



EUROPEAN ASSOCIATION FOR
THE EDUCATION OF ADULTS

ALL WE WANT IS... A NEW ERASMUS+ PROGRAMME THAT STRENGTHENS EUROPEAN ADULT EDUCATION

EAEA Statement

December 2019

While the trialogue for the future Erasmus+ programme is in full swing, we would like to reiterate our key criteria for a programme that strengthens European adult education.

1. Budget share of at least 6 per cent for adult education

We very much appreciate the European Parliament's commitment to increasing the funding of the Erasmus+ programme and **raising the budget share for adult education to at least 6 per cent**. We would like to point out that the potential target group of adult education is many times greater than other educational target groups. Nearly 85 per cent of the European population is older than 15 years, and studies such as PIAAC confirm the long-standing observation of the adult education sector that a high proportion of the adult population - about a fifth - has an urgent need for basic education. There are also adults who need further education to remain competitive in the labour market and adults who have a higher formal education but are socially excluded or need guidance in areas such as media literacy, social and communication literacy, and political education.

2. Learning mobility for adult learners

Learning mobility for adults is, in our view, crucial to providing adequate learning opportunities, where they do not exist at the national or regional level, and where European exchange provides a significant added value in providing knowledge and skills. Target groups of learning mobility could be better defined around themes or specific learning needs. These could include the elderly, low-skilled, migrants, women from disadvantaged backgrounds, among others. Another way of managing the potential learners who would want to participate is to introduce certain topics that would be the core of the mobility – these themes could be citizenship/democracy or intercultural learning or the possibility to create/experience learners' representation.

In order for the National Agencies to manage project proposals for learners' mobilities, EAEA suggests that the proposals be done through providers. Providers could, as is the procedure in Higher Education, sign up to an Adult Education Mobility Charter, which enables them to manage their learners' mobility. EAEA has already produced a charter, which has been supported by a large number of adult education organisations, and which sets out central recommendations for the learners, the sending and the hosting organisation: https://issuu.com/eaeapublications/docs/mobilitycharter_final_view/10

Learning mobility for adults – just like for any other age group – adds a European dimension to the learning experience. It provides an opportunity for transcultural and civic learning by being exposed to a different culture of the host country and meeting learners from other countries. The learning experience created



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through a mobility contributes significantly not only to the development of personal and interpersonal skills, such as language and communication skills, empathy, tolerance of ambiguity and team-working skills, but also helps to promote European values and democracy. Learning mobility creates awareness about the benefits of the European Union for its citizens and fosters mutual understanding and solidarity. It supports the delivery of the Council Recommendation of 22 May 2018 on promoting common values, inclusive education, and the European dimension of teaching.

Adult learners who participated in a learning mobility will act as multipliers of their learning experience and skills that they acquired. Evidence shows that participation in adult learning is a transformative experience for adult learners and their social and professional environment. Learners, therefore, often act as champions of learning in their communities and will inspire other people to participate in adult learning. This will contribute to reaching the ET2020 objective of 15% of adults participating in lifelong learning. Additionally, participation in a learning mobility is a low-threshold step into European cooperation in other areas of the learner's personal and professional life.

3. Adult education alliances for stronger adult education structures and policies

Stronger adult education structures require large-scale projects that bring together all stakeholders, including adult learning practitioners and researchers. European alliances already exist in the area of vocational education and tertiary education and show very successful results. We, therefore, call for **adult education alliances** to be included in Erasmus+. These could bring adult education providers, research and public institutions together to jointly identify answers to European challenges such as democratic deficits, digitisation and the changing world of work, and ensure an impact at the policy level.

4. Jean Monnet activities to promote European Union learning

Jean Monnet activities, which aim to foster innovation, mutual enrichment and the dissemination of information about the European Union, are, in our view, relevant to all education sectors and should, therefore, be opened up to adult learning. Non-formal education and low-level learning activities in adult learning are of enormous importance for the dissemination of knowledge and skills about the European Union, as well as teaching and research for the study of topics such as democratic developments and citizenship.

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 130 member organisations in 43 countries and represents more than 60 million learners Europe-wide.