

# Volunteering on exchange

*The SocialErasmus+ implementation report*



1.292 activities coordinated by 2,526 volunteers across 271 cities in 31 European countries, engaging 86.000 people.

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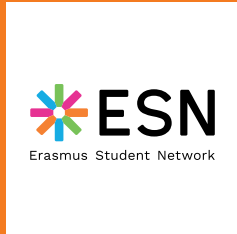


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# Table of Contents

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4	About the project
5	SocialErasmus
6	Methodology
7	Community Management
8	Online Community Management
9	Capacity Building through training
10	Online Communication Campaign
10	SocialErasmus+ Campaign
12	Coverage of the Social Inclusion Days
12	Leave your mark campaign
14	Implementation Results
16	Engagement through Social Inclusion Days
17	Focus on schools visits
20	<b>Report on SocialErasmus+ policy impact</b>
21	The SocialErasmus Charter
21	Inclusion in the Erasmus Charter for Higher Education (ECHE)
22	Erasmus Student Charter
23	ECTS User's Guide
24	Engagement with stakeholders
24	Conclusion
26	Partners



## About the project

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The **SocialErasmus** programme incorporates all volunteer activities where international students engage with locals to contribute to their local host society. The **SocialErasmus+ project** is an Erasmus+ KA3 Forward-Looking Cooperation grant project to support the development and professionalisation of the SocialErasmus initiative across Europe.

### The main aims of the project are:

- Better integrate the international exchange student in the local society by organising volunteer opportunities to ensure an exchange of values takes place between the International students and the local community
- Developing and professionalise the implementation process of the activities by involving more stakeholders such as Higher Education Institutions and local schools in the process.
- Increasing the learning experience of students by engaging with Higher Education Institutions and Non-Formal Education experts to build in elements of Community Service Learning in the curricula and increase the recognition students receive for their volunteering activity.

The SocialErasmus+ project has a focus on **Erasmus in Schools activities**, to ensure also local youth experience internationalisation and intercultural communication in classrooms from a younger age.

The implementation of the SocialErasmus+ project is coordinated by ESN and implemented with the support of the European University Foundation, Youth for Exchange and Understanding, Erasmus Student Network Besancon, Vrije Universiteit Brussel, University of Vienna and the University of Vigo.

# SocialErasmus

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ESN has been implementing SocialErasmus since 2009. The **SocialErasmus programme** incorporates all volunteer activities where international students engage with locals to contribute to their local host society.

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# Methodology

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In order to implement activities across Europe, an extensive implementation strategy is needed. Throughout the academic year 2018-2019, many supporting activities were organised to empower national and local volunteers and encourage Erasmus students to engage in local volunteer initiatives.

# Community Management

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The Erasmus Student Network is an extensive organisation with more than 15.000 volunteers across 40 countries and 525 local organisations.

In order to reach engage the extensive network of organisations in ESN, it is important to engage in extensive community management. In the Academic year of 2018-2019, the ESN headquarters were supported by a group of experienced volunteers recruited from the community of ESN volunteers across Europe. This allows for a grass-root level approach through co-management, where the needs of the volunteers are represented.

## ESN Headquarters

- **Wim Gabriels**, Project Coordinator
- **Jeroen Van Lent**, International Board member

## Social Inclusion team

- **Elena Iamboglo**, Social Inclusion Secretary
- **Josipa Friščić**, Communication Officer
- **Anna Demiri**, Social Engagement & Community Management
- **Panka Paskuj**, Inclusive Mobility & Community Management
- **Filipos Mikropoulos**, IT Officer

Together the team managed the community of volunteers active within national and local level through several channels and platforms. One of the main objectives was to empower national coordinators, in order for them to function as multipliers to local volunteers. They, in turn, execute activities with Erasmus students in their local communities.

In order to create a sense of community and to encourage volunteers on the local level to engage in the organisation of volunteer activities during the implementation phase in Fall 2018 and Spring 2019, the team organised the **Social Inclusion Days**. The aim of the Social Inclusion Days initiative organised twice per year is to provide young citizens with the opportunity to do more with their mobility experience, to make a difference and create a positive social change through volunteering. The initiative stresses the importance of intercultural learning and the **learning students experience during their volunteering activity**.

This biannual initiative took place for 2 weeks per semester:

- Fall 2018: from 19th of November till the 3rd of December 2018.
- Spring 2019: from 29th of April till the 12th of May 2019.

This encouraged local and national volunteers to take action and organise volunteer activities for the international students. Throughout the semester, the team engages with the community in different ways in order to offer them support in the organisation of the initiative on the ground by creating an online community to engage volunteers and exchange knowledge, offering capacity building and training, and provide communication tools.



## Online Community Management

Extensive online coordination is needed throughout the semester to coordinate large scale implementation phases across Europe. The creation of an active online community is key in order to ensure activities will be organised on the ground.

- Of 746 national and local coordinators through social media and 520 through mailing lists.
- 14 skype calls were organised by the Community Managers
- 5 international educational videos were released in order to train the community on certain topics
- National Coordinators were requested to create action plans and a dashboard in order to track their progress.
- An extensive reporting portal was introduced to report on organised activities.



# Capacity Building through training

## SocialErasmus+: Erasmus in Schools training

As experts in Non-Formal Education and Intercultural learning, Youth for Exchange and Understanding organised 4 multiplier trainings for 100 volunteers. These 4 trainings were a key element in the implementation plan, as they kick-started each of the implementation phases. The first 2 trainings took place in September 2018 in Crnomelj, Slovenia, while the second took place in February 2019 in Vienna, Austria.

The training, facilitated by trainers from YEU, focused on four aspects: how to best implement Erasmus in School activities, how to use the tools that are being developed in the SocialErasmus+ project, how to support international students in upscaling the content of Erasmus in Schools activities on topics such as cultural heritage; intercultural learning and tolerance for intercultural differences, and how to teach and inspire other ESN volunteers what you have learned on SocialErasmus+.

Next to the specific 4 multiplier trainings, workshops were organised in multiple events organised for national and local student representatives in order to disseminate the project and its tools, increasing the capacity of local ESN volunteers to implement activities on the ground.

These events were organised in Valencia, Spain in October 2018 for the Social Inclusion coordinators of the Erasmus Student Network, workshops were organised

during the Regional Training events of ESN International that gathers between 130 - 200 participants of that country and its neighbouring countries in Porto, Portugal; Olomouc, Czech Republic; Athens, Greece; Jelgava, Latvia and Fribourg, Switzerland between October 2018 and November 2018. Furthermore, the project was presented during the European wide conference ESN organises each year that gathers more than 800 representatives from across Europe, in Platja d'Aro, Spain in March 2018 and Thessaloniki, Greece in April 2019. Here the project was presented to the audience, a workshop was held and the project was disseminated during the infomarket.

*“The dedication and commitment to learning is clearly shown by the ESN people, even when pushed out of their comfort zones and stretched to the limit in terms of tiredness, receiving new knowledge, and for some leading activities for the first time. SocialErasmus itself is a great opportunity and programme that is already showing multiple benefits, it increases the soft skills of ESN volunteers and staff, it increases the soft skills of the Erasmus students and it provides a cultural learning experience for hundreds of high school students.” - Nik Paddison, YEU trainee*

## Online Communication Campaign

As a final building block in the large scale implementation, a large scale visibility is needed to ensure that first; the awareness of the SocialErasmus+ project and volunteering on exchange as an activity was increased, and more people knew of it's existence. Second, the attitude towards volunteering activities needed to increase, in order for students to feel attracted to take action and volunteer during their exchange themselves.

## SocialErasmus+ Campaign

This campaign started on the 14th of September 2018, with the launch of the SocialErasmus charter, where the project consortium launched a petition to European Commission and the European Parliament to create an Erasmus programme which encourages social integration & intercultural awareness through volunteering and engaging with local communities during an international exchange. The petition, which currently has over 2,500 signatures, and accompanied by the SocialErasmus Charter which examines the key elements that highlight the social dimension to an exchange programme and should form the backbone of an Erasmus experience.

These key messages were translated into an online campaign that posted messages each week from september 2018 till december 2019, finishing with a short video on the 5th of december, with the International Day of the Volunteer.



# 1,280,055

Total impressions in 2018/19

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## 6,332

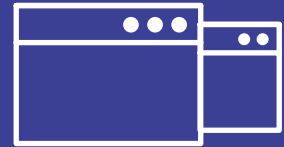
Reactions in 2018/29

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## 100,483

Video views 2018/19

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## 840

Shares

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## 64

Comments

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## 1,975

Link clicks

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## Coverage of the Social Inclusion Days

During the biannual initiative that took place for 2 weeks in fall 2018, and spring 2019, the Social Media channels of ESN focus on the promotion of activities where students volunteer in their local communities and the impact of volunteering on exchange can have by covering the activities that take place across Europe extensively.

The two week period the social media channels are focused on the promotion of ESN activity in social inclusion, the impact of volunteering on the exchange and promotion of accessible education.

## Leave your mark campaign

The campaign “Leave your mark, volunteer on exchange” points out the different benefits the Erasmus+ programme can have on exchange students as well as on local communities. The focal point is the social impact of the Erasmus+ programme, highlighting benefits not directly related to a persons academics progress or employability opportunities.

The goal was to share the experience of students on exchange who participated oin an volunteering activity during their period abroad and make them abassadors of the SocialErasmus+ project.

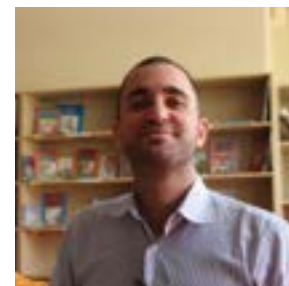
*"We always talk about the importance of volunteering and I am happy to have taken a step forward and actually tried it on my own! It was fun and surprisingly easy to spend some time with locals, especially seeing there was a team of people involved and everyone believed in the importance of what we were trying to do. I felt more present, volunteering reminds me of the immediate issues I can address and shifts my focus from the big, daring dreams to the small, daily steps I can take to make the dream come true." - Timka*



*"With volunteering, the wonder is right behind the corner. The pupils in Thessaloniki and their teachers supported us to make the activities lovely engaging because those kids made the difference: they were the embodiment of curiosity! Even after years of volunteering, you understand why you're still in love with it, and reaffirms what you always knew, but thanks to ESN is everyday clearer: Europe is our continent which cultivates hopes and peace, and there is much more room for cultural understanding than hate and division." - Alberto*



*"During my Erasmus exchange was the first time I participated in volunteering activities, and while I always associated it with something that would require the right skills, it turned out that to help the local community you only need willingness, an open mind and a positive attitude. What we get in return is life experience, new friendships and the knowledge that every person in the world is struggling with same problems and in the end, the only thing that sometimes separates us is the language." - Jakub Wardziński, Erasmus student in Rijeka, Croatia. - Jakub*



# Implementation Results

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The implementation phase took place during the academic year of 2018-2019. During this period more than 1292 SocialErasmus activities were organised by ESN and its partner organisations, where international exchange students had a chance to contribute to their host communities by volunteering through food drives and donations, fundraisers, cleaning actions, kindergarten and school visits, educational workshops, conferences, and many more events that promote active citizenship and social engagement. This accounts for 65,65% of all recorded activities (1968) related to the causes of ESN.

More than 18.574 international students joined as volunteers and engaged with more than 64.934 members of their local communities. All of this was coordinated by a team of 2.526 local youth leaders of the Erasmus Student Network. A total of 86.034 people engaged in intercultural dialogue across in 271 different cities across 31 countries in Europe.

**1.292**

SocialErasmus  
activities

**86.034**

People involved

**2.526**

ESN volunteers

**18.574**

International students

## Volunteering on Exchange

**262**

Erasmus in  
Schools visits

**10.442**

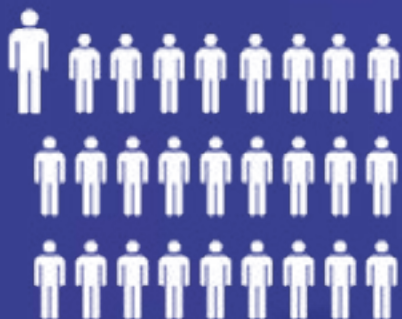
Local school students

**438**

ESN volunteers

**1.324**

International students



1 ESN volunteer  
coordinates activities,  
8 international students volunteer  
and engage with 25 locals.

Based on these results, we can see that for each International student that engages in a SocialErasmus activity, roughly 3,50 local members of the community are reached. The effort of one ESN volunteer organising volunteer opportunities on average reaches 7,35 international students and 25,71 members of the local community.

In the activities that included both ESN coordinators, International Students and members of the local community, 2,94% of the participants were ESN coordinators, while 21,59% of the participants were International students engaging with locals, who make up the biggest group of participants, with more than 75,47% of the participants.

This highlights the importance of the ESN volunteer's role as coordinator for such initiatives. The ESN volunteer is a therefore a key factor for international students to reach out to the local communities and to instigate connections. Each ESN volunteer thus has a very big multiplier effect.



## Engagement through Social Inclusion Days

As explained in the methodology, ESN supports the organisation of social engagement activities across Europe by organising the Social Inclusion Days.

The coordination of this initiative is led by the International Social Inclusion team of ESN international in order to empower the local and national volunteers to take action and organise volunteer activities for the international students. This biannual initiative takes place for 2 weeks per semester. In the fall semester of 2018 the Social Inclusion days took place from the 19th of November till the 3rd of December 2018, while in the spring semester this took place from the 29th of April till the 12th of May 2019. 51,89% of activities took place in fall 2018 which was the first large scale implementation phase, while 48,11% took place in Spring 2019, the second large scale implementation phase.

Overall 63,38% of the activities took place during the Social Inclusion Days in 2018-2019. Given that the total duration is 1 month in the year, this indicates that organising initiatives across Europe where international students can come together and contribute to their local community, empowers students to take action.

Out of all the SocialErasmus activities where international students did volunteer activities, there, more than one third, 34,52%, of the SocialErasmus activities were categorised by the coordinators as having a primary focus on Social Inclusion and engagement.



Culture and intercultural awareness followed closely with 25,29% of the activities and 20,60% of activities classified as having a focus on education and youth. When comparing the results for Education and Youth within SocialErasmus activities (20,25%) and overall reported activities (16,11%), we can see a significant increased percentage of activities classified as Education and Youth.

The field of Skills and Employability reports very few activities, as only in 1,09% of SocialErasmus activities tackle skills set and youth employability.

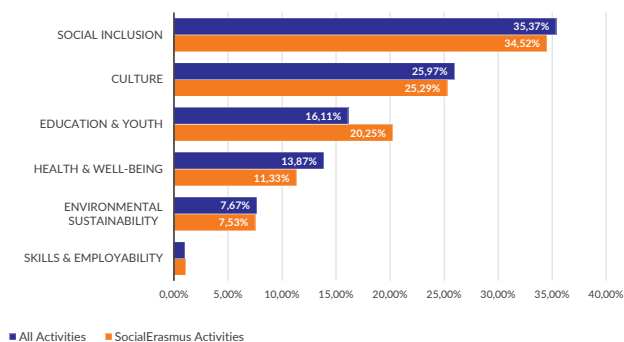


Figure 1: Breakdown of the cause related to the overall and SocialErasmus activities.

Overall 370 activities, or 29,44% of all activities were reported to have more than one cause affiliated to the activity, addressing more than one of the objectives. A good example is the Erasmus in Schools activity model where students touch upon various elements such as culture, education and inclusion, hence this initiative answers to more than one objective set.

When it comes to the types of activities executed we can see that games and social activities are organised most frequently, with 27,06% of SocialErasmus activities classified as a game or social activity focusing on social interaction with the local community. Awareness raising campaigns are a close second with 23,14% of activities.

## Focus on schools visits

Within the SocialErasmus+ project we have established a more clear focus on the Erasmus in Schools module of activities where international students visit local schools and interact with local teachers and pupils. Throughout the academic year of 2018-2019, 262 activities in Schools took place in 18 countries, which is 20,84% of all SocialErasmus activities and 13,31% of all accounted activities. Altogether 438 ESN coordinators organised Erasmus in Schools visits for 1324 International students. Throughout these activities, more than 10.442 local primary and high school students were reached.

When comparing these figures to the results of the academic year 2017-2018 when the project was in its pilot phase, we can see that an extensive increase can be measured. In the academic year 2017-2018, 121 visits in schools took place. In 2018-2019 this was up by 116,53%, to more than 260 activities. Because of this increase in Erasmus in Schools visits, an increase of 141,61% can be experienced when analysing the reach of international students, as 1324 international students took part in a visit in 2018-2019 compared to 548 in 2017-2018.

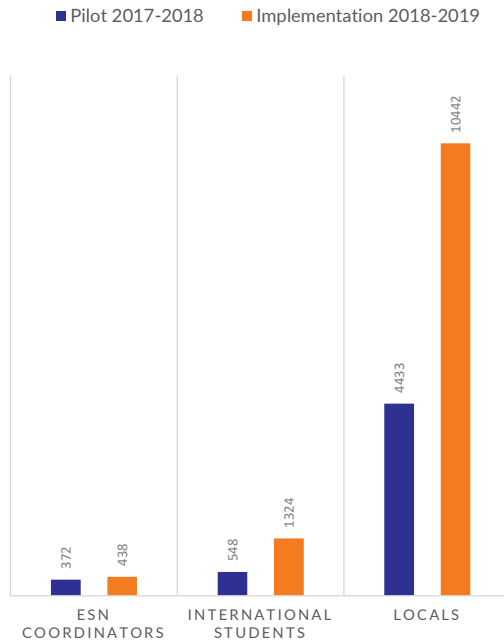


Figure 2: Breakdown of the profile of the participants in the project

More than 10.442 local primary and high school pupils were reached in 2018-2019. This is an increase of 135,55% compared to academic year 2017-2018. Although the amount of ESN coordinators involved has also increased from 372 in the pilot phase to 438, an increase of 17,74%, the increase is noticeable lower than in the other categories. This can be explained by an increased activity by the same coordinators, organising more long term activities.

This indicates that the 4 multiplier trainings and the internal dissemination about the Erasmus in

Schools methodology has caused a more intensive implementation of the project among ESNers. This has led to an increase of impact of each ESNer has more than doubled; from a ratio where 14,39 locals pupils and 1,47 international students were reached per ESN coordinator during the academic year 2017-2018, to a ratio where 23,84 local pupils and 3,02 were reached per ESN coordinator in the large scale implementation during 2018-2019.

The increased focus on Education and Youth when comparing SocialErasmus activities to overall reported projects, can be clarified by the fact that 61% of Erasmus in Schools activities are classified as Education and Youth oriented. Coordinators of Erasmus in Schools activities thus clearly consider visits in schools to be an educational topic.

We recorded the most preferred subjects addressed during the Erasmus in Schools activities. As some subjects can strongly correlate, coordinators were allowed to indicate a maximum of 3 subjects. The subject most present in the activities was the topic of cultural heritage and cultural differences that was addressed in 48,47% of the activities, while international student mobility, such as the Erasmus+ programme itself, follows at 33,21% of the sessions, followed closely by the topic of accessible student mobility at 32,02%. Intercultural dialogue (31,68%) and language (26,34%) compliment the focus on cultural topics. Access to education (19,47%) complements the discussions on inclusive education and student mobility. While we consider all topics mentioned above to be European values, 19,08% of activities explicitly discussed Europe and European citizenship. Recognition of skills (0,76%), sports and healthy lifestyle (3,05) and equal rights (3,44%) were topics that were found hard to discuss and were therefore reported rather infrequently.

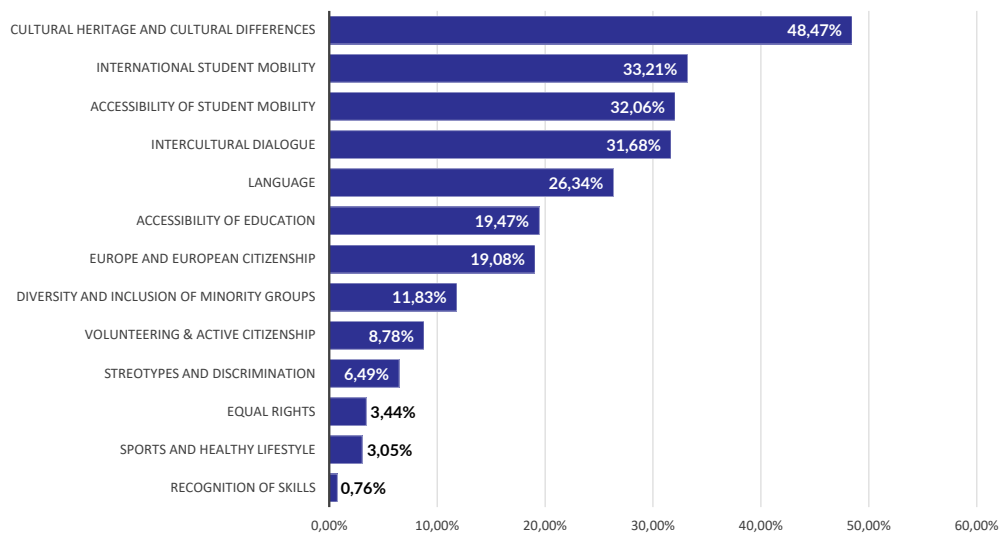


Figure 3: The most recorded subjects for Erasmus in Schools visits.

# Report on SocialErasmus+ policy impact

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This report aims at summarising the efforts the SocialErasmus+ consortium has undertaken to create a positive policy impact in line with the outcomes of the projects. It is worth mentioning that all policy efforts were underpinned by a solid advocacy scheme that involves all partners and commits to creating meaningful change through action. In short, this advocacy scheme can be summarised as:



**Act:** The SocialErasmus+ consortium has piloted activities as a proof of concept and to showcase the positive impact such activities can have on all stakeholders involved – Erasmus students, schools, universities, local student organisations and the local community at large. During the academic year 2018/2019, the Erasmus Student Network in cooperation with its partners organised 1.292 social events, involving 2.500 volunteers, 18.574 international students and more than 64.000 local participants.

**Advocate:** Based on the outcomes of the SocialErasmus+ activities, the consortium involved itself in different advocacy measures which are described in greater detail in this document.

**Commit:** The consortium is well aware that a systemic change requires both policy change and action to go hand in hand. This is why advocacy efforts are complemented with the commitment to continue creating positive change and utilising Erasmus+ mobilities to their full potential. By preparing policy recommendations not only to European institutions but also for the very organisations the SocialErasmus+ consortium represents, we commit to creating a sustainable SocialErasmus programme, which lasts way beyond the project duration and has the desired systemic impact.

# The SocialErasmus Charter

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The SocialErasmus Charter is an output of the project that highlights the different benefits the Erasmus programme can have on local communities if activities like SocialErasmus are implemented in a systemic way and recognition of volunteering is a core element of an HEI's internationalisation strategy. It provides a concrete call to action towards the European Commission and the European Parliament to make the Erasmus programme more inclusive and facilitate such activities. For this reason, a petition was created on change.org, which at the time of writing (August 2019), was signed by more than 2500 individuals. The SocialErasmus Charter is intentionally general and works under the Act – Advocate – Commit scheme.

## Inclusion in the Erasmus Charter for Higher Education (ECHE)

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“The Erasmus Charter for Higher Education (ECHE) provides the general quality framework for European and international cooperation activities a higher education institution may carry out within Erasmus+. The award

of an ECHE is a prerequisite for all higher education institutions located in a Programme country and willing to participate in learning mobility of individuals and/or cooperation for innovation and good practices under Erasmus+.” (Commission, Erasmus Charter for Higher Education, 2019)

The ECHE is thus the foundation to guarantee that the Erasmus+ programme is implemented correctly. The European Commission provides ECHE Guidelines and ECHE monitoring guide for Erasmus+ National Agencies to ensure that it is implemented correctly. Furthermore, a website that allows an ECHE self-assessment for HEIs is currently being developed.

In line with the European Commission's principle to engage stakeholders in the discussion on how the next Erasmus programme will look like, they have set-up a Working Group coined ECHE Working Group

The SocialErasmus+ consortium partners Erasmus Student Network and European University Foundation are both represented in this working group. The working group meets regularly to discuss different topics like compliance, guidelines but most importantly the ECHE for the next programme iteration of Erasmus. Through the involvement in this working group, ESN and EUF have proposed concrete formulations in the ECHE that give a higher emphasis on equal and equitable access and opportunities to the Erasmus programme for students from all backgrounds. While the version is not yet final, a draft of the charter has been annexed to this report.

This positive development clearly reflects on how a concrete change in policy can be possible through making proposals in the working groups set up by the European Commission and can be counted as a real success for the SocialErasmus+ project.

The ESN and the EUF are committed to further contribute with their expertise and bring the outcomes of the SocialErasmus+ also into the development of future ECHE guidelines, ECHE monitoring guide, as well as the self-assessment tool.

## Erasmus Student Charter

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Each Erasmus+ student will be given an Erasmus+ Student Charter by their sending university or higher education institution after their selection. The Student Charter highlights the rights and obligations of students participating in Erasmus+. It informs Erasmus+ students about what they are entitled to and what is expected of them during their secondment for studies and/or for a traineeship.

In particular, the Erasmus+ Student Charter outlines the basic entitlements of the Erasmus+ students, such as free tuition and full recognition of studies or traineeship abroad. The Charter also specifies the main obligations of the Erasmus+ students, providing them with a concise idea of their duties with regard to both their sending and receiving higher education institutions/enterprise.” (Commission, Erasmus+ Student Charter, 2019)

The European University Foundation (EUF) did an inquiry to the European Commission’s DG EAC – Unit B1 on the current status of the Erasmus Student Charter. While the aforementioned ECHE working group has already commenced work on designing a

new ECHE, the Erasmus+ Student Charter has not yet been discussed with stakeholders. The EC proposed to include the topic of the Erasmus+ Student Charter in the next meeting of the ECHE working group to ensure that changes reflected in the ECHE and the Erasmus programme as such are also reflected in the Student Charter for the next Erasmus programme.

In line with the commitment to contribute to the ECHE, ESN and EUF will also contribute to this discussion as part of the ECHE working group.

## ECTS User’s Guide

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“The European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) is a tool of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) for making studies and courses more transparent and thus helping to enhance the quality of higher education. The ECTS Users’ Guide offers guidelines for implementing ECTS and links to useful supporting documents.”

The latest version of the ECTS Users’ Guide was published in 2015 in conjunction with the Ministerial conference in Yerevan that took place 14-15 May 2015. In consultation with stakeholders of the Bologna Follow-Up Group (BFUG), the SocialErasmus+ consortium was informed that there is currently no plan to revise the ECTS Users’ Guide.

There is already multiple references to recognition of learning in non-formal and informal settings, as well as references to a more socially inclusive European Higher Education Area in the current Bologna process. This is also reflected in the 2018 Paris Communique, as a result of the Ministerial Conference that took place 24-25 May 2018 in Paris.

In the context of the SocialErasmus+ project, the consortium created a strong collaboration with the European Students' Union (ESU), which is part of the BFUG. (See more details on concrete activities in the section "Engagement with stakeholders"). The consortium commits to continue this cooperation and contribute with their expertise where possible to develop the ECTS Users' Guide as part of the Bologna process. The aim is to create a Bologna process that continues its commitment to be more inclusive, fostering volunteering and recognising the positive impact of social activities on the local societies.

## Engagement with stakeholders

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Besides the aforementioned efforts to create policies that support the aims of the SocialErasmus+ project like the SocialErasmus Charter, Inclusion in the ECHE, the Erasmus+ Student Charter and the ECTS Users' Guide, the SocialErasmus+ consortium has undertaken several activities contributing to achieving this goal, which you can find in the following. The consortium contributed and co-published a position

paper: Fostering active citizenship through Erasmus+ student mobility, which calls for the recognition and facilitation of volunteer activities for Erasmus+ students. The ESN, the EUF and YEU as SocialErasmus+ consortium partner are signatories to the position paper. In addition, The Scouts, World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts, the European Volunteer Centre, European Educational Exchanges Youth for Understanding and the European Youth Forum co-signed the position paper. It was published in Spring 2018 and picked up ideas that were developed in the context of the SocialErasmus+ project.

The European University Foundation in cooperation with the European Students' Union (ESU) organised a meeting with the then Chair of the European Parliament committee on Culture and Education (CULT) – Petra Kammerevert on 5 September 2018 to discuss the then upcoming discussions about the legal basis for the Erasmus follow-up programme. The proposals tabled by her group were broadly accepted and are now part of the legal basis for the Erasmus follow-up programme. The main elements important for ensuring a socially just programme are the definition of social inclusion and individuals from disadvantaged backgrounds. While the definition is still relatively broad, it will allow the follow-up programme of Erasmus+ to continue putting emphasis on social inclusion.

The European University Foundation and the Erasmus Student Network took part in a consultation through interviews organised by the PPMI for the European Commission's DG EAC: Study on inclusiveness and adequacy of student support in higher education under the next Erasmus programme. The study aims to draw scenarios on how to best adapt the technical implementation of the Erasmus+ programme to allow for a socially just programme.

Next to the extensive policy work towards the European Institutions and policy makers, Erasmus Student Network, the European University Foundation and the other partners in the SocialErasmus+ consortium represented the project and the concept of volunteering on exchange at more than 24 events, reaching out to 4.435 people, going from big events such as the Annual General Meeting of ESN in Costa Brava 2018 and Thessaloniki 2019, to the meeting of Erasmus Coordinators in Murcia 2018 and Paphos 2019, EAIE Geneva 2018 and Helsinki 2019 with a predominantly wide European audience, the project also sought connection with the educational sector by attending the European Conference on Service-Learning in Antwerp 2019, which is a key element to the project development as one of the major methodologies used. Furthermore the Project Coordinator was invited to present the impulse speech at the opening of the Transnational Cooperation Activity 'Erasmus+ students as intercultural ambassadors - Strengthening European values through cross-sectoral initiatives, organised by the DAAD in Frankfurt, April 2019. ESN's president on the other hand spoke about SocialErasmus+ at the TCA 'Erasmus4ever Erasmus4future', organised by INDIRE in Florence, May 2019.

Next to European activities, also more country specific events on internationalisation were attended, such as the Czeducon event in Prague, Czech Republic in November 2019, the 'Go International conference 2019: collaborate to innovate' in London, June 2019. The main aim of these activities was raising awareness of the project, and bringing about a change in thinking in the Higher Education sector with regards to volunteering, non-formal education and community engagement.

## Conclusion

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The aim to influence policies and create a systemic change at Higher Education Institutions, Schools, at local ESN organisations and other partners of the SocialErasmus+ project has been largely achieved. Given the complexity of achieving and measuring policy impact, the consortium has managed to present a substantial number of concrete activities and achievements in the policy context at European level. Through the involvement of individuals in committing to the SocialErasmus+ charter, as well as concrete examples on how e.g. the ECHE will look like, the policy work can be considered a success. In line with the Act -> Advocate -> Commit scheme to advance policies, all the partners of the SocialErasmus+ consortium will further the efforts also beyond the project duration. Lastly, the involvement of particularly the European networks in the consortium in shaping the future Erasmus programme are more than promising to achieve the necessary policy change.





*« We believe in the transformative power of the abroad experience and with the Social Inclusion Days, we aim at enriching it by promoting an active contribution of international students to the progress of their host community. With these activities, which provide opportunities for interaction between locals and internationals, the investment the European Union makes in the Erasmus+ Programme reaches more people and contributes to a more cohesive European society. »*

João Pinto, President of Erasmus Student Network 2017/19  
Social Inclusion Days 2019



## Partners

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### Erasmus Student Network

Erasmus Student Network (ESN) is the biggest student association in Europe. Present at over 1000 Higher Education Institutions, it unites over 520 local associations in 40 countries.

More than 15,000 volunteers take care of international colleagues under the motto “Students helping students”. ESN works for the creation of a more mobile and flexible education environment by supporting and developing the student exchange from different levels and providing an intercultural experience.

ESN translates its vision into 6 different causes, to help facilitate the implementation of our mission and objectives. The causes of ESN represent the different fields in which we as ESN believe we can contribute to society through engagement with our International students. These fields are Culture, Education and Youth, Environmental Sustainability, Health and Well-being, Skills and Employability and, finally, Social Inclusion.

ESN’s objective is to foster active citizenship through Erasmus+ student mobilities. To do so, ESN implements and coordinates the SocialErasmus+ projects, which incorporates all volunteer activities where international students engage with locals to contribute to their local host society.

## European University Foundation

The European University Foundation is a network of 20 member universities and 28 associate member universities across 23 countries. EUF stands for diversity and social fairness in Higher Education (HE) and aims to accelerate the modernisation of the European Higher Education Area. The network deploys intensive cooperation and policy experimentation under five key pillars:

1. Digital Higher Education both for governance and provision of education,
2. Entrepreneurship and employability skills of graduates,
3. Policy innovation at national and European level,
4. Active citizenship of students
5. Quality mobility for all.

EUF, with its long experience in managing various EU-funded projects and its excellent connection to high-level policy-makers, will use its expertise to support the dissemination and communication of the project, with a focus on the policy work.

## Youth for Exchange and Understanding

Youth for Exchange and Understanding is an international youth organisation works to promote peace, understanding and co-operation between the young people of the world, in a spirit of respect for human rights. Today, YEU is a Network of 32 Organizations from 27 Countries based in Europe and Northern Africa. Beyond it's network, YEU International is an active member of the Lifelong Learning Platform and the European Youth Forum.

YEU uses non-formal education methods to increase tolerance and awareness between young people from different countries, cultures and traditions. Using a Global Education dimension and Intercultural Learning activities we promote a greater level of comprehension and active citizenship through the development of quality youth exchanges, seminars, conventions, meetings, study visits, training courses, and the production of Non Formal education resources.

YEU, with it's extensive expertise in non-formal education, was lead partner and responsible for the implementation and facilitation of the 4 multiplier trainings, the Activity Guidelines and Activity Outlines in order to support the implementation of activities on the ground.

## ESN Besançon

ESN Besançon is one of ESN's 530 local organisations, and works in close collaboration with the University of Franche-Comté. Since 2016 ESN Besançon and the University of Franche-Comté started a service-learning course called 'SocialErasmus' for all students in the Center for Applied Linguistics. International students coming to the University of Franche-Comté to study French, were offered the SocialErasmus course as an elective course as an Additional Education Unit that awarded three ECTS credits to students upon completion of 25 hours of volunteer activities in the local community and several guided sessions concluded by a final presentation of their learning outcomes. The University of Franche-Comté is responsible for the academic guidance and learning development of the students, while ESN Besançon is responsible for the logistical implementation of the courses, making it a true University-Community partnership focused on Internationalisation in local communities, which was the first of its kind in France.

The concept of ESN Besançon and the University of Franche-Comté served as an initial case study and blueprint for the partners to start the development of the 'Educational Framework for Volunteering on exchange', the School Guide, the Practical Guideline and the which were drafted at the Validation workshop and study session that was hosted in Besançon in July 2018.

## Universidade de Vigo

The Universidade de Vigo is a young public academic institution officially founded in 1990 that has managed to consolidate itself in time as a reference of modernity and innovation in Galicia. It has three main objectives: to provide higher education services with high quality rates and oriented to promote work placements among its students, giving priority to internationalization; to promote a basic and applied research through competitive research groups at an international level; and to transfer its knowledge and scientific advances to the society in order to foster an intelligent, sustainable and integrating growth of all its surrounding territory.

The Universidade de Vigo is organized in three Campuses, placed in three different cities, Vigo, Pontevedra and Ourense- all of them in the South of Galicia, Northwest of the Iberian Peninsula. It has around 21,000 students in 39 degrees, 74 postgraduates and 42 PhD programs. Its internationalisation objective makes the Universidade de Vigo the Galician university offering more student exchanges, and receiving and sending the greatest number of students with Erasmus, Erasmus Mundus, ISEP (USA) and bilateral programs with third country institutions.

University of Vigo, together with the other university partners, was highly involved in everything relating to the academic side of support to SocialErasmus+ activities, validating competences and academic recognition of credits. University of Vigo was also leader on the Quality Assurance Work Package, and in this capacity responsible for the Quality Assurance and Evaluation plan.

## Vrije Universiteit Brussel

The Vrije Universiteit Brussel (VUB) was founded in 1970. It provides education for almost 15.000 students in 8 faculties. Situated in the capital of Europe, it is part of VUB's mission to be an international university. Therefore, in addition to the regular programs for Dutch speaking students, VUB also provides English programs for its nearly 21% foreign students.

As parts of its basic philosophy, its location and urban student population, the VUB furthermore has extensive expertise in university-wide social inclusion services and policy.

VUB was highly involved in the development of the Educational Framework, bringing its expertise in Service-Learning into the project and sharing theoretical frameworks in which the volunteering in mobility can be better framed. Furthermore, VUB was involved in the development of the one-stop-shop: the socialerasmus.org portal that carries all the different support structures for universities, schools and ESNers to facilitate Erasmus in Schools visits on the ground.

## University of Vienna

The University of Vienna, which was founded in 1365, is an internationally orientated university with long term experiences in research and teaching. Currently, about 91.000 students are enrolled at the University, in more than 188 courses, of which 56 are Bachelor Programmes, 117 Master Programmes, 4 Diploma Programmes and 11 PhD Programmes. With staff of close to 9.400 employees, 6.700 of which are academic, the University of Vienna is the largest teaching and research institution in Austria. The main task and goal of this University are creating and sustaining top-quality research and teaching. Research and teaching are regarded as one inseparable entity.

The Postgraduate Centre of the University of Vienna currently conducts the "UNIBILITY-project" ("university meets social responsibility") which aims at strengthening the relationships of universities with their local communities through USR-activities. The specific aims of the project are:

- Enhance the commitment of universities in local communities
- Develop strategies how universities can increase their social responsibility actively on student and researcher level
- Develop practical service learning projects impacting the social environment
- Develop training material and train university management and students in USR
- Create learning networks between HE and local business, the environmental sector and the social sector

## Scholengroep Vlaamse Ardennen

Scholengroep Vlaamse Ardennen is one of 28 regional school networks of the Flemish Community Education. One of the main aims of Scholengroep Vlaamse Ardennen is to increase the internationalisation of its schools as well as its pupils in order to facilitate more participation in the Erasmus+ programme as well as Internationalisation at Home.

Scholengroep Vlaamse Ardennen represented the Schools' side in the project and was heavily involved in the drafting of the School Guide and supporting the testing phase and implementation phase in Belgium.

## Organising Bureau of European School Student Unions

The Organising Bureau of European School Student Unions (OBESSU) is the platform for cooperation between the national school student unions active in general secondary and secondary vocational education in Europe. It was founded in April 1975 in Dublin, Ireland and brings together Member, Candidate and Affiliate Organisations from all over Europe. All Member Organisations are independent, national, representative and democratic school student organisations.

OBESSU is part of the advisory board of the SocialErasmus+ project and in this capacity has offered input from the school students' perspective, making sure that these perspectives of the young people who are in the classrooms where SocialErasmus+ activities are carried out, are present at all times.



WELCOME ERASMUS+

- To improve my language skills
- To meet new people from all around the world
- To know a different culture
- To learn to do things together as an international community



“

*Volunteering is  
Love in motion.*

*As you grow older,  
you will discover  
that you have two  
hands – one for  
helping yourself,  
the other for  
helping others.”*

*– Audrey Hepburn*

[socialerasmus.org](https://socialerasmus.org)



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