

CO-CREATING ERASMUS+ AND THE EUROPEAN SOLIDARITY CORPS

28 & 29 JANUARY 2020, ULB CAMPUS SOLBOSCH BRUSSELS, BELGIUM

A1- Language Learning Opportunities

Summary of the discussion

50 Participants were invited to discuss how the Erasmus+ programme can better support language learning in the future in line with the policy objectives in the field. Recognition and visibility of language learning skills acquired through Erasmus+ projects is important and should be better integrated in the programme. There is a need to strengthen the visibility of the tools for rewarding good projects, such as the European Language Label. Participants suggested extending the range of Erasmus+ mobility participants who are able to access the Online Linguistic Support (OLS) platform, for instance by opening it to teachers, staff, **A2 - The truth about synergies** short-term learners, etc. For any future online platform, they also strongly voiced the need to facilitate its access (including for people with disabilities) and make it more user friendly, entertaining and interactive. They recommended increasing the use of social media for connecting mobility participants (eg: building online peer learning/buddy communities). Participants stressed the importance of blended learning strategies when addressing the needs of learners in schools, vocational education or youth field. Projects' organisers/teachers/staff should help defining relevant learning contents (for instance for pupils, the online tool could include a kid area with specific language games, pictures and audio files). New concept/methods of language learning for projects with short-term mobility activities should be elaborated (for instance non-formal learning activities such as language animation). Staff should be trained on how to use the platform to offer better guidance to learners.

Main outcomes/ operational conclusions of the session

On the topic on how language learning and teaching being supported by Erasmus+ programme, participants suggested to link with project DIALANG for recognition of language skills developed in Erasmus+ projects; developing new/different concepts for short term and multilateral projects in the field of youth, for instance language animation; providing more tools and methods for projects organisers in adult education, as well as more funding for language support.

On how can we best boost participants' language learning through the Online Language Support tool, the group proposed to a) extend the access to more programme participants (in particular teachers/staff, short-term learners, etc.); b) make the online tool more interactive and communicative focussing on practical content and skills; c) include peer learning and buddy communities; d) raise the language levels offered up to B2/C1; e) facilitate the access to the platform and provide further support to staff.

On how can we best support participants, such as learners in schools and vocational education or youth field, who are not always able to learn a language independently by using an on-line tool, several elements were raised, such as a) the potential of blended learning (online tools are not the main instrument to learn a language but can serve as course materials); b) considering the needs of the learners and identifying relevant content for them, c) increasing the accessibility and attractiveness, making the online tool and App more accessible, user friendly and interactive, also for people with disabilities, d) social media channels should be better used to, for example, build a 'language café' where students meet to chat in a foreign language or create online study groups and social community, connecting learners and organise online-learning groups, e) learning paths should include some point system and any language level should go up to B2/C1, f) the language level acquired as well as the learning skills should be recognised (for instance with the Youthpass), g) a 'language learning responsible' should be identify for each project where it is relevant.