

## EFEE REPLY TO ERASMUS+ MID-TERM REVIEW

28 April 2017

With this paper, the European Federation of Education Employers (EFEE) wishes to provide further input to the public consultation on the mid-term review of the Erasmus+ Programme. EFEE is a dynamic organisation established in 2009 to represent the interests of employers in the strategic and highly diverse European education sector. We represent 31 education employer organisations from 16 European countries in all levels of education, from pre-school to higher education and research. This includes different national organisations, such as education councils and ministries of education, associations of VET colleges and universities and local and regional authority employers' organisations.

EFEE has been a beneficiary of Jean Monnet funding (Key Activity 3) under Erasmus+ predecessor programme of 2013 and has received structural support under the current programme focussed on Civil Society Cooperation. Based on our experience with both programmes, EFEE would like to praise the reduction of red tape, especially in the reporting phase, and therefore we hope that this trend will be continued in the next programme cycle. In particular the introduction of lump sum financing has made reporting much easier. However lump sums are sometimes a bit too low and might have to be revised upward (especially lump sum financing for staff costs). Besides, many grant holders in the higher education sector, have experienced increasing red tape. Therefore we hope that the bureaucracy will be reduced for all sectors in the next programme cycle.

EFEE as a European organization is composed of 31 national organizations that often benefit from different ERASMUS+ grants distributed by the National Agencies. Although our members underline the efficient overall functioning of National Agencies, certain differences in terms of award criteria, grading of applications, and diverse forms of providing feedback can be observed with respect to different Member States. Therefore, EFEE calls for stronger uniformity of procedures related to revision, awarding, and reporting in all EU Member States.

Furthermore targeted information on available funding per education level, would be most welcomed by EFEE and its members. This will contribute to improved participation rates of education levels that are currently not highly represented, such as (pre) primary and secondary education. Besides a stronger emphasis on adult education is desirable, as this is an essential part of lifelong learning.

Moreover regarding Key Activity 1 and 2, EFEE would like to stress the following:

- Under KA1 the systemic impact of professionalisation projects have improved but the match making between international in-service training courses offered and institutions with KA1 grants is still not very efficient. The training database in the school education gateway lacks a quality check that works.
- Under KA2 it has been a real improvement to have the possibility of “exchange of good practice” projects with a limited budget. They have the potential for a significant impact.
- Under KA2, “School to School” projects should be stimulated more by attributing a bigger budget to these projects, but the emphasis should be on smaller projects with limited grants.
- For KA1 it would be an asset to have two deadlines instead of one, especially for VET schools applying for mobility for student placements.
- European international organisations based in Brussels now have to apply to one of the Belgian NA’s for KA1 or KA2 projects. It would be preferable to have a separate budget line for them with a specific application procedure.

We strongly agree with the enhanced focus on innovation, cooperation and reform. Cross-sectoral cooperation and policy reform are in our view essential for improving quality education, providing students with 21<sup>st</sup> century skills and competences, and promoting employability. Herewith we would like to underline however the important role social partners play in linking the policy fields of education, training, employment and social affairs, and making reforms happen. Therefore we would like to plead for a stronger recognition of social partners as target group of the Erasmus+ programme.

In this regard, we regret that social partners are not any longer invited to participate in the programme committee of Erasmus+, as was the case under the Lifelong Learning programme.

With our reply to the consultation questionnaire and this paper, we hope to have made a valuable contribution to the mid-term evaluation of the Erasmus+ programme.



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