

# CO-CREATING ERASMUS+ AND THE EUROPEAN SOLIDARITY CORPS

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

## C6 - Get active and participate!

### ***Summary of the discussion***

The session was dedicated to the active participation dimension of the Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps programmes and how to empower participants to actively engage in tackling the current future societal challenges.

During the session, the participants were divided into four groups. The first group was focusing on the good practice examples of the current generation of programmes contributing to the active engagement of participants in society and local communities. The second group discussed how could the mobility activities be designed in such a way to meet the expectations of active participation experiences. The third group focused on possibilities to empower participants, and young people in particular, to act as ambassadors of the EU programmes and support other potential participants. The fourth group was engaged in discussion about the possibility to use the education and youth projects as an instrument in understanding societal phenomena and challenges and the changes caused by human activity (climate, digital, new forms of democratic participation, etc.).

A common element of discussion proved to be the peer-to-peer exchange as a useful instrument for empowering and engaging young people to participate actively in democratic life and support their local community. The participants in the session pointed out that in order to obtain a meaningful participation in mobility activities, young people should be offered different ways to enter the programmes – firstly through small-scale projects (school exchanges, volunteering, sport, etc.) – and then spike their appetite for further engagement.

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

Throughout the session, various proposals for future developments were made. The participants in the session agreed that the needs of the local communities should be identified in order to propose engaging activities, including by making sure that there is adequate infrastructure as it is vital for the interaction between local people and mobility participants. In addition, it was noted that currently, a good part of the project activities are aimed at the individual experience, whereas in order to achieve a change in the local community, the group power should be scaled-up (teamwork brings change).

Some more concrete proposals described the possibility to earmark additional funding for complementary project activities to support the active participation at grass-root levels or for follow-up activities in order not to lose the “legacy” of the awarded projects. A majority of participants in the session shared that more synergies between the various sectors can be sought, for example with sectors such as culture and sport. A concrete example was to provide means for volunteering in the area of sports.