

C4 - SAY CHEESE! A snapshot of Alumni activities

About this session...

More than 10 million participants have benefitted from Erasmus+ and its predecessor programmes over the last 32 years. With the successor programme expected to triple the number of opportunities on offer, more than ever we need to engage our networks of alumni, ambassadors and role models to share the benefits of their experiences. They should encourage the next generation to follow in their footsteps, and even engage with programme initiatives at different stages of their lives (for example, DiscoverEU -> Higher Education -> European Solidarity Corps).

In higher education, the European Commission strategy on Erasmus+ alumni supports the Erasmus+ Student and Alumni Alliance (ESAA) and regional alumni associations in the Western Balkans and Africa.

Alumni mobilisation under Erasmus+ does not benefit from a cross-sectorial strategy. The school, VET and Adult Education sectors are less well represented, and the growing DiscoverEU and European Solidarity Corps communities, though building up on former EVS initiatives, including Europeers, are not currently integrated with a wider alumni strategy.

The untapped potential of programme alumni should be addressed through a cross-sectorial strategy involving partners implementing the programmes, with the following objectives:

1. Reach out to underrepresented groups and tackle obstacles to participation.
2. Support cross-border networking for personal and professional development.
3. Empower Erasmus+ alumni to pay forward the benefits of their mobility to society.
4. Raise programme visibility, and promote the values that underpin it.
5. Support the EU in developing policies in education and training, culture, youth and sport.
6. Better understand how participating in the programmes impacts alumni's lives.

Funding for National Agencies to help create and support relevant initiatives already exists, but more could be done in the future.

NAs would take concrete steps to build cross-sectorial alumni communities involving both incoming and outgoing Erasmus+ alumni, as is already happening in some programme countries. Local community engagement and outreach should be central to these activities, involving diverse participants in terms of background, generation, type of mobility etc.

DG EAC would continue to coordinate pan-European and international activities.

Something to think about...

What existing activities already contribute to the objectives outlined above? What more could we do?

How can we bring together these activities to create and implement a truly cross-sectorial alumni strategy?

Who are the main partners implementing these activities, and how can we best engage them with this initiative?