







Agency for Mobility and EU Programmes: Inclusion and Diversity Strategy (2023 - 2027)

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For the past 15 years, the Agency for Mobility and EU Programmes (AMEUP) has been helping turn good ideas into great projects that change our society for the better.

As the body responsible for the implementation of the **Erasmus+** and **European Solidarity Corps** programmes (as well as their predecessors – the Lifelong Learning Programme and Youth in Action), **AMEUP** has been supporting learning mobility and internationalisation in the fields of science, education and training and youth since 2007.



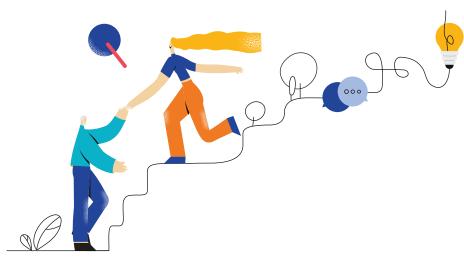
In that period,
AMEUP oversaw implementation
of around 4 500 projects worth
more than 200 million euros,
with over 115 000 Croatian citizens
benefitting from participation
in the programmes.

The benefits of participation, however, go well beyond the number of projects, participants and contracted funds. The opportunities offered by the programmes improved the quality of educational provision and youth work, fostered innovation and excellence, strengthened institutional capacities of organisations, promoted policy debate and facilitated exchange of practices. Furthermore, testimonies reveal that participants of both programmes are more ready to take on new challenges, have better career prospects and are more aware of the benefits that the EU brings to their daily lives. In line with its motto, the **Erasmus+** programme continues to enrich lives and open minds, whereas the **European Solidarity Corps** programme restores faith in the power of togetherness and doing good for the benefit of the society.



Foreword





Keeping that in mind, AMEUP has been taking steps and investing efforts to ensure that these opportunities remain accessible to a wide range of individuals and organisations, regardless of their background or the barriers they are facing. Some of the measures implemented thus far include provision of continuous support to beneficiaries during all stages of the project cycle, establishment of an internal inclusion and diversity working group, organisation of regular thematic meetings and workshops dealing with the topic of inclusion and diversity, design and launch of awareness-raising campaigns and outreach activities, setting up of a national network of inclusion and diversity ambassadors etc. With a view to further strengthen the inclusive dimension and contribute to the achievement of Europe-wide impact, AMEUP has also submitted a successful bid to host the SALTO Resource Centre for Inclusion and Diversity in the field of education and training and is now committed to helping make the Erasmus+ programme more inclusive and diverse at a systemic level by providing support to National Agencies and organisations across Europe.

As part of its common strategic approach towards inclusion and diversity at EU level, the European Commission has additionally encouraged National Agencies to take strategic action and develop plans or strategies based on the local realities in their respective countries. Following up on the objectives and activities identified in the two-year action plan (2021 – 2022) and the multiannual work programme (2021 - 2027), AMEUP has now also developed its inclusion and diversity strategy for the period from 2023 to 2027, accompanied by an updated action plan (2023 - 2025). The strategy takes into account both the European and the national context and identifies long-term goals that seek to be ambitious, but above all attentive to the needs of beneficiaries, who were actively involved in the process of drafting. National Agencies play a vital role in the process of bringing opportunities offered by both programmes closer to persons with fewer opportunities and we see this document as our contribution to the creation of more inclusive and diverse programmes that remove barriers and offer equal opportunities for everyone.





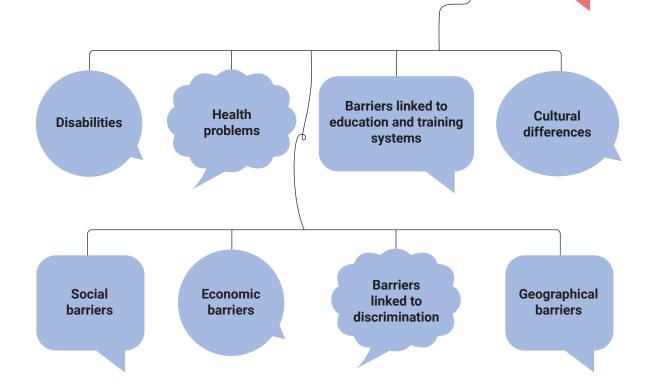
Erasmus+ and European Solidarity
Corps are EU's flagship
programmes and well-known
brands even outside European
borders. More than 10 million
participants have benefited from
EU programmes in the field of
education, training, youth and
sport between 1987 and 2020,
with the proportion of participants
with fewer opportunities in the
period between 2014 and 2017
amounting to 11.5% of the total
number in all fields.¹

With a view to further widen the access and provide opportunities that are accessible for all, the European Commission has established a dedicated framework and identified main areas of intervention in the context of inclusion and diversity. Inclusive efforts and novelties in the new generation of both programmes (2021 - 2027) are summed up in the Implementation Guidelines: Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps Inclusion and Diversity Strategy, a document published by the Directorate-General for Education, Youth. Sport and Culture in 2021. The aim of the guidelines is twofold: (i) to help create equitable opportunities of programme access for everyone and (ii) to provide framework for inclusion and diversity projects supported through the Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps programmes.





Taking into account the policy context and aiming to build on the experience from the previous programme periods, the document proposes shared definitions of key terms and provides a list of main barriers preventing participants with fewer opportunities from participating in the programmes.





It also gives an overview of programmes' features and mechanisms that support inclusion and diversity and encourage involvement of participants with fewer opportunities.

Inclusion and diversity as priorities in the assessment process, meaning that they are equally relevant, irrespective of the sector and format;

Accessibility and user-friendliness of the programmes, with tools, platforms, documents and forms designed in a way that makes involvement of persons with fewer opportunities easier;

Preparatory visits, primarily intended for inclusion-related matters;

Reinforced mentorship as a means of supporting participation of young people with fewer opportunities;

Dedicated financial support, in form of lump sum or real cost;

Smaller and easier-to-access actions and formats, such as short-term mobilities, small-scale partnerships, online and local-level exchanges etc.



The aim of AMEUP's inclusion and diversity strategy is to support, at a national level, the achievement of goals from the Commission's Guidelines and bring programme opportunities closer to relevant target groups – persons with fewer opportunities, organisations working with persons with fewer opportunities, marginalised groups, newcomers, grassroot organisations, smaller organisations with little or no prior experience etc. To this end, AMEUP has, in response to the needs and challenges faced by its beneficiaries (see Chapter 3), identified six long-term objectives (see Chapter 4), which it aims to achieve through implementation of the multiannual action plan (see Appendix 1).



Sector-specific challenges

With the aim of ensuring that the strategy reflects different sectorial realities and that the support measures are tailored to the needs of the beneficiaries. **AMEUP** created a survey concerning key needs and challenges that they face when implementing projects that deal with the topic of inclusion and diversity, involve participants with fewer opportunities or both. **Results collected from the survey** are summarised below and have been taken into account in the process of defining both long-term objectives and specific actions to be implemented as part of the action plans.

School education

In the field of **school education**, the feedback primarily pointed to the need for an improved understanding of the definition of persons with fewer opportunities. The term is still primarily associated with involvement of persons with disabilities and many organisations are unaware of other categories encompassed by the definition. Beneficiaries also find it challenging to find reliable partners and adapt their mobility programmes to specific needs of persons with fewer opportunities.





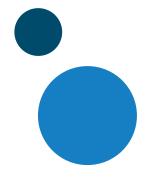
Vocational education and training

Among challenges in the field of **vocational education and training**, beneficiaries highlighted insufficient capacity to successfully address the topic, in particular lack of know-how with regard to ways in which persons with fewer opportunities could be involved in project activities. Also, some of the organisations in this field, though interested in sending persons with fewer opportunities to mobility periods abroad, are not well-acquainted with the support mechanisms offered by the programme and therefore opt not to involve them.

Higher education

Key challenges identified by stakeholders from the field of **higher education** are institutional barriers, limited awareness of existing opportunities, fear of stepping outside of the comfort zone and insufficient language proficiency. Some of the desired changes at the institutional level (e.g., establishment of inclusion offices) are often outside the sphere of influence of project coordinators, meaning that actions in this regard need to be extended to decision makers as well.





Sector-specific challenges



Adult education

Beneficiaries from the field of adult education cited lack of motivation and reluctance of learners to engage in physical mobility, while limited resources leave staff with insufficient time to deal with and explore the topics of inclusion and diversity. Another key challenge in this field is general interest of learners for adult education provision as they amount to just 3 % of learners' total in Croatia, while beneficiaries also pointed out to potential stigmatisation as an obstacle that deters some groups from participation.



Youth and European Solidarity Corps

Key challenges identified in the field of youth refer to lack of awareness related to opportunities offered by the Erasmus+ programme, fear of being stigmatised and absence of adequate support in different phases of project implementation. Organisations actively involved in implementation of projects as part of the European Solidarity Corps programme additionally highlighted lack of financial resources, outreach work, administrative barriers and increased workload as some of the key challenges preventing a more significant involvement of underrepresented target groups.



In line with the instructions provided in the Commission's Guidelines and taking into account the needs and challenges of the beneficiaries, AMEUP's strategy identifies a total of six long-term objectives.



Raising awareness about the importance of inclusion and diversity as one of the programme priorities



Capacity building of applicants, beneficiaries and NA staff



Creation of intersectoral and interinstitutional synergy

To achieve the identified objectives, AMEUP has developed multiannual action plans that contain a detailed list of topics, actions, time and implementation indicators and target groups. The current action plan (2023. – 2025.) can be found below (Appendix 1).



Fostering active engagement of beneficiaries



More effective communication and outreach



Establishment of monitoring and reporting mechanisms

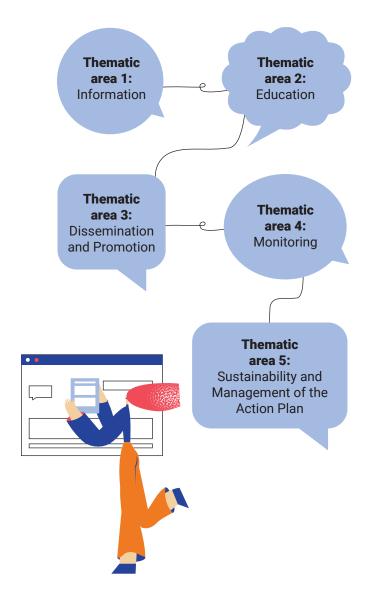


Appendix 1: Inclusion and Diversity Action Plan (2023 – 2025)

Introductory notes

Inclusion, equal opportunities and diversity are the principles that the European Commission has embedded in its programmes aimed at education, training, sport and youth, and the Agency for Mobility and EU Programmes (AMEUP) promotes these same principles in its work with the aim of providing equal opportunities. The Action Plan for Inclusion and Diversity in the Framework of Erasmus+ (E+) and the European Solidarity Corps (ESC) Programmes is adopted for the period from 2023 to 2025, in line with the Strategy for Inclusion and Diversity in the aforementioned programmes and the E+ and the ESC Programme Guides with the aim of contributing to the creation of a more inclusive society.

With the **Action Plan** through concrete activities we strive to provide support to applicants and beneficiaries in including persons with fewer opportunities in projects under the E+ and ESC programmes in the coming period, and to provide information and support to persons with fewer opportunities in order to facilitate their participation. Increasing the number of participants with fewer opportunities in projects under both programmes is an immediate objective of this Action Plan.



THEMATIC AREA 1	INFORMATION
MEASURE 1.1	Accessibility of the E+ and ESC programmes websites
OBJECTIVE	O1 Raising awareness of the importance of inclusion and diversity as programme priorities O5 More effective communication and outreach
LEADER	Department for Communication and Analytical Affairs of EU Programmes
TIMEFRAME	2023 – 2025
TASK	Improving the accessibility of websites
IMPLEMENTATION INDICATORS	 Increased accessibility level of websites Conducted evaluation of the level of accessibility of websites (survey for user groups)
TARGET GROUP	E+ and ESC programmes applicants and beneficiaries
MEASURE 1.2	Websites containing the principles of inclusion and diversity
OBJECTIVE	O1 Raising awareness of the importance of inclusion and diversity as programme priorities O5 More effective communication and outreach
LEADER	Department for Communication and Analytical Affairs of EU Programmes
CO-LEADERS	Pre-Tertiary Education Service, Higher Education Service, Youth and Lifelong Learning Service
TIMEFRAME	2023 – 2025
TASK	Creating and publishing online content related to inclusion and diversity
IMPLEMENTATION INDICATORS	 Increased level of online content related to inclusion and diversity (including numerous examples of good practice) Conducted evaluation of websites in the context of inclusion and diversity (survey for user groups)
TARGET GROUP	E+ and ESC programmes applicants and beneficiaries
MEASURE 1.3	Information materials on inclusion and diversity
OBJECTIVE	O1 Raising awareness of the importance of inclusion and diversity as programme priorities O5 More effective communication and outreach
LEADER	Department for Communication and Analytical Affairs of EU Programmes
IMPLEMENTATION ASSOCIATES	Pre-Tertiary Education Service, Higher Education Service, Youth and Lifelong Learning Service, Inclusion and Diversity Ambassadors
TIMEFRAME	2023 – 2025
TASK	Creating educational brochures and recording of information materials in the form of audio recordings for publication on websites
IMPLEMENTATION INDICATOR	 Izrađene četiri brošure te snimljeno i objavljeno devet audiozapisa Savjetovanje s korisničkim skupinama
TARGET GROUP	E+ and ESC programmes applicants and beneficiaries

MEASURE 1.4	Inclusion of networks and initiatives under AMEUP in informing about the inclusion and diversity aspects of both programmes
OBJECTIVE	O1 Raising awareness of the importance of inclusion and diversity as programme priorities O3 Creating intersectoral and interinstitutional synergy O5 More effective communication and outreach
LEADERS	Pre-Tertiary Education Service, Higher Education Service, Youth and Lifelong Learning Service, EU Programmes Support Service
TIMEFRAME	2023 – 2025
TASK	Implementation of activities aimed at informing the public about aspects of inclusion and diversity in the E+ and ESC programmes
IMPLEMENTATION INDICATORS	EURODESK a) at least three posts per year on the inclusion and diversity aspects of E+ and ESC programmes on social media b) holding a session on the topic of inclusion and informing young people with fewer opportunities at the annual training for national multipliers
	EUROPASS - at least three posts per year on the inclusion and diversity aspects of E+ and ESC programmes on the website of the National Europass centre
	 EUROGUIDANCE – at least one article per year on the inclusion and diversity aspects of E+ and ESC programmes in the Croatian Euroguidance Centre e-newsletter
	 EURYDICE - two posts per year on the national Eurydice website and one post in the annual Eurydice e-newsletter
	5. E-TWINNING a) promotion of three examples of good practice of eTwinning projects and one project kit on the topic of inclusion and diversity on the eTwinning website; b) representation of the theme of inclusion and diversity in the creation of the eTwinning digital informational and promotional leaflet; c) implementation of three webinars (workshops) of eTwinning ambassadors on the topic of inclusion and diversity; d) dissemination and promotion of three events (webinars or workshops) held by eTwinning ambassadors on the topic of inclusion and diversity on informational and promotional channels
TARGET GROUP	E+/ESC programmes applicants and beneficiaries

THEMATIC AREA 2	EDUCATION
MEASURE 2.1	Workshops for E+ and ESC programmes applicants
OBJECTIVE	O2 Strengthening the capacity of applicants, beneficiaries and Agency employees O4 Encouraging active beneficiary participation
LEADERS	Pre-Tertiary Education Service, Higher Education Service, Youth and Lifelong Learning Service
TIMEFRAME	2023 – 2025
TASK	Strengthening inclusion and diversity through sectoral workshops for applicants
IMPLEMENTATION INDICATOR	Sectoral workshops for applicants held (minimum one per year per sector) Sectoral workshops for applicants evaluated
TARGET GROUP	E+/ESC programmes applicants
MEASURE 2.2	AMEUP staff trainings
OBJECTIVE	O2 Strengthening the capacity of applicants, beneficiaries and agency staff
LEADERS	Pre-Tertiary Education Service, Higher Education Service, Youth and Lifelong Learning Service
TIMEFRAME	2023 - 2025
TASK	Expanding existing and acquiring new knowledge on the topic of inclusion and diversity through participation in trainings, webinars, conferences, meetings and cooperation and training activities
IMPLEMENTATION INDICATOR	 Participation of agency staff in a minimum of eight training sessions, webinars, conferences, meetings and cooperation and training activities Ensuring the transfer of acquired knowledge through reporting and application in daily work
TARGET GROUP	Agency staff
MEASURE 2.3	Trainings for E+ and ESC programmes beneficiaries
OBJECTIVE	O1 Raising awareness of the importance of inclusion and diversity as programme priorities
LEADERS	Pre-Tertiary Education Service, Higher Education Service, Youth and Lifelong Learning Service
TIMEFRAME	2023 - 2025
TASK	Strengthening inclusion by holding sectoral trainings for evaluators of the E+ and ESC programmes project applications
IMPLEMENTATION INDICATOR	Sectoral trainings for evaluators held (minimum one per year per field)
TARGET GROUP	External experts (evaluators of project proposals under the E+ and ESC programmes)

MEASURE 2.4	Network of Inclusion and Diversity Ambassadors
OBJECTIVE	O1 Raising awareness of the importance of inclusion and diversity as programme priorities O2 Strengthening the capacity of applicants, beneficiaries and agency staff O4 Encouraging active beneficiary participation O5 More effective communication and outreach
LEADER	Pre-Tertiary Education Service, Higher Education Service, Youth and Lifelong Learning Service
IMPLEMENTATION ASSOCIATES	Department for Erasmus+ Programme Priorities in Education
TIMEFRAME	2023 - 2025
TASK	Continuation and expansion of the activities of the network of inclusion and diversity ambassadors established in 2021
IMPLEMENTATION INDICATORS	 Continuous growth in the number of held ambassadorial activities Evaluation of the work of the ambassadors
TARGET GROUP	E+ and ESC programmes applicants and beneficiaries
MEASURE 2.5	Implementation of the activity "Embrace inclusion and diversity in your Erasmus+ projects"
OBJECTIVE	O1 Raising awareness of the importance of inclusion and diversity as programme priorities O2 Strengthening the capacity of applicants, beneficiaries and agency staff O3 Creating intersectoral and interinstitutional synergy
LEADER	Department for Erasmus+ Programme Priorities in Education
IMPLEMENTATION ASSOCIATES	Department for Communication and Analytical Affairs of EU Programmes, Pre-Tertiary Education Service, Higher Education Service, Department for Adult Education
TIMEFRAME	Q3 2023
TASK	Coordinating long-term activities of cooperation and training (Long-term activity – LTA) "Embrace inclusion and diversity in your Erasmus+ projects" and the implementation of activities within the seminar of the same title
IMPLEMENTATION INDICATORS	 Activities held as part of the international and national seminar "Embrace inclusion and diversity in your Erasmus+ projects" Coordinating long-term activities of cooperation and training An evaluation of the held activities carried out

MEASURE 2.6	Implementation of the activity "Inclusion ACAdemy"
OBJECTIVE	O1 Raising awareness of the importance of inclusion and diversity as programme priorities O2 Strengthening the capacity of applicants, beneficiaries and agency staff O3 Creating intersectoral and interinstitutional synergy
LEADER	Department for Erasmus+ Programme Priorities in Education
IMPLEMENTATION ASSOCIATES	Department for Communication and Analytical Affairs of EU Programmes, Higher Education Service
TIMEFRAME	2023 – 2024
TASK	Coordinating the training series (TCA) on the topic of inclusion "Inclusion ACAdemy" for stakeholders from the field of higher education
IMPLEMENTATION INDICATORS	 Activities held as part of the Inclusion ACAdemy training series An evaluation of the held activities carried out
MEASURE 2.7	Cooperation with the Erasmus Student Network to promote inclusion and diversity
OBJECTIVE	O1 Raising awareness of the importance of inclusion and diversity as programme priorities O3 Creating intersectoral and interinstitutional synergy O5 More effective communication and outreach
LEADERS	Higher Education Service
TIMEFRAME	2023 – 2025
TASK	Promotion of inclusion and diversity as part of the visits of the Erasmus Student Network to Croatian universities
IMPLEMENTATION INDICATOR	 Implementing promotional activities on the topic of inclusion and diversity during visits Reporting on the activities carried out
TARGET GROUP	Higher education institutions

THEMATIC AREA 3	DISSEMINATION AND PROMOTION
MEASURE 3.1	Inclusion projects dissemination
OBJECTIVE	O1 Raising awareness of the importance of inclusion and diversity as programme priorities O2 Strengthening the capacity of applicants, beneficiaries and agency staff O5 More effective communication and outreach
LEADER	Department for Communication and Analytical Affairs of EU Programmes
IMPLEMENTATION ASSOCIATES	Pre-Tertiary Education Service, Higher Education Service, Youth and Lifelong Learning Service
TIMEFRAME	2023 - 2025
TASK	Implementation of the Inclusion Projects Fair
IMPLEMENTATION INDICATORS	At least one Inclusion Projects Fair prepared and implemented Results of participants' projects disseminated
TARGET GROUP	E+/ESC programmes beneficiaries
MEASURE 3.2	Social media campaign
OBJECTIVE	O1 Raising awareness of the importance of inclusion and diversity as programme priorities O5 More effective communication and outreach
LEADER	Department for Communication and Analytical Affairs of EU Programmes
IMPLEMENTATION ASSOCIATES	Pre-Tertiary Education Service, Higher Education Service, Youth and Lifelong Learning Service
TIMEFRAME	2023 - 2025
TASK	Implementation of a campaign on the topic of inclusion and diversity on social media
IMPLEMENTATION INDICATORS	Social media campaign implemented (continuous) Conducted analysis of the implemented campaign for the purpose of preparing new campaigns
TARGET GROUP	E+ and ESC programmes applicants and beneficiaries

THEMATIC AREA 4	MONITORING
MEASURE 4.1	Additional funding for students belonging to the vulnerable group category
OBJECTIVE	O3 Creating intersectoral and interinstitutional synergy O6 Establishing monitoring and reporting mechanisms
LEADERS	Higher Education Service
TIMEFRAME	2023 - 2025
TASK	Monitoring and analysis of the use of additional funds for students belonging to the vulnerable group category
IMPLEMENTATION INDICATOR	Reporting on the use of additional financial funds for students belonging to the vulnerable group category as part of the annual report to the European Commission
TARGET GROUP	E+ programme beneficiaries – (higher education)
MEASURE 4.2	Financial support for inclusion under the volunteering projects of the ESC programme
OBJECTIVE	O3 Creating intersectoral and interinstitutional synergy O6 Establishing monitoring and reporting mechanisms
LEADER	Department for European Solidarity Corps
TIMEFRAME	2023 – 2025
TASK	Monitoring the allocation and use of funds for inclusion contracted under the ESC programme
IMPLEMENTATION INDICATOR	 Reporting on the use of financial support for inclusion contracted under the ESC Programme Communicating with the European Commission on the results of the analysis and the potential upgrade of financial support for inclusion
TARGET GROUP	ESC programme beneficiaries
MEASURE 4.3	Financial support for inclusion under the Erasmus+ programme
OBJECTIVE	O3 Creating intersectoral and interinstitutional synergy O6 Establishing monitoring and reporting mechanisms
LEADER	Pre-Tertiary Education Service, Higher Education Service, Youth and Lifelong Learning Service
TIMEFRAME	2023 – 2025
TASK	Monitoring the allocation and use of funds for inclusion contracted under the E+ programme
IMPLEMENTATION INDICATOR	 Reporting on the use of financial support for inclusion contracted under the E+ Programme within the annual report to the Commission Communicating with the European Commission on the results of the analysis and the potential upgrade of financial support for inclusion
TARGET GROUP	E+ programme beneficiaries

THEMATIC AREA 5	SUSTAINABILITY AND MANAGEMENT OF THE ACTION PLAN
MEASURE 5.1	Monitoring and implementation of the action plan
OBJECTIVE	O6 Establishing monitoring and reporting mechanisms
LEADERS	Department for Erasmus+ Programme Priorities in Education
IMPLEMENTATION ASSOCIATES	Department for Communication and Analytical Affairs of EU Programmes, Pre-Tertiary Education Service, Higher Education Service, Youth and Lifelong Learning Service
TIMEFRAME	2023 – 2025
TASK	Maintaining a system for monitoring and improving objectives and measures regarding inclusion and diversity
IMPLEMENTATION INDICATORS	 Appointed persons in charge of the implementation of the Action Plan 2023 – 2025 (inclusion and diversity officers) Analysis of implemented measures with proposals for improvement and creation of the Action Plan 2026 – 2027

