

# CO-CREATING ERASMUS+ AND THE EUROPEAN SOLIDARITY CORPS

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

## C4 - Say Cheese! A Snapshot of Alumni Activities

### *Summary of the session*

The session started with an introductory presentation on the state of play on alumni activities, as well as on the main proposals for the future programmes on this topic.

Participants were then divided into groups, all discussing the same topics. First, already existing activities which will help contribute to achieving the objectives for alumni engagement in the next programme, were highlighted:

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

We also discussed what more we could do to achieve these aims and then moved on to how we can bring these activities together to create and implement a cross-sectorial strategy. Finally, we identified the main partners implementing these activities, and suggested how we can best engage them in this initiative. We finished with some concluding comments from each group's rapporteur.

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

Participants recognised the need to cooperate across sectors, but emphasised that this cooperation needs to be meaningful and make sense. They suggested that long-term cooperation along thematic lines would be a good way of achieving this. Common training across sectors would also be useful.

It should be explicit in programme documentation to all partners that their participation in the programmes comes with a responsibility to promote the programmes and communicate on the EU.

Individual participants were identified as "two-way ambassadors" who promote the programmes, the EU, their sending country and organisation, and receiving country and organisation. With this range of perspectives, alumni are the ideal people to advise on societal challenges such as tackling brain-drain and employability amongst other policy topics.

We should not "reinvent the wheel", but build on the bottom-up initiatives that already exist and in doing so, make alumni engagement more inclusive and cross-sectorial.

Access to information and alumni is crucial. Whilst it would seem too ambitious to unite all alumni in a single community or portal, a "portal of portals" could be a good idea as a single access point to alumni initiatives and relevant information.

Youth workers were identified as a group whose potential as programme alumni remains particularly untapped. They should be invited more frequently to contribute to initiatives and activities.