



Essential practical advice to participants in Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps mobility activities in light of the COVID-19 pandemic

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The **COVID-19** outbreak negatively affects the carrying out of the many activities, which are ongoing or were planned, under the Erasmus+ programme and European Solidarity Corps.

The **European Commission's main objective** is the safety and protection of all Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps participants, while fully respecting all the containment measures taken at national level. It is working to help students, pupils, volunteers and other participants in the programmes deal with the consequences for them.

Erasmus+ and the European Solidarity Corps are mainly implemented through the National Agencies in the programme countries (EU Member States as well as North Macedonia, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, Turkey, Serbia and the United Kingdom).

Individual participants facing difficulties need to contact their home institution.

The institutions should contact their National Agencies for decentralised projects or the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA) for centralised projects.

Based on guidance from the Commission, **National Agencies and EACEA** can provide all necessary information and support to the organisations and participants affected.

The Commission is monitoring the evolving situation very closely and will adopt any additional measures that might become necessary.

For beneficiary organisations, the Commission is providing maximum flexibility to adapt their activities to the current situation, within the limits of the legal framework applicable.

The Commission has taken the following measures:

➤ **National Agencies are authorised to invoke the force majeure clause in all cases** where the application of national limitations affects the implementation of Erasmus+ or European Solidarity Corps projects. This allows them to assess the possibility of accepting additional costs justified by the COVID-19 containment measures. These additional costs should not exceed the total budget granted to the project.

➤ **Deadlines for all planned activities** may be postponed by up to **12 months per project**. The maximum length of the project cannot exceed 36 months.

➤ Several thousand **ongoing Erasmus+ partnership projects** have the opportunity to reschedule activities that could not take place in Spring 2020.

➤ **Deadlines for ongoing calls** have been postponed. For information on the new call deadlines, please see: https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/news/coronavirus-outbreak-deadlines-applications-extended_en

➤ **National Agencies** have been asked to closely follow the problems faced by participants, especially young people, who are currently abroad so that immediate and adequate support can be provided to them.

In the field of higher education:

 **Higher education institutions** are asked to be as flexible and pragmatic as possible to help students achieve the outcomes indicated in their learning agreements, regardless of the students' geographical location, for example, through remote studying arrangements with the use of digital tools. This flexibility will in particular help students who have returned to their home countries to finish their courses at their host institution and to have the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) obtained through remote studying arrangements fully recognised.

 **Recent graduates** who need to postpone their planned placements abroad will be allowed to take them up within 18 months of their graduation, instead of the normal 12-month timeframe.

 **Erasmus+ National Agencies and higher education institutions** are encouraged to cooperate with local Erasmus Student Network sections and national student unions to share information quickly with students on mobility abroad, and arrange for peer-to-peer support for those in need. The Commission is working with the European Students' Union and the Erasmus Student Network to help students around Europe.

If you are a student or a teacher, please contact your home institution for further guidance.

If you are an institution, you can get in touch with the National Agency in your country or with the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency in case of centralised projects.



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