



## EAEA ON THE FUTURE OF ERASMUS+

EAEA Statement

April 2017

[The European Association for the Education of Adults](#) believes that [Erasmus+](#) is one of the key programmes of the European Union that has the potential to bring citizens in Europe together and closer to the aims of the EU. Also, for adult education, the programmes – from Grundtvig to Erasmus+ – have enormously contributed to cooperation and innovation in the sector. For any discussions, therefore, on the future of the programme beyond 2020, EAEA would like to highlight the following recommendations.

### More funding for more opportunities

Erasmus+ is at the heart of the European Union. In order to continue telling its success story, a drastic increase in funds is necessary. EAEA therefore proposes a **doubling of its current budget**.

Adult education has become a 'passe-partout' for anything to do with non-formal learning and vocational training in addition to general adult education. There is an increased demand for adult education to tackle some of the key challenges in Europe: from 70 million Europeans with low basic skills to growing nationalism and increasing need for the integration of migrants and refugees, adult education can make a real difference. [The New Skills Agenda](#), and especially [the Upskilling Pathways strategy](#), also underline the urgency on the policy level. The future Erasmus+ programme could help increase participation levels in adult learning, especially for learners from more diverse backgrounds.

In order to reach the participation level of 15% by 2020 (as stipulated in the [ET2020](#)), or an even higher policy benchmark after 2020, it is necessary to increase the budget for adult learning in the Erasmus+ programme. We therefore propose that **the budget of adult education is increased from currently 5% to 20%** in the future programme.

An increase in the budget of adult education should be coupled with mobilities for adult learners. In times of growing nationalism, it would be useful to demonstrate the power of intercultural exchanges to a wider group of people. **More learners** (not just in Higher Education but also in VET and in adult education; not only young people but also older ones) should have the opportunity to participate in mobilities and contribute to an open and inclusive European society.

### Challenges of the adult education sector: one size does not fit all

In order to support a sector that is often more fragile and fragmented than other sectors, it will be necessary to increase the **financial support provided in projects**. Many EAEA members have noted that the management fee in KA2 remains far below their needs as adult education organisations.

A further difficulty has come with the new administrative procedures. The change from Grundtvig to Erasmus+ has been challenging for non-formal adult education organisations: the Learning Partnerships disappeared and were not replaced by small KA2 projects in most cases. Grundtvig in-



service trainings also disappeared and have only been partially replaced by KA1 mobilities (the database of eligible trainings is still sorely missed).

The fact that KA2 projects have been moved to the national level does not work very well for adult education: instead of having small projects (Learning Partnerships) and larger projects (Multilateral projects), there are now medium-sized projects. This is especially true for small countries, where the budget for adult education is very limited. Additionally, it is often used for vocational training rather than adult education or for any project in the non-formal area. Given how crucial the European programmes are for the development, cooperation and innovation in adult education, we propose to **rethink what is managed at the national and what at the European level.**

A further simplification of the application procedure is still necessary. For smaller adult education institutions, the procedure remains too complicated and resource-intensive. Additionally, KA3 application and administrative procedures are still highly bureaucratic and time-consuming.

### Expand and strengthen networks

Cooperation in adult education, especially at the grassroots level, can strengthen democracy and intercultural dialogue. We believe that it is therefore crucial that associations from the **Neighbourhood countries can participate** in the programme from the very start.

European associations are crucial for the positive development of policies as they provide the link between European policy and practice at the national, regional and local levels. The continued and increased support for these umbrellas is therefore in everyone's interest. We propose the **continuation of the operating grants** for European association while **increasing the budget** to the level of operating grants in other sectors (200.000 – 250.000 €).

In order to have appropriate impact in the area of adult education, we propose large-scale projects that are comparable to the sector skills or knowledge alliances. These **adult learning alliances** could bring together practitioners and researchers to have an impact on the policy level, with key developments (democracy / digitalisation etc.) as the main themes.

### More information

**Contact:** Gina Ebner, EAEA Secretary-General, +32 02 893 25 24, [gina.ebner@eaea.org](mailto:gina.ebner@eaea.org).

*The European Association for the Education of Adults (EAEA) is the voice of non-formal adult education in Europe. EAEA is a European NGO with 141 member organisations in 45 countries and represents more than 60 million learners Europe-wide.*