

Call for changes

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Regional SALTOs with a number of youth organisations throughout Europe and a group of National Agencies CALL FOR CHANGES in the Erasmus+ programme that would allow to utilise full potential of cooperation with neighbouring partner countries in youth field.

Cooperation with the Programme's neighbouring partner regions continues to occupy an important place in the Erasmus+: Youth in Action programme. Possibility for such cooperation is foreseen especially in Key Action 1 where **up to 25% of budget can be allocated for projects**. We welcome the reintroduction of a **balanced approach between Programme and partner countries** as an award criteria for KA1 projects as of 2016, as it will lead to a stronger impact of implemented projects in the regions and in Programme countries, as well as the involvement of more participants from partner regions overall in projects funded. In addition, a **new Western Balkan Youth Window** was opened in 2015 (for projects applied for under Capacity Building, KA 2). Specific additional frameworks/Windows for cooperation with the other partner regions EECA and EuroMed are under preparation or discussion.



Yet, cooperation with the neighbouring partner regions in the youth field does not have any explicit and recognized place in the Programme: neither in terms of objectives or priorities nor within any strategical approach that would answer to existing political frameworks. This "vacuum" makes it difficult to promote and support cooperation with these partner regions in a meaningful, effective and visible way.

Our vision of Erasmus+ development in the area of cooperation with neighbouring partner countries foresee following areas:

EQUAL FOOTING / FAIR PARTNERSHIP:

- *balance between partner and programme countries within a project.*
- *possibility to apply for organisations from NPCs (either in the programme or via "Windows")*
- *more coherence between the priorities, structures and management of the Erasmus+ programme and the "Windows".*
- *cooperation between organisations from different regions and their Programme countries' partners.*

RECOGNITION:

- *officers responsible for cooperation with NPCs in every NA (contact persons).*
- *political declaration of importance of cooperation with NPCs (either bringing any specific dimensions/qualities or simply empowering implementation of the general priorities of the programme).*
- *available statistics about projects with NPCs (not only numbers, but also quality information like themes of projects = interest of organisations in specific topics). This will help regional SALTOs to connect programme countries needs/realities closer with potential of cooperation with NPCs.*
- *more clarity on responsibilities of different actors on cooperation with NPCs (what regional SALTOs are responsible for and what is NAs responsibilities in this regards).*

The regional SALTOs continue their service in Erasmus+: Youth, offering their support and expertise to National Agencies as well as Programme promotion and support in the partner regions. One of the most visible and harmonised forms of support offered are EVS accreditation and the coordination and implementation of the EVS volunteers training cycle (on-arrival trainings, mid-term meetings and annual EVS events). The expertise of the SALTOs reaches much further, to areas such as information and promotion of Erasmus+, capacity building activities for youth workers, youth policy development, and much more.

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