Research for CULT Committee - Erasmus+: Towards a New Programme Generation

Annex to study: Country User Profiles

Culture and Education
Research for CULT Committee - Erasmus+: Towards a New Programme Generation

Annex to study:
Country User Profiles

Abstract
This annex contains user profiles for the 10 Member States, which were examined in the context of this study on Erasmus+. The Country User Profiles examine how Erasmus+ is perceived in the country, the overall outcomes of Erasmus+ in the country, and how the Erasmus+ programme aligns with the national level priorities in a country.
This document was requested by the European Parliament’s Committee on Culture and Education.

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## CONTENTS

1. **BULGARIA**  
   1.1. Overall perceptions of Erasmus+ in Bulgaria  
   1.2. Outcomes of Erasmus+  
   1.3. National policy debates and coherence of Erasmus+  

2. **GERMANY**  
   2.1. Overall perceptions of Erasmus+ in Germany  
   2.2. Outcomes of Erasmus+  
   2.3. National policy debates and coherence of Erasmus+  

3. **FINLAND**  
   3.1. Overall perceptions of Erasmus+ in Finland  
   3.2. Outcomes of Erasmus+  
   3.3. National policy debates and coherence of Erasmus+  

4. **FRANCE**  
   4.1. Overall perceptions of Erasmus+ in France  
   4.2. Outcomes of Erasmus+  
   4.3. National policy debates and coherence of Erasmus+  

5. **LATVIA**  
   5.1. Overall perceptions of Erasmus+ in Latvia  
   5.2. Outcomes of Erasmus+  
   5.3. National policy debates and coherence of Erasmus+  

6. **THE NETHERLANDS**  
   6.1. Overall perceptions of Erasmus+ in the Netherlands  
   6.2. Outcomes of Erasmus+  
   6.3. National policy debates and coherence of Erasmus+  

7. **SLOVENIA**  
   7.1. Overall perceptions of Erasmus+ in Slovenia  
   7.2. Outcomes of Erasmus+  
   7.3. National policy debates and coherence of Erasmus+  


8. SPAIN
   8.1. Overall perceptions of Erasmus+ in Spain
   8.2. Outcomes of Erasmus+
   8.3. National policy debates and coherence of Erasmus+

9. POLAND
   9.1. Overall perceptions of Erasmus+ in Poland
   9.2. Outcomes of Erasmus+
   9.3. National policy debates and coherence of Erasmus+

10. THE UNITED KINGDOM
    10.1. Overall perceptions of Erasmus+ in the UK
    10.2. Outcomes of Erasmus+
    10.3. National policy debates and coherence of Erasmus+
1. BULGARIA

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1.1. Overall perceptions of Erasmus+ in Bulgaria

Erasmus+ is a positively perceived programme in Bulgaria, which influences policy developments in the different fields, continues to address targeted audiences within the fields and is generally described as *exclusively successful and very well known to all stakeholders.* \(^1\) The majority of respondents in the national report indicate that integration of several programmes into Erasmus+ has resulted in efficiency gains for the implementation of the Programme both for NA and the beneficiaries, and that the merger significantly simplified the design. \(^2\) The overall perception of the design of Erasmus+ is therefore, regarded as positive and respondents suggest that the design should not undergo structural changes, as this would decrease effectiveness, negatively affect organisations and cause confusion and waste of time to catch up with innovations. The respondents to the national data collection however, report the need for clearer, more user-friendly guidelines and explanations. Moreover, there is a general suggestion on the simplification of the application form, specifically the inclusion of more IT tools in the application stage, update and unification of all rate for all programme countries, avoiding submission of duplicate information in the online platforms, and update of the distance calculator as the calculation through straight lines could be inaccurate. \(^3\)

The national data collection reveals that all the organisations that have already implemented at least two Erasmus+ projects find the design easy to navigate and understand, and they likewise point out the positive impact of the integration of the predecessor programmes in the current framework. \(^4\) Another interviewed beneficiary concurred with the general understanding of the design, however admitted that the first approach to the programme guide can result overwhelming, but that with some time it is both clear and manageable. A sport organisation pointed out the positive synergies and cross-pollination opportunities under the current design between youth and sport.

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3 Ibid., p. 13-14, 16, 18, 20.
The governance of Erasmus+ is overall as positive with margin of improvements both at decentralised and centralised level. The national report finds that almost 56% of respondents believe the support and communication between the national agency, Executive Agency, the Erasmus+ Committee and other actors, is efficient. The beneficiaries indicate the positive impacts that joint meetings between these actors can bring on the Erasmus+ Programme and indicate as the only problem the timing of notifications for issues and, delay in deadlines or sending of documents concerning the programme. The national data collection exposed different views from beneficiaries as to the smoothness of communication with the national agency. Some regard it efficient and supportive; others indicate delay in answers and publication of selection results that disrupt the smooth operation of projects. Organisations that benefit and apply to centralised actions stated that the communication with EACEA is efficient, and that there have been no problems so far with the centralised agencies.

Within the findings for effectiveness of the Programme in Bulgaria, there is a general conclusion on the necessity to increase budget for all Programme’s fields. The beneficiaries recommend a reduction in the co-financing duties and call for a general increase in funding to increase the percentage of approval of qualified projects. Moreover, one of the main findings of the National Report is the perceived need of increase in funding for result dissemination. The national data collection also supports this finding, particularly for smaller actors that might not have other resources to disseminate project results. The national data collection underlined the need for funding to focus on ensuring high quality of projects, not only the quantity, supporting financing for expertise, products and for some actions higher budget with longer years of project activity.

An area, which in Bulgaria is problematic, is that of monitoring and reporting requirements. According to the national report, the reporting is an area of issue for multiple organisations; in fact, at national level the requirements are particularly strict, requesting an overwhelming volume of documentation. Organisations also report that there is a general lack of instructions on the documentation for reporting projects. The issues noted in the national report have been mirrored during the interviews for the national data collection. In fact, all organisations lamented issues with reporting. The main issue seems to be all the paper work, which is required, issue, which is also present in the application process, rendering the bureaucracy for organisations and partner organisations too complicated.

1.2. Outcomes of Erasmus+

A significant majority (83,9%) of the respondents surveyed in the national report regard the programme to meet the expectations of the beneficiaries. Moreover, the most relevant outcomes according to the respondents in the national evaluation are mobility, sharing of good practices, cooperation with EU and international organisations, enhancement in proficiency of foreign languages, and the acquisition of knowledge, competences and skills at different levels. In the national data collection, the interviewees expressed absolute support for the programme and the impact that it had on the development: of their respective organisations, of the participants to the projects and the community as a whole. The outcomes derived from the integration of the predecessor programmes into the

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7 Ibid., p. 8.
Erasmus+ umbrella have been underlined as positive both in the national report and by relevant beneficiaries, stating that further clarity was ensured and administrative issues simplified significantly. Other beneficiaries underlined the positive outcomes both on a professional level for the organisation and on the involved participants, with regard to the improvement of skills and the understanding of the European Union and its values. A beneficiary involved in the support of policy reform stated that the outcomes are tangible as the funding enabled the implementation of a project that concretely led to policy reform and implementation of youth recommendation by Bulgarian policy makers. In that spirit another beneficiary underlined that without Erasmus+, their activities would not have received funding, as there is no overlap with other funding opportunities, making the programme for them crucially necessary. It is also suggested that outcomes of Erasmus+ would increase in Bulgaria with better result dissemination to increase the impact of projects and results both at a national and European level, and with a mentorship programme for grassroots and smaller organisations.

The tables and graphs below provide a visual indication of what the outcomes of Erasmus+ have been in Bulgaria. Results for Key Actions 1 and 2 are provided, and for the Sports field and Jean Monnet activities. Key Action 3 outcomes were rather variable and few comparable numbers are available for this area at the national level; instead, Key Action 3 data is provided in the main report.

**Key Action 1**

Below you can find the quantitative results regarding Key Action 1 in terms of the amount of projects and participants (of successfully funded proposals) for Bulgaria in the period 2014-2016. For the sake of comparison, only complete data entries are considered. This means that the small centralized sub-actions are not considered and “Higher education students & staff mobility” is considered one category, since the distinction between mobility between and within programme countries was not yet made in 2014.

**Source:** Erasmus+ Annual Reports 2014, 2015, 2016.

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9 National Data Collection, Interview Alternativi International.

10 National Data Collection, Interview Economic Policy Institute.

11 National Data Collection, National Association Resource Teachers.
Below you can find the quantitative results, the amount of successful projects (those awarded funding) regarding Key Action 2 in Bulgaria for the main decentralized actions in the period 2014-2016. For the sake of comparison, “Strategic Partnerships for School Education” is regarded as a single category, since not in every year the data both including and excluding “Schools only” is reported.

**Source:** Erasmus+ Annual Reports 2014, 2015, 2016.

**Sports**
Below you can find the quantitative results, the amount of projects awarded funding, regarding the Sports category for Bulgaria in the period 2014-2016. Important to note is that small collaborative partnerships did not start until 2016 onwards.
Jean Monnet
Below you can find the quantitative results, the amount of projects awarded funding, regarding the Jean Monnet activities for Bulgaria in the period 2014-2016.

Budget
Below you can find the outcomes regarding funding through the national agency/agencies of Bulgaria for the period 2014-2015. The budget is split over the five different categories, with three amounts shown for each one. The Work Programme budget is the planned budget that is set before the start of the year, the EU commitments are “the amounts allocated by the Commission to the NA through the delegation agreements”, and the NA commitments are “the amounts granted by the NA through the various actions and projects.”

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<td>858.011</td>
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</table>


1.3. National policy debates and coherence of Erasmus+

It is relevant to note in the latest years Bulgaria focused on the area of inclusive education, with revisions of funding in order to support disadvantaged school and improve general quality of school education. In education, children coming from disadvantaged status, including from minorities, such as Roma families, do not enjoy equal education opportunities. Following a CSR recommendation in 2016, the Pre-School and School Education act came into force, defining education as a national priority and implementing new curricula and standards. Bulgaria introduced apprenticeship in the field of education training, and is now seeking to establish partnership between vocational institutions and businesses. With regard to youth policy, the government developed all major policy developments between 2009 and 2012, with the Youth Law adopted in 2012 and the national Youth Programme (2011-2015) in 2011. The latter contains national priorities for the youth policy and funding for youth initiatives, specifically for the creation of youth information and counselling centres, promotion of youth initiative and volunteering, and recognition of youth work. Moreover, following the adoption of the EU Youth Strategy 2010-2018, the responsible ministry proposed the later adopted National Youth Strategy.

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12 Education and Training Monitor 2017, Bulgaria.
15 Ibid., p. 34.
2010-2020 that focused on a cross and multi sectoral approach to include youth at all levels. The priorities enshrined in the national youth strategy corresponded to the ones established at EU level.17

In our national data collection, it became evident that the Bulgarian responsibility for the Council Presidency brought more action and movement in the policy development. Respondents also underlined how policy debates at national level are triggered by policy development at EU level, which priorities helpfully anticipate national needs. An example of this in the field of sport was the EU focus on anti-doping, which then translated in awareness programs and project implementation in Bulgaria. Other beneficiaries highlight that the youth policy in place until this moment is underdeveloped and scarce, making the need and success of Erasmus+ more relevant.

1.3.1. Alignment national priorities with Erasmus+

The objectives of the Erasmus+ Programme and the EU priorities shaping the annual work programmes have a positive impact on policy developments in Bulgaria throughout all the sectors at both local and national level. 69.8% of respondents to the national report believe that the effects produced by the Erasmus+ Programme are additional to the effects that would have resulted from similar action at national or local level.18 Moreover, the priorities are oriented towards the needs and interests of the beneficiaries at national level and meet their expectation: 82.2% of respondent organisations believe that the programme objectives continue to address needs and objectives in line with the needs of the beneficiaries, and stakeholders in the different fields.19 However, the beneficiaries still express the need for the introduction of national priorities and some discretion on the implementation of projects tailored to national needs. Through our national data collection, some more nuanced and divergent perspectives arose. In fact, beneficiaries stated that European priorities do not always reflect national priorities or policies but they do reflect on issues, which will become Bulgarian national priorities in a few years. Therefore, EU priorities allow for innovation and anticipation of future needs, and are not only positive but also considered as necessary by the beneficiaries.20 On the other hand, other organisations signalled a positive alignment but called for greater flexibility in decentralised actions for the consideration of national priorities and local needs.21

19 Ibid., p. 23.
20 National Data Collection.
21 National Data Collection.
2. GERMANY

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Organisation</th>
<th>National Agency for EU University Cooperation (NA-DAAD), National Agency for EU Programmes in Schools (PA), National Agency for Education for Europe at the Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training (BiBB), National Agency for Erasmus+ Youth in Action</th>
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<td>Responsible Ministries</td>
<td>Federal Ministry of Education and research (BMBF); Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth (BMFSFJ)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other relevant organisations</td>
<td>The Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the Länder in the Federal Republic of Germany</td>
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</table>

2.1. Overall perceptions of Erasmus+ in Germany

In general, the overall perception of the outcomes from Erasmus+ in Germany is positive. The merging of the programmes into the programme E+ has indeed contributed to better political and social conditions of the region. On the one hand, an increase in the visibility and perception of the programme as a whole in the public has been noticed. On the other hand, however, from a German point of view, the visibility of individual areas has decreased, since the name "Erasmus" is often associated with higher education. In this way, the extensive renouncement of the well-known brand names is leading to a diminished public perception of the different programme areas. For a successor programme, the visibility and impact of individual programme areas should be reinforced once again. For the successor programme, the different programme areas should have their place in independent programme chapters, as it has been already the case in E+ for the youth sector without abandoning the integrated approach. This would also simplify the necessary sector-specific implementing provisions. The new programme structure has in principle led to efficiency gains. Losses in efficiency occur especially with regard to the complexity of the application procedure (particularly in the area of partnerships) and the increase in the number of applications submitted to the Commission. It is also criticised that the merger does not respond to sector-specific circumstances. In addition, the IT instruments show considerable weaknesses and impair the programme implementation. The main weakness is the multitude of instruments that a user must apply. Moreover, the IT tools were not fully functional during the start-up phase of the programme, which led to difficulties. A repetition of this state has to be avoided in the transition to the next generation of programmes.

In contradiction with the intention of the European Commission to reduce the administrative burden, increased administrative expenses have been perceived in Erasmus+ and therefore a fast simplification of the application procedure is required. The access for some target groups (particularly inexperienced, smaller institutions) has become more difficult as changes in the applicant's profile became visible. The instantaneous

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22 National Report for the mid-term evaluation of Erasmus+ in Germany.
system of administrative procedures and financial regulations has become counterproductive towards achieving the qualitative, sustainable effects desired by all stakeholders. Hence, once again the requirement for less paper work cannot be stressed enough. In addition, the successor programme should again provide a larger view of the individual programme areas. More flexibility, taking into account the specific characteristics of each sector is needed. Furthermore, the coherence between the programme priorities and the evaluation of a project proposal should be made more transparent and clear. In Key Action 2, the number of participating institutions from schools is still too low. Finally, there is a general need for action in the youth sector. National Agencies for Youth in action require greater freedom to adjust the budget and financing possibilities and formats during the course of the year. Concerning the design of the Jean Monnet programme, it can be stated that the higher education sector already provides a variety of possibility for teaching and learning about the European Union. Consequently, other target groups should be addressed in the future call for proposals. Organizations and situations such as schools or sport associations that have much lower access, knowledge and levels of understanding about the European Union should be increasingly addressed.

The cooperation of the different parties involved in implementing the programme in Germany works well. Cooperation between the National Agencies in Germany is well organised and efficient for coordinating the implementation of the programme. The potential for improvement primarily relates to cooperation between the national and regional authorities Agencies and the Executive Agency (EACEA). Greater proactive contact of the Executive Agency is desired in order to improve transparency and communication between the Executive Agency and the National Agencies. There are also no difficulties observed regarding the communication between National Agencies and National Authorities. In general, the cooperation and communication process with the National Agencies and the European level is perceived to be supportive and helpful. Therefore, Erasmus+ promotes networking activities and contributes to a shared identity within the EU.

From a German point of view, there is a need for an increase of the budget. In all areas of education and youth, the size of the budget is not sufficient. Demand is greater than the available budget and capacity in all areas and good quality projects had and still have to be rejected. Therefore, the amount of the current funding amounts leads to a social selection. In Key Action 2, the resources available for dissemination of results are currently too low. In addition, support concerning the presentation of results and the project networking with national and European initiatives is required.

### 2.2. Outcomes of Erasmus+

Erasmus+ had positive outcomes on national policy developments in Germany in all three fields as Erasmus+ serves as an instrument to further both the internationalisation and Europeanisation of politics and practices in the different sectors.
From the German perspective, the programme Erasmus+ and his Predecessor programmes have reached their respective specific objectives and made a significant contribution to the overall European goals. In particular, the objectives that are most relevant to mention in the German context are improving key skills, improving language teaching and learning languages, learning mobility, civic, intercultural and social commitment as well as the further development of personal competencies. Progress achieved at national level has also helped to achieve the overall Program objectives. However, a more flexible national focus would allow the program countries to exploit more specifically and effectively their respective potential for achieving European goals. Erasmus+ also had a positive effect on national political developments: the funding measures of E+ are a fundamental good instrument for the Europeanisation and internationalisation of all beneficiaries and participants. The new program structure has essentially led to efficiency gains. However, even if cooperation between the program areas in E+ is easier than in the predecessor programmes, there is less cross-sectorial cooperation than expected.\(^3\)

The tables and graphs below provide a visual indication of what the outcomes of Erasmus+ have been in Bulgaria. Results for Key Actions 1 and 2 are provided, and for the Sports field and Jean Monnet activities. Key Action 3 outcomes were rather variable and few comparable numbers are available for this area at the national level; instead, Key Action 3 data is provided in the main report.

**Key Action 1**

Below you can find the quantitative results regarding Key Action 1 in terms of the amount of projects and participants (of successfully funded proposals) for Germany in the period 2014-2016. For the sake of comparison, only complete data entries are considered. This means that the small centralized sub-actions are not considered and “Higher education students & staff mobility” is considered one category, since the distinction between mobility between and within programme countries was not yet made in 2014.

![Key Action 1 - Learning mobility of individuals](image)

**Source:** Erasmus+ Annual Reports 2014, 2015, 2016.

\(^3\) National Report for the mid-term evaluation of Erasmus+ in Germany, p.2.

Key Action 2
Below you can find the quantitative results, the amount of successful projects (those awarded funding) regarding Key Action 2 in Germany for the main decentralized actions in the period 2014-2016. For the sake of comparison, “Strategic Partnerships for School Education” is regarded as a single category, since not in every year the data both including and excluding “Schools only” is reported.


Sports
Below you can find the quantitative results, the amount of projects awarded funding, regarding the Sports category for Germany in the period 2014-2016. Important to note is that small collaborative partnerships did not start until 2016 onwards.
Jean Monnet

Below you can find the quantitative results, the amount of projects awarded funding, regarding the Jean Monnet activities for Germany in the period 2014-2016.


![Jean Monnet Activities Chart]

Budget

Below you can find the outcomes regarding funding through the national agency/agencies of Germany for the period 2014-2015. The budget is split over the five different categories, with three amounts shown for each one. The Work Programme budget is the planned budget that is set before the start of the year, the EU commitments are “the amounts allocated by the Commission to the NA through the delegation agreements”, and the NA commitments are “the amounts granted by the NA through the various actions and projects.”

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2.3. National policy debates and coherence of Erasmus+

In the field of vocational training Erasmus+ and its predecessor programme provided crucial inputs for the development of the sector in Germany with the quality standards of EU Programs now being landmarks for all mobility in VET. Moreover, the programme influenced the implementation of certain measures in Bundestag Resolutions in the field.31 The same positive influence of Erasmus+ has been perceived at national policy level in the sector of adult education which projects responding to relevant policy challenges such as the integration of refugees through education. This policy development and the priority of European cohesion have also been positively reported at the level of higher education, while also suggesting more discretion be left to institutions to adjust to social changes and needs at national level. The youth field in Erasmus+ fosters the cooperation between federal and state level governments for the development of the national youth policy with a focus on the European perspective, and initiated throughout the years a number of political developments in this field. In Germany debates that have been identified as requiring more attention included skills shortages, demographic change and nationalist tendencies.32

31 National Report for the mid-term evaluation of Erasmus+ in Germany, p.8, 9.
32 National Report, evaluation in the areas of higher education, adult education and vocational training.
2.3.1. Alignment national priorities with Erasmus+

In general, the objectives of Erasmus+ remain highly relevant for Germany. The personal encounter of young people, teachers and learners contributes to international understandings and the perception of the benefit of the European Union by young people.\(^{33}\) Therefore, individual projects have undoubtedly contributed to achieve the general objectives of Erasmus+ at the national level. The education policy objectives ("General and vocational education 2020", "Europe 2020" strategy) are basically covered and the promotion of European values, in accordance with Article 2 of the Treaty on European Union (TEU), is supported by the quality-assured mobility and cooperation within the framework of Erasmus+. Nevertheless, the alignment of Erasmus+ with national priorities in Germany is more relevant for the sectors of Vocational Education and Training, Higher Education and Youth.\(^{34}\) The question of whether the objectives of Erasmus+ align with national priorities in Germany cannot be answered in general. Many problems are still considered to be of great relevance, while others are no longer considered to be of great relevance in the German context. Erasmus+ calls should be formulated to better target tender priorities and align with the objectives of social reality, in order to better respond to national requirements. In addition, it should also be possible to set national priorities, at least in order to address the relevant target groups in a specific and demand-oriented manner. In addition, the political priorities should be formulated more clearly. Therefore, precise references should be made to the programme areas. In the high education sector, national and European goals are closely coordinated. In the school sector, where the number of participants has collapsed, the achievement of the goals has so far been determined selectively.

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\(^{33}\) Combined evaluation of Erasmus+ and predecessor programmes: Final report – main evaluation report (volume 1).

\(^{34}\) Combined evaluation of Erasmus+ and predecessor programmes: Synthesis of the National Authorities’ Reports on the implementation and the impact of Erasmus+ (volume 6).
3. FINLAND

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</table>

3.1. Overall perceptions of Erasmus+ in Finland

The perception of the Erasmus+ design in Finland is of a coherent and clear in structure programme. The integration of the predecessor programmes into the Erasmus+ framework boosted the awareness of the programme in Finland by virtue of the common brand. The structure is perceived as not presenting any overlaps between actions as well as no synergies increasing its effectiveness.\(^{35}\)

With regard to the communication and support by the Finnish National Agency, the mid-term report suggests that the services provided by the latter and the smooth information process led to a positive outcome on the number of applications. In addition, the interviewees for this data collection thought the communication and support by the National Agency to be excellent.\(^{36}\) The National Agency was also thought to provide a good promotion of interest for Finland at the EU level.\(^{37}\) Within the decentralised implementation of the programme the mid-term report suggested that participants were satisfies with the development of the grass-roots level activities and that a bottom-up approach was in fact implemented.\(^{38}\)

However, the respondents in Finland noted that the communication at EU level within the centralised application process lacks in effectiveness compared to the decentralised administration. In particular, it is underlined that centralised KA3 projects, KA2 Knowledge, and Sector Skills Alliances in the field of education lack exchange of information with national agencies which are then unaware of both beneficiaries’ organisations and subjects of the projects in those actions.\(^{39}\)

The Erasmus+ Programme and its predecessors contributed to the internationalisation of the different fields in Finland and the financial resources allocated in that regard for both cooperation and mobility are regarded as significant. In this regard, the sharp increase in budget was considered definitely absorbable in Finland also given that national cuts render investing in international cooperation without Erasmus+ even more difficult. Specifically in higher education, such budget cuts in staff enhance the relevance of Erasmus+.\(^{40}\) With regard to the budget, an increase would also facilitate more marketing campaigns for visibility of the Programme leading not only to more applications but also to more funded projects. Moreover, current challenges including the refugee crisis and growing number of

\(^{36}\) National Data Collection: University of Turku and Villa Elba.  
\(^{37}\) National Data Collection: Villa Elba  
\(^{39}\) ibid., p. 31-32.
NEETs will make the Erasmus+ Programme even more significant and cooperation between the different stakeholders needed, actions that an increase in resources could assure.\textsuperscript{41}

The introduction of IT Tools at different stages and sectors of the Erasmus+ programme initially hindered instead of benefit the management and application stage for applicant organisations. In the initial stage, the problems encountered were many, however, at this interim point all relevant stakeholders are slowly adapting to the tools. A suggestion advance by respondents to the national report was coordinating the different IT Tools more closely and establishing interaction to avoid duplication of information and extra work.\textsuperscript{42}

With regard to bureaucracy, a number of beneficiaries in education and training identified the general administration as complicated and heavy. Moreover, they signalled the disadvantage that small actors face both in the application and management of Erasmus+ projects, in Finland, such smaller organisations are specifically present in school and adult education. Such organisations lack both the capacity and the resources and competent coordinators for projects. In the fields of youth and sport the beneficiaries underlined the inefficiencies caused by administrative burdens, which present different obstacles, included the difficulty in understanding the specific terminology, application forms, reporting requirements. All obstacles that are even more detrimental to first time applicants.\textsuperscript{43}

\textbf{3.2. Outcomes of Erasmus+}

Erasmus+ is considered the most important form of international cooperation and it is renowned throughout the sectors of education and training. Two main outcomes of the Erasmus+ Programme and its predecessors have been highlighted in Finland in the field of education. First, across all levels of education Erasmus+ ensured the internationalisation of the Finnish education system. This outcome particularly benefitted higher education where internationalisation is also most visible. The Erasmus+ programme fostered the sharing of EU values and brought the European Union closer to its citizens. The EU added value has also been underlined in the mid-term report with respondents stating that such framework of cooperation would not have been possible at such an extent without Erasmus+ and stated that the programme also consolidated Finland position as a member state of the European Union.

Second, the array of opportunities provided by the Programme allowed individuals to develop relevant skills, working methods, exchange good practices, and in general gain meaningful experiences. These positive outcomes in the field of education have played an important role in diversifying skills of teaching staff and in the field of school and adult education the adoption of new working methods. In particular, for the field of adult education, the internationalisation aspect brought a number of advantages including acceptance and different attitude towards groups from a migrant background.

Also in the field of youth, Erasmus+ managed to achieve important milestones leading to significant contribution in reducing marginalisation and ensuring social empowerment of youth. Because of Erasmus+, youth activities in Finland play a stronger role in communities and youth initiatives benefit in particular the communities in rural areas. With regard to disadvantaged youth, the impact is still limited as high requirements are set on both cooperation with different actors (schools, healthcare, social services, labour

\textsuperscript{40} ibid., p. 36.
\textsuperscript{41} ibid., p. 49.
\textsuperscript{42} Mid-Term Evaluation of Erasmus+ Programme 2014-2-2- Finland, Ministry of Education and Culture, p. 36.
\textsuperscript{43} ibid., p. 39.
administration) and professional qualifications of workers.\footnote{ibid., p. 26.} Within the national data collection, a youth organisation considered the Erasmus+ programme of crucial importance for international youth work in Finland. The organisation underlined the importance of the current programme in creating opportunities for underprivileged youth.\footnote{National Data Collection, Interview Villa Elba.}

Positive outcomes of the presence of Erasmus+ are also highlighted from the perspective of priorities and EU political discussions. Namely, the mid-term asserts that the dialogue and cooperation between different fields and especially at the level of youth, which the Erasmus+ enables, is crucial in tacking political problematics such as the rise of populism. In this context, the international cooperation with non-EU countries has also been underlined as a relevant feature of Erasmus+. Last, the cooperation which the Erasmus+ Programme ensured at policy level was considered essential and recommended that it should be enhanced as one of the main examples of the added value of the Erasmus+.\footnote{ibid., 35, 51.}

The tables and graphs below provide a visual indication of what the outcomes of Erasmus+ have been in Bulgaria. Results for Key Actions 1 and 2 are provided, and for the Sports field and Jean Monnet activities. Key Action 3 outcomes were rather variable and few comparable numbers are available for this area at the national level; instead, Key Action 3 data is provided in the main report.

**Key Action 1**
Below you can find the quantitative results regarding Key Action 1 in terms of the amount of projects and participants (of successfully funded proposals) for Finland in the period 2014-2016. For the sake of comparison, only complete data entries are considered. This means that the small centralized sub-actions are not considered and “Higher education students & staff mobility” is considered one category, since the distinction between mobility between and within programme countries was not yet made in 2014.

![Key Action 1 - Learning mobility of individuals](image)

**Source:** Erasmus+ Annual Reports 2014, 2015, 2016.
Key Action 2
Below you can find the quantitative results, the amount of successful projects (those awarded funding) regarding Key Action 2 in Finland for the main decentralized actions in the period 2014-2016. For the sake of comparison, “Strategic Partnerships for School Education” is regarded as a single category, since not in every year the data both including and excluding “Schools only” is reported.

Sports
Below you can find the quantitative results, the amount of projects awarded funding, regarding the Sports category for Finland in the period 2014-2016. Important to note is that small collaborative partnerships did not start until 2016 onwards.
Jean Monnet
Below you can find the quantitative results, the amount of projects awarded funding, regarding the Jean Monnet activities for Finland in the period 2014-2016.

Budget

Below you can find the outcomes regarding funding through the national agency/agencies of Finland for the period 2014-2015. The budget is split over the five different categories, with three amounts shown for each one. The Work Programme budget is the planned budget that is set before the start of the year, the EU commitments are “the amounts allocated by the Commission to the NA through the delegation agreements”, and the NA commitments are “the amounts granted by the NA through the various actions and projects.

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3.3. National policy debates and coherence of Erasmus+

In the field of education, the system is in constant development and Erasmus+ and its predecessor programme have an impact on such developments. For example, in the national Strategy of the Internationalization of the Higher Education Institutions in Finland 2009–2015, mobility was considered a target to be met at all levels of education. With regard to youth, the policies in Finland are in constant development with new statutes including the Youth Act, Child Welfare Act, the Pupil and Student Welfare Act and the Local Government Act. All of the abovementioned frameworks priorities active participation of youth and cross-sectorial cooperation, in line with Union objectives.

3.3.1. Alignment national priorities with Erasmus+

Challenges addressed by the objectives of the Erasmus+ Programme became prominent also in Finland, particularly in the youth area, demonstrating alignment of interests. For example, the placement of youth in the labour market or in vocational/higher education became an important factor in Finland where the number of young men belonging to the NEET group doubled from 2005 to 2015. With regard to the Erasmus+ focus on disadvantaged groups and special needs, the mid-term report notes that everyday five or six people from the youth age range retire from work due to mental health issues, aligning the EU priority to address such group with a national need.

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47 ibid., p. 19.
48 ibid. p. 28.
Moreover, with regard to alignment there is nothing in national policy regarding education, youth or sport that would contradict the objectives of the programme. National policy highlights the importance of internationality and European level collaboration in developing the quality of the activities in the three fields.\(^49\) There are educational reforms under way in Finland, and internationality, globalization and international co-operation are considered as important topics in them, which is in line with the orientation of Erasmus+ and its objectives. More generally, the internationality and other objectives of the programme are well on display whenever there are new national developments in the fields of Erasmus+. When a longer perspective is taken into account, it can be argued that in the 1990’s internationality was the one priority above all others in Finland. Nowadays it is still relevant, but it is in its place as one of the several important topics.\(^50\)

\(^{49}\) National Data Collection, Board of Education.

\(^{50}\) National Data Collection, Board of Education.
4. FRANCE

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<th>Organisation</th>
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<tr>
<td>Other relevant organisations</td>
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4.1. Overall perceptions of Erasmus+ in France

The Erasmus+ programme has an undeniable positive perception in France among all the agents involved. The midterm evaluation\(^{51}\) studies the perceptions over the programme on the French territory. Simplification is highlighted as the most important improvement of the programme respect to previous versions.

Most of the agents point out a more readable structure of the key actions, an increase of the advanced payments of the grants, and a less complex financing based on fixed cost units as the key drivers of the simplification process.

However, the various stakeholders involved in the programme also express the existence of some caveats in the design. First, the design of the mobility of middle and high school students under KA2 (strategic partnership) is considered to be far away from other beneficiaries such as higher education students or apprentices who are targeted under KA1 (mobility). This limits the impact of the programme on such groups of students.

Moreover, the excessive rigidity required in terms of detail in the confection of the plans of work is a matter of concern by the organisations. This can be noted for example for the case of apprenticeship training centres, which have to provide a detailed plan of the projects two years in advance, even when the companies and apprentices they will work with are still unknown.

There is also an overall perception of complexity from the administrative point of view. A non-proportionated amount of administrative constraints relapse in small and medium organisations who are less likely to face them efficiently than bigger ones making high use of the programme. Another caveat identified by the stakeholders is need of further promotion of some targeted groups. In particular, vocational training students and apprentices need an extra push for equalizing their international opportunities to the ones existing for higher education students.

In terms of governance, the perception over the different bodies carrying out the different decentralised and centralised actions is considered positive. However, according to the midterm evaluation, the delimitation of the actions carried out by the EACEA and the two

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national agencies is not clear enough for part of the organisations. Consequently, the national agency Erasmus+ Agency for Education and Training recently proposed to foster the cooperation with the EACEA in order to promote through the national agencies information on centralised actions.

Cooperation between the two national agencies in charge of the French decentralised actions is also being promoted. Although each national agency disposes of its own online portal, a common website is being set up for improving the transmission of information over the general public. Moreover, other initiatives in terms of cooperation such as a common plan for sport activities are being analysed.

Within the French framework, national priorities are implemented by the national agencies through the so-called operational strategic objectives. Those objectives are transmitted to the rest of stakeholders through public interest group meetings. At a lower level, the different partners see regional and local authorities as essential for the effective development of the actions under Erasmus+.

Regarding the budget and the efficiency on its allocation, the midterm report reveals an insufficient level of resources. For education and training actions, the financial volume of grant application is twice the available budget for KA1 and three times for KA2. The need for an increase in the budget is further necessary giving that the credits in Erasmus+ follow an exponential evolution all over the programme.

For youth and sport actions, the level of allocation of budget does not match the announcements previously made by the European Commission when the Erasmus+ programme was established in 2014. As specified by the midterm evaluation, the budget does not pair with the expected goals and efficiency of the youth component.

4.2. **Outcomes of Erasmus+**

In general, the Erasmus+ programme produces obvious gains in terms of competences for its beneficiaries. Based on a study performed by the national agency Erasmus+ Agency for Education and Training on the impact of European mobility on school drop-out, the midterm evaluation exposes the main outcomes of the programme.

The main benefits for students participating in a European project are the building of self-esteem, the improvement of language skills, the development of the key cross-curricular competences and European citizenship. Professionals, at the same time, profit from Erasmus+ by encouraging a reflection on professional practices and enhancing their skills through trainings of teachers and other actors involved. Then, structures, according to the study, take advantage of the programme by promoting innovation and new teaching practices, fostering team-work, recruiting new players into European mobility and cooperation projects, and developing strong professional and personal relationships with new players in Europe.

According to field of action of the projects, different outcomes have been observed. In the education and training field, mobility beneficiaries tend to improve professional skills. This is especially true for mobility users coming from low socio-professional categories, not used to traveling, and for young people sometimes in relative academic failure. These people regain self-confidence, develop new skills and find new sources of motivation. Moreover, the program has also proved to be remarkably advantageous for mobility beneficiaries in
vocational education, which tend to get back their motivation for studies, acquire new skills and apply for undergraduate programs in technical occupations. Erasmus+ has caused other positives outcomes in France such as a notable involvement of companies in European projects, and a significant promotion of innovative teaching methods.

In the youth and sports field, Erasmus+ supports the development of volunteerism and civic engagement. Youth exchanges fit particularly well young people with fewer opportunities by offering short projects that represent a collective commitment and a first experience of intercultural experience. The report of the RAY-MON survey carried out by the national agency Erasmus+ France Youth & Sport noted that participants of the programme acquire cultural and social skills (54%), foreign languages (40%), and initiative to find work (53%).

The tables and graphs below provide a visual indication of what the outcomes of Erasmus+ have been in Bulgaria. Results for Key Actions 1 and 2 are provided, and for the Sports field and Jean Monnet activities. Key Action 3 outcomes were rather variable and few comparable numbers are available for this area at the national level; instead, Key Action 3 data is provided in the main report.

**Key Action 1**

Below you can find the quantitative results regarding Key Action 1 in terms of the amount of projects and participants (of successfully funded proposals) for France in the period 2014-2016. For the sake of comparison, only complete data entries are considered. This means that the small centralized sub-actions are not considered and ‘Higher education students & staff mobility’ is considered one category, since the distinction between mobility between and within programme countries was not yet made in 2014.

![Key Action 1 - Learning mobility of individuals](chart.png)

**Source:** Erasmus+ Annual Reports 2014, 2015, 2016.
Below you can find the quantitative results, the amount of successful projects (those awarded funding) regarding Key Action 2 in France for the main decentralized actions in the period 2014-2016. For the sake of comparison, “Strategic Partnerships for School Education” is regarded as a single category, since not in every year the data both including and excluding “Schools only” is reported.

**Key Action 2**

**Sports**

Below you can find the quantitative results, the amount of projects awarded funding, regarding the Sports category for France in the period 2014-2016. Important to note is that small collaborative partnerships did not start until 2016 onwards.
Below you can find the quantitative results, the amount of projects awarded funding, regarding the Jean Monnet activities for France in the period 2014-2016.

**Jean Monnet**

Below you can find the outcomes regarding funding through the national agency/agencies of Finland for the period 2014-2015. The budget is split over the five different categories, with three amounts shown for each one. The Work Programme budget is the planned
budget that is set before the start of the year, the EU commitments are “the amounts allocated by the Commission to the NA through the delegation agreements”, and the NA commitments are “the amounts granted by the NA through the various actions and projects.

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4.3. National policy debates and coherence of Erasmus+

The political agenda of the recent prime minister of the République Française set main priorities in the fields of education, youth and sport for the government. They can be summarised as follows. The objectives in education include ensuring preschool is an instrument to fight against inequalities; enhancing support and individualization at early, middle and high school; guaranteeing professional integration; better support for teachers, encouraging the autonomy of institutions to adapt to the needs of their students and local situations and stimulate innovation; and strengthening the relationship with parents and encourage the involvement of volunteers and associations. The priorities set for Training are making learning more attractive for businesses and young people; and making alternation the heart of vocational education. Finally, the objectives in Sport for the government are adapting the organization of sport in France; making sport an asset for the French economy; promoting professional sports; and accompanying volunteers and adapting training.

4.3.1. Alignment national priorities with Erasmus+

Erasmus+ actions converge with some national priorities. First, the establishment at national level of the Standing Committee on European and International Youth Mobility and at regional level of CoReMob (Regional Mobility Committees) formalized by an inter-ministerial circular involving four ministries responsible respectively for youth, national education and higher education, agriculture and employment under the Youth Priority Plan. Second, the creation of GRETA, structure promoting adult lifelong learning. Third, the creation of a unit for the promotion of mobility at the high school level. Fourth, re-adaptation of diplomas and certifications for an easier access throughout the working life.

53 https://en-marche.fr/emmanuel-macron/le-programme
54 Évaluation à mi-parcours du programme Erasmus+ 2014-2020 (Ministère des Sports, Ministère de l’Éducation Nationale)
5. LATVIA

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5.1. Overall perceptions of Erasmus+ in Latvia

In the field of education and training, it is considered that the new architecture of the Erasmus+ programme led to positive impacts on both institutional and project level. Also the national agency responsible for E&T regarded the integration of the predecessor programme under the unique umbrella of Erasmus+ as a positive decision as Erasmus+ is gaining more visibility at all levels, national, local and organisational. In fact, in thirty years of development the programme in Latvia is now both recognised at political and community level. On the other hand, the national agency responsible for youth regarded the unification of all predecessor programmes under the current design to undermine the visibility of the youth field imposing a name associated with education on it.

In general, terms, both for the implementing bodies and for the participants the design of Erasmus+ and division of key actions is regarded as clearly defined, logical and understandable. Positive aspects of the current structure include the decentralization of certain action, making it more accessible for institutions, as for example the international cooperation in Higher Education. Moreover, KA2 is regarded to be more accessible under the new design for higher education institutions compared to previous programme and the value of this key action is highlighted in the youth sector where strategic partnerships projects contribute to the development of youth organisations and participants, with long-term benefits. Under the new structure, the number of projects submitted in the different fields has generally increased and with it the quality of proposed and funded projects where applicants present highly competitive projects. In general, therefore, there is a positive perception of the current structure, perception that is also confirmed by the national data collection in which interviewees highlighted the understanding of the design. The interviewed organisations highlighted the usefulness of online tools and online applications and noted that those could be improved by avoiding doubling information required and more interaction between the tools, such as for example the youth pass portal and the Mobility Tool+.

In Latvia, the current approach of only institutions being eligible to apply for mobility calls is regarded as positive as it allowed for the implementation of long-term development plans and targeted projects. In particular, for mobility, addition funding would be considered as beneficial in Latvia as many qualitative projects are rejected on the sole basis of shortage of resources both in E&T and in the youth field. The same holds true for strategic partnerships, especially in the field of higher education. Therefore, in Latvia allocation of
additional budget would be positively received. With regard to budget allocated to the national agencies, both the one responsible for E&T and the one responsible for youth regard to have adequate resources to promote the visibility of the programme. The national agencies generally appreciate the involvement with the EU level and the mid-term report emphasises the need for more cooperation between the two national agencies and the implementing bodies of different programme countries. With this regard, positive feedback is given to the meeting of all national agencies for the exchange of good practices, resolution of common issues and development of common positions to be present at EU level for specific aspects of the Erasmus+ implementation.

With regard to the communication with the central executive agency, the national data collection suggests different experiences. In fact, some regard as smooth and cooperative while others signalled the delay in answers, the uncleanness of responses that disrupted the implementation of projects.

5.2. Outcomes of Erasmus+

In Latvia, the Erasmus+ Programme is considered essential for achieving objectives such as internationalisation, innovation, international cooperation, all of which could not be achieved without it. Moreover, the outcomes of Erasmus+ are not limited to general goals but they also influence individual participants and the implementation of projects led to the development of different skills sets, exchanges of good practices, innovative working methods and improvement of both formal and non-formal education in Latvia. It is also highlighted that the added value of the programme is also to be found in the acquisition of language competences and the acquisition of EU values such as non-discrimination, tolerance as participants to projects are introduced to the culture of different programme or partner countries. In the area of education, the Erasmus+ led to policy developments aiming at modernising the system and expanding the international dimension of education. The outcomes in the youth programme are considered even more relevant given the lack of national funding and that the area of youth policy in Latvia is considerably new. Moreover, the programme with its activities crucially addressed issue of youth unemployment and active participation in society. In Latvia the actions, which are considered most essential, are the ones involving mobility and strategic partnerships and it is regarded that the programme should maintain focus on both formal and non-formal education in the future.

The national data collection also underlines the relevance and the added value of the programme. Within higher education the importance of international cooperation is significantly highlighted together with the Erasmus+ uniqueness in considering the mobility of administrative staff leading to a comprehensive of all relevant actors in HE and not only students and teaching staff. Other institutions highlighted the benefit of the visibility of the programme and the opening of many paths and doors for collaborations with international partners. The existences of such a programme is in itself the main motivator for establishing relevant projects, which enrich the organisations, the participants and the community as a whole.

The tables and graphs below provide a visual indication of what the outcomes of Erasmus+ have been in Bulgaria. Results for Key Actions 1 and 2 are provided, and for the Sports field and Jean Monnet activities. Key Action 3 outcomes were rather variable and few comparable numbers are available for this area at the national level; instead, Key Action 3 data is provided in the main report.
Key Action 1
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Key Action 2
Below you can find the quantitative results, the amount of successful projects (those awarded funding) regarding Key Action 2 in Latvia for the main decentralized actions in the period 2014-2016. For the sake of comparison, “Strategic Partnerships for School
Education” is regarded as a single category, since not in every year the data both including and excluding “Schools only” is reported.

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Below you can find the quantitative results, the amount of projects awarded funding, regarding the Sports category for Latvia in the period 2014-2016. Important to note is that small collaborative partnerships did not start until 2016 onwards.

**Jean Monnet**
Below you can find the quantitative results, the amount of projects awarded funding, regarding the Jean Monnet activities for Latvia in the period 2014-2016.
Below you can find the outcomes regarding funding through the national agency/agencies of Latvia for the period 2014-2015. The budget is split over the five different categories, with three amounts shown for each one. The Work Programme budget is the planned budget that is set before the start of the year, the EU commitments are “the amounts allocated by the Commission to the NA through the delegation agreements”, and the NA commitments are “the amounts granted by the NA through the various actions and projects.”

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**Source:** Erasmus+ Annual Reports 2014, 2015, 2016.
5.3. National policy debates and coherence of Erasmus+

The national youth policy for Latvia highlights seven policy principles applicable to three different dimensions defined as political youth citizenship, socio-economic youth citizenship and last youth preferences and international best practices. The seven reported principles include partnership, information availability, equal opportunities, youth interests, favour social and economic premises, mobility and international cooperation and last youth integration facilitation. Policy debates within the education system in Latvia regard the high level of decentralisation and demographic factors that influenced enrolment rates, which include rural areas migration, fertility rates and ageing population. Another main issue regards the discrepancies in performance between the urban and rural areas and between gender performances, which calls for the reform of the system. In recent years, budget cuts experienced by the field after the 2008 financial crisis are revised and new policy implementation underway.

National policy priorities listed in the mid-term included social integration to reduce inequality, especially between urban and rural areas, specific support for vocational education aiming at excellences and supporting the number of young people active in non-government organisations and youth organisations generally.

5.3.1. Alignment national priorities with Erasmus+

The priorities and objectives stemming from the Erasmus+ Programme generally align and influence national policy developments. However, both the Ministry of Education and Science and the national agencies underlined in the mid-term the need to allow some discretion for the incorporation of national needs and priorities in the implementation of decentralised actions of the programme. The national data collection supports the alignment between priorities and regards the Erasmus+ priorities are current and relevant. Institutions highlight that given that funding derives from the EU it is reasonable for the focus to entail EU political priorities.
6. THE NETHERLANDS

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6.1. Overall perceptions of Erasmus+ in the Netherlands

The Dutch mid-term report commissioned by the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science (OCW), indicates that the Erasmus+ programme is considered both effective and efficient by stakeholders in the Netherlands. The mid-term report indicates that: “Erasmus+ contributes to participants’ knowledge and skills, internationalisation, quality improvements and a more innovative culture at institutional level. The contribution of Erasmus+ to the objective of lifelong learning is least apparent, but participation of staff as well as adult education are in itself examples of lifelong learning.”

The mid-term also notes that through the programme is effectiveness and working towards its programme objectives, it is still unlikely to lead to policy impacts unless policymakers or local authorities are more directly involved. The programme also lags behind in supporting beneficiaries form disadvantages backgrounds, and does not yet have a large societal impact. This last point may be closely related to the fact that the programme has been running for 3 years and overall sectoral impacts are unlikely to be observable at this stage in the programming cycle.

Several points that are more specific came forward from the national level research on Erasmus+ in the Netherlands:
- Primary Education schools apply less for Erasmus+ funding than for funding of predecessor programmes.
- It is challenging for small and volunteering organizations to comply with the application procedure.
- The Erasmus+ programme mainly reaches the average and well-off students and young people. Students and youth with special needs and fewer opportunities are believed to be underrepresented under applicants.
- It is believed is that the high administration burden for applying for funding of the Erasmus+ programme and the low success rate for primary school applicants in the first years of the Erasmus+ programme are the causes of primary school underrepresentation under applicants.
- The application procedure is regarded to be very time consuming to complete, which makes it challenging for small organization and volunteering organizations to complete. Bigger organizations seem to be better equipped in dealing with the complexity of the application procedure. Often staff of small organisations have to complete applications during or after working hours. Many bigger organizations have one or two (external) people working specifically on the applications and are therefore more professionalized and better equipped to comply with the complex application procedure.
Lower representation of students and youth with special needs and fewer opportunities is believed to be caused by the difficulty of reaching these target groups and the insufficient adaptation of the language used in communication to these target groups. Additionally, arranging insurance and healthcare needs and providing additional support for special needs students are obstacles for including these students in Erasmus+ projects.

Overall, the design of the Erasmus+ is considered good. The Dutch Midterm Evaluation concluded that:

- The design of Erasmus+ increased the visibility of the projects. Erasmus+ integrated different youth, sport and education organisations under the same programme increasing the familiarity of the brand name under applicants.
- The application procedure leads to better quality project and project implementation than in predecessor programmes. There is a stronger focus in the Erasmus+ application procedure on quality relative to predecessor programmes.
- Erasmus+ increases the opportunities for collaboration by funding for strategic and sectorial partnership under KA2. It is believed that these collaborations can enlarge the impact of the Erasmus+ programme. However, several education institutions and youth organisations are unaware of this possibility and funding is limited.
- The coherence between KA’s is clear and logical. The KA’s complement and connect to each other well. However, some small inconsistencies are perceived between KA1 and KA2.

Generally, the support and communication with NAs is considered good. Organisations get the necessary feedback and guidance to their application. Nonetheless, an improvement can be made by providing more detailed feedback on how to improve the unsuccessful applications for funding. Additionally, the Mid Term report states that some primary and secondary schools would like more personalized communication with the NAs.

Overall, the level of funding for the different policy fields is appreciated considering that they are higher than they were under the predecessor programmes. However, the number of high quality applicants for KA1 and KA2 exceeded the budget funding possibilities. Moreover, many primary and secondary organisations consider their budget insufficient relatively to higher education, taking into account the bigger combined size of secondary and primary education than higher education. The budget of KA3 was not completely exhausted. There were insufficient high quality applicants for the budget available.

The challenges in the implementation of projects are the difficulty for organisations to establish the amount of participants in a project far in advance and to define what the expected outcome of a project will be. For the latter, it is in particular hard to define expected outcomes for KA2 projects, because outcomes of partners are difficult to assess.

6.2. Outcomes of Erasmus+

According to the mid-term report Erasmus+ in the Netherlands contributes to both institutional and individual development specifically for internationalisation, innovative developments and knowledge and skills of participants. It is also noted that the impact on society as a whole of the programme is not yet visible but that if individual effects translate to institutional development the outcome might be more visible in the future.

The tables and graphs below provide a visual indication of what the outcomes of Erasmus+ have been in Bulgaria. Results for Key Actions 1 and 2 are provided, and for the Sports field and Jean Monnet activities. Key Action 3 outcomes were rather variable and few comparable numbers are available for this area at the national level; instead, Key Action 3 data is provided in the main report.
Key Action 1
Below you can find the quantitative results regarding Key Action 1 in terms of the amount of projects and participants (of successfully funded proposals) for the Netherlands in the period 2014-2016. For the sake of comparison, only complete data entries are considered. This means that the small centralized sub-actions are not considered and “Higher education students & staff mobility” is considered one category, since the distinction between mobility between and within programme countries was not yet made in 2014.


Key Action 2
Below you can find the quantitative results, the amount of successful projects (those awarded funding) regarding Key Action 2 in the Netherlands for the main decentralized actions in the period 2014-2016. For the sake of comparison, “Strategic Partnerships for
School Education” is regarded as a single category, since not in every year the data both including and excluding “Schools only” is reported.

Sports
Below you can find the quantitative results, the amount of projects awarded funding, regarding the Sports category for the Netherlands in the period 2014-2016. Important to note is that small collaborative partnerships did not start until 2016 onwards.

Jean Monnet
Below you can find the quantitative results, the amount of projects awarded funding, regarding the Jean Monnet activities for the Netherlands in the period 2014-2016.
Below you can find the outcomes regarding funding through the national agency/agencies of the Netherlands for the period 2014-2015. The budget is split over the five different categories, with three amounts shown for each one. The Work Programme budget is the planned budget that is set before the start of the year, the EU commitments are “the amounts allocated by the Commission to the NA through the delegation agreements”, and the NA commitments are “the amounts granted by the NA through the various actions and projects.”

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### Source
6.3. National policy debates and coherence of Erasmus+

A general trend related to youth, is the decentralization of youth policies to local authorities started on 1 January 2015 with the implementation of the new Youth law (’Jeugdwet’). It was implemented to simplify youth policy and thereby increase its efficiency and effectiveness. Its overall objectives were to lower the administrative burden for professionals giving them more independency to offer the right help, to put more effort on prevention and personalized help and to increase the cohesion between operating actors in youth matters. To accomplish these objectives, the implementation and design of youth policy are made on a local level, making it the responsibility of local authorities. One of the challenges to achieve the set objectives is to increase collaboration on this local level between different youth organisation, schools and municipalities. Something the Erasmus+ projects are considered conducive in.

In the coalition agreement 2017-2021, the policy objectives and vision for the sport sector are established. One of the main concerns for the coalition is that sport organisations struggle to find volunteers and the necessary funding for recreational and top-level sport. The coalition aims at tackling this issue by improving sport organisations financially and organizationally. Instrumental in achieving this is the ‘Sport Agreement’ between stakeholders in the sport sector. Municipalities, sport associations and athletes with disabilities will make an agreement to make the financials and organisational structure of sport organisations sustainable. Moreover, themes as easy access for children in sport organisations, diversity of sport associations, etc., will be discussed.

6.4.3 Alignment national priorities with Erasmus+

In general, the Erasmus+ programme and its objectives are considered broad enough to align them with Dutch contemporary social issues, such as radicalization and the refugee crisis. More specifically, the Erasmus+ and its objectives align with the national objectives and priorities regarding the internationalization and mobility in education; the national objectives to increase collaboration on the topic of youth; the national objectives in developing local projects to support youth. The Erasmus+ programme is however not successful in influencing national and local policy developments unless policymakers or local authorities are involved.

There were no changes in the orientation of the programme for school education, higher education and adult education in the period of 2014-2016. For vocational education, the needs of the Erasmus+ programme where extended in 2015 by opening up IGT in VET and stimulate entrepreneurship. In 2016 the needs for vocational education of Erasmus+ where extended by excellence in VET and excellent artisanship. The extensions in needs of vocational education for the Erasmus+ programme are considered too minor to be felt by organisations on a national level.
7. **SLOVENIA**

<table>
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<th>Organisation</th>
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| National Agencies             | (1) Centre of the Republic of Slovenia for Mobility and European Educational and Training Programmes (CMEPIUS)  
(2) Institute for Development of Youth Mobility (MOVIT) |
| Responsible Ministries        | Ministry of Education, Science and Sport |
| Other relevant organisations  | National Education Institute Slovenia (ZRSŠ), Institute of the Republic of Slovenia for Vocational Education and Training (CPI)  
Public Scholarship, Development, Disability and Maintenance Fund  
Mladinski svet Slovenije (MSS)  
Office of the Republic of Slovenia for Youth (URSM) |

### 7.1. Overall perceptions of Erasmus+ in Slovenia

In general, the Erasmus+ Programme is regarded to be a story of success for Slovenia and most of the relevant actors of the sectors are aware of the Programme and have some sort of experience and knowledge of it. The Director of MMS (association of national youth organisations), Tin Kanpl, stated “we cannot even imagine a Europe without the Erasmus+ Programme”.57

The national report from Slovenia demonstrates that there is general good knowledge of the Erasmus+ program, however different levels of education (pre-school, elementary, secondary, higher education and adult education) present diversity in the knowledge of the predecessors or current Erasmus+ programme. Beneficiaries in the national data collection perceive the design of the Programme as quite understandable and believe that is complemented by the support and opportunity for clarification from both the national agency (CMEPIUS) and EACEA. Moreover, interviewed organisations suggest that the integration of Erasmus+ in the current structure rendered the programme more transparent and more accessible compared to predecessor programmes. With regard to youth, the Mid-term national report clarifies that almost 83% of all applicant organisations believe that it knows and understands the Erasmus+ Programme well or very well.58 This is an indication that after four years of implementation, the youth organisations in Slovenia now feel acquainted with the structure of the programme. On the success of the design, a high number of stakeholders stressed that informal groups of young people, under the current design, are at a disadvantage in the application process; this becomes problematic specifically in areas where there is lack of youth organisations. Respondents to mid-term report stated that objectives of Erasmus+ for the youth sector under the new design should be more precise and greater flexibility should be granted to address national local issues.59

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58 Vmesno nacionalno poročilo o implementaciji in učinkah programa Erasmus+, Mlad v Akciji, p. 106.
Interviewees from our national data collection regard the design as easily understandable, mainly thanks to the support (technical and content-wise) from the national agency.

In the field of education, Slovenia evaluated the cooperation between bodies as weak, with solutions and actions being vague during the transition phase and consequently transferring work to national agencies. Moreover, respondents considered Erasmus+ to cover too many different actions, undermining the general quality of the programme. The national agency in the field of education underlines that communication between different institutions at EU level and exchange of information shall improve, and that the constant change in staff at the European Commission’s level leads to loss of knowledge and experience. Moreover, smaller countries such as Slovenia have difficulties in pursuing an agenda in the Erasmus+ Committee. On the other hand, the independent audit body finds good cooperation at national level and the national data collection suggests that the cooperation can go from sufficient to excellent both at national and European level. An institution within the national data collection regards the communication as generally positive and affirms that the national agency is more rigid in the interpretation of the programme compared to the EACEA, which is supportive. The youth report perceives the communication as presenting different caveats. First, the Commission seems to regard national agencies as mere fund operators while they in reality can be important policy stakeholders. Moreover, there is lack of consultation and direct contact with issues on the ground by the Commission, suggesting a need for improvement in communication. In the field of youth, what emerges from the national data collection is that the support and communication of applicant organisations with the national agency is optimal.

Generally, in the field of education and training beneficiaries assess the level of the budget as adequate with an almost full absorption. However, budget for school partnerships is assessed as inadequate. With regard to budget for human resources for the implementation of Erasmus+, the latter is considered inappropriate. Given it is not possible to predict the number of employees before the response on the projects per action, the national agency suggests to increase the budget for the management one year before the increase of the budget for actions. Beneficiaries of the programme (42%) in the field of youth believe that the goal cannot be rationally achieved with the budget size and that the latter should be increased. In Slovenia, youth organizations and the youth sector in general are mostly funded through the Erasmus+ Programme given the lack of government action. The projects acceptance rates provide a clear indication of lack of resources given only 25% of projects are on average accepted. In addition, for youth an increase of budget for management is necessary to ensure training of human resources. There needs to be proportionality in the increase of budget for actions and the increase of budget for management. For budget allocation, the relevant national agency also suggests a higher level of discretion in the distribution of resources across key actions. For example, quality assurance under KA1 is disproportionately harder than under KA2, as the latter suffers from lack of resources only extremely high level quality performing projects will be accepted.

7.2. Outcomes of Erasmus+

The national agency CMEPIUS, responsible for the sectors of Education & Training, prepared in 2017, a summary of outcomes both in numbers and content, for all the different level of

60 ibid., p. 17.
61 ibid., p. 18.
63 ibid., p. 17.
educations in Slovenia, to state why Erasmus+ and its predecessor programmes are a story of success in Slovenia. In the context of primary schools, positive outcomes included the motivation of teachers to include innovation and new methodologies in their teaching resulting from exchanges of good practices, knowledge and understanding of other educational systems, development of relevant skills. In numbers within the period of 2007 and 2016 in total 76% of all existing primary schools in Slovenia were involved with EU Projects with more than 3.800 teachers collaborating. With regard to middle schools, the most positive impacts were seen in the collaboration between teachers and development of a more efficient school environment, use of modern and innovative methodologies of teaching, quality increase in pragmatic training of student, and visibility of the school in the local community. From 2007 to 2016, 97% of all existing middle schools in Slovenia collaborated in an Erasmus+ or predecessor programme and 3,800 teachers and 8,600 could take advantage of mobility possibilities. In the context of secondary and higher secondary education the positive outcomes included a professional and beneficial development of employees skills in the secondary sector, boost in innovation in teaching methods, visibility of institutions also at a national level, collaboration with foreign countries on development of best practices and collaboration also with foreign researchers. In number in the period between 2007 and 2016, 79% of all existing secondary and higher secondary institutions participated in projects of EU programs, in total 4.100 professors and 13.00 students exploited mobility opportunities and in total a €53 million budget was given for participation in the programmes. Last, in the field of adult education, positive outcomes included the promotion of new teaching material, development of common goals and strategies throughout organisations and more dialogue between them, openness of these organisations towards the local communities and greater visibility.

According to the Mid-Term Report of Slovenia in the context of Education at an institutional level Erasmus+ impacts professional development in individual development of participants, influences the learning environment and the quality and internationalisation of institutions. At a system level, it influences, through compliance with EU priorities, quality on all levels of education in Slovenia, internationalisation of secondary and particularly higher education, as well as development of best practices with foreign countries.

The Director of the national agency for youth (MOVIT) affirmed that the Programme is incredibly beneficial and relevant for Slovenia as on national level the youth sector is granted few support, especially from a budget perspective. From interview with stakeholders of the relevant sector, the overall perceptions coincide with the ones of MOVIT. In fact, according to youth organisations Erasmus+ is the only stable financial resource for the development and implementation of youth work. The most effective outcome of Erasmus+ according to youth organisations is the enhancement of the international dimension of youth activities and the enhancement of the capability of youth workers and relevant stakeholders to support young people in Slovenia. The Mid-Term evaluation of the Erasmus+ in the youth sector demonstrates that the vast majority (64%) of stakeholders believes that Erasmus+ is truly relevant to tackle problematics of the youth sector in Slovenia. In total circa 70% of evaluators of the Mid-Term, believe that the

67 Mlad.si 'Erasmus+ širii obzorja in spreminja življenja, 4 Oktober 2017.
69 Natioanl Data Collection, Mladinski Center Trbovlje, Zavod Voluntariat.
Erasmus+ Programme is either very well or well known within the youth sector.\textsuperscript{71} However, the same evaluators believe that only around 21\% of young people knows very well or well about the Erasmus+ programme. In comparison to the period 2010-2013, the number of projects, which include youth from disadvantaged groups augmented by 150\% in the period 2014-2016, and the number of young people coming from disadvantaged groups increased in this period by 55\%.\textsuperscript{72} The most robust outcomes in the youth sector are seen in KA1 as this action is designed for individuals, it has a high number of young people involved, it provides for immediate results and it includes the most successful action of EVS in Slovenia. On the other hand, both KA2 and KA3 have more far-reaching objectives, and the results are not yet as visible as for KA1. Participants in Erasmus+ Projects in Slovenia affirmed that they mostly learnt about cultural differences and acceptance, that they value more cultural differences and feel European. They also believe that their competences increased in terms of foreign languages and that now with more ease move to foreign countries, as well as became more independent.\textsuperscript{73} Overall, these numbers prove that through the years the Erasmus+ Programme contributed significantly to the development of the youth sector in Slovenia.

The tables and graphs below provide a visual indication of what the outcomes of Erasmus+ have been in Bulgaria. Results for Key Actions 1 and 2 are provided, and for the Sports field and Jean Monnet activities. Key Action 3 outcomes were rather variable and few comparable numbers are available for this area at the national level; instead, Key Action 3 data is provided in the main report.

**Key Action 1**

Below you can find the quantitative results regarding Key Action 1 in terms of the amount of projects and participants (of successfully funded proposals) for Slovenia in the period 2014-2016. For the sake of comparison, only complete data entries are considered. This means that the small centralized sub-actions are not considered and “Higher education students & staff mobility” is considered one category, since the distinction between mobility between and within programme countries was not yet made in 2014.

\textsuperscript{71} Vmesno nacionalno poročilo o implementaciji in učinkih programa Erasmus+ Mladi v Akciji, p. 106.
\textsuperscript{72} Mladinfogram 03/2017, ‘Kaj je pokazala vmeasna evaluacija programa Erasmus+: Mladi v Akciji?’
\textsuperscript{73} Mladinfogram 03/2017, ‘Kaj je pokazala vmeasna evaluacija programa Erasmus+: Mladi v Akciji?’
Key Action 1 - Learning mobility of individuals

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Key Action 2

Below you can find the quantitative results, the amount of successful projects (those awarded funding) regarding Key Action 2 in Slovenia for the main decentralized actions in the period 2014-2016. For the sake of comparison, “Strategic Partnerships for School Education” is regarded as a single category, since not in every year the data both including and excluding “Schools only” is reported.
Sports

Below you can find the quantitative results, the amount of projects awarded funding, regarding the Sports category for Slovenia in the period 2014-2016. Important to note is that small collaborative partnerships did not start until 2016 onwards.

Jean Monnet

Below you can find the quantitative results, the amount of projects awarded funding, regarding the Jean Monnet activities for Slovenia in the period 2014-2016.

### Budget

Below you can find the outcomes regarding funding through the national agency/agencies of Slovenia for the period 2014-2015. The budget is split over the five different categories, with three amounts shown for each one. The Work Programme budget is the planned budget that is set before the start of the year, the EU commitments are “the amounts allocated by the Commission to the NA through the delegation agreements”, and the NA commitments are “the amounts granted by the NA through the various actions and projects.”

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7.3. National policy debates and coherence of Erasmus+

One of the issues, which is discussed at political level in Slovenia, is how to increase employability of low skilled and the elderly workers specifically with targeted measures in the field of lifelong learning. Moreover, the educational system in Slovenia faces issues due to the size of demographic cohorts, which increases year by year in elementary school, increase which is then not registered in higher education.74 Another national policy debate that made constant news with regard to the education system in Slovenia was the 2015 Slovenian Constitutional Court decision that all private basic school programme should be fully funded by public funds,75 making it at unique case in the EU. This decision was faced with resistance and opposition, with trade union asking the constitution to entrench full public funding only to public schools. Moreover, with regard to modernisation of school education in 2016, the Ministry adopted a Decree to rationalise the network of basic schools to make better use of school place.76

In July 2016, Slovenia adopted a strategy for the internationalisation of higher education, from our national data collection; some of the most relevant HE institutions were involved in the policy debate for modernization and internationalisation of pedagogical processes. An issue that they presented is the use of the Slovenian language in the education process as being much prescribed by the law, making it difficult to introduce education courses only in English language and therefore having problems providing courses to foreign students.77 With regard to adult education, the main Adult Learning Association, ASC, informed us of an in process renovation of the Adult Education Act with stress on literacy, improvement of basic skills and key competences, non-formal ALE programmes, training and awareness campaigns.78

Before describing which the current debates in the youth sector are, it is crucial to present the status of youth policy, or lack thereof in Slovenia. In fact, the main issue specifically seems to be the lack of an efficient national policy and lack of budget therein. The Director of the NA for Youth stated that the funding at national level has not changed for year and that the situation in the last years did not improve. He affirms that if it is true that financial support is reflection of political will, looking at the current national numbers for youth work demonstrates that this might not be a priority.79 Therefore, Erasmus+ covers also basic and essential aspects of an absent national policy. Within this background, the national data collection suggests that the Office of the Republic of Slovenia for Youth presented some priorities in the last period with focus on employment of young people and the transition of young people from education to the labour market.80

7.3.1 Alignment national priorities with Erasmus+

The majority of stakeholders, which responded to the mid-term evaluation questionnaire, agreed that the objectives of Erasmus+ are consistent with national objectives in the field of education. The majority of respondents also seem to agree that Erasmus+ complements

74 Pregled izobraževanja, in usposabljanja 2016 – Slovenija, Evropksa Komisija,
76 Ibid; Uredba o dopolnitvi Uredbe o merilih za oblikovanje javne mreže osnovnih šol, in zavodov za vzgojo in izobraževanje otrok in madostnikov s posebnimi potrebami ter havne mreže glasbenih šol, 24 Maj 2016.
77 National Data Collection: University of Ljubljana.
78 National Data Collection: Andragoški center Slovenije (ACS).
80 Urad Republike Slovenije za Mladino, informaton available at http://www.ursm.gov.si/si/javni_razpisi_in_облave/; National data collection relevant youth organisations: Mladinski Center Trbovlje
national focuses and policies of education. However, with regard to both statements, a large group was undecided, the issue being respondents do not agree with regard to which are the national priorities. What is particularly true for preschool, primary and secondary education is that relevant stakeholders and respondents did not know which the national objectives were, making it more difficult for them to assess their alignment with the objectives at European level. An objective, which demonstrates lack of alignment, is the teaching in a foreign (English) language as this is limited by Slovenian legislation. Moreover, there appears to be disagreements as to the effectiveness of Erasmus+ in educational policy development. 54% of the external experts that participated in the questionnaire for the Mid-Term believe that Erasmus+ had no impact on national policy development with regard to education. Dissemination seems to be the issue for KA1 and KA2 not having more of a significant impact on policy development. With regard to KA3, the issue is the duration of the projects (longer projects might lead to policy development). Moreover, the Ministry for Education, Science and Sport does not formulate educational priorities sufficiently.

With regard to youth there appears to be a general perception of coherence between the Erasmus+ Programme and national objectives. However, there also seem to be a perception that the government does not support the youth sector to a degree that would allow Erasmus+ to be supplementing rather than providing basic existential needs to the sector. In fact, it is evident from the National Report of the youth sector that Erasmus+ contributed to a very large or a large extent (over 70% of evaluators) to outcomes that would not exist if there had been national action, clearly demonstrating the vital European added value in the field of youth. Erasmus+ Youth in Action left visible traces in policy development at Slovenian national level. The programme has become a tool for new policy mechanisms, for testing new ideas as well as innovative approaches. The programme achieves clear synergetic effects with national policy in the field of youth and improved the position of the NA MOVIT, which became an influential policy agenda setter. Youth organizations also presented recommendation for alignment with two opposite views. First, a number of stakeholders believes that the Commission should seek flexibility of the programme and further discretion to national agencies to address local needs and adapt objectives to local idiosyncrasies. On the other hand, a number of stakeholders believe that the government should update and adapt the national programme to further compatibility with the objectives of Erasmus+.

82 Vmesno nacionalno poročilo o implementaciji učinkih programa Erasmus+, CMEPIUS, 2017, p. 9.
84 Vmesno nacionalno poročilo o implementaciji in učinkih programa Erasmus+ Mladi v Akciji, p. 109.
8. **SPAIN**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organisation</th>
<th>Spanish Service for the Internationalisation of the Education (SEPIE)</th>
<th>National Spanish Youth Agency (INJUVE)</th>
</tr>
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<td>Responsible Ministries</td>
<td>Ministry of Education, Culture, and Sport (MECD)</td>
<td>Ministry of Health, Social Services and Equity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other relevant organisations</td>
<td>-</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

8.1. **Overall perceptions of Erasmus+ in Spain**

The current Erasmus+ structure offers visibility to the programme given the re-branding under one single umbrella composed of all predecessor programmes’ actions and areas (Grundtvig, Erasmus, Leonardo, Comenius, Erasmus Mundus, Youth in Action…), and the recognisability of the name simplifies the dissemination of projects results and effectiveness of the Erasmus+ programme overall. However, this integration resulted also in a complicated transition period, which required adjustment at different levels, and application organisations adapting to the new procedures. During the interviews, one organisation stated that the merger of all predecessor programmes might help to understand the whole concept, values, and objectives of the programme. However, the guide or the support material now is more complicated to read and understand for new organisations in the Programme, with technical language. In this sense, the previous guide was clearer.

The Programme in the field of education and training is generally considered as well-known with new promotion and dissemination strategies (new IT tools, communication activities) increasing the programme both in quantity and quality. As for the effectiveness related to the dissemination of the programme, the education authorities consider it appropriate.

In the field of VET, IT tools within application procedure present a number of technical difficulties with constant changes and updates, which lead to time waste and unnecessary attention by the applicant organisations. As above stated, the administrative burden initially increased for applicant organisation during the transition period, as both the national agencies and the beneficiaries had to adapt to the new system, leading to some efficiency and quality disruption in that phase. One challenge which is still present but which seems to improve year by year, is the difficulty for smaller actors to apply for strategic partnerships. That said, the integration and current design are now consolidated and the advantages of such integration now clearly stand out for predecessor programmes, such as Comenius and Leonardo, which benefit substantially from the visibility of the single grand, Erasmus+.

In the youth field, the previously described integration is seen as positive with clear continuity of the predecessor programmes, and a less problematic transition period compared to the education and training field. The Mid-term reveals that synergies between actions are clearly perceived in the youth field and that cooperation between sectors has

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significantly improved. Moreover, also the youth area was positively impacted by the single image of Erasmus+ as with greater visibility, a greater number of projects could be subsidised.\(^{87}\) However, there are still some challenges to face, and the synergies did bring positive outcomes as well as some confusion about the pertinence of a project in one or another sector. Moreover, some regional authorities and beneficiary entities state that one of the main difficulties is to reach the young people with fewer opportunities. Apart from that, after the integration process, youth initiatives like Youth in Action are considered to have remained in the framework of Key Action 2 and, in this sense, the European Commission should develop strategies to differentiate and focus on the added value of the youth chapter. The interviews conducted within the national data collection have revealed (at least in the Youth field) that KA3 (structural dialogue) must be developed in Spain, as policy makers are not yet fully aware of this type of projects’ and their value.

In the particular case of the former programme Youth in Action, interviewed institutions stated that the way to calculate travel expenses has improved significantly, as now participants’ travel costs in mobility are covered entirely (100%), unlike before. It is considered a relevant step forward mainly for those people with less resources. In addition, the fact that now participants in training courses receive also the aid for travel expenses (as those participating in mobility) is something favourable.

With regard to the budget and financial resources, a number of qualitative projects cannot be supported because of lack of funding.\(^{88}\) In this sense, the percentage of beneficiary institutions that consider that the budget support is very adequate reaches 60.8%. Higher Education is the educational field that offers the lowest score with a 39.4% of high satisfaction. With this regard, despite the rise in budget for the higher education sector, the high demand leads to a lower support for students in HE compared to students at intermediate VET level.\(^{89}\) The Mid-Term also reports a level of dissatisfaction with regard to the calculation method for budget distribution among participating countries, given the relative growth of the country places it at a disadvantaged position compared to the LLP calculation. On the other hand, national agencies regard the human resources as appropriate.

The communication between the national agencies and the beneficiaries improved under the Erasmus+ programme with the optimisation of work processes. Also in the field of youth, cooperation between the national agency responsible and division of tasks with national authorities is regarded as positive.

### 8.2. Outcomes of Erasmus+

In the fields of Education and training, between the years 2014 and 2016, the Erasmus+ Programme in Spain supported 5,683 projects, while in the field of youth a total of 1,604 projects. Taking into account that Spain has high level of youth unemployment, the orientation of the Programme in Spain is to increase the possibilities of finding a job, and in fact the participants in KA1 generally consider that their possibilities for finding employment grow after having taken part in a European educational programme (especially students or trainees): 87.7% of KA107 students, 82.6% of KA102 participants, 81.9% of participants of KA103-students and 86% of KA103-trainees consider that their job opportunities have increased. Many participants saw a clear connection between their mobility experience and the quality or opportunity of employment that followed. At the

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\(^{87}\) National Report Spain, Mid-term Evaluation Erasmus+, 2017, p. 32.  
\(^{88}\) ibid, p. 25.  
\(^{89}\) ibid, p. 30.
state level, many advances in educational policy and youth policy have been produced linked to European current and former educational programmes (Lifelong Learning Programme, E+, Erasmus Mundus, etc.), some examples include state financing for mobility in the field of higher education, the introduction of legislation for the European Diploma Supplement, etc.\(^9^0\)

The tables and graphs below provide a visual indication of what the outcomes of Erasmus+ have been in Bulgaria. Results for Key Actions 1 and 2 are provided, and for the Sports field and Jean Monnet activities. Key Action 3 outcomes were rather variable and few comparable numbers are available for this area at the national level; instead, Key Action 3 data is provided in the main report.

**Key Action 1**
Below you can find the quantitative results regarding Key Action 1 in terms of the amount of projects and participants (of successfully funded proposals) for Spain in the period 2014-2016. For the sake of comparison, only complete data entries are considered. This means that the small centralized sub-actions are not considered and “Higher education students & staff mobility” is considered one category, since the distinction between mobility between and within programme countries was not yet made in 2014.

![Key Action 1 - Learning mobility of individuals](chart.png)

**Source:** Erasmus+ Annual Reports 2014, 2015, 2016

\(^9^0\) National Report Spain, Mid-term Evaluation Erasmus+, 2017, p. 18.
**Key Action 1 - Learning mobility of individuals**


**Key Action 2**

Below you can find the quantitative results, the amount of successful projects (those awarded funding) regarding Key Action 2 in Spain for the main decentralized actions in the period 2014-2016. For the sake of comparison, “Strategic Partnerships for School Education” is regarded as a single category, since not in every year the data both including and excluding “Schools only” is reported.

**Sports**
Below you can find the quantitative results, the amount of projects awarded funding, regarding the Sports category for Spain in the period 2014-2016. Important to note is that small collaborative partnerships did not start until 2016 onwards.

![Sports Chart]

**Jean Monnet**
Below you can find the quantitative results, the amount of projects awarded funding, regarding the Jean Monnet activities for Spain in the period 2014-2016.

![Jean Monnet Activities Chart]

**Source:** Erasmus+ Annual Reports 2014, 2015, 2016
Budget
Below you can find the outcomes regarding funding through the national agency/agencies of Spain for the period 2014-2015. The budget is split over the five different categories, with three amounts shown for each one. The Work Programme budget is the planned budget that is set before the start of the year, the EU commitments are “the amounts allocated by the Commission to the NA through the delegation agreements”, and the NA commitments are “the amounts granted by the NA through the various actions and projects.

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8.3. National policy debates and coherence of Erasmus+

As far as main changes going on in Spain in the field of education and training, youth and sports, there is a strong tendency towards the modernisation of the education system. According to the Education and Training Monitor 2016 Spain, in Spain important discussions are taking place regarding aspects like the modernisation of Higher Education, VET and adult learning as a whole. As for the higher education, for example the cooperation between universities, public sector and the business sector remains a challenge. Stakeholders identify funding, relational barriers and excessive bureaucracy as the main obstacles to cooperation between universities, research institutions and businesses. In addition, the university governance and financing systems do not provide enough incentives for cooperation, and the teachers’ recruitment and career promotion system is another burden, which limits staff mobility both among institutions and between universities and businesses. Moreover, the university financing system is mainly based on quantitative criteria and does not reward innovation.

Following the same line, Spain is reforming the VET system to better adapt young people’s skills to the labour market needs and to increase the attractiveness, transparency and acceptance of VET programmes. It is doing so by reforming the catalogue of diplomas offered both for medium-level and high-level VET and increasing the flexibility of the curricula of medium-level VET programmes. In line with the European Credit system for Vocational Education and Training (ECVET) principles, mobility has also gained some attention and some steps have been taken to implement regional mobility systems.

As for the main national debates going on, debates related to employment and youth entrepreneurship in Spain are mainly based on the unemployment issue. The debate shows a disparity of approaches between the concept of youth unemployment because of the economic and financial crisis, and another broader perspective pointing towards economic and social planning. Some analysis point to the need to emphasise policies on youth who have not reached a high level of training, taking into account that the highest rates of youth unemployment are found in the age group between 16 and 24 years of age: that is, young people who drop out early from the training cycle. This leads to the age issue, the establishment of a closed age range delimiting what is understood as youth, a concept that expands to ever-older age in developed societies. Another debate is related to the need to establish youth employment policies with an emphasis on gender, understanding that this is crucial in order to address different problems of labour market integration and consolidation.

The Youth worker element is another initiative projected to be developed in the Spanish employment and youth entrepreneurship system. It entails the introduction of personnel specialised in orientation and implementation of measures related to youth employment from different bodies and institutions. In all, the main debate on the matter that takes place in Spain is the one related to the education system reform, and on how to promote entrepreneurship culture from this system. At the same time, how to favour the achievement of skills in non-formal and informal education and its recognition is the object of discussion.

### 8.3.1 Alignment national priorities with Erasmus+

The relationship between the objectives of the E+ Programme in Spain and the general objectives framed within the Europe 2020 Strategy and the Education Training 2020 Strategy is a direct one. In the same line, it can be said that the E+ Programme contributes to the achievement of the objectives of the Programme in Spain, and the impact that E+ has on the educational system and on Spanish youth is unquestionable. Accordingly, the Spanish government has always considered the E+ Programme an important tool for Spanish students, specifically in the field of Higher Education, for the development of relevant competences. On the other hand, apart from state level actors, other territorial and institutional levels are also relevant, as some regional or local programme are available in Spain, which complement Erasmus+. An example of such initiatives are internationalisation strategies related to local priorities, such as the Smart Specialisation Strategy (RIS3).\(^92\)

9. **POLAND**

Organisation of Erasmus+

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<td>Other relevant organisations</td>
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</table>

9.1. **Overall perceptions of Erasmus+ in Poland**

The Erasmus+ programme is considered very useful. Numerous different organisations are very keen on participating in it. It allows the beneficiaries from different backgrounds to understand the idea and values of the EU widen their horizons and open to cooperation at the EU level. It induces changes for individuals, organisations, systems, practices, policy, at all levels of society in many spheres of life, such as personal and professional. It also helps to promote the countries, the regions and the beneficiaries in the international area. One can also notice an increase in the beneficiaries' prestige in the local environment.

Erasmus+ and its integrated nature and harmonisation of rules, manuals, terminology, etc., facilitate programme management and make it more efficient. This is also favourable for beneficiaries and allows them to combine activities from different key actions. Covering the whole Programme with a single recognisable name has contributed to making it more visible and transparent. On the other hand, this harmonisation of programme rules and documents does not fully address specificity of individual sectors; e.g. in the case of Adult Education, difficulties for smaller and less experienced NGOs are emphasised, particularly major administrative barriers. Administrative burdens include more extensive programme documents, written in a formal language that is difficult to understand (and as a result there are now fewer programme participants – for instance in the previous rounds, under the Grundtvig programme, almost 150 organisations applied, while currently there are only approx. 40 such organisations, and they mainly include the biggest organisations). In general, Erasmus+ addresses specificity of this sector to a lesser extent, and the change in the forms of co-financing (now the coordinator distributes funding, and the lump-sum-based system, which covered all activities implemented under project, was replaced by budget categories) raises fear among smaller organisations, which prevents them from applying. In the case of School Education, it is emphasised that elimination of the rigid (lump sum based) rates would contribute to the increase in the number of participants in exchanges and placements.

In general, the need to monitor and improve the current mechanisms of programme implementation is emphasised, since people get used to specific methods of operations. Erasmus+ was easier to understand for people who have not been familiar with the previous programmes. Predecessor programmes’ users found the new principles, rules and mechanisms more difficult to understand. That is why the next perspective should not introduce major changes; it should only enhance the current mechanisms, IT system in...
particular. Moreover, the specificity of the individual sectors should be addressed to a greater extent (the language should be easier to understand, the way of reporting should be simplified, and the budget categories should be eliminated in the case of small projects).

The system of support and communication with the NA mainly covers publicity and information activities that are oriented to potential applicants, with the aim of disseminating the information on the opportunity of benefitting from funding available under the Programme, as well as adapting generally available materials to the specificity of the individual target groups. Funds used in these activities are mainly spent on Internet-related measures (web sites – for instance to develop answers to frequently asked questions, social media, newsletter, and glossary), radio and TV programmes, sectoral and general programme videos, direct meetings, conferences, workshops, fairs, trainings, publications developed by the NA. Monitoring is an additional source of support – apart from the standard verification of the accuracy of task performance; it also supports beneficiaries to make sure that they implement optimum solutions. Programme stakeholders and beneficiaries assess all these activities as efficient, and claim that they deliver intended outcomes. However, the following needs have been reported:

- A broad support to the applicants, particularly to those who are less experienced in project preparation,
- A greater access to trainings and conferences through organising them in other (than Warsaw) cities,
- More trainings and workshops delivered in the form of webinars,
- Facilitating the process of translation of documents that are required at the stage of applications’ development.

Contacts with the EU level involve numerous effective tools; however, it would be useful to modify the rules of establishing working groups for specific sectors, for instance by separating two teams in the groups’ composition, i.e. the standing team (know-how accumulation) and the rotational team.

The scale of financing available under Erasmus+ is assessed as adequate for the planned objectives, which is also due to the option of using European Social Fund (ESF) funding to implement additional and large projects. This facilitates implementation of good quality projects from the ranking lists, as well as granting additional support to disfavoured groups (disabled people, people with a poor material status). In the future, increase in the programme budget in order to raise the level of remuneration of employees of organisations, which take part in the international cooperation under strategic partnerships, should be considered. It would strengthen the motivation to conclude partnerships and initiate the cooperation, especially that differences in the rates of remuneration paid to representatives of various countries are perceived as significant and unjust to employees of Polish organisations.

The monitoring and reporting requirements for applicant organisations are assessed to be friendly, however smaller organisations perceive dispersion of the databases used for specific reporting components problematic.

9.2. Outcomes of Erasmus+

In Poland, the Erasmus+ Programme is generally well known, especially in the higher education, school education and VET sector. On the other hand, in the adult and youth sector the programme while known does not reflect the same application potential by
organisations as in other sectors. The main outcomes in Poland include the internationalization of the education and training sectors, opportunities for youth to increase intercultural communication, increase language competences across all levels of participants, and self-reliance. The initiatives that were reported as most effective for the development of key competences were mobility of VET learners and school education staff and the initiative which best-offered support for labour market participants were student traineeships and again mobility of VET students. According to the national report, the NA declared that Erasmus+ Programme support led to educational reforms and development of new curricula. Moreover, youth stakeholders participating in KA3 believe the action leads to youth involvement in community life and local politics.

The tables and graphs below provide a visual indication of what the outcomes of Erasmus+ have been in Bulgaria. Results for Key Actions 1 and 2 are provided, and for the Sports field and Jean Monnet activities. Key Action 3 outcomes were rather variable and few comparable numbers are available for this area at the national level; instead, Key Action 3 data is provided in the main report.

Key Action 1
Below you can find the quantitative results regarding Key Action 1 in terms of the amount of projects and participants (of successfully funded proposals) for Poland in the period 2014-2016. For the sake of comparison, only complete data entries are considered. This means that the small centralized sub-actions are not considered and “Higher education students & staff mobility” is considered one category, since the distinction between mobility between and within programme countries was not yet made in 2014.

### Key Action 1 - Learning mobility of individuals

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<th>Category</th>
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</table>

**Source:** Erasmus+ Annual Reports 2014, 2015, 2016.
Key Action 2
Below you can find the quantitative results, the amount of successful projects (those awarded funding) regarding Key Action 2 in Poland for the main decentralized actions in the period 2014-2016. For the sake of comparison, “Strategic Partnerships for School Education” is regarded as a single category, since not in every year the data both including and excluding “Schools only” is reported.

**Sports**
Below you can find the quantitative results, the amount of projects awarded funding, regarding the Sports category for Poland in the period 2014-2016. Important to note is that small collaborative partnerships did not start until 2016 onwards.

![Sport category chart](chart.png)

**Source:** Erasmus+ Annual Reports 2014, 2015, 2016.

**Jean Monnet**
Below you can find the quantitative results, the amount of projects awarded funding, regarding the Jean Monnet activities for Poland in the period 2014-2016.

![Jean Monnet activities chart](chart.png)

**Source:** Erasmus+ Annual Reports 2014, 2015, 2016.
Budget
Below you can find the outcomes regarding funding through the national agency/agencies of Poland for the period 2014-2015. The budget is split over the five different categories, with three amounts shown for each one. The Work Programme budget is the planned budget that is set before the start of the year, the EU commitments are “the amounts allocated by the Commission to the NA through the delegation agreements”, and the NA commitments are “the amounts granted by the NA through the various actions and projects.

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9.3. National policy debates and coherence of Erasmus+

The main accents of the debate concern internationalisation, improved quality of education, increasing employment-related opportunities, enhancing key skills, interculturalism and care for equal opportunities. In the case of Adult Education, the accent is placed on people with low skills and disfavoured people. In the case of Youth Policy the accent is placed on the quality of education, providing equal opportunities (also for disabled people) and a broad inclusion of young people in civil activity and active and conscious participation in social life (it concerns KA3 in the section concerning development of youth policy and participation in democratic structures in particular). In the case of Sport, the main accents are placed on the role of sport in developing social-, development- and health-friendly behaviours, which provide the basis for sound social capital (team games, team cooperation, rivalry, tolerance, and respect for opponents, etc.) and modern life style.

9.3.4 Alignment national priorities with Erasmus+

ERASMUS+ aligns with the national policies, in particular:

- With the Strategy for Responsible Development (SRD), the field of the 2nd detailed objective: Socially and Territorially Sustainable Development, in the section concerning: (i) Social Cohesion; (ii) Territorially Sustainable Development. Directions of Support of Erasmus+ Programme are in line with the diagnosis indicated in Chapter: ‘Human and Social Capital’ of the SRD;

- With the objectives laid down in the Operational Programme Knowledge, Education, Development (PO WER), particularly in the section concerning reduction in the number of young people dropping out from the system of education, formal and informal
educational paths, adaptation of education to the needs of the labour market, and social inclusion;
• With the education reform, in the School Education sector in particular, e.g. through support to development of new curricula and the use of modern technologies in teaching, and in the Education and Vocational Training sector, e.g. through support to cooperation between schools and employers);
• With the higher education and science reform, particularly in the section concerning improvement of quality of education and scientific research, and internationalisation.
10. THE UNITED KINGDOM

Organisation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>National Agencies</th>
<th>British Council, in partnership with Ecorys UK</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
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<td>Department for Education</td>
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<td>Other relevant organisations</td>
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10.1. Overall perceptions of Erasmus+ in the UK

Under the new umbrella of a single brand, the Erasmus+ Programme is generally known and more recognized compared to its predecessors. The presence of a single national agency had positive results in synergies of expertise and experiences throughout all sectors of decentralised action. The positive perception and knowledge of the Programme is also enhanced by the communication strategy of the national agencies, which promotes the programme through other field events and activities expanding the audience and rendering Erasmus+ more visible.97

The impacts of Erasmus+ and the projects it supports are seen as very favourable. Interviewees note that the mobility projects especially have a strong added value amongst youths from rural and/or disadvantaged backgrounds. Precisely those students, who are further removed from cities and live in comparatively poorer areas, would otherwise not have the opportunity to travel and broaden their cultural horizons. Erasmus+ therefore provides a comparatively stronger added value and impact for these youths because if it were not for the Erasmus+ programme, such youths would not generally leave their area, let alone their country. Some students and youths need to order a first passport even for a two-week class or group trip; they would not have been inclined to apply for a passport if not for Erasmus+. In this sense, Erasmus+ has a rich and transversal effect.

For teachers and trainers of youths in more disadvantaged areas, there is a similarly, comparatively higher impact and added value of being able to travel, set-up strategic partnerships or share knowledge and practices amongst each other. Teachers and trainers working in more rural or disadvantaged areas, tend to be at work in organisations which are also less well financed, and do not generally organised such initiatives for their staff. Erasmus+ plays an important role for the teachers and trainers of students and youths at risk of social exclusion.

At the implementation level, concerning IT Tools, in the UK, in the initial phases of transition, the tools led to management inefficiencies and disrupted the projects implementation, however currently the tools have indeed been improved with still margin of improvement.98 Regarding budget, it is recommended that national agencies enjoy greater discretion in establishing the division of funds between the sectors and it is underlined that some actions require higher attribution of funding, namely school and adult education, and mobility of youth workers.99 Specifically for KA2 an increase in budget would

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99 Ibid, p. 10. 11.
not only be promptly absorbed but is a definite requirement in the UK, while other fields are reported to have adequate resources. Moreover, stakeholders expressed the wish, as other countries, for a bigger allocation of resources for dissemination of projects results and other relevant activities.

10.2. Outcomes of Erasmus+

The impacts of Erasmus+ and the projects it supports are seen as very favourable. Interviewees note that the mobility projects especially have a strong added value amongst youths from rural and/or disadvantaged backgrounds. Precisely those students, who are further removed from cities and live in comparatively poorer areas, would otherwise not have the opportunity to travel and broaden their cultural horizons. Erasmus+ therefore provides a comparatively stronger added value and impact for these youths because if it were not for the Erasmus+ programme, such youths would not generally leave their area, let alone their country. Some students and youths need to order a first passport even for a two-week class or group trip; they would not have been inclined to apply for a passport if not for Erasmus+. In this sense, Erasmus+ has a rich and transversal effect.

For teachers and trainers of youths in more disadvantaged areas, there is a similarly, comparatively higher impact and added value of being able to travel, set-up strategic partnerships or share knowledge and practices amongst each other. Teachers and trainers working in more rural or disadvantaged areas, tend to be at work in organisations which are also less well financed, and do not generally organised such initiatives for their staff. Erasmus+ plays an important role for the teachers and trainers of students and youths at risk of social exclusion.

A note, which should be made regarding the outcomes of Erasmus+, is that although the projects funded have a comparatively high impact amongst disadvantaged individuals, notably students and youths, there is still an organisational bias in who uses Erasmus+. The interviewed applicants from the UK, as well as the national literature available, all indicate that smaller, poorer, and new applicant organisations face comparatively higher challenges to meeting the eligibility criteria, and in having the time and resources to prepare an application. This same issue is cited in most of the countries studied, but is no less true for the UK. In the UK in particular, societal fault lines have emerged more sharply in recent years, culminating with the Brexit referendum.

The UK national report on Erasmus+ indicates that actions such as strategic partnerships and mobility of other actors positively influence the quality of teaching and adoption of new innovative working methods, implementation of foreign good practices etc. The Erasmus+ Programme within the UK only influenced national policy selectively with an example in Northern Ireland where the programme contributed to HE Strategic Objectives in the field of mobility, a more general impact on increased language competences, and in the innovation of curricula and teaching methods.

The tables and graphs below provide a visual indication of what the outcomes of Erasmus+ have been in Bulgaria. Results for Key Actions 1 and 2 are provided, and for the Sports field and Jean Monnet activities. Key Action 3 outcomes were rather variable and few comparable numbers are available for this area at the national level; instead, Key Action 3 data is provided in the main report.

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100 National Report UK, Mid-Term Evaluation of the Erasmus+ Programme, 2017, p. 11, 12.
101 Ibid., p. 7.
**Key Action 1**
Below you can find the quantitative results regarding Key Action 1 in terms of the amount of projects and participants (of successfully funded proposals) for the United Kingdom in the period 2014-2016. For the sake of comparison, only complete data entries are considered. This means that the small centralized sub-actions are not considered and “Higher education students & staff mobility” is considered one category, since the distinction between mobility between and within programme countries was not yet made in 2014.

**Source:** Erasmus+ Annual Reports 2014, 2015, 2016.
Key Action 2
Below you can find the quantitative results, the amount of successful projects (those awarded funding) regarding Key Action 2 in the UK for the main decentralized actions in the period 2014-2016. For the sake of comparison, “Strategic Partnerships for School Education” is regarded as a single category, since not in every year the data both including and excluding “Schools only” is reported.


Sports
Below you can find the quantitative results, the amount of projects awarded funding, regarding the Sports category for the UK in the period 2014-2016. Important to note is that small collaborative partnerships did not start until 2016 onwards.

Jean Monnet

Below you can find the quantitative results, the amount of projects awarded funding, regarding the Jean Monnet activities for the UK in the period 2014-2016.

![Jean Monnet Activities Bar Chart]

**Source:** Erasmus+ Annual Reports 2014, 2015, 2016.

Budget

Below you can find the outcomes regarding funding through the national agency/agencies of the UK for the period 2014-2015. The budget is split over the five different categories, with three amounts shown for each one. The Work Programme budget is the planned budget that is set before the start of the year, the EU commitments are “the amounts allocated by the Commission to the NA through the delegation agreements”, and the NA commitments are “the amounts granted by the NA through the various actions and projects.”

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10.3. National policy debates and coherence of Erasmus+

In the UK, national policy debates have been the refugee and migrant, as well as inclusion of disabled people in education, the labour market, and society as a whole. In the UK, there is also the issue, as mentioned above, of certain societal dimensions and divisions becoming increasingly apparent. The Brexit Referendum was the pinnacle of this division manifesting itself, pointing to the division and mentality differences in age, race and nationality, and educational backgrounds. The comparative wealth, employment, and cosmopolitan attitude in the south and the London area contrast ever more sharply with the education, lower employment prospects in other areas of the UK. This societal division and the position of the UK regarding the EU are constant, salient national policy debates in the UK.

In the United Kingdom, for certain areas, the youth are a key target group, especially youths at risk of social exclusion. Particularly in the northern parts of the country, physical accessibility to Erasmus+ projects is an obstacle to participation, as most students do not have the money to drive or take public transport so easily to reach the project location. Added to this, is the fact that in the northern and/or more rural areas of the UK, the projects, which are set up through Erasmus+, are targeting the more socially disadvantaged students. These youths come from migrant or less well-educated backgrounds, and if not a financial disadvantage, these students often carry a more negative mentality regarding the EU and its benefits, and more closed attitudes to migrants. In this context, the Erasmus+ programme has the potential to help counter such closed and anti-EU mentalities, by promoting travel and mobility, and support for disadvantaged groups, as well as helping to promote European values.

10.3.1. Alignment national priorities with Erasmus+

In the United Kingdom, some key areas of policy focus have been the refugee and migrant, as well as inclusion of disabled people in education, the labour market, and society as a whole.

Concerning the alignment between national priorities and the annual orientation of Erasmus+, interviewed individuals indicate that the programme allows for the freedom and space to promote projects and activities, which are in line with national needs. One main topic is the issue of migrants and refugees, ICT in education (a relevant policy priority generally, but gains a lot of attention in the UK). Beyond this global impression that the breadth of Erasmus+ is beneficial, the degree to which the annual orientation of the programme fits with national priorities in the UK is rather mixed.

In the United Kingdom, for certain areas, the youth are a key target group, especially youths at risk of social exclusion. Although Erasmus+ helps to target such individuals, the architecture of the programme could be adjusted to allow for more targeted support, which address the obstacles faced by those more disadvantaged groups when wanting to participate in Erasmus+ projects.

Furthermore, respondents to the UK national report highlighted the need for introducing national needs and priorities within the framework of the programme as the European priorities can be less relevant, especially in the field of education.103 Moreover, not only are

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the priorities included in Erasmus+ not always aligned in the UK, the objectives set out in the ET 2020 strategy were not regarded as being in line with the UK national policy.\textsuperscript{104}

The changing annual orientations are indeed felt by the applicants. There is a different focus every year on different topics. The national agency and their promotion activities help convey this (webinars, seminars, mail updates, etc.) changing emphasis on projects. The UK national agency is thought to be particularly good in how they disseminate information on the Erasmus+ programme, application deadlines and the changing annual project emphases.

\textsuperscript{104} Ibid., p. 9.
This annex contains user profiles for the 10 Member States, which were examined in the context of this study on Erasmus+. The Country User Profiles examine how Erasmus+ is perceived in the country, the overall outcomes of Erasmus+ in the country, and how the Erasmus+ programme aligns with the national level priorities in a country.