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ERASMUS+ (2014-2020) AND THE OPPORTUNITIES FOR STUDYING ABROAD AND SCHOLARSHIP IN THE EUROPEAN UNION

Erasmus+ is the EU Programme in the fields of education, training, youth and sport for the period 2014-2020. It includes a strong international dimension (i.e. cooperation with Partner Countries) notably in the fields of higher education and youth. The paper aims to present the main characteristics of the Erasmus+ Programme, as well some of the opportunities that it provides to the youth.

1. Main characteristics of the Erasmus+ Programme

The Erasmus+ Programme [1] builds on the achievements of more than 25 years of European programmes in the fields of education, training and youth, covering both an intra-European as well as an international cooperation dimension. Erasmus+ is the result of the integration of the following EU programmes implemented by the Commission in 2007-2013: The Lifelong Learning Programme; The Youth in Action Programme; The Erasmus Mundus Programme; Tempus; Alfa; Edulink; Programmes of cooperation with industrialized countries in the field of higher education.

The Erasmus+ Programme aims to contribute to the achievement of: [2]

- the objectives of the Europe 2020 Strategy, including the headline education target;
- the objectives of the strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training (ET 2020), including the corresponding benchmarks;
- the sustainable development of Partner Countries in the field of higher education;
- the overall objectives of the renewed framework for European cooperation in the youth field (2010-2018);
- the objective of developing the European dimension in sport, in particular grassroots sport, in line with the EU work plan for sport;
- promotion of EU values in accordance with Article 2 of the Treaty on the EU.

In order to achieve its objectives, the Erasmus+ Programme implements the following Actions: [3]

- Key action 1 – Mobility of individuals;
- Key action 2 – Cooperation for innovation and the exchange of good practices;
- Key action 3 – Support for policy reform;
- Jean Monnet activities;
- Sport.

ERASMUS+ allows: [4]

- ✓ 2 million higher education students;
- ✓ EU grants and training for about 4 million people and 125,000 institutions;
- ✓ 500,000 young people will volunteer or participate in youth exchanges;
- ✓ 650,000 vocational apprenticeships or traineeships abroad;
- ✓ 200,000 Master's degree loan schemes;
- ✓ 25,000 joint master degree grants;
- ✓ 800,000 educators and youth workers will acquire new teaching and learning methods abroad.

The Erasmus+ Programme has an overall *budget* of 14.774 billion EUR for 2014-2020. In addition, 1.68 billion EUR for funding actions with third countries (partner countries) have been made available through the EU's external action budget.

2. Opportunities provided from the Erasmus+ Programme to the youth

The Erasmus+ programme aims to boost skills and employability, as well as to modernize Education, Training, and Youth work. Erasmus+ supports transnational partnerships among Education, Training, and Youth institutions and organizations to foster cooperation and bridge the worlds of Education and work in order to tackle the skills gaps that Europe is facing. In the field of Sport, the programme supports grassroots projects and cross-border challenges such as combating match-fixing, doping, violence and racism [5].

Considering the Erasmus+ programme, the students may have a chance to do part of their studies abroad or complete a traineeship in a company through [Erasmus+](#).

If they are interested in doing it, they should first contact their own university.

In case they are willing to go abroad to study via Erasmus+:

- they don't have to pay registration or tuition fees to their host university;
- their studies abroad count as an integral part of their degree;
- they get an EU grant towards living and travel expenses.

It is guaranteed that their home university must recognize their period of study abroad as counting towards their degree, provided they complete the study program agreed in advance of their exchange.

Another opportunity for the youth is the joint-degree programmes. With Erasmus Mundus, they can enroll in a postgraduate degree program jointly offered by universities based in different EU countries - in certain cases, even outside Europe. The programme requires that they study or conduct research in at least two countries - and are awarded a joint, double or multiple degrees as a result. Scholarships for Erasmus Mundus are available for students from Europe and all over the world.

References

1. European Commission. Erasmus+ Programme guide. Version 3 (2015): 14/11/2014, p. 10, http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/documents/erasmus-plus-programme-guide_en.pdf
2. Ibid, p. 11.
3. Ibid, pp. 15-17.
4. http://esn.org//Erasmus?gclid=Cj0KEQjwqe-rBRCv J6qs6isp6EBEiQAmbctFii-PrsJ2iVCq0AL9TqebY_hBOMrYK6VNNF0xgZ1ygi8aAodJ8P8HAQ
5. Erasmus+. http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/discover/index_en.htm