

# CO-CREATING ERASMUS+ AND THE EUROPEAN SOLIDARITY CORPS

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

## B3 - Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps go Green

### *Summary of the discussion*

The discussion focused on the ways to make our programmes more sustainable and to use their full potential to pave the way towards a more environmentally and climate friendly society. The session started with a short presentation by the European Commission, highlighting the importance to make our programmes more green and to take advantage of its multiplier effects. The Erasmus+ programme, with mobilities at its core, needs to address the challenges of global warming and sustainable development. However, Erasmus is not just mobilities, it also means cooperation in education, training, youth and sport. Erasmus can effectively act at different dimensions and with different actors. Ideas on how to act at the level of participants and mobilities; of organisations and projects and on how to use already existing and new tools in view of making the programmes more green were also initiated during this presentation. Participants were invited to share their feedback and to further discuss about these three questions in smaller groups.

### *Main outcomes/ operational conclusions of the session*

The group stated that green choices, in particular regarding mobility, are often more expensive and that the programme should help addressing this financial issue. Other concerns and ideas have been raised during the discussion, for instance the importance to focus on what participants will do once they are abroad, to add a reference to sustainable food and diets. Regarding participants, the group agreed on the fact that beneficiaries can be a good source of inspiration to make the programmes more green and ask also for their ideas and what they are already doing.

A proposal to link the greening of the programmes with other EU strategies and with the Sustainable Development Goals was also discussed, such as other concrete ideas like the use of eTwinning and virtual exchanges as a supporting tool with great potential, create an “Erasmus forest” or provide participants with a tool to calculate the carbon footprint of their mobilities depending on the way of transport chosen. Participants recommended to boost visibility on social media and platforms, for instance by providing extra prizes for sustainability or using specific hashtags.

About organisations and projects, the group spotted the importance to involve beneficiaries, to take inspiration from and to inspire local initiatives and politicians. Guidelines for events and practical information on green issues have been considered as efficient tools. The group mentioned the importance to plan the long term impact of projects and to focus on systemic responsibility. Participants reminded the challenge to include remote and rural regions and proposed to consider intra-regional mobility. The introduction of “green audits” was also suggested by the group as a way to help organizations to improve their practices.

Concerning the tools and incentives that can be used (“How?”), discussions converged on the necessity to use evidence based tools and to measure their impact. The group proposed to focus on positive incentives, on compensation and to use initiatives of the programmes as a way to influence politics. Participants stated the importance to have a long-term strategy and suggested to add a reference to green measures in the European Development Plan and in the European Charter for Higher Education.

All ideas will be considered by the European Commission while developing a strategy to make the programmes more green.