E&T and Youth fields, with 11 National Agencies reporting a success rate below the average.

Example of LLP Grundtvig mobility project equivalent to KA1 Adult Education

Project number: 2013-1-CZ01-GRU11-15134 (details in Projects Annex)

Beneficiary: Veronika Pavlová (CZ)

EC contribution: EUR 7,729.57

A Czech national, undertook a mobility at the host organisation Escuela Oficial de Idiomas Dos Hermanas (EOI Dos Hermanas) from 30 September 2013 to 20 June 2014. During her stay, the beneficiary was fully responsible for leading English language lessons to a small group of learners. The beneficiary applied blended learning which enabled the use of online communication tools within the learning module, a method better tailored for learners with special needs. The courses helped participants improve their knowledge of a foreign language. The outputs have been shared with other project partners via social media, thus promoting lifelong learning.

4.3 Mobility in the field of youth

The mobility activities funded under Key Action 1 in the field of youth, targeting young people (Youth Exchanges and European Voluntary Service) and youth workers, are a continuation of the actions supported under the previous Youth in Action Programme.

The implementation of the programme was further decentralised with the consequence that European Youth NGOs now apply for funding for mobility activities directly at the level of the National Agencies.

Large-scale European Voluntary Service events, a novelty of Erasmus+ managed at centralised level, were also implemented for the first time in 2014

4.3.1 Mobility for young people and youth workers

During this first year, there has been a high interest in this action (see details in annex 3.6). Youth Exchanges continued to receive the highest number of applications (3,056) and to involve the largest number of participants (99,343). For Youth Exchanges and European Voluntary Service, the number of activities and participants funded remained stable compared to the Youth in Action programme, while the number of projects for the Mobility of Youth Workers saw a large increase compared to previous years. A new simplified format indeed allows now for a more innovative usage of this type of activity.

In 2014, 1641 organisations were accredited for participation in EVS. During the year, representatives of the National Agencies, of SALTOS worked together with the Commission to define a common process of accreditation aiming at increasing the quality and ensuring consistency across Europe.

As in the past, a strong focus was put on the inclusion of young people with fewer opportunities. The participation of more than 50,000 young people with fewer opportunities and with special needs showed the same high level of inclusiveness as in the past, reaching 34% of the total number of participants.

During the year, a working group composed of NAs, SALTOS and the Commission also worked on updating and further improving the Inclusion and Diversity Strategy¹⁶ which was presented to the Programme Committee in December 2014.

Cooperation with Partner Countries was also streamlined in the activities. In 2014, National Agencies used around 30% of Key Action 1 funds for activities fostering youth

¹⁶ http://ec.europa.eu/youth/library/reports/inclusion-diversity-strategy_en.pdf

cooperation with Partner Countries neighbouring the EU. The funding allowed the participation of more than 46,000 young people and youth workers in Erasmus+ youth projects involving neighbouring Partner Countries; more than 12,700 of the participants in these projects were from Partner Countries.

A more strategic funding modality was introduced in Erasmus+ to enable the support of larger-scale, longer-term youth projects combining various types of activities. However, the results of the first year of implementation of this Action show that this opportunity has not yet been widely used by applicants.

The projects selected during this first year have addressed the specific objectives of the Youth Chapter very well: they contributed to the promotion of social inclusion and solidarity (some 2,500 projects) as well as the promotion of intercultural dialogue (some 3,400 projects). Moreover, some 3,000 projects aimed at improving the key competences and skills of young people.

Recognition of non-formal learning remains one of the main features of the Erasmus+ programme in the youth field. A total of 70% of the selected projects intend to use Youthpass as a tool to support the participants in reflecting on, planning and documenting their learning during the project. In 2014, around 80,000 of Youthpass certificates, adapted for Erasmus+, have been issued.

In order to ensure continued distribution of the EVS European Youth Cards to EVS volunteers, a new contract with EYCA was signed in December 2014 (till December 2016). As under Youth in Action, the cards are to be distributed to each EVS volunteer.

Example of KA1 Youth mobility projects

Project title: *Yes we Rock*

Project number: 2014-1-NL02-KA105-000017 (details in Projects Annex)

Coordinating organisation: *Stichting Kinderperspectief (NL)*

EC contribution: EUR 10,860

The project offered participants with a youth care background, the opportunity to learn how to set their own life changing goals and enable them to be less dependent on the youth care system. The activity provided them with tools to overcome obstacles, to better learn, develop social and civic competences and opened their educational and professional perspectives. At another level, the project allowed the identification of best practices on this issue in the different participating countries. The group was composed of 16 young people between the ages of 18 and 23 years from Croatia, Albania, Austria and the Netherlands who met for one week. A possible follow-up could be the creation of European guidelines.

Project title: *Active Learning*

Project number: 2014-1-BE04-KA105-000045 (details in Projects Annex)

Coordinating organisation: *Jeunes actifs dans le volontariat et les voyages alternatifs asbl (BE)*

EC contribution: EUR 22,825

Two Italian volunteers worked for 11 months in the leisure service of a centre for female asylum seekers in Belgium and carried out activities in support of refugee women and their children. Through this project, links have been created between European youngsters and asylum seekers. The volunteers developed skills such as intercultural communication, listening capacity and mutual understanding. Furthermore, they became more tolerant and empathetic and learned about the asylum seeking process in Belgium.

Project Title: *Improving youth work across Europe: sharing detached youth work practices*

Project number: 2014-1-LT02-KA105-000154 (details in Projects Annex)

Coordinating organisation: *Politikos tyrimu ir analizes institutas (LT)*

EC contribution: EUR 16,740.

Together with partner organisations and Lithuanian stakeholders, detached youth work (street youth work) has been identified as a missing piece of the puzzle in the education of youth workers while the group of young people not in education, employment or training (NEET) is growing. The project “Improving youth work across Europe: sharing detached youth work practices” allows youth workers to benefit from experience in the UK and Norway and to apply these new practices. A total of 31 youth workers from Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Norway and UK are taking part in this activity. The project aims to share good practices in different youth work methodologies, to develop detached youth work competence and a manual of detached youth work in the Baltic States, to improve individual youth work competence of participants and develop their skills in mentoring, coaching, open youth work, and consulting.

4.3.2 Large-Scale European Volunteering Service Events

Building on the existing principles of the European Voluntary Service (EVS), the Large Scale EVS events is a new project format introduced under Erasmus+. The projects take place in the context of large-scale volunteering in European or worldwide events in the field of youth, culture and sport. They can include complementary activities such as conferences, seminars, meetings and workshops etc., aimed at promoting the value of volunteering, and notably the EVS.

The results of the first call for proposals managed by the Executive Agency are as follows:

KA 1	PROJECTS			TOTAL GRANT in EUR	ORGANISATIONS	VOLUNTEERS
	Submitted	Granted	Success rate			
Large-Scale Volunteering Events	10	5	50%	350,327.92	5	199

Table 4.2: Large Scale Volunteering Service Events

Example of Large-Scale European Volunteering Service Events

Project Title: Green Capital EVS

Project number: 554457-EPP-1-2014-1-UK-EPPKAI-LARG-EVS (details in Projects Annex)

Coordinating organisation: Change Agents UK Charity (UK)

EC contribution: EUR 90,513.60

Green Capital EVS centred on sustainability skills and boosting employability of young volunteers; it provided an opportunity for young people to express their perspective on sustainability issues in the context of a European Green Capital, and increased the capacity of Bristol Green Capital 2015 (BGC) to deliver on its objectives. A total of 33 EVS volunteers acted as BGC ambassadors and researchers assigned to different areas of the city. They served as ‘change agents’ in communities across Bristol: increasing capacity and raising the profile of local projects that are making a positive impact for sustainability in the city.

4.4 Online Linguistic Support (OLS)

The Erasmus+ Online Linguistic Support (OLS) was introduced to promote language learning and linguistic diversity. It allows participants to improve their knowledge of the language in which they will work, study or volunteer abroad.

OLS was launched in October 2014 for higher education students and youth-EVS volunteers leaving on an Erasmus+ mobility for more than two months. The OLS language assessment (before and after mobility) is compulsory from January 2015, while participants can follow the OLS language courses voluntarily. In addition to on-line language courses, MOOCs, tutoring sessions and a forum will be gradually introduced in 2015 to provide additional opportunities for students to improve their language skills.

Participants who	completed 1 st assessment	completed 2 nd assessment		used courses	
	number	number	%	number	%
Higher Education	125,968	86,838	69%	56,264	45%
Youth	456	109	24%	325	71%
Total	126,424	86,947	69%	56,589	45%

Table 4.3: On-line linguistic supports

More than 126,000 Erasmus+ participants (most of them students) assessed their language level before and after their mobility using OLS under the 2014 Call. Amongst these, more than 56,000 followed an OLS language course.

The results of the second assessment show that participants' proficiency improved noticeably, depending on their initial level, the selected language and assiduity. Course participants starting at an A level improve on average their proficiency between 1 and 1.5 CEFR levels.

The OLS currently covers German, English, Spanish, French, Italian and Dutch, the language needed by around 90% of all Erasmus+ mobilities. Around 65% of participants use the OLS to assess and improve their English skills. Czech, Danish, Greek, Polish, Portuguese and Swedish will become available in 2016. Other EU official languages will be added gradually until 2020.

4.5 Erasmus Mundus Joint Degrees

Erasmus Mundus Joint Master Degrees (EMJMDs) are highly integrated study programmes delivered by an international consortium of Higher Education Institutions. They aim to foster excellence, innovation, and internationalisation in Higher Education Institutions and improve the competences, skills and employability of Master students.

The EMJMDs were included in the first call for the Erasmus+ Programme published in December 2013.

KA 1	PROJECTS			TOTAL GRANT in EUR	ORGANISATIONS	PARTICIPANTS
	Submitted	Granted	Success rate			
Erasmus+ Joint Master Degrees	61	11	18%	21,240,349	46	437

Table 4.4 – Erasmus Mundus Joint Degrees

The 11 projects selected by the Executive Agency represent a good mix of humanities, hard sciences and life sciences. There is a wide geographical distribution of projects, which involve the participation of 46 higher education institutions from 18 different Programme Countries.

Erasmus Mundus Master Courses (EMMCs) scholarships and Erasmus Mundus Joint Doctorates (EMJDs) fellowships

In 2014, there were 138 ongoing EMMC and 42 ongoing EMJDs recruiting students or PhD candidates. These consortia were initially funded prior to Erasmus+, but continue to be supported with Erasmus+ funds. A total amount of EUR 48.8 million was allocated to cover the ongoing EMMCs and EUR 32.5 million to cover the ongoing EMJDs.

Erasmus Mundus scholarships were awarded to:

- 452 Programme country Master students (including 114 scholarships awarded through a geographic "window"¹⁷ for nationals of the FYROM or Turkey) and
- 927 Partner country Master students (including 89 scholarships awarded through a Western Balkans "window" and 45 scholarships awarded through a Syria "window").

Doctoral fellowships were awarded to:

- 80 PhD candidates from Programme countries (including 11 fellowships awarded through the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Turkey "window") and
- 177 candidates from Partner countries (including 5 fellowships awarded through a western Balkans "window").

Erasmus Mundus Quality Review - Selection 2014

The Erasmus Mundus Quality Review was launched as a pilot exercise and concerned 50 eligible Erasmus Mundus Master Courses (EMMC) selected under the Erasmus Mundus call for proposals in 2009. A total of 43 courses chose to submit a Quality Review Report in 2014 and were evaluated with respect to their performance, excellence, sustainability and development prospects beyond the period of the EU funding. At the end of the Quality Review process, 19 courses were deemed of sufficiently high quality to be included in the Erasmus Mundus Joint Master Degrees (EMJMDs) Catalogue and were eligible to apply for a grant in 2015 based on a specific call for proposals.

Example of Erasmus Mundus Master Course

Project number: FPA nr. 2011-0162 (details in Projects Annex)

Coordinating organisation: Université de Bourgogne (FR)

EC contribution:

Grant 2011: EUR 622,800

Grant 2012: EUR 630,800

Grant 2013: EUR 568,400

Grant 2014: EUR 390,000

Grant 2015: EUR 648,000

VIBOT is a 2-years Master programme aiming to provide qualifications for entry into the professions in the area of robotics, computer vision, image processing and medical imaging in public or private laboratories. The strongest points of the EMMC are the close collaboration with industry leading to very high employability rates (98% employment rate 3 months after graduation) and the excellent collaborative spirit, both within the consortium and across student cohorts. The consortium organises the yearly VIBOT Day, a one-day event gathering industrial partners, VIBOT staff and VIBOT students of different cohorts. Business partners have the opportunity to learn more about VIBOT and the collaborative opportunities offered to companies wishing to sponsor the programme. It is also an opportunity for the companies to recruit VIBOT graduates or 1st year students for an internship.

4.6 Erasmus+ Master Loans

The Student Loan Guarantee Facility is a novelty of Erasmus+. It provides partial guarantees in order to expand access to affordable finance for students who will take a full Master's degree in another Erasmus+ programme country.

¹⁷ A EC initiative to foster cooperation between higher education institutions, to boost exchanges of students, researchers and academic staff and to support mobility, in particular from non-EU countries to EU Member States.

Although the 2014-2020 Multiannual Financial Framework was one of the first innovative financial instruments to finalise its Delegation Agreement with the European Investment Fund (EIF), it was only signed in December 2014. The launch of the loan scheme was therefore postponed to February 2015, when the call to Financial Intermediaries was published.

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

5.1 Introduction

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

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

In 2014, a total amount of EUR 375.89 million was committed under Key Action 2, representing around 20% of the total commitments for the Erasmus+ Programme (see annex 2.1).

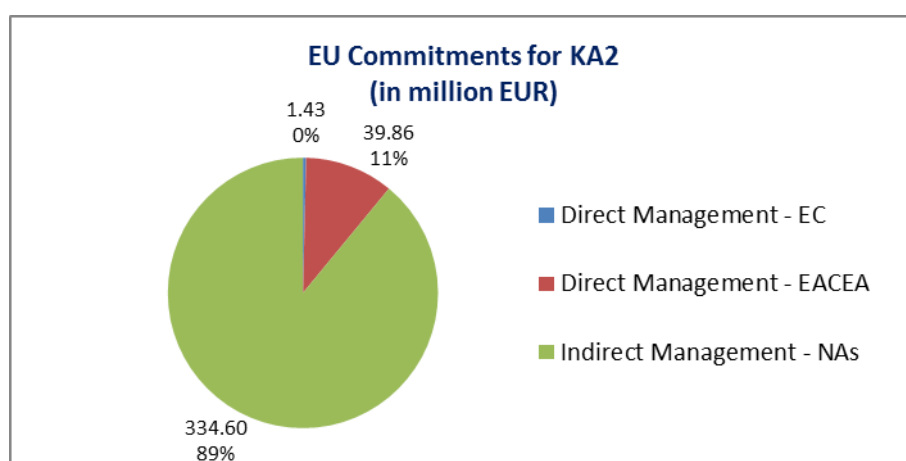


Figure 5.1: 2014 EU Commitments by Management Mode for Key Action 2

5.2 Strategic Partnerships

The Erasmus+ KA2 Strategic Partnerships action supports the development, transfer and/or implementation of innovative practices and promotes cooperation, peer learning and exchanges of experience at European level.

It combines elements of previous programmes (Lifelong Learning and Youth in Action), namely the Partnerships, Transfer of Innovation and Transnational Youth Initiatives projects, in a new structure. It encourages the involvement of group of partners as diverse as possible including public and private organisations established in a Programme Country or in any Partner Country.

Moreover, it introduces the possibility for organisations to participate in cross-sectorial projects tackling issues related to more than one field of education, training and youth and/or addressing one or more horizontal priorities. In 2014, 19% of the Strategic Partnership budget (EUR 65 million) was allocated to 243 cross-sectorial projects.

Strategic Partnerships also introduce a more strategic approach in terms of project implementation. They enhance the role and responsibilities of the coordinating institutions, which must ensure that roles and responsibilities are allocated appropriately to the partners according to their expertise and experience in order for the project objectives to be achieved. Moreover, the coordinators are also now responsible for allocating the budget to the partners.

The Erasmus+ 2014 call for Strategic Partnerships was launched in December 2013. Its high demand across all Programme Countries and fields, combined with a limited budget, resulted in a rather low success rate (~18%).

	PROJECTS			GRANT AMOUNT (EUR)	ORGANISATIONS	PARTICIPANTS
	Submitted	Granted	Success Rate			
Strategic Partnerships for School Education	1,057	206	19.49%	46,127,908	1,265	13,563
Strategic Partnerships for Schools Only	2,998	522	17.41%	78,272,387	2,566	93,351
Strategic Partnerships for Adult Education	1,317	215	16.32%	45,764,442	1,289	8,238
Strategic Partnerships for Higher Education	917	154	16.79%	42,016,082	1,046	17,130
Strategic Partnerships for Vocational Education and Training	1,657	377	22.75%	96,034,874	2,492	9,575
Strategic Partnerships for Youth	1,730	258	14.91%	30,033,152	1,165	16,948
Transnational Cooperation Activities for Youth				6,938,693		12,957
Transnational Cooperation Activities for other Sectors				774,281		919
TOTAL	9,676	1,732	17.90%	345,961,819	9,823	172,681

Table 5.1: Overview of the results for KA2 Strategic Partnerships

A total amount of over EUR 345 million was granted to 1,732 projects involving the participation of 9,823 organisations and directly benefitting over 158,805 participants in learning, training and teaching activities and 13,876 participants in transnational cooperation Activities.

More than 76% of the selected projects are producing intellectual outputs (such as open educational resources, curricula, IT tools or other pedagogical materials) and more than 65% include learning, training and teaching activities (see annex 4.1).

Around 2% of the total budget was dedicated to transnational cooperation activities (TCAs) between National Agencies, mainly in the field of youth. This instrument aims at bringing added value and increased quality in the overall programme implementation by the National Agencies. It contributes to increasing the impact of the programme at systemic level.

In 2014, 89% of the total budget, including TCAs, went to the Education and Training sectors the remaining amount was allocated to Youth.

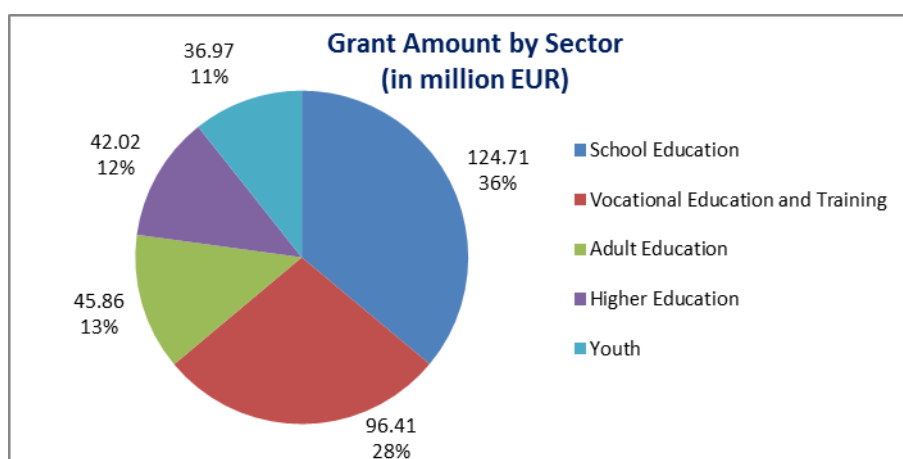


Figure 5.2: Strategic Partnerships (including TCAs) by Sector

In 2014, the proportionality principle was applied during the selection process to ensure that projects of various sizes and with different objectives were awarded funding, which was quite a challenge for most National Agencies.

An additional challenge the NAs had to face was the promotion of this new action. In education and training many former beneficiaries were used to previous programme rules and had to adapt to the new applicable provisions related to project management.

Since the beginning of the Erasmus+ Programme, Strategic Partnerships have been perceived as an attractive action promoting the strategic internationalisation of the participating institutions. The quality of the submitted applications was quite high, and their number, even in the smaller Programme Countries, demonstrates the high interest for the action, including in the youth field where this type of project was less familiar. Overall, high quality projects were submitted.

5.2.1 School education

The transition to Erasmus+ gave schools the opportunity to cooperate with other organisations active in all fields of education, training and youth, and opened up opportunities for them to engage in larger-scale projects than in previous programmes.

Compared to Comenius, Strategic Partnerships have taken a more ambitious approach by creating the possibility for projects to produce innovative curricula, handbooks and other products intended for school practice. At the same time, exchanges of good practices and networking between schools in different countries have remained an equally important aspect of the projects funded under school education. The 2014 selection has produced a balanced mix of process-oriented and output-oriented projects.

	PROJECTS			PROJECT DETAILS			GRANT (million EUR)	ACTIVITIES				ORGANISATIONS		PARTICIPANTS
	Submitted	Granted	Success Rate	% With IO	% With ST LTTs	% with LT LTTs		IO	ME	ST LTTs	LT LTTs	Number	Average/project	
Strategic Partnerships for School Education	1,057	206	19%	93%	66%	3%	46.13	802	497	557	13	1,265	6.1	13,563
Strategic Partnerships for Schools Only	2,998	522	17%	39%	85%	7%	78.27	867	309	3415	133	2,566	4.9	93,351
Transnational Cooperation Activities for School Education							0.31							292
TOTAL	4,055	728	18%	55%	80%	6%	124.71	1,669	806	3,972	146	3,831	5.3	107,206

Table 5.2: KA2 details for School Education

(IO= Intellectual Output, ME = Multiplier Event, LTTs = Learning, Training and Teaching, ST= Short term, LT = Long term)

In 2014, the demand for funding under this action was five times the available budget. A total of 728 projects were funded for a total grant amount of around EUR 125 million. The projects involve 3,831 organisations and will benefit 106,914 participants in short-term and long-term learning, training and teaching activities and 292 participants in TCAs.

The relatively low success rate (~18%) has been a challenge that could potentially have an impact on the motivation of future applicants in the long-term.

Following the application of the proportionality principle some concerns were also raised that the number of funded organisations might not be sufficient to create a real impact on the school field. This has been addressed by a number of measures taken by the Commission in the subsequent 2015 and 2016 calls. National Agencies were given the possibility to include internal staff as evaluators and the implementation of the action was fine-tuned in order to more explicitly cover the two main objectives – support for innovation and exchange of good practices.

Moreover, the budget for Key Action 2 - school education has been steadily increasing since 2014 and will continue to grow as the Programme progresses, thus allowing for more schools and other organisations to participate each year.

Examples of LLP Comenius multilateral partnership similar to KA2 Strategic Partnerships in the field of School education

Project number: 2012-1-TR1-COM06-36862 (details in Projects Annex)

Coordinating organisation: Gazi Osman Pasa Ilkokulu (TR)

EC contribution: EUR 23,000

The main aim of this cross-curricular project is to support students in their future choices giving them the basic skills and competences needed to enhance their employability. Partners worked to promote the acquisition of transversal competencies, in particular learning to learn, digital competence, sense of initiative and creativity. Subjects such as languages, history, geography, art, music and ICT were used in the project. Activities aimed to give students the opportunity to deal with the future challenges, to develop links with European schools, and to strengthen pupils' motivation to learn foreign languages.

5.2.2 Vocational education and training

Strategic Partnerships in the VET field build upon the successful previous actions and experience of the Leonardo da Vinci Partnerships and Transfer of Innovation projects, and seek to further enhance cooperation across a diverse range of participating institutions, by adopting a more strategic approach to project implementation.

	PROJECTS			PROJECT DETAILS			GRANT (million EUR)	ACTIVITIES				ORGANISATIONS		PARTICIPANTS in LTTs
	Submitted	Granted	Success Rate	% With IO	% With ST LTTs	% with LT LTTs		IO	ME	ST LTTs	LT LTTs	Number	Average/ project	
Strategic Partnerships	1,657	377	23%	95%	48%	3%	96.03	1920	1041	525	18	2,492	6.6	9,575
Transnational Cooperation Activities							0.37							474
TOTAL	1,657	377	23%	95%	48%	3%	96.41	1,920	1,041	525	18	2,492	6.6	10,049

Table 5.3: KA2 details for Vocational and Education Training

In 2014, 377 VET projects worth more than EUR 96 million were funded. Strategic Partnerships in the VET field consisted of both larger-scale projects aiming to produce tangible intellectual outputs and smaller cooperation projects. The smaller-scale partnerships can be a catalyst for the first internationalisation attempts of newer institutions, and allow for building cooperation and international networks as well as transnational mobility. They can also act as a stepping stone for future participation in larger Strategic Partnerships with intellectual outputs.

Some NAs have pointed out that the smaller VET exchange of practices projects were not selected due to the high budgets of "larger-scale" projects with intellectual outputs. In response to this remark, the Commission 2016 call gives NAs the choice to earmark budgets for exchange of practice projects.

The overall success rate was rather low (23%) due to limited budget and high demand across the Programme Countries. Of the Strategic Partnerships, 95% aim to produce intellectual outputs and in LTTs preference is given to short term teaching and training events (48% of the projects), rather than long-term ones (3% of the projects), which is in line with the needs of the action. On average, 6.6 organisations are involved per project.

Overall, the transition to the new programme was smooth in the field of VET as the concept is similar to the Leonardo da Vinci actions, namely TOI, under the previous LLP programme.

Example of LLP Leonardo da Vinci Transfer of Innovation projects similar to Strategic Partnerships in the field of VET

Project Title: *Self-employment with e-Learning based Practise Firms*

Project number: 2011-1-SI1-LEO05-02719 (details in Projects Annex)

Coordinating organisation: Secondary School of Economic Celje (SI)

EC contribution: EUR 166,221.20

Analyses have shown that due to their shortcomings in terms of education, lack of competences and consequently fear and uncertainty, the unemployed rarely opt for self-employment. As the concrete response to the deficiencies identified above, the general aim of the SELPRAF project is to encourage people's interest for entrepreneurship by an innovative SELPRAF Training Programme for the acquisition of the four key competences: communication in the mother tongue, communication in foreign languages, digital competence, sense of initiative and entrepreneurship and working in practise firms. The project also promotes individual educational pathways beyond VET and improves permeability in VET.

Project Title: TAKE TECH

Project number: 2011-1-AT1-LEO05-04864 (details in Projects Annex)

Coordinating organisation: Steirische Wirtschaftsförderungsgesellschaft mbH, Graz (AT)

EC contribution: EUR 230,281.37

The project links schools and technical companies through systematic matchmaking and raises the awareness for technical issues among young people through school visits to companies. The visits aim to make young people interested in technical professions, and they give opportunities to companies to present themselves to future employees thus tackling the issue of lack of skilled personnel. All in all about 4,000 pupils could visit over 150 companies during the pilot phase of the project.

Project Title: Renewable Energy for Future generations

Project number: 2011-1-SK1-LEO05-02879 (details in Projects Annex)

Coordinating organisation: EUR 186,002 (SK)

EC contribution: EUR 186,002

The main objectives of the project are identification and analysis of new professions in the field of renewable energy sources and their adaptation to Slovak conditions, the preparation of a training course for educational and career advisors, as well as the preparation of renewable energy textbooks suitable for the study field "Technician for energy facilities of buildings". The textbooks are developed by EkoFond in cooperation with secondary schools and the State Institute of Vocational Education. Main outputs of the project are: handbook of professions in the field of renewable energy sources, curriculum for the training of educational and career counsellors and textbooks on renewable energy sources.

5.2.3 Higher education

A total of 154 higher education projects were funded in 2014 under the Strategic Partnerships action. The countries with the highest number of selected projects were Spain and Germany (13), followed by Poland and UK (12), France (10) and Italy (9). The majority of countries (20) could fund between 1 and 3 projects (see annex 4.2 for details).

	PROJECTS			PROJECT DETAILS			GRANT (million EUR)	ACTIVITIES				ORGANISATIONS		PARTICIPANTS in LTTs
	Submitted	Granted	Success Rate	% With IO	% With ST LTTs	% with LT LTTs		IO	ME	ST LTTs	LT LTTs	Number	Average/ project	
Strategic Partnerships	917	154	17%	100%	69%	3%	42.02	931	376	474	10	1,046	6.8	17,130

Table 5.4: KA2 details for Higher Education

Although the average project size is around EUR 273,000, there is a wide diversity: ranging from EUR 59,000 to 450,000. Project sizes also vary between 3 and 25 partners, with an average of around 7 partners per project and a total of 1,046 organisations funded. More than two thirds of the participating organisations are Higher Education Institutions, while the remaining are enterprises, chamber of commerce or foundations, associations and public authorities.

The topics covered by selected projects are very relevant to the EU policy agenda:

- 69 projects address Employability (Labour Market; entrepreneurship; skills mismatch; entrepreneurial education)
- 66 the Digital single market (ICT; Open and Distance Learning)
- 30 Inclusion/tolerance (EU citizenship; disadvantaged; ethics/religion; gender; equity; intercultural education)

All 154 selected projects foresee concrete results ("Intellectual Outputs") and almost all projects (140 or 91%) will organise "Multiplier Events" to disseminate projects' results. A lot of interest was shown in mobility activities ("*Learning Teaching and Training*"), more than 70% of projects involving around 17,000 participants. It is worth noting that the new possibility of Blended Mobility for Learners (the combination of virtual and physical mobility) will be given to almost 2,000 participants.

Example of LLP Erasmus project similar to KA2 Strategic Partnerships

Project number: 517688-LLP-2011-1-ES-ERASMUS-ECUE (details in Projects Annex)

Coordinating organisation: Universidad de Zaragoza (ES)

EC contribution: EUR 293,808.75

100 Mirrors – Tools for the motivation of enterprising women aims to improve the situation for women in business by providing a selection among 5 European countries of 100 enterprising women who can be used as model or mentor for other women who want to create their own project or to reinforce their creative and enterprising skills.

5.2.4 Adult education

Through their efficient information and promotion campaigns, the National Agencies succeeded in overcoming the major challenge in the adult education field that is the smooth transition from the LLP Grundtvig Learning Partnerships to the new Erasmus+ Strategic Partnerships. The demand, both in terms of the amount of submitted applications and of the requested budget, was relatively high, however, due to the limited budget the success rate was particularly low (16%).

	PROJECTS			PROJECT DETAILS			GRANT (million EUR)	ACTIVITIES				ORGANISATIONS		PARTICIPANTS in LTTs
	Submitted	Granted	Success Rate	% With IO	% With ST LTTs	% with LT LTTs		IO	ME	ST LTTs	LT LTTs	Number	Average/ project	
Strategic Partnerships	1,317	215	16%	94%	53%	3%	45.76	927	538	382	7	1,289	6.0	8,238
Transnational Cooperation Activities							0.09							153
TOTAL	1,317	215	16%	76%	65%	4%	45.86	927	538	382	7	1,289	6.0	8,391

Table 5.5: KA2 details for Adult Education

With an average number of 6 partners per project, 1,289 organisations are actively participating in European cooperation in the adult education field. More than half (53%) of the Strategic Partnerships are organising learning, teaching or training activities with a preference for short term joint staff training events. The vast majority of the selected Strategic Partnerships projects (94%) aim to produce intellectual outputs.

The interest of adult education stakeholders in the programme remains high, however the heterogeneous character of the field combined with the low budget are likely to make the objective of a systemic impact more difficult to reach. The need to reach a critical mass has been addressed in the subsequent 2015 and in the 2016 Calls.

Example of LLP Grundtvig partnership similar to KA2 Strategic Partnerships in the field of Adult Education

Project Title: Initial literacy in a social context

Project number: 2012-1-SE1-GRU06-11987 (details in Projects Annex)

Coordinating organisation: Föreningen Urkraft (SE)

EC contribution: EUR 14,000

The project aimed at creating an opportunity to share best practice in the field of adult literacy and basic skills training of disadvantaged learners and to transfer these practices into the home institutions and share them with other relevant local stakeholders. The partners aimed to form a sound body of theoretical and practical knowledge in order to integrate socially and educationally disadvantaged learners into the society. Apart from the learner group, the project contributed to the professional competencies of the trainers and educational staff involved in adult education. As a result, different course materials and innovative techniques were compared and developed. Training, seminars, workshops, conferences and meetings were organised within the project.

5.2.5 Youth

The Strategic Partnerships action in the field of youth supports a large variety of projects including the Transnational Youth Initiatives of the previous Youth in Action Programme.

Similarly to other sectors, the success rate of this action in 2014 is low (less than 15%), mainly due to the low level of the available budget and the high demand for this action in the field of youth.

	PROJECTS			PROJECT DETAILS			GRANT (million EUR)	ACTIVITIES				ORGANISATIONS		PARTICIPANTS
	Submitted	Granted	Success Rate	% With IO	% With ST LTTs	% with LT LTTs		IO	ME	ST LTTs	LT LTTs	Number	Average/ project	
Strategic Partnerships	1,730	258	15%	82%	52%	4%	30.03	726	427	336	22	1,165	4.5	16,948
Transnational Cooperation Activities							6.94							12,957
TOTAL	1,730	258	15%	76%	65%	4%	36.97	726	427	336	22	1,165	4.5	29,905

Table 5.6: KA2 details for Youth

One of the main challenges faced by National Agencies in 2014 was the application of the proportionality principle in the evaluation of the projects, allowing for the possibility to evaluate a variety of projects submitted by diverse applicants within one action.

On top of the general challenges encountered by all sectors, youth NAs struggled to ensure sufficient demand from informal groups of young people for the Transnational Youth Initiatives, mainly due to their low visibility and the complexity of the application form.

Despite the problems encountered and considering that Strategic Partnerships is a new format in the field of youth, the number of projects submitted and the promising projects funded during this first year of implementation show an interest and a need from the youth field for these larger-scale, longer-term projects combining various types of activities.

Example of KA2 Strategic Partnership project in the field of Youth

Project Title: Social Inclusion through Virtual International Mobility

Project number: 2014-2-ES02-KA205-005266

Coordinating organisation: Ayuntamiento de Alcala de Guadaira (ES)

EC contribution: EUR 77,247

Learning mobility, i.e. transnational mobility for the purpose of acquiring new skills is one of the fundamental ways in which young people can strengthen their future employability as well as their personal development (European Commission. Green Paper: Promoting the learning mobility of young people).

The European Commission and the Member States of the EU have worked year after year to increase the number of learning mobility opportunities, within the framework of formal education (i.e. the Erasmus programme) or within the framework of non-formal education (i.e. the Youth in Action programme). Despite their efforts, there are still a large number of young people who do not have access to such opportunities for personal, economical, social and/or health reasons.

In this context, the SIVIM project aims at reducing the inequalities and risk of exclusion faced by young people who cannot access learning mobility opportunities, in particular, young people from disadvantaged social groups. To this end, public administrations and youth organisations from 3 European countries (Spain, Italy and Poland) will develop, validate and disseminate at European level a Toolkit for Virtual Mobility in non-formal education. This Toolkit will give to young people who cannot travel, the opportunity to develop similar competences to the ones developed by those taking part in transnational mobility activities.

5.3 Capacity Building

In 2014, as Heading 4 funds were not yet available to fund Capacity Building projects in Higher Education (or International Credit Mobility), reporting is limited to the field of youth.

As a distinct action of KA2, **Capacity Building** aims at fostering regional integration and cooperation between programme countries and different regions of the world, and at improving the quality of youth work, informal learning and volunteering.

Figures presented below are combined for both rounds organised under the 2014 call for Erasmus+ 'Capacity building in the field of youth'.

	PROJECTS			GRANT (million EUR)	ORGANISATIONS
	Submitted	Granted	Success Rate		
Capacity Building in the field of Youth	319	79	25%	9.39	80

Table 5.7: Capacity Building in the field of youth

Capacity building projects brought together youth organisations, public bodies and other stakeholders from Erasmus+ Programme Countries and Partner Countries from different regions of the world in particular with the aim to improve the quality and

recognition of youth work and to further develop and implement non-formal learning mobility within and across regions of the world.

5.4 Knowledge Alliances

Knowledge Alliances are structured partnerships bringing together businesses and higher education institutions in order to develop new ways of creating, producing and sharing knowledge. They collaborate for designing and delivering new curricula to foster creativity, employability and entrepreneurship. In return, more innovative and entrepreneurial graduates, staff and institutions, plus enhanced co-operation between higher education and business will contribute to Europe's innovation capacity.

Knowledge Alliances are not limited to any one field or area of study, their main added value rather lying in their focus on innovation excellence. They should stimulate and facilitate inter- and multidisciplinary activities so as to bring benefits to both the academia and the business sector. Recently funded projects cover a wide range of sectors like textile and clothing, agri-food business, bio-technology, open data, urbanism, sustainable tourism, water treatment, cinema industry and more. In addition, quite a number of projects target to foster entrepreneurial attitudes based on a cross-disciplinary collaboration.

With the support of the European Parliament, the Commission launched two pilot calls for Knowledge Alliances in 2011 and 2012. The overwhelmingly positive response demonstrated that these structured partnerships meet a very real need in the educational sector. Based on these initial results as well as on the inclusion of Knowledge Alliances in the Lifelong Learning Programme 2013 call, Knowledge Alliances were mainstreamed under Erasmus+.

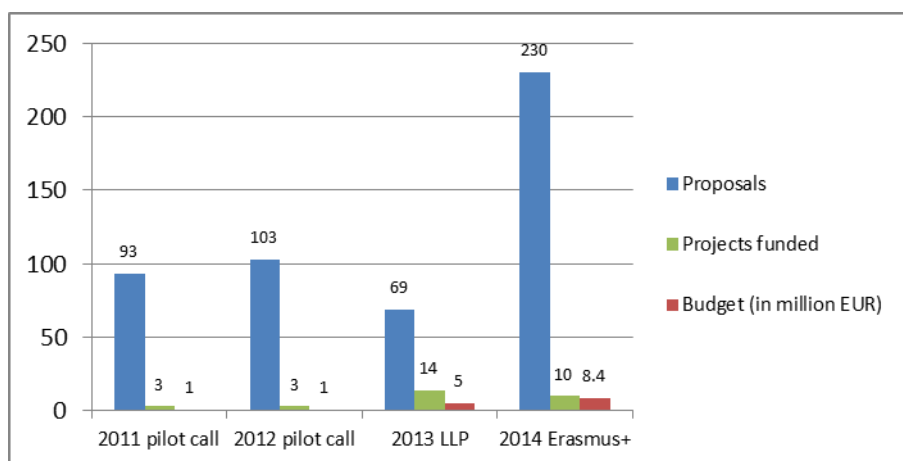


Fig. 1.3: Evolution over years for the Knowledge Alliances

In 2014, the interest for Knowledge Alliances was extremely high leading to very strong competition for funding. For the pilot calls and for the first two Erasmus+ call the success rate was below 5%. A total budget of EUR 8.4 million was granted through that action by the Executive Agency to projects involving 116 organisations.

	PROJECTS			GRANT (million EUR)	ORGANISATIONS
	Submitted	Granted	Success Rate		
Knowledge Alliances	230	10	4%	8.43	116
TOTAL	230	10	4.35%	8.43	116

Table 5.8: Details for Knowledge Alliances

5.5 Sector Skills Alliances

Sector Skills Alliances aim to identify and close skills gaps in occupations by enhancing the responsiveness of initial and continuing VET systems to sector-specific labour market needs and demand for new skills. They aim to agree on sector-wide training content for European professional core profiles based on commonly defined competence standards, and to integrate work-based learning, thereby facilitating cross-border certification and easing professional mobility in the sector. An Alliance should include networks of VET providers including companies, representative sector organisations or sectorial social partners.

2014 was the first Erasmus+ call for this new action. 48 applications were submitted and grants were awarded to 6 proposals, giving a success rate of about 12.5%. This low number was due to the limited budget earmarked for this action in the first Erasmus+ year.

	PROJECTS			GRANT million EUR	ORGANISATIONS
	Submitted	Granted	Success Rate		
Sector Skills Alliances	48	6	12.50%	4.76	81
TOTAL	48	6	12.50%	4.76	81

Table 5.9: Details for Sector Skills Alliances

The evaluation revealed that many applicants had not yet understood the new concept and drafted their proposals along the lines of the former LLP multilateral projects, underestimating the importance of the right mix in the composition of the Alliance, resulting in many ineligible proposals. The 2015 Programme Guide provided clarifications to applicants to help understanding in future calls.

Two of the selected proposals come from the sector advanced manufacturing, and one each from the cultural & creative sectors, from environmental technologies, from ICT and from commerce.

6. Key Action 3 – Support for policy reform

6.1 Introduction

Key Action 3 supports policy reforms targeting the goals of the European policy agenda, in particular the 2020 Strategy, the Strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training (ET 2020) and the European Youth Strategy. It aims to improve the quality of education and training systems and youth policies.

The action promotes knowledge in the education, training and youth fields in support of evidence-based policy making and monitoring. It also supports Prospective Initiatives through policy experimentations and forward-looking cooperation projects.

Tools for improving the transparency of skills and qualifications, the cooperation with international organisations, the dialogue with stakeholders and for raising awareness about the Erasmus+ actions are also supported under this Key Action.

In 2014, an overall budget of EUR 83.23 million was committed under Key Action 3 (see annex 2.1). One single action, representing 7% of the overall KA3 budget was implemented by the National Agencies: Dialogue between young people and policy-makers (see details under section 6.4.5). All the other actions were implemented in direct management mode by the Executive Agency and the European Commission services (see details in annex 5.1 and 5.2).

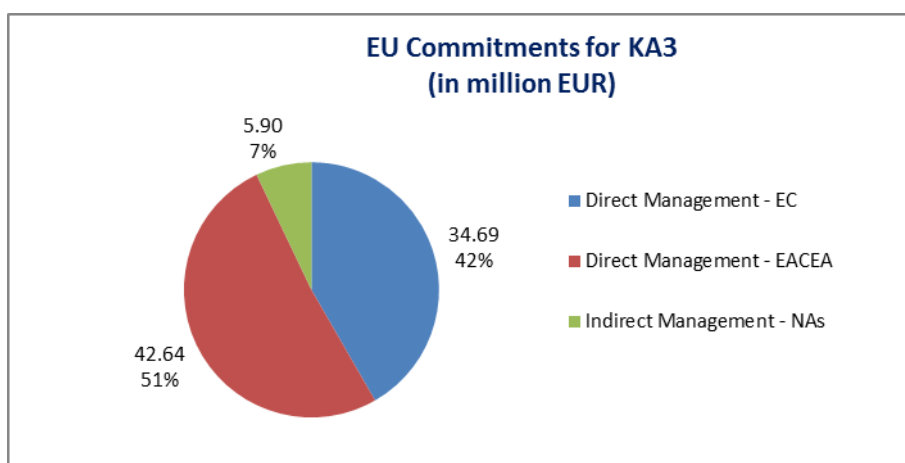


Fig. 6.1: 2014 EU Commitments by Management Mode for Key Action 3

6.2 Knowledge in the fields of education, training and youth

Eurydice outputs for 2014 were published according to schedule and were, as usual, divided into thematic publications, annual updates as well as country specific information. Thematic publications included focus on funding mechanisms for education, early school leaving, Early Childhood Education and Care and modernisation of higher education (second report on Access, Retention and Employability is available on the [European Commission's website](#)).

6.3 Prospective Initiatives

6.3.1 European policy experimentations

European policy experimentations are a new trans-national cooperation action under Erasmus+. They aim at testing innovative measures through rigorous evaluation methods under the leadership of high-level public authorities.

The first call for proposals on European Policy Experimentations published in 2014 resulted in the selection for funding of eight projects which have a 3-year duration.

KEY ACTION 3 Policy Experimentation in the field of	PROJECTS			GRANT AMOUNT (EUR)	AVERAGE PER PROJECT (EUR)	ORGANISATIONS
	Submitted	Granted	Success rate			
Education & Training	20	7	35%	11,261,310	1,608,759	
Youth	2	1	50%	1,934,009	1,934,009	
Total	22	8	36%	13,195,319	1,649,415	127

Table 6.1: European Policy Experimentation

The call was successful in terms of: the target number of applications; the coverage of all the priority themes; the substantial involvement of ministry-level authorities; a balanced and wide geographical distribution involving most Erasmus+ countries (see details in annex 5.3) as well as the significant partnership size (between 5 and 14 countries/project); the high proportion of good quality proposals with all selected proposals scoring above 70%, and 3 proposals scoring above 80%.

Given the high number of proposals on education and training fulfilling the minimum quality requirements, the initial budget allocation was increased from EUR 10 million to EUR 13.2 million to finance the following projects:

Country	Applicant organisation	Project Title
BE	EUN PARTNERSHIP AISBL	Monitoring Technology Enhanced Pedagogy
	VLAAMS GEWEST	Guidance and Orientation for Adult Learners
	JUNIOR ACHIEVEMENT YOUNG ENTERPRISE EUROPE	Innovation Cluster for Entrepreneurship Education
CY	CYPRUS PEDAGOGICAL INSTITUTE - PAIDAGOGIKO INSTITOUTO KYPROU	Assessment of Transversal Skills 2020
FI	CSC-TIETEEN TIETOTEKNIKAN KESKUS OY	Field trial on the impact of enabling easy mobility on recognition of external studies
FR	FRANCE VOLONTAIRES	International Volunteering Opportunities for All
NL	MINISTERIE VAN ONDERWIJS, CULTUUR EN WETENSCHAP	Focus on Automatic Institutional Recognition
PT	PEEP - EDUCAR PARA EMPREENDER (ASSOCIAÇÃO)	Youth Start - Entrepreneurial Challenges

Table 6.2: European Policy Experimentation projects selected

6.4 Cooperation with International Organisations

6.4.1 Council of Europe

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

In 2014 Erasmus+ KA3 supported a joint Council of Europe (CoE) and Commission programme for pilot-projects in the field of human rights/citizenship education - launched in 2013 -, to promote civic competencies in national cultures and curricula. The action is part of the implementation of the CoE *Charter of Human Rights Education* and of the ET 2020 Strategic objective of *social inclusion, equity and*

citizenship, and targets national education and training authorities, which co-finance the project. With an annual budget of EUR 350,000 in the form of grants (EU co-funding: EUR 200,000), it also allows the participation of non-EU stakeholders.

In June 2014, two medium-sized proposals out of four were selected:

- Teaching Controversial Issues – Developing Effective Training for Teachers and School Leaders (Cyprus, Ireland, Montenegro, Spain and the United Kingdom with the support of Albania, Sweden and Turkey). The high interest in this project, relevant for all types of discriminations, including LGBT, in schools resulted in increased partnership from 5 to 10 countries.

- Teacher training in EDC/HRE: how to develop students' ability to assess information from media and social networks (Belarus, Georgia, Lithuania and the Russian Federation).

b) ROMED training Programme

The ROMED training programme for school, culture and health mediators co-funded by the European Commission and the Council of Europe with a yearly budget of EUR 1 million, aims at restoring dialogue between Roma communities and mainstream society. It has trained more than 1,300 mediators since 2011 and is regarded as an effective and visible mediation instrument. In 2014 ROMED2 has been actively running in 11 countries: BG, DE, EL, HU, IT, PT, RO, SK, Bosnia and Herzegovina, FYROM and Ukraine. During 2013-2014 mediation focussed on local authorities and the role of mothers in children's education reflecting the growing emphasis on "going local", which was the underlying inspiration for the Roma Summit of 4 April 2014 in Brussels.

c) Cooperation with the Council of Europe in the field of youth

In 2014 a new Framework Partnership Agreement with the Council of Europe in the youth field was signed for the period 2014-2106 in order to provide knowledge on the situation of young people, to promote youth work across the themes of participation/citizenship, and social inclusion, and also promote the quality and recognition of youth work. Moreover, it facilitates peer-learning and capacity-building in the EU's neighbouring regions through seminars and symposia. For the first time, this cooperation agreement contained a logframe, the intervention logic of this partnership with concrete activities, expected outcomes, performance indicators and sources of verification, in line with the recommendations of the Commission's external evaluation of the partnership carried out in 2013.

The main 2014 event was a conference with 130 participants held in Malta on the role of youth work in supporting young people from vulnerable groups. This was an opportunity to present the research on the mapping of barriers to social inclusion of young people and for groups of young people from disadvantaged backgrounds coming from five different countries to formulate their needs and share their projects. The conference was combined with the annual meeting of the Pool of European Youth Researchers (PEYR) and the national correspondents of the European Knowledge Centre on Youth Policy (EKCYP).

6.4.2 Cooperation with OECD

Already active under the 2013 Annual Work Programme (AWP) for LLP, the cooperation on country analysis with OECD fully exploits the synergies between OECD's strong analytical capacity and the Commission's political and financial capacity regarding country analysis. This cooperation has enhanced education policies via improved knowledge of education systems and scientific support.

The 2014 AWP designed a set of common activities focusing on knowledge sharing for country analysis, on providing support to the implementation of education and skills surveys and the analysis of their results and on cooperation in the field of Higher Education.

In 2014 three joint OECD-EC Country Profiles (HU, SK, PL) were finalised, printed and launched and two further Country Profiles (EE, SI) were under preparation. Joint launch events took place in Hungary and Poland. The preparation of joint OECD-EC Country Profiles will continue in 2015 with Erasmus+ support.

Furthermore, OECD began to support countries that engage in preparing their national skills strategy towards a higher skills equilibrium, involving all the stakeholders concerned. Under AWP2014, Erasmus+ provided financial support to countries engaging in policy dialogue at national level and implementing a national skills strategy in line with the OECD framework and the agreed EU policy priorities¹⁸.

6.5. Stakeholder dialogue and policy promotion

6.5.1 Introduction

Through dialogue with stakeholders and policy promotion, this action contributes to the implementation of European policy agendas in education, training and youth, particularly via exchanges of views and consultations on topical subjects. It also supports dissemination and exploitation of the programme results.

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

6.5.2 Education, Training and Youth Forum 2014

The annual Forum took place on 9-10 October 2014 in Brussels on the "*Future Priorities of the ET 2020 Strategic Framework for European Cooperation in Education and Training*". With a budget of EUR 400,000, the Forum enabled 400 stakeholders from the education, training and youth sectors in the Erasmus+ Partner Countries to contribute to the 2015 draft Joint Report of the Council and the Commission on the Strategic Framework for European Cooperation in Education and Training (ET 2020). Participants helped to identify future priorities for European cooperation in education and training, their potential synergies with Youth policies, and the role of stakeholders in this process. The issues highlighted in the Forum's key messages were incorporated in the European Commission 2015 draft Joint Report on ET2020.

6.5.3 Support to the European Youth Forum (YFJ)

The positive assessment of the European Youth Forum's work plan by the European Commission led to the award of a EUR 2.55 million operating grant for the support of the European Youth Forum's activities in 2014 in areas such as *youth participation, strong youth organisations, autonomy and inclusion*.

¹⁸ Spain and Portugal have already completed the diagnostic phase of the project and initial discussions about embarking on a project have begun in Italy and Slovenia.

6.5.4 Civil Society Cooperation in the field of education, training and youth

The Call for Proposals for Civil Society Cooperation provided structural support to European non-governmental organisations and EU-wide networks active in the fields of education and training, and youth.

KEY ACTION 3 Civil Society Cooperation	PROJECTS			GRANT AMOUNT (EUR)	AVERAGE PER PROJECT (EUR)	ORGANISATIONS
	Submitted	Granted	Success rate			
Lot 1: in the field of Education and Training	34	19	56%	2,051,076	107,951	19
Lot 2: in the field of Youth	90	79	88%	3,691,394	46,727	79
Total	124	98	79%	5,742,470	58,597	98

Table 6.2: Results of the KA3 call for Civil Society Cooperation

As under previous programmes, Erasmus+ continues to support the work of European youth NGOs and EU wide networks via operating grants. The activities of these organisations ensure the participation of learners, staff and young people in public life and society and the development and implementation of European cooperation activities in the education, training and youth field.

In the field of Education and Training, 18 NGOs were awarded grants for a total amount of EUR 1.9 million; one EU-wide network was awarded a grant of EUR 135,468. The beneficiaries covered the whole spectrum of education and training organisations, ensuring wide awareness-raising and outreach for policy outcomes at grass root level. The success rate reflects the overall good quality of the applicant organisations, with work plans highly consistent with the priorities of policy cooperation in education and training at EU level.

Under the Youth lot, 79 organisations were selected for an overall amount of almost EUR 3.7 million, a level similar to that of the previous Youth in Action Programme.

6.5.5 Structured Dialogue Youth

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

- Centralised annual grants, new under Erasmus+ awarded to the National Working Groups of Structured Dialogue which are bodies designated by the Member States.
- Decentralised grants implemented as a follow-up to the former Youth in Action, with a big improvement: the introduction of simplified grants.

KEY ACTION 3	PROJECTS			GRANT AMOUNT (EUR)	AVERAGE PER PROJECT (EUR)	ORGANISATIONS	PARTICIPANTS
	Submitted	Granted	Success rate				
Dialogue between young people and policy makers	668	211	32%	5,949,555	28,197	691	53,393

Table 6.3: Dialogue between young people and policy makers

At the decentralised level, the decrease in the number of grants (211 instead of 447) in comparison to the similar Action under the previous Programme was mainly due to the significantly lower level of available budget appropriations (EUR 5.9 million instead of EUR 9.4 million).

Example of KA3 Structured Dialogue project

Project Title: *Active Young Person=young entrepreneur?*

Project number: *2014-1-EE01-KA347-000435 (details in Projects Annex)*

Key Action/Action type: *KA347 – Meeting of young people with decision makers*

Coordinating organisation: *Jõgevamaa Grammar School (EE)*

EC contribution: *EUR 6,426*

The project "Active Young Person=young entrepreneur?" brought together young people, decision-makers and successful entrepreneurs to discuss the best ways to support youth entrepreneurship in Estonia. The main aim of the two seminars organised was to map the expectations of young people and decision-makers about entrepreneurship, inspire youth with real examples of successful entrepreneurs and offer them practical support with idea development and business start-ups. Different non-formal methods were used to spark dialogues between all stakeholders involved.

6.5.6 International Dialogue Platforms

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

2014 Policy dialogue activities

*-The Ministerial meeting of the **Western Balkans Platform on Education and Training** held in Brussels on 19-20 June 2014 concentrated on teacher education;*
-A regional conference on the cooperation opportunities under Erasmus+ took place on 17-18 January in Athens, under the Greek Presidency;
-A regional stakeholder conference was held on 30-31 October in Belgrade, Serbia, on the impact and role of past EU programmes and assistance on higher education;
*-Two **Eastern Partnership Platform 4** meetings took place in May and December 2014;*
*-The second meeting of the **EU-China High-Level People-to-People Dialogue (HPPD)** was held on September 6, 2014 in Beijing, where both sides agreed on the need to deepen mutual understanding and trust and give new momentum to the EU-China Comprehensive Strategic Partnership;*
*-In the context of the dialogue with **Southern Mediterranean** countries, a seminar on quality assurance in higher education as a tool to promote international cooperation was held on 27-28 March 2014 in Brussels;*
*-The second policy dialogue with **Southern Mediterranean** countries on higher education took place on 23-24 June 2014, and focused on the strategies developed in the EU and in the region to improve graduate employability, reduce skills mismatches and to ease transitions to the labour market;*

6.5.7 International Attractiveness Projects

During 2014, the Commission organised a call for tender to select an organisation to help the Commission enhance the attractiveness of European higher education around the world. Together the consortium is now undertaking a range of activities to promote Europe as a high-quality study and research destination: higher education fairs, a Study in Europe portal, social media activities, promotional materials and guidance and support for EU promoters in partner countries.

6.5.8 Presidency events

In 2014 Erasmus+ funded Directors-General meetings and events organised by the Greek, Italian and (partly) Latvian governments during their respective Presidencies of the Council of the EU. In addition to these meetings, Erasmus+ funded its launch event hosted by the Greek Presidency.

6.6. Support to European policy tools

6.6.1 Introduction

European policy tools aim to improve and facilitate the transparency and recognition of skills and qualifications, as well as the transfer of credits, to foster quality assurance, and to support skills management and guidance. This activity also supports the following networks providing support for the implementation of those tools.

6.6.2 Networks - SALTOS

Building on the success of the Youth in Action Programme, the SALTO Youth Resource Centres continued to raise the quality and impact of the Programme in the youth field. Through their thematic (Participation, Inclusion, Training and cooperation, Information, Cultural diversity) or geographical scopes (Euro-Mediterranean, South East Europe, Eastern Europe and Caucasus), they provided support, services, tools and resources to the network of National Agencies and Programme stakeholders.

In 2014, regional SALTOS promoted Erasmus+ as a unique opportunity to further strengthen international youth cooperation and capacity building of youth organisations in the Neighbouring Partner Countries. They ensured support for the EVS accreditation system as well as EVS training cycle in these countries

In 2014, regional SALTOS promoted Erasmus+ as a unique opportunity for further strengthening the international youth cooperation and capacity building of youth organisations in the Neighbouring Partner Countries. They also continued ensuring the EVS accreditation system as well as EVS training cycle in the Neighbouring Partner Countries. Among others, they actively contributed to the Erasmus+ Conference organised in Greece and the 2nd Eastern Partnership Youth Forum in Latvia.

During the first year of the Programme, thematic SALTOS supported its quality implementation through a wide variety of activities in particular by: developing the European Training Strategy and the Inclusion and Diversity Strategy; developing the set of competences for trainers, further improving the partner-finding tool OTLAS, ensuring the smooth transition of Youthpass under Erasmus+ and its mainstreaming at national level, and promoting young people's participation in the European Elections and their electoral participation in general.

6.6.3 Networks – Eurodesks

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

The launch of Erasmus+ required a transition period for the network of national Eurodesks to adjust to the new programme, update their materials and websites, and brief their networks of multipliers. In some countries, the opportunity was taken to completely alter how Eurodesk operated in the country, with wholesale changes to personnel and nominated organisations.

During 2014 the 33 national Eurodesks and Eurodesk Brussels Link reported that together with their network of nearly 1,300 multipliers they replied to 258,500 enquiries, attended over 5,000 events, and presented European information and programmes directly to more than 62,000 young people during 1,100 information sessions and workshops. They continued to publish and maintain core information content on the European Youth Portal at European and national levels, with over 2,300 new articles published during the year, along with over 1,900 news items and 1,300 events.

The 2014 Eurodesk "Time to Move" campaign, highlighting the benefits of cross-border mobility, was coordinated by Eurodesk Brussels Link, and involved 13 national Eurodesks. Together with over 200 multipliers, they ran more than 250 separate events targeting young people at schools, universities and in their communities. Due to its success, the campaign has become an annual event involving more national Eurodesks and multipliers.

6.6.4 Euroguidance, Europass, European Qualifications Framework (EQF)

Euroguidance, a European network of national resource and information centres, provides quality information on lifelong guidance and mobility for learning purposes and promotes the European dimension in guidance.

The European network of National Europass Centres (NECs) helps citizens and employers to communicate and understand their skills and qualifications effectively via Europass documents, when looking for a job or training. They also support education and training authorities in defining and communicating the content of curricula.

The European Qualifications Framework supports national authorities to translate, make understandable and link countries' qualifications systems.

For the first time in 2014, the grants proposed to those Policy Networks were action grants instead of operating grants. The application procedure was simplified and harmonised, and the application package was designed with a focus on the qualitative components of the work programmes and specific attention to relevance and impact. In 2014 the quality, relevance and synergy of the applications submitted increased significantly.

6.6.5 Networks – ECVET

In 2014 Erasmus+ supported national teams of ECVET experts. These teams of experts are meant to promote the principles of the ECVET framework for credit accumulation and transfer in VET among policy makers, VET providers and other relevant stakeholders. The activities deployed by the teams of experts included networking with their target audiences, training opportunities and communication events.

Examples of National teams of ECVET experts' activities:

- A seminar on the "Development of strategy for applying ECVET elements in VET standards for the Tourism sector" for VET experts from public authorities*
- 25 "face-to-face" meetings with VET providers and International coordinators*
- VET provider capacity building to selected KA1 project promoters*
- ECVET training to teachers and trainers from 3 VET schools*
- A customised workshop for a team of national developers of work-based learning*

6.6.6 Networks - ECVET and EQAVET Network support

This item refers to the organisational and expert support provided by two contractors to the implementation of the policy initiatives: the framework for credit accumulation and transfer (ECVET) and the European framework for quality assurance in VET (EQAVET).

In 2014 the ECVET activities included three meetings of the main policy group, five thematic seminars and the 2014 ECVET Forum, the ECVET website and three ECVET magazines.

The EQAVET activities included the annual meeting of the EQAVET national reference points, two peer learning activities, the annual EQAVET Forum, a thematic symposium, a thematic working group on quality in adult learning, and the [EQAVET website](#).

A joint working group on cooperation between ECVET and EQAVET was also set-up.

Examples of the action's activities

The 2014 ECVET Forum took place in Vienna on 30-31 October and was attended by 300 participants from 33 countries. Despite its size, this highly interactive event gave everyone the opportunity to take the floor during the small workshops run in parallel. The participants discussed the experience gained in ECVET, and the opportunities for development in the short and medium term.

The EQAVET symposium on sectorial approaches to quality assurance held on 25-24 November 2014 in Brussels, brought together policy makers, EU social partners organisations and national employers' associations to discuss about quality assurance particularly in relation to three themes: forecasting the needs for skills, work-based learning in a lifelong learning perspective and teacher and trainer skills.

6.6.7 National Academic Recognition Information Centres (NARIC)

National Academic Recognition Information Centres provide services for individuals and organisations, advising on comparisons of international qualifications against national qualification framework levels.

The 8 selected NARIC projects for the period of 2014-2015 were launched and are currently all under way with their two annual meetings already successfully held.

KEY ACTION 3	PROJECTS			GRANT AMOUNT (EUR)	AVERAGE PER PROJECT (EUR)	ORGANISATIONS
	Submitted	Granted	Success rate			
NARIC - National Academic Recognition Information Centers	8	8	100%	701,222	87,653	13

Table 6.4 - NARIC

6.6.8 Bologna Process

The Ministerial Conference, partly financed by Erasmus+, was organised in May 2015 as a follow up to the 2014 preparatory work which included regular meetings of the Bologna Follow-up Group and concluding the mandates of working groups such as the Pathfinder Group on automatic recognition.

6.6.9 Erasmus Charter for Higher Education (ECHE)

Higher education institutions must be holders of an Erasmus Charter for Higher Education (ECHE) in order to be eligible to apply for any KA1 or KA2 activity in the field of higher education under Erasmus+.

To enable these institutions to apply under the first general Erasmus+ call, the ECHE call was launched 9 months before the Erasmus+ adoption and led to 4,308 ECHE awards.

Call Year	APPLICATIONS					Success Rate
	Received	Eligible	Non-Eligible	Selected	Rejected	
2014	4,886	4,574	312	4,308	266	94%

Table 6.5: Erasmus Charter for Higher Education (ECHE)

The objective of this new Charter is to reinforce the overall quality and impact of the new programme, with clear commitments before, during and after mobility projects, as well as for cooperation projects. Guidelines have been devised by experts for higher education institutions to implement efficiently the ECHE principles. The monitoring of the ECHE implementation has also been reinforced through direct feedback from participants and the enhanced role of National Agencies (NAs) in this process.

6.7 Dedicated VET tools

6.7.1 National authorities for apprenticeships

The restricted specific call for national authorities on apprenticeships aimed at encouraging the development of high-quality apprenticeship-type training and excellence in work-based learning in VET, through partnerships with other relevant stakeholders. Ten projects were selected, starting in autumn 2014 for a period of 2 years (total grant amount: EUR 2.2 million).

KEY ACTION 3	PROJECTS			GRANT AMOUNT (EUR)	AVERAGE PER PROJECT (EUR)	ORGANISATIONS
	Submitted	Granted	Success rate			
National Authorities for Apprenticeships	21	10	48%	2,168,624	216,862	47

Table 6.6: National Authorities for Apprenticeships

7. Horizontal Activities

IT platforms such as eTwinning, the European Platform for Adult Learning in Europe (EPALE) or the European Youth Portal, and the VALOR project dissemination platform facilitate the communication within and about the programme and promote the dissemination of its results.

7.1 IT Support Platforms

EPALE, eTwinning, and the European Youth Portal offer multilingual information and opportunities to the programme stakeholders to get involved, exchange news, ideas and practices across Europe. In addition, the platforms provide a wide range of useful educational resources, events, networking tools and interactive features.

7.1.1 eTwinning

Successfully integrated into the Erasmus+ programme, the eTwinning action is now supported under Key Action 2, with a budget of around EUR 11.9 million in 2014. The [eTwinning Portal](#), the main workspace for the action, continued to catalyse reinforced collaboration between schools in Europe through the use of ICT by providing support, tools and services for schools. Its availability in 26 languages, flexibility and informality led to the involvement of more than 330,000 members in more than 44,000 projects between two or more schools across Europe, over the 9 years of existence of eTwinning.

7.1.2 EPALE

EPALE is an interactive and multilingual platform (available in 24 languages) supporting Europe's adult learning community. It aims to build an online community for the adult learning sector and adult learning professionals. Its open membership enables practitioners, professionals, and volunteers across Europe to connect with their peers and share useful content related to adult learning. Launched in 2014, EPALE is supported under Key Action 2 of the Erasmus+ programme, with a budget of EUR 4.6 million. There are currently around 8,000 members of the platform.

7.1.3 European Youth Portal

The [European Youth Portal](#) (EYP) offers both European and national information, and opportunities that are of interest to young people who are living, learning and working in Europe. It gives information structured around eight main themes, covers 33 countries and is available in 27 languages.

During 2014, the EYP continued to provide young people aged 13-30 across Europe with information and opportunities related to the themes of the EU Youth Strategy. This was done in partnership with the Eurodesk organisation, which provided the core European and national levels content for the site. More than 15.2 million pages were viewed on the site during 2.1 million separate visits from 1.4 million unique visitors.

The old Youth in Action database of organisations accredited for European Voluntary Service was fully integrated into the EYP in February 2014, and the new Erasmus+ EVS accreditations began to be shown in the EYP in July. A new Volunteering Database was launched in October, allowing for the first time EVS organisations to advertise for volunteers for their projects.

The EYP also supported the Structured Dialogue with young people by piloting a new online participation platform, which helped National Working Groups to reach out to more young people than before.

7.2 Dissemination and exploitation of results

The dissemination of the programme results is essential to inspire genuine improvements in systems and policies, and to provide concrete responses to beneficiaries' needs.

Preparations for the transparency and communication to the public of projects financed by the European Union in the field of education, training and youth started in 2014, through the construction of the new Project Results Platform [VALOR](#). The platform includes a comprehensive database containing information on all projects financed under Erasmus+, Creative Europe and previous programmes (LLP, YiA and Erasmus Mundus programmes). The platform has a powerful search function: relevant projects can be found by entering key words and/or by specific fields/areas. It is also possible to find projects flagged as good practices or as success stories. Success stories are projects that have distinguished themselves by their impact, contribution to policy-making, innovative results or creative approach, and can be a source of inspiration for others.

8. Jean Monnet Activities

8.1 Introduction

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

8.2 Actions

A call for proposals (EAC/S11/13), which expired on 26 March 2014, was launched by the EAC Executive Agency.

JEAN MONNET ACTIVITIES	PROJECTS			GRANT (EUR)
	Submitted	Granted	Success Rate	
Jean Monnet Modules	182	72	40%	1,783,752.10
Jean Monnet Chairs	114	52	46%	2,260,084.00
Jean Monnet Centres of Excellence	24	14	58%	1,316,309.64
Jean Monnet Associations	14	9	64%	379,584.61
Jean Monnet Institutions	15	3	20%	762,113.52
Jean Monnet Network	17	7	41%	1,973,920.07
Jean Monnet Information Project	125	55	44%	2,867,907.75
TOTAL	491	212	43%	11,343,671.69

Table 8.1: Details for Jean Monnet Activities

65% of the applications concerned the core of the actions, which is teaching and research with a vast majority of Chairs and Modules, while 25% were Projects aiming at creating and applying new methodologies or spreading knowledge on the European integration process among a wider target audience.

In terms of geographical spread the trend of the recent years was confirmed, a high number of applications originated from Italy and Spain while there was still quite a low participation from the Nordic countries. Outside the Member States Ukraine and Turkey participated strongly while Latin America, Africa and Asian countries need more attention in the future promotion of the Jean Monnet actions (see annex 6.2).

Example of a Jean Monnet Module

As the influx of migrants reaching the EU sea borders has given rise to legal and human rights issues, the University of Salerno proposed a Jean Monnet Module with the objective to deepen knowledge and the critical assessment of issues related to legal and illegal migration. It examines the applicable multilevel rules and fundamental rights, as well as the conflicts between different legal levels and between the National authorities' practices and the European rules and principles. The Module will benefit post-graduate Law students and the prospective legal and administrative professionals who will be dealing with regular and irregular migrants, as well as asylum seekers.

8.3 Operating Grants

Seven institutions pursuing an aim of European interest submitted their applications and work programme to the European Commission for this Jean Monnet activity.

JEAN MONNET ACTIVITIES	PROJECTS			GRANT (EUR)
	Submitted	Granted	Success Rate	
Operating Grants to support Specified Institutions	7	7	100%	3,807,628.57

Table 8.2: Details for Operating Grants

Since 2014 the management of these operating grants has been transferred to the Executive Agency. The management entails close cooperation with the institutions, including the approval of their annual work programmes and the analysis and acceptance of their reports. The annual meetings with the designated institutions ensure an open dialogue on technical and content themes. Site visits are part of the management exercise.

8.4 Jean Monnet Annual Conference

The Conference, which took place on 1 and 2 October 2014, took a fresh look at the programme's core activities: European Union studies. Academics, policy makers and civil society representatives from around the world considered the content of studies in European integration, and the way they are delivered.

The conclusions of the conference stressed the academicians' key role in society and the need for universities to provide advice to policy makers on topical themes. In teaching, new skills are needed (problem solving approach, negotiation skills, globalisation challenges) to modernise EU studies and increase job opportunities. EU studies should contribute to analysing identification processes, creating narratives and help developing a "European Civic Education curriculum" to support common values and pluralistic citizenship. European success stories should be emphasised. These recommendations were followed up in 2015 via a series of measures to rejuvenate, simplify and innovate the Jean Monnet actions, the re-launch of the Jean Monnet Online Platform to reinforce dissemination and the organisation of conferences and seminars to gather academic advice on themes such as the European Neighbourhood Policy review and migration.

9. Sport Activities

With the entry into force of the Treaty of Lisbon in December 2009, the European Union acquired competence in the field of sport for the first time. The actions to be implemented were translated into a first EU Work Plan for Sport 2011-2014, subsequently followed by a new plan covering the years 2014-2017. In 2014 sport was introduced as a new field of European level competence in the Erasmus+ Programme.

In the context of the 2009-2013 Preparatory Actions in the field of sport, the Commission was in charge of supporting projects on various sport aspects, nowadays covered by the Erasmus+ Sport action. These projects of the Preparatory Actions constituted a good basis for launching Erasmus+ Sport.

Within Erasmus+, the Sport action aims at promoting the European dimension in sport by supporting activities such as not-for-profit European sport events, collaborative partnerships, the strengthening of evidence-based policy-making in sport and dialogue with relevant European stakeholders. A total budget of EUR 22.43 million was committed for this Action in 2014.

9.1 Not-for-profit European sport events

The Erasmus+ Programme supports not-for-profit European sport events through grants for event organisation and follow-up.

As 2014 was the first year of the implementation of this action, two rounds of calls for proposals were organised to cover both events taking place in 2014 (deadline of 14 March) and events taking place in 2015 (deadline of 26 June).

SPORT ACTIVITIES	PROJECTS			GRANT (million EUR)
	Submitted	Granted	Success rate	
Support for Not-for-profit European Sport Events 2014	37	3	8.11%	3.20
Support for Not-for-profit European Sport Events 2015	135	3	2.22%	1.95
TOTAL	172	6	3.49%	5.15

Table 9.1: Not-for-profit sport events

Despite the high demand (172), the limited budget foreseen for 2014 meant that only a limited number of projects (6) were selected for financing. Amongst the selected projects, the 2nd European Universities Games 2014 organised in Rotterdam (NL) received a grant of EUR 500,000

9.2 Collaborative partnerships

The objectives of collaborative partnerships deal with the issues of anti-doping, match-fixing, the protection of minors, the promotion of good governance in sport, and the support to innovative approaches in social inclusion and equal opportunities policies by encouraging participation in sport and physical activity and supporting the implementation of the EU guidelines on dual careers of athletes.

One round of the call for proposals took place in 2014 with a submission deadline of 26 June.

SPORT ACTIVITIES	PROJECTS			GRANT (million EUR)
	Submitted	Granted	Success rate	
Support fo collaborative partnerships	305	39	12.79%	15.22
TOTAL	305	39	12.79%	15.22

Table 9.2: Support for Collaborative Partnerships

Around half of the budget was devoted to areas with pre-existing EU guidelines: Health-enhancing physical activity (HEPA) and dual careers of athletes.

AREA	Number of Projects	GRANT (EUR)
HEPA	16	6,195,952
Social inclusion, equal opportunities, volunteering and participation in sports	13	5,272,870
Approaches to contain violence and tackle racism and intolerance in sport	3	1,160,689
EU guidelines on dual careers of athletes	2	811,740
EU principles on good governance in sport	2	629,289
Fight against the doping	2	650,932
Fight against the match-fixing.	1	500,000
TOTAL	39	15,221,472

Table 9.3: Support for collaborative partnerships by Area

The number of selected projects (39) was lower than anticipated in the AWP 2014 (42), as a high number of applicants requested the maximum grant amount available (EUR 500,000).

Following the publication of the call results, a few concerns were also raised about the number of selected projects per country and the percentage of sport organisations among the successful applicants:

- More than a third of the applications were from Italy (118 out of 477 – see annex 7.2). Unsurprisingly, Italy had the highest number of applications selected (12). Against a backdrop of an overall 9.4% success rate, the most successful countries were Finland (33%), Luxembourg (25%), Austria (21%) and France (14%) with Italy only at 14th place position in the ranking with a success rate of 10%.
- The fact that only a limited number of beneficiaries were actual sport organisations and that many beneficiaries were HEIs and other NGOs loosely linked to sport (see annex 7.3), was also criticised by several sport stakeholders. Taking these comments into account the Commission decided to introduce in 2016 small collaborative partnerships, as a means to encourage more grassroots sport organisations to participate to the Erasmus+ Sport programme.

9.3 Support for strengthening the evidence-base for policy making

Erasmus+ provides support for strengthening the evidence-base for policy making through studies, data gathering, surveys, networks, conferences and seminars.

As laid down in the Annual Work Programme, five studies in the area of sport were commissioned in 2014, with a total budget of EUR 1.17 million. The projects are on-going and all expected to be completed between the end of 2015 and mid-2016.

Study	Results expected	Budget (EUR)	Description
Contribution of sport to regional development through the structural funds	mid-2016	224,800	Overview on the adopted Regulation package for Cohesion Policy 2014-2020 focusing on objectives and priorities relevant for sport and physical activity, laying out a typology of sport-based activities and outlining how to utilise the available funding at national level in the field of sport
Sport qualifications acquired through sport organisations and (sport) educational institutes	beginning-2016	186,700	Focus on qualifications in the sector of sport and is directly linked to the implementation of the Recommendations on European Qualifications Framework (EQF) and validation and recognition of non-formal and informal learning.
Minimum quality requirements for dual career services	end-2015	189,450	Develop a set of minimum quality requirements at European level, which could function as a reference point for national dual career services and facilities, and provide a model of a Quality Framework, providing transparency and guarantees on quality, safety and security for athletes, taking into account a quality label and/or accreditation system for facilities and dual career services at national and European levels.
Implementation of the EU Physical Activity Guidelines	beginning-2016	197,973	Support to the implementation of the Council Recommendation on health-enhancing physical activity (HEPA) across sectors by collecting data based upon the indicators defined therein and developing training material and training modules for national focal points
National Sport Satellite Accounts (SSA) in the EU	end-2015	59,710	Deliver a mapping exercise on the data availability and gaps at national level in the EU-28 in view of setting up a national SSA as well as propose a harmonised methodological manual based on the existing manuals.
Total		858,633	

Table 9.4: Sport studies

9.4 Dialogue with relevant European stakeholders

The EU Sport Forum took place in Milan on 1-2 December 2014 and brought around 300 participants together: leading representatives of international and European sport federations, the Olympic movement, European and national sport umbrella organisations and other sport-related organisations. The sessions focused on the implementation of Erasmus+ Sport, on the results of the 2012 Preparatory Action in the field of sport, on the future of sport at EU level and on the economic and social impact of major sport events.

The second main activity foreseen was a conference on 11 June 2014 in Brussels to launch the communication campaign for the first European Week of Sport to be held in September 2015. It involved about 150 experts from governmental and non-governmental sport organisations and institutions from all over Europe.

9.5 Policy dialogue (Presidency events)

Presidency events are novelties introduced in the field of sport in 2014, when two events were organised by the Greek Presidency and three by the Italian Presidency. They addressed various contemporary challenges in sport such as gender equality, match-fixing, the role of multisport clubs as models of social capital building.

10. Conclusions

During this first year of implementation of the Erasmus+ Programme and despite the difficulties described above, the joint efforts of all Programme stakeholders made it possible to deliver at the expected level. All the foreseen activities, except international credit mobility and student loan guarantee postponed to early 2015, were successfully launched in 2014. Novelties were also well absorbed although lessons were learned and adjustments had to be implemented, in particular in the field of the new action "Strategic Partnerships".

The merge of the former 7 programmes has now become a reality. Although it is too early to have a qualitative assessment of the impact of the new programme (as most non-mobility projects have a duration of 18 months to 2 years) the outputs are already tangible: more than 18,000 projects were selected with just under 1 million participants and 70,000 organisations involved.

The budgetary execution and the selection success rates for the various actions also show that the interest and expectations of the potential beneficiaries remain as high as in the previous programmes.

However, to make the new programme even more accessible, these efforts will have to be maintained and reinforced in order to further simplify the processes and procedures and to improve the user-friendliness of the IT tools, targeting primarily beneficiaries and National Agencies.



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