

SUSTAIN – MOBILITY

EPLM Conference

26 February – 1 March 2023

Germany



Concept note

Sustainability and learning mobility is the fourth conference of the [European Platform on Learning Mobility \(EPLM\)](#) in the youth field. It will be hosted by *JUGEND für Europa*, German National Agency of the Erasmus+ Youth and European Solidarity Corps Programmes, in cooperation with the Partnership between the European Commission and the Council of Europe in the field of Youth, and other [EPLM members](#).

Why sustainability?

Sustainability has become one of the key areas of consideration for learning mobility, encompassing environmental, sociocultural and economic dimensions. The topic has gained importance due to young people's growing climate change concerns. It has been incorporated as one of four key priority areas of Erasmus+ and the European Solidarity Corps. It has also been promoted through other policy instruments, such as the [European Green Deal, Youth Goal #10](#) "Sustainable Green Europe" and the work of the Council of Europe Youth Department's work on greening the youth sector.

In order to improve our understanding of sustainability in the youth learning mobility field, in 2021, the EU-Council of Europe Youth Partnership conducted various research activities on sustainability, including an [exploratory study](#) and development of a sustainability checklist. The EPLM highlighted several [examples of practice](#) during its autumn 2021 meeting, and further research is planned in 2022-23 to map practices across Europe.

Aim of the conference

The conference aims to:

- **establish a common understanding** of sustainability in the area of youth learning mobility, with a holistic focus on the economic, sociocultural and environmental dimensions of sustainability;
- **map the main actors and practices** and give visibility to their work;
- **explore main dilemmas** related to sustainability in the context of learning mobility; and
- **raise political awareness** of sustainability in non-formal education settings and in the youth policy area and **connect stakeholders and initiatives**.

Focus and questions for the conference

The youth work practice, research, policy and young people have been working together to improve the quality of learning mobility activities. How to ensure more environmentally, socioculturally and economically sustainable processes before, during and after learning mobilities?



While many discussions in the youth field focus on the environmental (or “green”) aspect of sustainability, it is important to make connections between all three aspects and understand how they influence each other.

Therefore, starting with the holistic approach towards sustainability in learning mobility projects, the conference will have the following objectives:

- broaden participants’ perspectives on sustainability by exploring its sociocultural, economic and environmental dimensions and how they might be demonstrated in youth learning mobility;
- map and connect stakeholders, organisations, and initiatives which work on sustainability in youth learning mobility, and increase their visibility;
- provide a space to explore the connection between sustainability and learning mobility practices;
- reflect on participants’ strengths concerning sustainability, explore gaps and possible crossroads for support and cooperation;
- raise and explore dilemmas regarding learning mobility and sustainability;
- establish the connection of sustainability in learning mobility with current Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps Programme priorities; and
- include the perspectives of young people, their understanding of sustainability and their practice examples.

Main questions

The following questions will be explored during the conference:

- How is sustainability practised within the youth learning mobility field?
- What are the main strengths of different actors in this area?
- What are the main dilemmas in relation to sustainability and learning mobility activities?
- How can we encourage and enable connections and cross-learning between different actors?
- How can we connect sustainability with other horizontal priorities of Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps programmes and the work of the EPLM?

Participants

The conference will gather around 150 practitioners, researchers, policymakers, young people and other stakeholders who will explore the topic of sustainability in learning mobility projects. As the EPLM supports the connection between research, practice and policy this event should have representation from all of these, as well as young people themselves. The national delegations (of maximum 4 people per country) should come from the following profiles:



1. Youth worker/NGO worker in the youth field
2. Young person (age 18+), especially if they have a story to tell about how their learning mobility experience influenced them to make a (positive) impact on society through sustainability
3. Policy maker from local/regional/national level, related to youth policies, especially with a sustainability focus
4. National Agency staff members

IYNGOs and individual researchers will also be supported.

A call for researchers (social scientists, and also including those who have other relevant studies) with an interest/record in sustainability and youth learning mobility will be run by the EU-Council of Europe Youth Partnership.

Background information

What is the EPLM?

The European Platform on Learning Mobility in the youth field (EPLM) is a **space for exchange and cooperation** of youth organisations, researchers, policy makers and practitioners, such as trainers and youth workers. It strives to create conditions for **the development of high-quality and sustainable learning mobility for all** in the youth field in Europe. In order to achieve this vision, the EPLM is working to pursue quality, impact, knowledge, inclusivity, participation, sustainability, visibility and recognition of learning mobility (including blended or online) in non-formal and informal education and learning in Europe.

The EPLM is an open network, coordinated by the partnership between the European Commission and the Council of Europe in the field of youth. It connects several different international mobility Programmes, including representation from Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps National Agencies, regional and bilateral programmes, and also others that offer workcamps, youth exchanges, volunteering, school exchanges, youth worker mobility, vocational apprenticeships etc. The strength of the Platform lies in its diversity, its reach, and its ability to react flexibly to the needs of the field. The work of the EPLM is currently guided by the [EPLM Framework of Action 2021-2030](#). The EPLM consists of the [Core Steering Group](#), a [Resource Group](#), and thematic working groups, which are established depending on the needs and developments related to learning mobility in the youth field. Current thematic areas that the EPLM covers include: [Quality in learning mobility](#), [Community impact of learning mobility](#) and [Sustainability and learning mobility](#).