

# A vision of the futurE<sup>1</sup>

Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps after 2021

Resolution, Bucharest 12-15 March 2019

## We:

- The 125 participants<sup>2</sup> from 24 countries<sup>3</sup> in the futurE+ and futurESC joint events taking place in Bucharest between 12-15 March 2019,
- Organizations and people benefiting from Erasmus+ and its previous programmes, as well as from the European Solidarity Corps, supporting this resolution,

## Are kindly asking the relevant stakeholders to consider<sup>4</sup>

implementing the following key messages and measures in the Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps future generations starting in 2021, in order to better meet the beneficiaries' needs and have an increased impact at individual, local, national and European level.

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<sup>1</sup> The resolution was developed during the futurE+ and futurESC joint events that took place in Bucharest between 12-15 March 2019, as part of the Romanian National Agency's contribution during the Romanian Presidency of the Council of the European Union.

<sup>2</sup> The participants are active in the field of adult, school and higher education, as well as of vocational education and training and the youth sector in their capacity as heads of the board members of their organizations and institutions, project managers, teachers, trainers, volunteer managers and experts in their sectors.

<sup>3</sup> The represented countries were: Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, North Macedonia, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey

<sup>4</sup> The resolution was adopted by acclamation in the plenary session of the participants on the 15th of March 2019. The original versions and all measures developed in all sectors are available in the links in the annexes.

### **The participants in the futurE+ and futurESC events,**

Aware of the tremendous contribution that the European programmes in the field of education, training and youth have made in the lives of tens of millions of people, hundreds of thousands of organizations and thousands of communities over the last decades,

Acknowledging that education and training are achieved in formal, non-formal and informal settings throughout the whole life of an individual,

Taking note of the potential that the European programmes in the field of education, training, youth and sport have to implement an integrated European education strategy continuing the Education and Training 2020 and the European higher education strategies, as well as the recently approved European Youth Strategy,

Considering that Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps are effective tools in supporting a more inclusive and coherent Europe which offers equal opportunities for access to the learning space to all the people, irrespective of their level of education or age, including immigrants, minority or marginalized groups, people living in precarious conditions,

Taking into consideration the nature of the programmes and the possibilities they open for mobility and for fostering intercultural understanding and tolerance,

Noting with approval and agreeing upon the importance of involving a greater number of beneficiaries in the Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps programmes while at the same time raising awareness about the programmes and increasing the motivation and willingness to participate,

Reminding that learning, education and youth work, provided in any form, are key tools to combat unemployment and to prevent poverty or other forms of social inequality,

**Strongly advise that the following key messages and measures should be considered in the architecture of the future generations of European programmes dedicated to education, training, youth and sports<sup>5</sup>**

### **General key messages**

#### **We, the participants in the futurE+ and futurESC events,**

1. Recognize **Europe as a larger entity than the European Union**, where intercultural learning as well as European projects in the field of education, training,

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<sup>5</sup> The key messages were developed in sectoral working groups. Each sector developed several key messages and prioritized the three most important ones that were to be included in the resolution. Although some messages are overlapping, in the plenary adopting the resolution it was decided to retain them as important messages for the sector. This does not mean that they are the only important messages of the participants, and if they are placed in one particular sectoral section it does not mean that it may not be relevant for other sectors as well. Their final form was adapted in order to use adequate terminology and it was agreed upon by the participants.

- youth and sport should be able to reach beyond, continuing and expanding the cooperation with Partner countries and including new sectors;
2. Strongly believe that the future generations of Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps must be **inclusive programmes**, paying particular attention to vulnerable categories or at risk of social exclusion by offering them the necessary support (financial, but even more importantly, human and emotional support through coaching, mentoring, training, etc.);
  3. Express our hope that the two programmes will provide frameworks for better communication and knowledge sharing between **non-formal and formal education**, as well as **equal treatment** for these two types of learning;
  4. Urge the European Commission to digitalize the whole process from application to reporting, covering all necessary documents and data inputs. The **digitalization** should be ensured through a single online tool that must be reliable, user-friendly, non-redundant, safe and integrated;
  5. Call for the **simplification of the programme and project procedures** in all sectors and actions by significantly decreasing the administrative workload from the application to the reporting stage, including the amount of documentation required from each individual participant, and by adapting the complexity of the documentation to the project size;
  6. Invite decision makers to ensure that the increase in the number of programme participants will be accompanied by a corresponding **increase in the available budget** - including budget to provide reasonable accommodation which would allow everyone to take part in the programme fully and on an equal basis;
  7. Recognize **sport as a universal language** contributing to social cohesion and understanding and as a valuable tool for promoting common European values and enhancing well-being and learning skills;

#### **Adult education sector key messages and measures**

8. Request that support should be extended to the social economy in regards to the **insertion of disadvantaged adults**, and for the improvement of their skills and competences;
9. Stress the importance of enhancing the **soft and transversal skills** as key points in adult education, mainly for the disadvantaged groups;
10. Strongly advise that **individual mobility should be** re-introduced as part of the institutional approach to adults, in order to give each person the right to training opportunities and personal development, thus supporting their employability;

#### **School sector key messages and measures**

11. Reaffirm the importance of **professional support and guidance** to facilitate the access of all teachers and call for the simplification of the application process in order to make it more appealing and user friendly;
12. Trust that the future generation of programmes will ensure a **fair financing process** based on a non-discriminatory budget in all countries;

13. Urge that **the bureaucracy** concerning project implementation should be **reduced**, in order to better acknowledge the coordinator's role;

#### **University sector key messages and measures**

14. Urge the European Commission to **eliminate the paper documents** at all project stages, to introduce the mandatory use of integrated and effective digital tools and to facilitate the transition to this new system;
15. Call for **increased funding of individual mobilities** that should be realistically correlated with the living costs in the host country and ensure staff costs in cooperation projects on an equal basis, with no discrimination;
16. Encourage the European Commission to actively raise the **awareness of business and industry partners** to take part in Erasmus+ activities through options such as traineeships, teaching in higher education institutions or strategic partnerships;

#### **Vocational education and training sector key messages and measures**

17. Underline the necessity of offering **sufficient financial support** in order to guarantee the full participation of people from lower social and economic backgrounds ;
18. Trust that an **effective database for VET Partner Searching** will be developed for sending and receiving organizations, based on a complete profile including information about the languages available in the company, accessibility, length of possible hosting periods, possible working fields;
19. Ask for **flexible financial support according to individual language needs** that should replace and improve the Online Linguistic Support, since each profession requires very specific content;

#### **Youth sector key messages and measures**

##### ***Regarding Erasmus+***

20. Call for the **simplification of the application form** by using clear terms, eliminating the redundancy through repetitive questions, making it more user-friendly for the applicants, without requesting additional printed materials, and by standardizing the procedural requirements in the contractual and implementation stages.
21. Emphasize the need to offer **support for the project management** and the correct compensation of the staff while encouraging common approaches to ensuring overall sufficient funding for all types of projects.
22. Underline the **importance of Youthpass** and the need to make it more attractive for the participants by focusing on the gained competencies that should be better recognized and valued by employers (NGOs, companies, authorities).

### ***Regarding European Solidarity Corps***

23. Recommend, in the interest of including young people with fewer opportunities, to:
  1. change the minimum age from 18 to 16 in order to target groups which are still in formal education and which may not be available later,
  2. change the age limit from 30 to 35 to address target groups that are only able to join activities at later stages in life due to various hindrances such as lack of proximity or health and social situations,
  3. Change the minimum age in solidarity projects from 18 to 13 in order to provide a platform for youth civic participation and future activities, with the group leader having a minimum age of 18 in order to provide guidance;
24. Strongly urge the Member States to **recognize volunteering** according to a definition collectively agreed upon by the European Solidarity Corps, in order to harmonize the national policies regarding visas, taxes, recognition of work and efforts (i.e. proper recognition of the Youthpass by potential employers), health and social insurance and any other legislation that may have an impact on the volunteers;
25. Request a **flexible language learning process** and additional tools to be offered besides the Online Linguistic Support, such as language classes or professional language apps depending on the volunteers' preferred learning method and at the volunteers' discretion.

## **ANNEXES**

The resolution was built using a bottom-up participatory approach in which the participants organized themselves within the working groups, the organizers being responsible for setting up the framework and allowing the participants to engage in discussions..

- Key messages and measures proposed by each sector [HERE](#) (sectoral sessions)
- A few other secondary key messages and measures proposed by each sector during the sectoral working sessions can be found [HERE](#).