



Impact of Erasmus+ on the Adult Education Sector (second monitoring 2025/2026)

EU synthesis report RIA-AE Network

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Logo of authors



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Abbreviations

AE	Adult Education
EU	European Union
KA1	Key Action 1
KA2	Key Action 2
CS	Case Study
NA	National Agency
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisations
RIA-AE	Network for Research-based Impact Analysis of Erasmus+ Adult Education Programmes

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FOREWORD

The RIA-AE Network (Research-based Impact Analysis in Erasmus+ Adult Education Programmes) was established in 2022 as a transnational research network, funded by the European Union, to initiate and coordinate research and monitoring activities on Erasmus+ in the field of adult education. The Network aims to foster transnational comparative research and provide a robust evidence base for strengthening the impact of international cooperation and mobility projects in adult education. In doing so, it also seeks to contribute to the continued development and quality improvement of the Erasmus+ programme. The Network is open to new members and, at the beginning of 2026, brought together National Agencies (NAs) from 21 Erasmus+ programme countries.

In 2023–2024, the RIA-AE Network conducted its first coordinated transnational monitoring study on the impact of Erasmus+ in adult education. This first round of data collection resulted in a series of national reports and an EU synthesis report. Building on the experiences and findings of the first round, a second round of the study was implemented in 2025–2026. While continuing the broader monitoring of the impact of Erasmus+ in adult education, this second round placed particular emphasis on the programme’s horizontal priority “Participation in democratic life, common values and civic engagement.” In addition, greater attention was given to understanding the impact of Erasmus+ on adult learners themselves, supported by additional qualitative and quantitative research modules.

The second survey round demonstrates the strength and scope of the cooperation within the RIA-AE Network. In total, 21 countries participated in the data collection, although their involvement varied across the different research modules. The resulting national analyses comprised 18 country reports and three country factsheets. Together, these national contributions form the empirical foundation for this EU synthesis report and provide a unique comparative perspective on the reach, experiences and impacts of Erasmus+ in adult education across Europe.

This study could not have been realised without the commitment and cooperation of a large number of people and organisations. We would therefore like to express our sincere gratitude to the National Agency Education for Europe at the Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training (NA at BIBB), as the coordinating National Agency, and to all National Agencies participating in this second survey round. We are equally grateful to the researchers across the participating countries who contributed to the collection, analysis and interpretation of the evidence.

Most importantly, we would like to thank all those who participated in the research: the beneficiary organisations, their staff, adult learners, non-participating organisations and the wider group of stakeholders who shared their experiences and perspectives with us. Their willingness to participate in surveys, interviews, case studies and other research activities made this study possible.

The EU synthesis report was prepared by Ockham IPS, with specific contributions from Institute for Innovation and Technology (iit) to the chapter examining the impact on staff (chapter 4). Section 4.5, presenting the results of the pre- and post-measurements among adult learners, was written by Prof. Dr. Maurice de Greef (Artéduc). The additional attention given to adult learners in this second round has allowed the study to explore more deeply how participation in Erasmus+ can affect learners themselves, complementing the evidence on organisational, staff and wider systemic impacts.

We hope that the findings presented in this report will support reflection, learning and dialogue among National Agencies, policymakers, practitioners, researchers and other stakeholders in adult education. Above all, we hope that the evidence will contribute to further strengthening Erasmus+ and its capacity to create meaningful and lasting impact for adult learners, organisations and adult education systems across Europe.

PART A – EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This second survey round of the RIA-AE network examines the accessibility, inclusiveness and impact of Erasmus+ in adult education. It draws on European Commission programme data, a survey of beneficiary organisations, national research, country reports, case studies and qualitative and quantitative research among adult learners. Particular attention is given to the priority “Participation in democratic life, common values and civic engagement”.

The accessibility and inclusiveness of Erasmus+

Accessibility is strongly influenced by organisational capacity: limited staff time, administrative complexity and financial constraints are the most commonly reported barriers. KA2 projects present additional challenges related to partnership development, transnational coordination and competitive applications, while KA1 learner mobility requires substantial preparation, accompaniment and support, particularly for learners facing additional barriers.

Impact on organisations and staff

Beneficiaries report strong organisational and staff-level effects. Overall, 94.8% report that Erasmus+ improved their learning offer, while 97.4% report a positive impact on staff competences. Organisations introduce new topics, programmes, teaching methods and accessible forms of provision, while international cooperation strengthens networks, visibility, innovation and their European dimension. KA2 projects generate practical outputs such as curricula, manuals, training modules and digital tools; 71% of organisations continue to use these outputs rather much or very much after project completion, and a further 23% use them to some extent. Impact is most sustainable when Erasmus+ is strategically embedded in organisational development, knowledge is shared internally and outputs respond to concrete organisational and learner needs.

Staff report improvements in practical, pedagogical, international, organisational and management competences, alongside greater confidence, motivation and openness to innovation. Erasmus+ also increases awareness of diversity, inclusion, Europe, the EU and European values. Effects related to democratic participation and changes towards environmentally sustainable behaviour are reported less frequently. Staff turnover, workload, limited follow-up resources and weak internal knowledge transfer can reduce the durability of these effects.

Impact on learners

The available learner-level evidence concerns primarily KA1 mobility. Participant satisfaction is very high: 99% of individual-mobility participants report being satisfied or very satisfied. Frequently reported benefits include practical skills, foreign-language competence, confidence, independence and responsibility. Additional Module A, based on 24 qualitative interviews, identifies effects on intercultural learning, social connection, well-being and independent living, alongside more context-dependent effects on volunteering, civic engagement, European citizenship, work and environmental awareness. In Additional Module B, 96.1% of learners completing the pre- and post-test experienced progress in at least one measured area, including assertiveness, social connections, capability reflection, foreign-language use, intercultural attitudes, European citizenship and volunteering.

Impact beyond the organisational level

Impact beyond participating organisations is less consistently evidenced and more difficult to attribute. The strongest evidence concerns the dissemination and transfer of methods and materials and the continuation of cooperation networks. Effects on local communities, civic participation, policy dialogue and wider systemic change occur less frequently and are generally less well documented.

Characteristics of Erasmus+ projects addressing the priority of participation and civic engagement and impact in the thematic area

Although democratic participation is less prominent as a principal project focus than inclusion and digital transformation, 73% of beneficiaries report that at least one project addresses “Participation in democratic life, common values and civic engagement”, either directly (35%) or indirectly (38%). Projects most commonly promote European values, intercultural understanding, critical thinking and civic competences through educational provision, staff development and practical learning activities. Among the selected case studies, encouraging civic engagement is the most common primary impact narrative, while relatively few projects create opportunities for participation in democratic or public decision-making. Some cases have no clearly defined civic or democratic pathway, indicating that beneficiaries can face difficulties operationalising this broad thematic priority.

The thematic impact is strongest within organisations and among staff: 84.1% of beneficiaries report a stronger focus on the priority within their learning offer and 83.7% report relevant improvements in staff competences. Learner-level examples demonstrate increased confidence, voice, belonging, community involvement and, in some cases, volunteering or civic action. Overall, Erasmus+ contributes most visibly by strengthening common values, awareness, educational capacity and participation-related competences. Evidence of effects on formal political participation and public decision-making remains more limited. The programme nevertheless demonstrates strong added value: 91% of respondents report that their project would not have taken place without Erasmus+ support.

PART B – INTRODUCTION

1 Introduction

1.1 The Erasmus+ programme

Since at least the 1920s, international cooperation and internationalism in adult education have been viewed, to varying degrees, on the one hand as a contribution to peace and international understanding, and on the other hand as a means of further developing national systems and practices.¹ Through the Grundtvig programme, which was incorporated into the Erasmus+ programme in 2014, the European Union (EU) has been actively promoting international exchange in adult education since 2000. The importance of adult education in European educational cooperation – which, measured by the proportion of funding compared to other educational sectors within Erasmus+, had consistently been low – has grown since 2021.²

Through the Erasmus+ programme, the EU promotes international mobility and cooperation in the fields **of education, youth and sport**. In line with the principle of lifelong learning, the programme addresses learners and educational institutions across all sectors of education, from early childhood education through to adult education, including school, higher education and vocational education and training, as well as in sport and youth work. The programme's actions are designed to contribute to sustainable growth, secure high-quality jobs for citizens, promote innovation and strengthen social cohesion, European identity and active citizenship.

For the period 2021–2027, Erasmus+ comprises three **Key Actions (KA)**, as in the previous funding period (2014–2020). These relate to the learning mobility of individuals (KA1), cooperation between organisations and institutions (KA2) and support for policy development and policy cooperation (KA3).

In Key Actions 1 and 2, funding measures are implemented on a decentralised basis by national Erasmus+ agencies (NAs).³ Their tasks include publicising and providing information about the programme, supporting applicants and beneficiaries, implementing the funding processes, and cooperating with the European Commission and other NAs. The following objectives are pursued:

- **KA1 (Learning mobility of individuals):** The funded actions aim to promote the personal, professional and social development of learners and education staff

¹ Knoll, J. (1999). "Internationality" in adult education and continuing education. A historical sketch. *DIE Zeitschrift Für Erwachsenenbildung*, 6(2), 35–37.; Grotluschen, A. et al. (2022). Adult education from an international perspective: boundaries and opportunities. Series of the Adult Education Section of the German Society for Educational Research.

² The total budget for Erasmus+ for the 2021–2027 funding period is over 26 billion euros, which is significantly higher than the budget for the previous funding period (2014–2020). The specific allocation of funds to the individual education sectors is determined annually in the work programme and varies according to political priorities. Overall, it can be observed that the share allocated to adult education has risen slightly compared to the previous funding period, yet remains significantly lower than the share allocated to other sectors of education, particularly higher education, whose share has tended to decline over the same period. This indicates, on the one hand, a greater emphasis on adult education, whilst, on the other hand, its financial weighting within the programme remains comparatively limited. European Commission (2025). The 2026 annual work programme for the implementation of Erasmus+: the Union Programme for Education, Training, Youth and Sport.

³ <https://erasmus-plus.ec.europa.eu/national-agencies>

through stays abroad. Furthermore, the internationalisation and professionalism of the participating organisations are to be supported.

- **KA2 (Cooperation between organisations and institutions):** The funded activities aim to support the development, transfer and/or implementation of innovative practices at organisational, local, regional, national and European levels. In the long term, this is intended to have a positive impact on the participating organisations and, beyond that, on education systems.

Within each of these Key Actions, there are several funding formats for which organisations in the field of adult education can apply. Under KA1, individual organisations or consortia comprising several organisations from a single Member State can apply for accreditation. Once accredited, they can flexibly apply for funding for mobility activities over several years through a simplified procedure. Non-accredited organisations wishing to carry out mobility activities over a period of six to eighteen months can apply for short-term projects for the mobility of learners and staff. Under KA2, two different project formats are available to organisations in adult education: Cooperation Projects and Small-scale Partnerships. Cooperation Projects must involve at least three organisations from three different countries and have a duration of 12 to 36 months. Small-scale Partnerships are designed in particular for organisations with limited or no previous experience with Erasmus+. They involve at least two organisations from two different countries and have a duration of 6 to 24 months.

In the field of adult education, the Erasmus+ programme aims in particular to strengthen the socio-economic resilience of adults and increase their participation in lifelong learning. In doing so, participating organisations should actively contribute to the four cross-cutting objectives defined as the programme's "horizontal priorities": Inclusion and diversity; Digital transformation; Environment and fight against climate change; and Participation in democratic life, common values and civic engagement.

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1.2 The RIA-AE network

A transnational research network (RIA-AE Network: *Research-based Impact Analysis in Erasmus+ Adult Education Programmes*), funded by the European Union, has been set up in 2022 to initiate and coordinate research and monitoring activities on Erasmus+ in adult education. Its aim is to foster transnational comparative research and thus provide evidence to strengthen the impact of international cooperation and mobility projects in adult education while also contributing to the further development and quality improvement of the Erasmus+ programme (see mission statement in Annex 1). The network is open to new members and counts NAs from 21 Erasmus+ programme countries at the beginning of 2026.⁵ In 2023/2024, the RIA-AE Network conducted its first coordinated transnational monitoring study on the impact of Erasmus+ in the field of adult education, which resulted in a series of national reports

⁴ European Commission (2025). Erasmus+ Programme Guide.

⁵ Austria; Belgium (FWB); Croatia; Czechia; Estonia; Finland; France; Germany; Hungary; Ireland; Italy; Latvia; Luxembourg; Netherlands; Poland; Portugal; Romania; Slovakia; Slovenia; Spain; Türkiye.

and an EU synthesis report (first round of data collection).⁶ This first round of the survey aimed to capture both intended and unintended impacts of the programme. Drawing on the multi-level model of adult education, impacts were examined at the level of learners, funded organisations and their staff, as well as on the political and institutional framework and adult education as part of the education system.

1.3 Aims and objectives of the second survey round (2025-2026)

The second survey round, implemented in 2025-2026, in addition has a specific **thematic focus on the programmes' horizontal priority "Participation in democratic life, common values and civic engagement"**.

European policy positions adult education as a key instrument for promoting active citizenship and social cohesion, particularly with regard to population groups that are under-represented in democratic processes or have limited access to formal education. Against the backdrop of current societal challenges, such as declining political participation, growing polarisation and social inequality, it plays a strategic role in imparting democratic values and strengthening social participation.⁷

The EU's Erasmus+ funding programme in the field of adult education (2021–2027) takes up these objectives and aims to strengthen European values, promote a more inclusive and sustainable society, and prepare for a digital future. It enables learners and professionals to go abroad for learning and further training purposes and to gain international experience. At the same time, the Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council stipulates that Erasmus+ should explicitly contribute to the promotion of political education and shared values such as freedom, tolerance and non-discrimination through education.⁸

This focus is in line with the 2015 Paris Declaration, which defines the promotion of shared European values as a priority objective of education and training systems.⁹ Erasmus+ thus serves as a key instrument for implementing European education and democracy policy by supporting Member States and educational institutions in translating these approaches into concrete projects. The objective set out in the European Union's Union of Skills initiative¹⁰ to provide all people in Europe with equal opportunities and access to education and lifelong learning is also supported by Erasmus+. In this context, the programme aims at making mobility accessible to all

⁶ Buiskool, B.-J., Krichewsky-Wegener, L., & Erckrath, M. (2024). *Transnational analysis of the impact of Erasmus+ on the adult education sector: Comparative research report, first survey round 2024*. https://www.ria-ae.eu/fileadmin/user_upload/ria-ae.eu/Documents/Transnational_publications/First_survey_round/Transnational_report_2023_2024.pdf

⁷ Council of the European Union (2021) Council Resolution on a new European agenda for adult learning 2021–2030. Available at: <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/53179/st14485-en21.pdf>

⁸ Regulation (EU) 2021/817 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 May 2021 establishing 'Erasmus+', the Union programme for education, training, youth and sport, and repealing Regulation (EU) No 1288/2013. <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/DE/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32021R0817&qid=1649851869370&from=DE>

⁹ Informal meeting of European Union education ministers (17 March 2015): Declaration on the promotion of civic education and the common values of freedom, tolerance and non-discrimination. https://www2.daad.de/medien/eu.daad.de.2016/dokumente/programme-und-hochschulpolitik/europaeische-hochschulpolitik/pariser_erklaerung_2015_de.pdf

¹⁰ European Commission (2025). Union of Skills. eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/en/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX%3A52025DC0090

learners – especially those with fewer opportunities – and to “contribute to building a resilient, competitive and cohesive Europe”. In this way, the programme also contributes to the European Commission’s Action Plan on Basic Skills,¹¹ which, as part of the Union of Skills, is based on a broad understanding of basic education and also highlights the digital and civic dimensions of basic education.

In the current programme generation, these objectives have been further refined and strengthened through the introduction of horizontal priorities in the programme’s guidelines, in particular participation and civic engagement. This makes it clear that Erasmus+ not only contributes to quality development in adult education, but is specifically designed to promote political participation, strengthen inclusive educational structures and provide long-term support for social cohesion in Europe. The focus on this theme reinforces RIA-AE’s overarching objective of making Erasmus+’s contribution to building democratic, socially cohesive societies more visible. In this way, the research network not only promotes the political relevance of civic engagement as a horizontal priority, but also supports concrete improvements in programme quality and equity across Europe.

The key questions guiding this thematic focus are:

- To what extent do Erasmus+ projects address the priority ‘participation in democratic life, common values and civic engagement’?
- What type of activities are implemented within this thematic area?
- What goals are set for projects within this thematic area?
- What groups of adult learners are addressed by projects within this thematic area?
- What is the added value of Erasmus+ for the projects within this thematic area?
- What is the impact of Erasmus+ projects in this thematic area on the learning offer in adult education?
- What is the impact of Erasmus+ projects in this thematic area on staff and on learners?

1.4 Existing studies on the impact of Erasmus+ in adult education

The previous RIA-AE transnational study (2023/2024) concluded that there was limited research on the impact of Erasmus+ in the adult education sector. The current monitoring round, drawing on the 17 country reports that included this module, confirms that substantial gaps in the evidence base remain across most participating countries. The RIA-AE network therefore fills an important evidence gap, underlined by the fact that in several countries the previous or current monitoring round constitutes the first dedicated study of the impact of Erasmus+ in adult education. It should also be noted that the present inventory focuses on studies not already covered in the previous monitoring round.

The newly reported evidence appears comparatively more developed in France, Finland and Croatia – See Annex 6 for an overview. The studies vary considerably in scope and relevance. They range from dedicated studies focused specifically on

¹¹ European Commission (2025). Action Plan on Basic Skills. <https://education.ec.europa.eu/sites/default/files/2025-03/Graphic%20version%20Action%20Plan%20on%20Basic%20Skills.pdf>

Erasmus+ adult education or adult learning mobility, such as the recent adult education study in France and research on adult education mobility in Croatia, to broader national Erasmus+ evaluations that include adult education alongside other education sectors, for example in Croatia, France and Italy. Some reported sources are more indirectly relevant, examining broader adult education outcomes or individual Erasmus+ projects rather than systematically assessing the impact of Erasmus+ in the sector. This is particularly the case for several sources reported by Spain and Türkiye, which mainly describe individual projects, practices or expected outcomes and therefore provide more limited evidence of programme impact.

The studies most commonly focus on organisational and staff-level effects, including internationalisation, professional development, innovation in teaching and learning, cooperation and organisational capacity. Some studies also examine outcomes for adult learners, including skills, confidence, inclusion and access to learning, although the evidence at learner level is considerably less developed. Where learner outcomes are considered, they generally form one component of a broader evaluation rather than the primary focus of the research.

As in the previous inventory, the methodologies used are diverse. Mixed-method approaches combining surveys, interviews, document analysis and project or programme data are particularly common, alongside qualitative case studies and analyses of participant or beneficiary reports. Among the studies that assess programme impact, the findings are generally positive, especially in relation to staff competences, organisational internationalisation, the adoption and transfer of new educational approaches, cooperation and networking, and inclusion. At the same time, several studies identify continuing barriers to participation, including administrative burden, limited organisational capacity and difficulties in reaching organisations and learners with fewer opportunities. Evidence of wider system-level effects remains comparatively scarce. A small number of broader national evaluations in Croatia, France and Italy consider Erasmus+ from a system or sector perspective, including its relevance to national adult education provision and broader policy and sector development, but clear evidence of system-level impact remains limited.

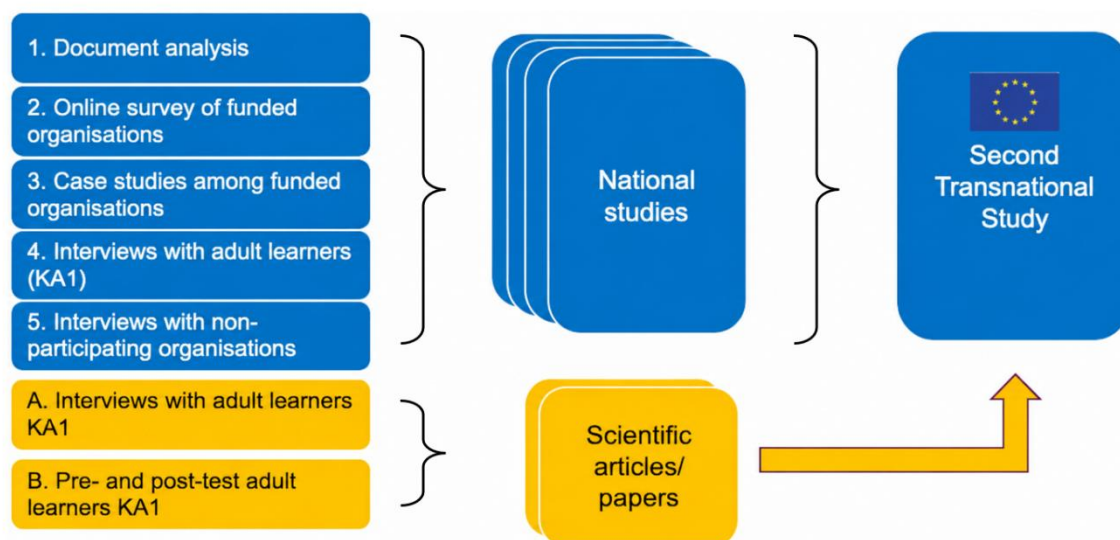
1.5 Methodological approach

The study is based on a common transnational methodological framework agreed upon within the RIA-AE network. The data for this study was collected and analysed in accordance with this framework based on five standardised modules. A visual overview is provided in Figure 1. All or selected modules are implemented every two years in the countries participating in the RIA-AE network and the results are analysed in a transnational study. In addition, two optional modules (module A and B) were implemented in selected countries in order to explore more in-depth the impact of KA1 mobility on learners in adult education.

For the second data collection round, the thematic focus on democratic participation and civic values was integrated into each module. Surveys, interviews, and case studies were designed to capture learners' development in civic values, engagement behaviours, and perceived social inclusion. Core questions from the first data collection round were kept, to ensure comparability over time on specific aspects of the monitoring. Other questions, mainly those related to progress markers for the horizontal priorities, were omitted but will be re-included in the modules for the third

survey round scheduled for 2027/2028. As only two years separate the first and second data collection rounds, major developments are not expected to be visible within this timeframe.

FIGURE 1: MODULES FOR COLLECTING AND ANALYSING DATA IN THE RIA-AE NETWORK



Source: Illustration prepared by the authors

In total, 21 countries participated in the second round of data collection, though to varying degrees. 20 countries participated in the analysis of programme data and 17 in the analysis of existing national research on Erasmus+ in the field of adult education (module 1). All countries participated in the online survey amongst beneficiaries (module 2). Case studies (module 3) were implemented in 14 countries, while interviews with adult learners (module 4) were conducted in 11 countries. Finally, interviews with non-participating organisations (module 5) were carried out in seven countries. In total, four countries participated in Additional Module A and 13 in Additional Module B.

These research activities resulted in 18 country reports, and three countries that have decided to produce a country-factsheet instead.¹²

1.5.1 Module 1: Analysis of programme data and existing studies

This module comprises an analysis of existing national research on Erasmus+ in the field of adult education, as well as an analysis of data collected by the European Commission as part of the funding and monitoring processes for all participating countries. This includes the data filled in by individuals participating in KA1 mobility activities or filled on their behalf by the project coordinators in group mobilities – the Participants Reports. Module 1 primarily seeks to answer questions related to the inclusiveness of the programme, map beneficiary organisations, and assess the extent to which these organisations reflect the diversity of the adult education sector. Within this module, 17 country reports provide a specific assessment or overview of

¹² At the time of writing, the Portuguese country report was still pending. Luxembourg, Romania and Slovakia opted to produce factsheets instead of country reports, of which the Slovak factsheet was also still pending.

existing studies (Austria, Croatia, Czechia, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Poland, Portugal, Slovenia, Spain, the Netherlands and Türkiye).

1.5.2 Module 2: Online survey among beneficiary organisations

This module consists of an online survey of all organisations that implemented at least one project in KA1 or KA2 under the current programme between 2021 and the end of 2024. It serves as the central survey instrument for assessing the impact of Erasmus+ and was implemented in all RIA-AE network member countries. For organisations that participated in more than one project, only one person, usually the project coordinator of the most recent project, received an invitation to take part in the survey. For KA2 projects, the survey was sent both to the coordinating organisation and to partner organisations in the RIA-AE countries. In total, the invitation to participate in the survey was sent to 7,276 organisations across 21 countries. Of these, 39.8% took part in the survey, and 30.2% fully filled in the questionnaire. All respondents who answered at least the first eight questions were included in the analysis, resulting in a total analytical sample of 2,370 respondents (33% of the total outreach). Table 1 provides an overview of the respondents before filtering, disaggregated by country and organisational role.

Of the included respondents (N=2,370), 35% carried out at least one project in KA1, and 32% carried out at least one project in KA2. A further 33% of the organisations were active in both Key Actions. 30.5% of the responding organisations are accredited in KA1. Annex 3 provides further information on the statistical analyses applied to the survey data.

TABLE 1: NUMBER OF RESPONSES AND RESPONSE RATE TO THE SURVEY PER COUNTRY AND IN TOTAL

Country	Number respondents (KA1 and coordinating beneficiaries)	of KA2	Response rate (%)	Number respondents (KA2 partner organisations)	of	Response rate (%)
Austria	72		59%	19		23%
Belgium (FWB)	20		34%	18		17%
Croatia	96		79%	22		31%
Czechia	80		63%	16		21%
Estonia	39		72%	9		45%
Finland	75		40%	10		21%
France	285		24%	9		11%
Germany	169		46%	15		18%
Hungary	107		80%	17		24%
Ireland	66		43%	13		19%
Italy	256		51%	121		31%
Latvia	65		70%	10		24%
Poland	260		44%	33		28%
Portugal	124		79%	40		26%

Romania	107	67%	31	27%
Slovakia	71	84%	17	33%
Slovenia	59	68%	15	13%
Spain	210	50%	78	17%
The Netherlands	75	75%	20	31%
Türkiye	114	56%	31	23%
Luxembourg	8	80%	19	23%
Total	2,358	48%	545	23%

Source: Online survey beneficiary organisations RIA-AE network (2025-2026)

1.5.3 Module 3: Case studies

This module consists of case studies in organisations having coordinated at least one Erasmus+ project in the current programme. The case studies focused on projects within the thematic area “Participation in democratic life, common values and civic engagement.” They included an analysis of project documentation, as well as interviews with project managers, staff, and learners, leading to a case study report. This module has been implemented by 14 countries (Austria, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Poland, Portugal, Slovenia, Spain and Türkiye) resulting in a total of 73 case studies.

1.5.4 Module 4: Interviews with adult learners

This module includes interviews with adult learners who participated in a KA1 mobility, as well as with their project coordinators. The interviews with adult learners provide deeper insight into the impact of mobility on participants. They also help to reflect on the experience of organising KA1 mobility for different target groups and to identify possible obstacles encountered during mobility. This, in turn, supports better organisation of KA1 mobility for learners in the future. In 11 countries (Austria, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Slovenia, Poland, Portugal and Spain) interviews were conducted with adult learners. In total at least 174 adult learners were interviewed.¹³

1.5.5 Module 5: Interviews with non-participating organisations

This module includes interviews with organisations that did not participate in Erasmus+. These interviews aim to better understand the obstacles preventing participation in the programme. During the interviews, organisations’ potential interest in participating in Erasmus+ was explored, alongside the barriers experienced by both the organisations themselves and their target groups. The findings served as an additional source for developing recommendations for future Erasmus+ funding. In

¹³ The reported number should be regarded as a minimum estimate, as some countries also conducted group interviews without specifying the exact number of adult learners involved. In addition, Hungary, Italy and Portugal conducted interviews with coordinators, which are not included in this total; their adult learner interviews are included.

total seven countries (Austria, Estonia, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Portugal and Spain) participated in this module interviewing at least 32 non-participating organisations in total. Participation in this module is lower because many countries had already implemented it during the previous data collection round and had largely reached saturation, with limited expectations that additional data would yield new insights.

1.5.6 Additional modules

Besides the five standardised modules, some countries participated in additional research modules (Modules A and B) aimed at gaining a better understanding of the impact of KA1 mobility on adult learners. These additional modules are not meant to be carried out on a regular basis and resulted in two separate publications. The first additional module (Module A) included a qualitative content analysis of interviews with adult learners from four countries (Austria, Germany, Latvia, Slovenia) who had recently participated in a KA1 mobility. In total, 24 adult learners were interviewed, contributing to the development of an inventory of the impact of KA1 mobility for adult learners. The results of this module are published in a scientific article.¹⁴

The second additional module (Module B) included a pre- and post-measurement of the capabilities of a selected group of adult learners participating in KA1 mobility, in order to assess the effects and impact on relevant variables included in the previous qualitative study. This quantitative research module was implemented in 13 countries. In total, 1,650 learners completed the pre-test and 1,045 completed the post-test. The results of these modules are presented in a dedicated chapter of this EU synthesis report for the second survey round and will also be included in a scientific article, which had not yet been published at the time this report was finalised.

¹⁴ Erckrath, M., Krichewsky-Wegener, L., Mikulec, B., Humpl, S., Šūpule, I., Greef, M. D., & Buiskool, B. (2026). *International mobility in adult education: Exploring the impact of Erasmus+ from the learners' perspective*. European Journal of Educational Research, 15(3), 995-1008. <https://doi.org/10.12973/eu-jer.15.3.995>

PART C – General impact of Erasmus+

2 The accessibility and inclusiveness of Erasmus+

2.1 Introduction

Inclusion and diversity are one of the priorities of the Erasmus+ programme. Equal opportunities and equal access, inclusion, diversity and fairness should be promoted in all programme actions.¹⁵ The focus of funding is therefore on organisations as well as disadvantaged learners who would otherwise not be likely to participate in internationalisation activities. This chapter discusses the characteristics of organisations participating in Erasmus+ between 2021 and 2024, drawing on the online survey, and between 2021 and 2025, drawing on European Commission data. On this basis, statements can be made about the accessibility and inclusiveness of Erasmus+ in adult education in the countries participating in the RIA-AE network.

2.2 Participating organisations in Erasmus+

2.2.1 Type of organisations

The majority of Erasmus+ beneficiary organisations fall under the category of NGOs, associations or foundations (see Figure 2). This is the case across all Key Actions, representing 54% of organisations involved in both KA1 and KA2, 56% of KA2-only organisations, and 42% of KA1-only organisations. France reports the highest share, with 76% of beneficiary organisations identifying as NGOs, associations or foundations, reflecting the structure of non-formal adult education in the country, where associations and *éducation populaire* organisations form an important part of the provider landscape and play a central role in community-based, cultural and civic learning. Poland shows similarly high proportions, with this category accounting for 63% of KA1-only organisations and as many as 86% of those involved in both KA1 and KA2. Likewise, Belgium (FWB) (69%), Germany (62%), Czechia (61%), and the Netherlands (61%) all report a clear majority of beneficiaries from the non-governmental sector. By contrast, religious organisations are only rarely represented among Erasmus+ beneficiaries.

Public or semi-public education institutions form the second largest group of Erasmus+ beneficiaries. This is particularly true for KA1-only organisations (28%), compared to organisations involved in both actions (15%) and KA2-only organisations (6%). The level of participation of public and semi-public education institutions varies considerably across countries, often reflecting differences in the organisation of national adult education systems. Spain and Slovenia are clear outliers, with public or semi-public education institutions representing the largest group of beneficiaries. In Spain, they account for 53% of beneficiary organisations, compared to 46% in Slovenia. The comparatively high shares of public and semi-public education institutions among Erasmus+ beneficiaries in Spain and Slovenia are consistent with features of their national adult education systems. In Spain, adult education is highly decentralised, with the autonomous communities responsible for organising provision and a substantial network of dedicated public adult education centres. In Slovenia, adult education governance is state-based and includes 35

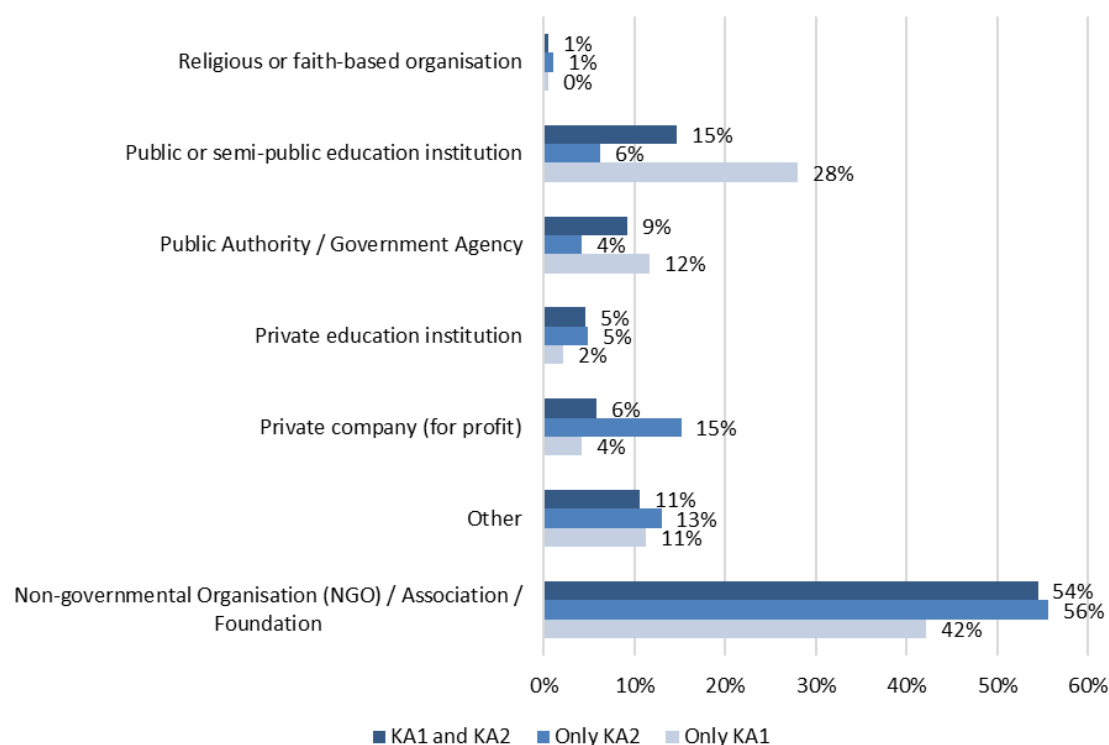
¹⁵ EU Commission (2023). Erasmus+ programme guide. p.7

municipal adult education centres. More moderate levels of participation are found in Ireland (17%), Czechia (14%), Germany (13%) and Latvia (12%), while France (2%) and the Netherlands (3%) report the lowest shares.

The involvement of private companies is generally limited across Europe. They are more strongly represented in KA2 (15%) than in KA1 (4%) or among organisations participating in both actions (6%). There are, however, a few notable exceptions. The Netherlands is a clear outlier, with private companies accounting for 22% of beneficiary organisations, substantially above the overall average of 8%. Spain and Austria report relatively high shares of private companies, but only among KA2 organisations, at 30% and 24% respectively. By contrast, in Latvia, 26% of KA1-only organisations are private companies. At the other end of the spectrum, private companies are only marginally represented in Türkiye (1%) and Czechia (2%). Finland (0%) and Croatia (1%) also report very low shares of private companies, although these countries have relatively high shares of private education institutions (15% and 11% respectively).

Direct participation by public authorities/government agencies is generally one of the smallest organisation categories. However, some countries show notably higher levels of participation. Türkiye is a clear outlier, with by far the highest share of public authorities and government agencies (74%). This reflects the central role of the Ministry of National Education and its affiliated institutions in the provision of adult education, as described in the institutional context of the Turkish country report. Slovenia follows at a considerable distance (20%), while Latvia and Estonia also report relatively high levels of participation (both 16%). By contrast, public authorities and government agencies are only marginally represented in Austria (1%), Poland (2%), Belgium (3%), Germany (3%) and Italy (3%).

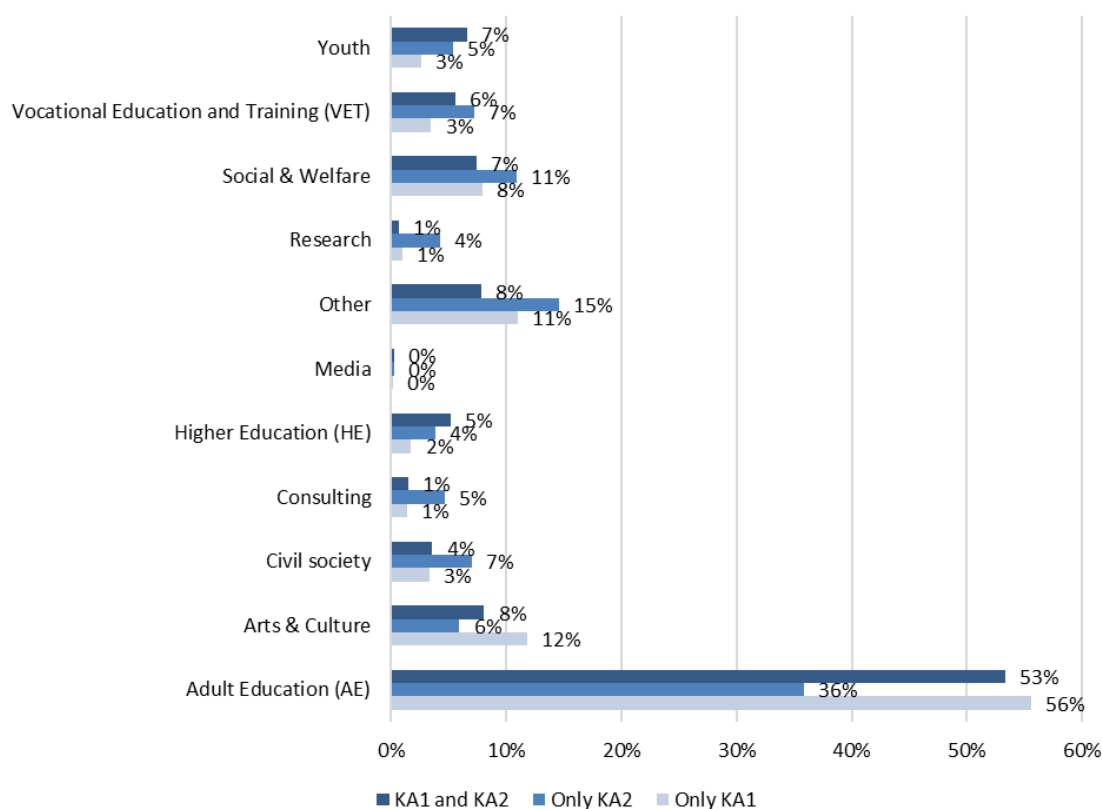
FIGURE 2: LEGAL STATUS OF BENEFICIARY ORGANISATIONS THAT PARTICIPATED IN ERASMUS+ (2021-2024) – N(KA1&KA2)=806, N(KA2)=725, N(KA1)=755



Source: Online survey beneficiary organisations RIA-AE network (2025-2026)

Although all participating organisations are active in the field of adult education, not all consider it their main area of activity and may therefore identify another sector as their primary field of operation. Nevertheless, Figure 3 shows that Adult Education (AE) is the most common sector across participating countries, while Erasmus+ also reaches a broad range of organisations active in other fields.

FIGURE 3: SECTORS IN WHICH BENEFICIARY ORGANISATIONS PRIMARILY OPERATE (2021-2024) – N(KA1&KA2)=806, N(KA2)=725, N(KA1)=755



Source: Online survey beneficiary organisations RIA-AE network (2025-2026)

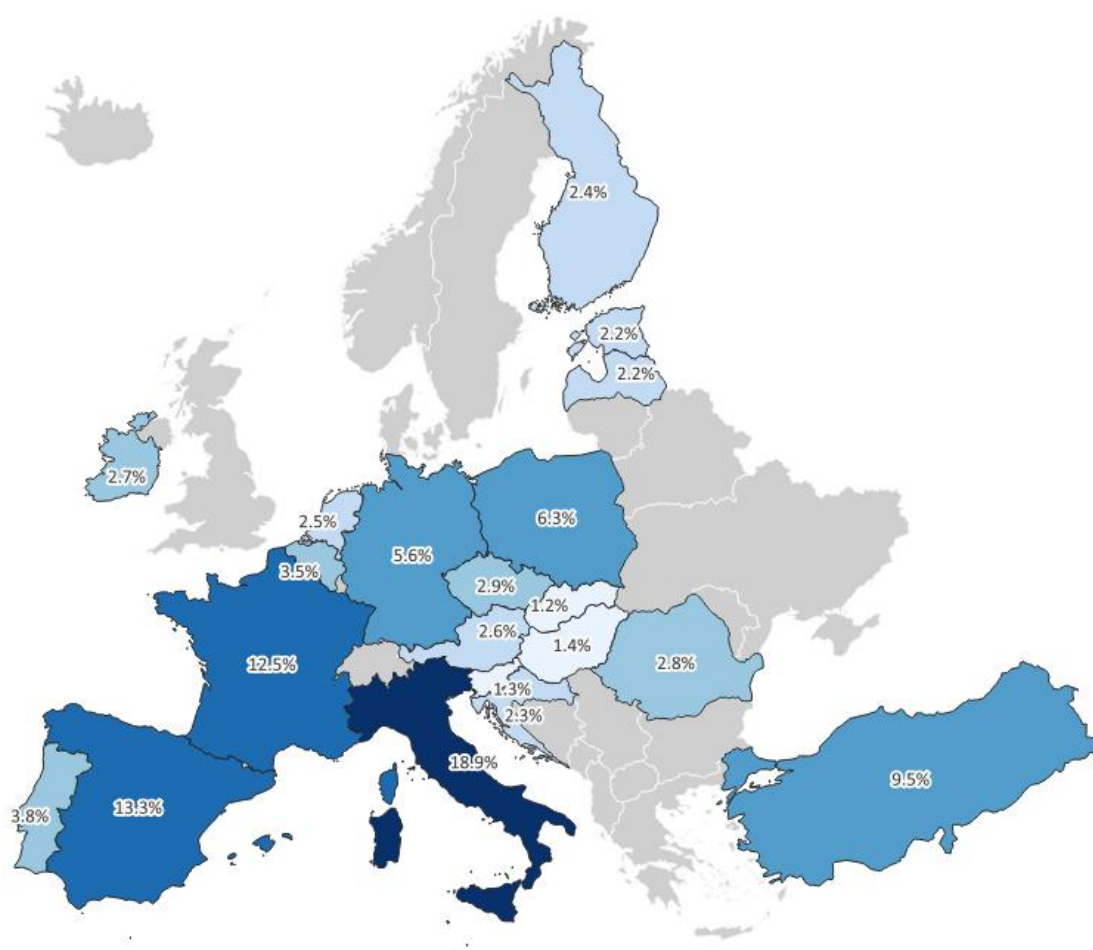
About half of the organisations identify a sector other than Adult Education as their primary field of activity. The most common other sectors are Social & Welfare (7%-11%), Arts & Culture (6%-12%), and Vocational Education and Training (VET) (6%-7%). Among organisations participating exclusively in KA1 projects, as well as those participating in both KA1 and KA2 projects, more than half identify AE as their primary sector. Organisations participating exclusively in KA2 projects, however, are more evenly distributed across sectors, although AE remains the most frequently represented primary field. Notably, the Arts & Culture sector is relatively more strongly represented among KA1-only organisations, while most other sectors account for higher shares among KA2-only organisations. All remaining sectors – including Higher Education, Civil Society, Consulting, and Research – account for relatively small shares, ranging from 1% to 7%. The Media sector is virtually absent across all groups (0%).

In almost all countries, organisations identifying primarily as Adult Education providers constitute the largest group of beneficiaries, although the degree of

concentration varies considerably. Poland shows the highest share of organisations operating primarily in the AE sector (66%), followed by Spain (59%) and Slovenia (57%). In France (35%), Belgium (38%) and Croatia (38%), AE remains the largest sector, but a greater share of beneficiaries originates from other fields. The second most prominent sector varies across countries, although it is most commonly ‘Other’, Social & Welfare, or Arts & Culture. This is consistent with the programme’s strong focus on social inclusion and vulnerable groups, as well as with differences in the organisation of adult education across countries. Croatia, for example, has a relatively large Arts & Culture sector (26%), while Italy has a relatively large Social & Welfare sector (16%).

2.2.2 Geographical distribution

FIGURE 4: COUNTRIES WHERE KA1 PROJECTS TAKE PLACE IN 2021-2025 – BASED ON THE LOCATION OF PARTICIPATING ORGANISATIONS (N=7969)



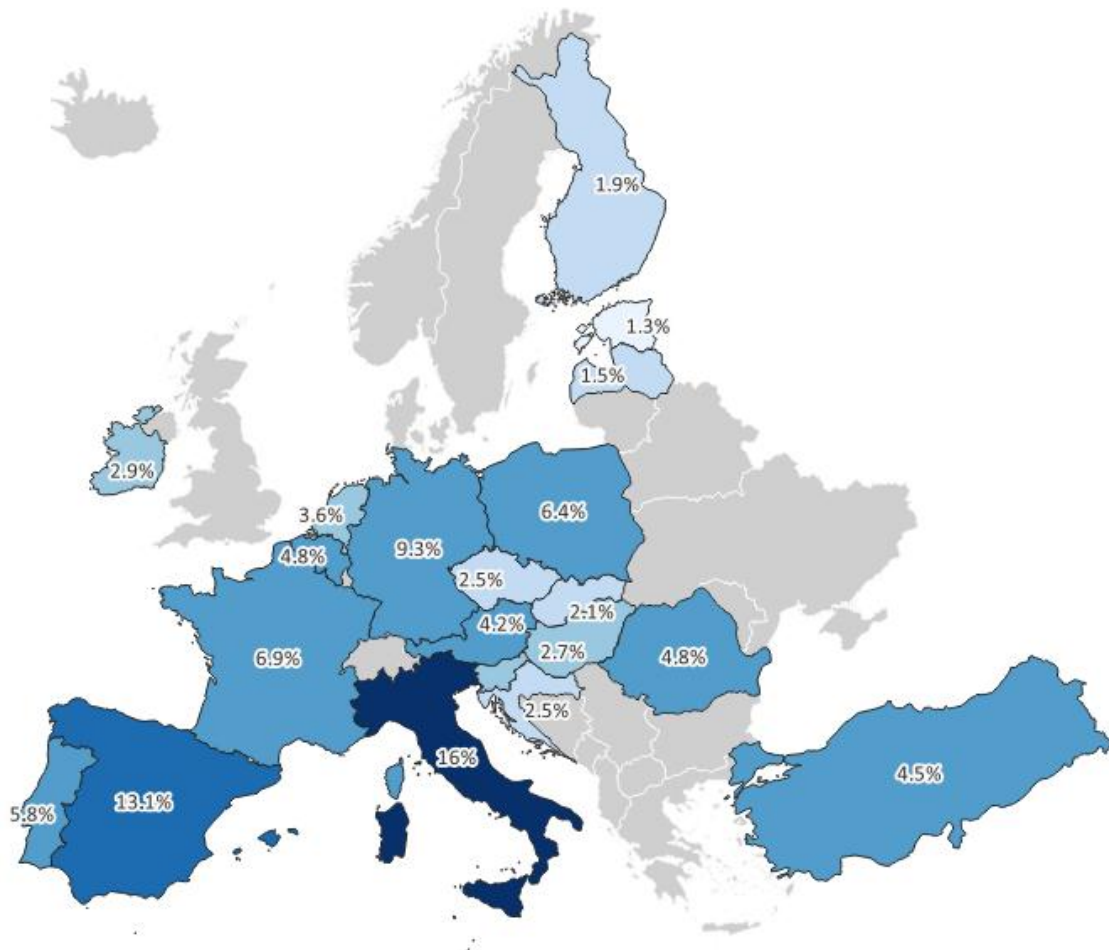
Source: European Commission monitoring data

Figure 4 shows the distribution of KA1 projects across the countries participating in the RIA-AE network. Italy represents the largest share of all KA1 projects in the dataset (18.9%), followed by Spain (13.3%) and France (12.5%). Türkiye contributes 9.5%, while Poland and Germany represent 6.3% and 5.6% respectively. Smaller shares are found in the Netherlands (3.5%), Czechia (2.9%), Ireland (2.7%) and Belgium (2.5%). Finland, Estonia and Latvia each represent between 2.2% and 2.4%

of the total, while Hungary (1.4%) and Slovakia (1.2%) contribute the smallest shares among the current RIA-AE member countries.

A straightforward explanation for this distribution would be that larger and more populous countries, which also receive larger Erasmus+ budgets, participate more frequently in Erasmus+. However, these factors do not fully account for the observed differences. Italy and Estonia, for example, appears to be particularly active in KA1 relative to its population size, whereas Germany and Türkiye participate at a lower level than might be expected on the basis of population size alone.

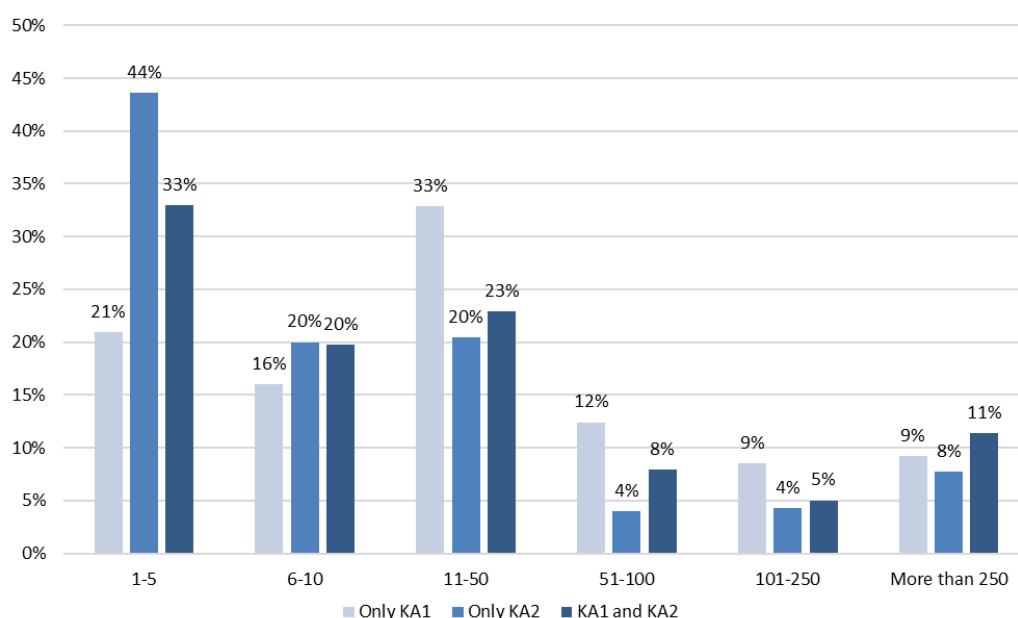
FIGURE 5: COUNTRIES WHERE KA2 PROJECTS TAKE PLACE IN 2021-2025 – BASED ON THE LOCATION OF PARTICIPATING ORGANISATIONS (N=6650)



Source: European Commission monitoring data

The distribution of KA2 projects across Europe in Figure 5 is reminiscent of the pattern of KA1 projects observed for KA1 projects in Figure 4. Again, Italy is most active, followed by Spain. There are, however, several notable differences between the two Key Actions. Germany (9.3% in KA2 compared with 5.6% in KA1) and Romania (4.8% compared with 2.5%) have relatively larger shares in KA2. By contrast, France (6.9% compared with 12.5%) and Türkiye (4.5% compared with 9.5%) have considerably smaller shares in KA2 than in KA1.

FIGURE 6: NUMBER OF STAFF WORKING IN THE ORGANISATION (2021-2024) – N(KA1&KA2)=806, N(KA2)=725, N(KA1)=755



Source: Online survey beneficiary organisations RIA-AE network (2025-2026)

2.2.3 Size of the participating organisations (KA1 and KA2)

An important indicator of organisation size is the number of employees an organisation has. Figure 6 illustrates that most organisations participating in Erasmus+ are small, with over half of the organisations (around 70%) having fewer than 50 staff members. The category of 1 to 5 employees represents the largest share, particularly among KA2 organisations (44%) and those involved in both KA1 and KA2 (33%), compared to 21% in KA1 only. The second largest group is the category with 11 to 50 staff members, particularly among KA1-only organisations (32%). Organisations with 6 to 10 staff account for a similar proportion across all groups (16%-20%).

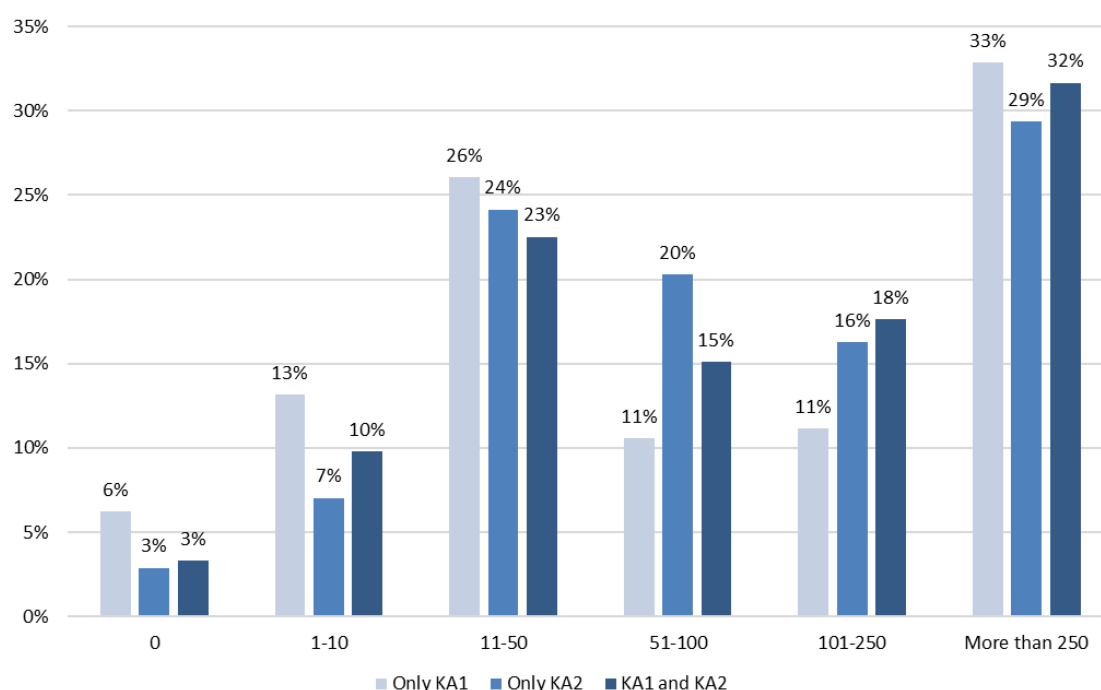
Larger organisations, with more than 50 employees are less common. Specifically, organisations with between 51 and 250 staff are rare, except among those that only participate in KA1 projects. The largest organisations, with more than 250 employees, account for around 10% of all organisations included in the survey. In general, KA1-only organisations are more often mid-sized, whereas KA2 organisations are more frequently very small, particularly when they do not also partake in KA1 projects.

Looking at individual country data, Hungary (56%) and the Netherlands (51%) have the highest relative shares of small organisations with only 1 to 5 employees. In the Netherlands, this is consistent with the institutional context of non-formal adult education, which is characterised by an absence of state regulation and considerable freedom for providers to shape their own educational approaches. By contrast, very small organisations are considerably less dominant in Türkiye (9%), Finland (18%), Spain (19%) and Ireland (19%). In these countries, larger organisations are more strongly represented, particularly in Türkiye, where 27% of organisations have more than 250 employees, and in Ireland, where organisations of this size account for 20% of the total.

Another important measure of the size, or potential reach of an organisation, is the number of adult learners participating in their activities. Figure 7 shows a varied distribution, with a tendency towards larger numbers of learners despite the generally small size of participating organisations. The largest group of organisations reports having more than 250 learners, accounting for 33% in KA1, 29% in KA2, and 32% in KA1 & KA2. The second most frequent category consists of organisations reaching 11 to 50 learners (23%-26%).

A smaller but still notable group of organisations reaches no learners or only a small number (1 to 10), accounting for around 13% of the total. These organisations may primarily be knowledge-based organisations that provide consultancy in adult education, develop methods and tools for the sector, or operate as umbrella organisations. However, this cannot be confirmed on the basis of the available data.

FIGURE 7: NUMBER OF ADULT LEARNERS THAT PARTICIPATED IN LEARNING ACTIVITIES IN 2024 – N(KA1&KA2)=806, N(KA2)=725, N(KA1)=755



Source: Online survey beneficiary organisations RIA-AE network (2025-2026)

Within individual countries, the highest shares of organisations reaching large numbers of adult learners are found in Finland (55%), Türkiye (51%) and Ireland (47%). This is broadly consistent with organisational size, as Türkiye and Ireland also report the highest shares of large organisations. Although this is less obvious in Finland, the country also belongs to the group with the lowest shares of very small organisations with 1 to 5 employees, and the data show that Finland has a particularly large share of organisations with 11 to 50 employees (36%), while another 38% are even larger. This suggests that organisational size is positively associated with the number of adult learners reached. However, it should be noted that this relationship is not absolute, as some countries with relatively high shares of small organisations nevertheless report comparatively high outreach figures. For example, in Estonia, 43% of organisations reach more than 250 adult learners despite 43% of

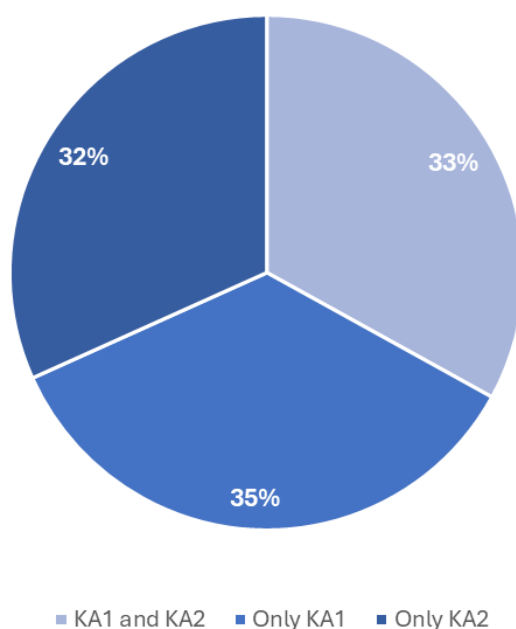
organisations having only 1 to 5 employees. A similar pattern is visible in Belgium, where 38% of organisations reach more than 250 adult learners, although 41% of organisations have only 1 to 5 employees.

The German and Polish country reports provide one possible explanation for how relatively small organisations can nevertheless reach higher numbers of adult learners. In Germany, AE providers often employ a small number of permanent staff responsible for planning and administration, supplemented by a larger group of part-time or freelance lecturers. The case studies described in the Polish country report illustrate how organisations with small teams and few or no permanent staff rely on volunteers to implement Erasmus+ projects. However, it should be noted that this organisational model is not reported consistently across all country reports.

2.2.4 Number of projects involved and variety of roles

The types of internationalisation activities that organisations participate in Erasmus+ are remarkably evenly distributed, as shown by Figure 8. For each group – only KA1, only KA2, and KA1 & KA2 – the share is approximately one third. This also means that about two thirds of all organisations responding to the survey participate in KA1 projects, and two thirds participate in KA2 projects. At the country level, such an equal division is not always observed. For example, in the Netherlands, organisations that only participate in KA2 are more common (47%), while in Czechia and Spain the opposite is the case, with 54% and 47% of organisations participating only in KA1 projects.

FIGURE 8: TYPE OF INTERNATIONALISATION ACTIVITIES ORGANISATIONS HAVE PARTICIPATED IN SINCE 2021 – N=2286

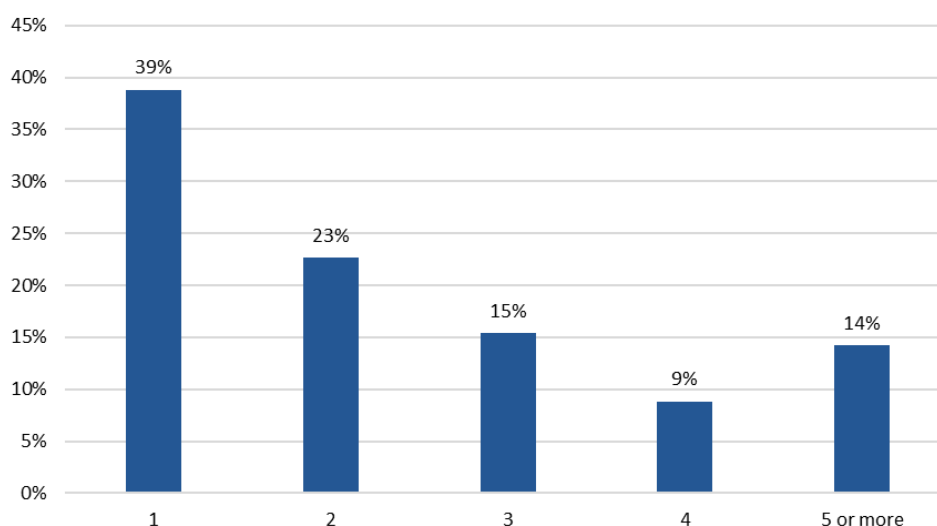


Source: Online survey beneficiary organisations RIA-AE network (2025-2026)

Figure 9 demonstrates that many organisations have participated in more than one KA1 project in adult education since 2021; 61% of organisations have participated in at least two projects. About 40% of organisations have participated in at least three,

and 14% choose to be active in at least five projects. A total of 39% of organisations participated in only one project within the current Erasmus+ programme up to 2024. It is likely that this number will decrease, as there are three years remaining within the current programme period for organisations to participate in another project.

FIGURE 9: NUMBER OF KA1 PROJECTS ORGANISATIONS HAVE PARTICIPATED IN SINCE 2021 – (N=1561)



Source: Online survey beneficiary organisations RIA-AE network (2025-2026)

For KA2 projects – see Figure 36 in Annex 2 – the pattern is nearly identical. Here, the share of organisations which participate in five or more projects is a bit higher (22% compared to 14% for KA1), and there are slightly fewer organisations participating in two to four projects.

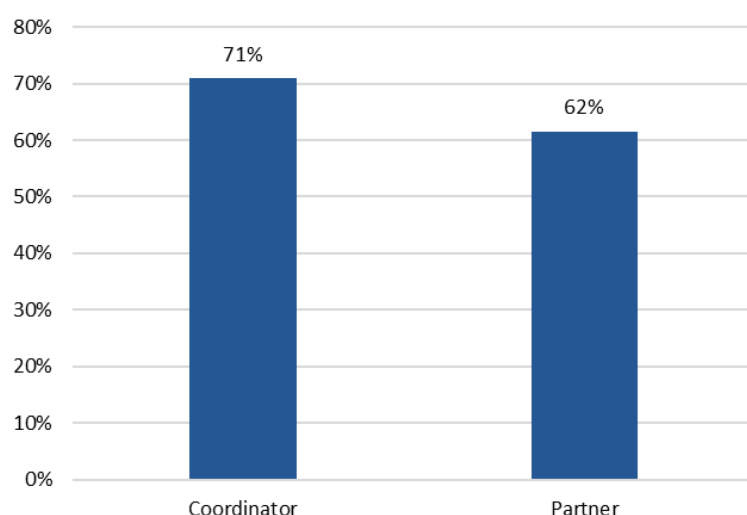
This pattern, as shown in Figure 9, can be interpreted in two ways. On the one hand, it suggests that organisations generally have positive experiences with Erasmus+, as many choose to participate again or implement several projects in parallel. On the other hand, the relatively large share of organisations reporting participation in only one KA1 or KA2 project since 2021 may indicate an influx of newcomers to the programme. This interpretation should, however, be treated with caution. The data only covers projects implemented from 2021 onwards and does not capture participation previous programme period. Moreover, as KA2 projects generally last between two and three years, many organisations may still be implementing, or may only recently have completed, their first project under the current programme period. The actual proportion of newcomers is therefore likely to be lower than suggested by Figures 9 and 36. These findings nevertheless point to opportunities to broaden participation. As demand for KA2 funding exceeds the available budget, additional funding could support more projects and enable more organisations, including newcomers, to participate.¹⁶ In regards to KA1, the budget for adult education mobility

¹⁶ European Commission. (2025a). Report on the interim evaluation of the 2021–2027 Erasmus+ programme and the final evaluation of the 2014–2020 Erasmus+ programme. <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex:52025SC0186>

was not fully used between 2021 and 2023, indicating scope to involve additional organisations within the existing budget.

Most countries show similar patterns to those identified in Figure 9 and 36. However, there are a few notable exceptions. Ireland, for example, has a particularly high share of organisations participating in five or more KA2 projects (28%) and a comparatively smaller share participating in only one project (22%). Spain similarly reports relatively few organisations participating in only one KA1 project (16%), with participation more evenly distributed across organisations involved in two to five or more KA1 projects. Conversely, Czechia shows a relatively high share of organisations participating in only one (48%) or two (43%) KA1 projects, and very few participating in five or more (4%).

FIGURE 10: ROLE OF ORGANISATIONS WHICH PARTICIPATED IN KA2 PROJECTS (2021-2024) – N=1554



Source: Online survey beneficiary organisations RIA-AE network (2025-2026)

Following Figure 10, most organisations that participate in KA2 act as coordinators (71%), while a somewhat smaller share (62%) participate as partners. This is consistent with the response rate, which is substantially lower for partner organisations than for KA1 and KA2-coordinator beneficiaries (see also Table 1). The figure also shows that many organisations participate in KA2 projects in both coordinating and partners roles, as multiple answers were possible for this questions. Further data analysis shows that 40% of responding KA2 organisations chose both roles.

2.3 Obstacles for participating in Erasmus+

2.3.1 Which type of organisations are underrepresented in Erasmus+

While Erasmus+ successfully engages a wide range of stakeholders, several country reports indicate that participation does not fully reflect the diversity of national adult education landscapes. Although these patterns depend largely on the structure of the AE sector in each country, national definitions of AE, and the Erasmus+ sector categories, several similarities have been identified in the country reports regarding possible mismatches.

One of the sectors considered to be underrepresented is the “GLAM” sector – galleries, libraries, archives and museums. While these institutions are traditional venues for adult learning, their participation is uneven, and some may not immediately recognise their activities as falling within the Erasmus+ adult education strand. The Estonian report identifies libraries and other provider types, including vocational training institutions and social-sector organisations, as underrepresented, although museums themselves are relatively well represented in KA1. In the Netherlands, Regional Training Centres (ROCs) and language houses, which play an important role in basic-skills education, remain underrepresented. The German report similarly recommends greater outreach to museums, music schools, environmental and social associations, and other organisations that do not primarily identify as adult education providers but nevertheless make relevant educational contributions.

Other gaps concern organisations that are clearly relevant to adult learning but do not recognise a feasible route into the programme. The Hungarian report identifies adult training providers, advisory organisations, micro-enterprises, civil society organisations and community-based learning actors, including providers whose work is strongly shaped by domestic regulation, accreditation and quality-management requirements. These organisations may remain outside Erasmus+ because they lack practical information, partners or capacity, or because they do not identify their work with the adult education strand. In Finland, smaller, volunteer-led and minority-serving organisations are considered particularly at risk of exclusion because administrative and co-financing requirements tend to favour more experienced and better-resourced institutions. The French report also suggests that some cross-sector actors involved in local inclusion, social and solidarity work, disability support, ecology and culture remain at the margins of the recognised adult education landscape.

Some country reports also point to unclarity about whether Continuing Vocational Education and Training (CVET) institutions can apply for adult learning fundings. An example is Croatia, where a significant portion of the AE sector consists of Continuing Vocational Education and Training (CVET) institutions. In the Croatian education system, CVET is considered an important part of the adult education system. However, within the Erasmus+ framework, it is treated as a separate Vocational Education and Training (VET) sector. This creates confusion among providers that offer adult learning opportunities while primarily operating within the CVET sector. The French country report identifies a similar problem. It notes that confusion between adult education and vocational training can make it difficult for organisations to determine the appropriate programme strand and may lead to applications being submitted under the wrong field or rejected. The Latvian country report points out that the distinction between general adult education and CVET is blurred by a highly integrated policy approach. This approach does not always align with the Erasmus+ programme, which distinguishes between separate “Adult Education” and “VET” sectors. This creates challenges for organisations navigating the Erasmus+ programme, as funding opportunities are segmented into distinct “Adult Education” and “VET” fields. As a result, applicants may experience uncertainty during the application process regarding the most appropriate call for their project, particularly formal providers whose core activities are focused on CVET.

In almost every country, there is a stark disparity between urban hubs and peripheral regions. For example in France, participation is concentrated in urbanised regions such as Île-de-France, while eastern, northwestern, and overseas

regions remain underrepresented. In Croatia, eight out of the 21 counties did not have a single organisation implementing a KA2 project, while three counties recorded no organisations with KA1 activity, leaving local adult education stakeholders in these areas completely outside the programme. In Ireland, the Eastern and Midland region accounts for 75% of all projects, pointing to considerable scope for expanding participation in other parts of the country. The Hungarian country report similarly notes that, although Erasmus+ reaches many small organisations and civil society actors, access remains uneven in terms of both geography and institutional capacity. In Finland, the country report indicates that although the Helsinki–Uusimaa region received nearly half of all Erasmus+ adult education funding between 2021 and 2025, this concentration is much less pronounced when funding is considered per inhabitant. Nonetheless, regions in Eastern and South-Eastern Finland, including North Karelia, South Karelia and Kymenlaakso, receive comparatively little funding in both absolute and per-inhabitant terms. In the Netherlands, participation is likewise concentrated geographically: most beneficiary organisations are located in South Holland and North Holland, with Amsterdam alone accounting for 41% of all Dutch organisations involved in KA1 mobility projects. Notably, three provinces – Groningen, Friesland, and Flevoland – do not appear in the data at all, despite having relatively high numbers of citizens who could potentially benefit from the programme. One nuance when considering regional differences is that the data are based on the location of beneficiary organisations rather than the locations in which their activities take place or learners are reached. This means that organisations based in urban centres may in theory also serve participants in other regions. The available data do not allow us to determine the extent to which this occurs, but the findings across the country reports suggest that the geographical reach of beneficiary organisations is an issue that warrants further examination.

Furthermore, **organisational barriers differ in intensity depending on the composition of the sector**. Poland's AE sector is marked by a gap involving micro-organisations and volunteer-led foundations that struggle with administrative burdens and pre-financing, whereas Spain reports that its public adult education centres perceive themselves to be at a competitive disadvantage when applying for KA2 projects compared with more agile, specialised NGOs and private companies.

Based on the synthesis of the provided national reports, it is clear that the gaps in Erasmus+ participation and its resulting impacts are not uniform across Europe. Instead, these gaps are highly dependent on the specific nature of the adult education sector in each country and the strategic manner in which the programme is utilised within those national contexts.

2.3.2 General obstacles in KA1 and KA2

Based on the country reports, including survey data and interviews with participating and non-participating organisations, the reasons for not applying to or participating in Erasmus+ are remarkably consistent across countries. The national reports make a clear distinction between general structural barriers that affect participation across the entire Erasmus+ programme and specific operational obstacles that are unique to either KA1 or KA2.

The most consistently reported obstacles in the country reports across actions relate to limited staff capacity, time constraints and workload. Many organisations in the adult education sector are small or micro-entities that struggle to

absorb the demands of international projects alongside their core duties. Respondents frequently refer to small teams and competing responsibilities, which make it difficult to integrate project-related tasks – such as preparing applications, coordinating partnerships and managing reporting – into daily operations. For example, the Belgian report notes that staff in some smaller organisations are already fully occupied with day-to-day provision, while these organisations lack the budget or mandate to recruit dedicated project personnel. The Estonian report provides a further example: among the museums interviewed, the absence of dedicated project staff and staff-scheduling constraints – such as the need for visitor guides to remain present during opening hours – discouraged participation. The Austrian report similarly indicates that some smaller organisations rely on part-time staff or very small teams, limiting their capacity to take on additional projects. Meanwhile, the Hungarian report suggests that participation remains easier for organisations with stronger networks and greater project-management capacity. A related issue is staff continuity. The Spanish report shows that unstable staffing and the absence of a sufficiently large permanent team can make it difficult to retain institutional knowledge and sustain the application process over time..

In addition, **several country reports identify staff-related barriers, including limited foreign-language skills and differences in staff motivation to engage in international mobility and cooperation.** In the Latvian country report, employees' fear of having insufficient language skills and working in a foreign environment made it difficult to recruit staff for international activities. Similar concerns about language skills and willingness to participate are reported in the German, Hungarian and Turkish country reports. At the same time, the Latvian and Austrian country reports illustrate that participation itself helps to build precisely these competences and strengthen self-confidence. These findings suggest a potentially self-reinforcing barrier: organisations and staff with less international experience may initially find participation more difficult, even though they may stand to benefit substantially from it.

Closely linked to limited staff capacity **is the administrative burden and complexity of procedures, which are widely perceived as demanding and is mentioned across almost all surveyed countries.** Application processes, documentation requirements and reporting obligations require substantial effort, while navigating EU systems and programme rules adds an additional layer of complexity. The Italian country report describes Erasmus+ procedures as excessively bureaucratic and difficult to approach, especially for small and local organisations without dedicated administrative staff or previous experience in European project design. The Irish country report refers to organisations that described the application process as intimidating and were unsure whether the time investment would yield a proportionate benefit. In the Estonian country report, potential applicants raised concerns about the poor usability of EU digital platforms and the specialised terminology used in programme guidance, which they considered inaccessible to those outside the Erasmus+ community. It is striking that interviews conducted for the Estonian country report suggest that the perceived difficulty of the application process may, in some cases, also stem from broader associations with large-scale grant funding, especially EU funding, even among organisations without direct experience of Erasmus+ itself. Although this finding is not supported by other country reports, it may nevertheless warrant further investigation.

These capacity and administrative challenges are further reinforced by financial constraints and insufficient funding coverage. While Erasmus+ funding is essential, it does not always fully compensate for staff time, and organisations also face pressures related to rising travel costs that are not always matched by grant levels. Organisations note that funding often fails to cover actual staff costs, management time, or the additional resources needed to support learners with fewer opportunities, including learners with disabilities. The Finnish country report indicates that recent national and municipal funding cuts have exacerbated the situation. For example, state funding for liberal adult education was reduced by €20.5 million in 2024, leaving organisations with fewer resources to cover co-financing and substitute for mobile staff or for the time spent on planning projects. At the same time, these budget cuts have also acted as a driver of participation. As state subsidies shrink, organisations are increasingly turning to Erasmus+ not only as an internationalisation opportunity but also as one of the few remaining stable sources of development funding.

At the same time, uncertainty in the application and selection process, including high competition, low success rates and unclear funding prospects, can discourage organisations from investing time and resources in project development. The French country report identifies strong competition and the high selectivity of proposals as obstacles, noting that even well-rated applications may be rejected. Respondents also emphasised that preparing an application requires a substantial investment of time, while uncertainty about obtaining funding makes it difficult to plan and commit organisational resources.

Other country reports identify insufficient programme information and limited understanding of eligibility rules as additional barriers, particularly for newcomers. New or less experienced beneficiaries are impeded by their lack of familiarity with Erasmus+ structures and opportunities. They have limited knowledge of available actions and application processes, and the complexity of procedures and terminology may seem overwhelming. This is illustrated in Estonia, where museums had difficulty identifying which programme actions were relevant to their sector. The Austrian country report provides broader evidence of this informational barrier: among the non-participating organisations interviewed, insufficient information or knowledge about Erasmus+ was one of the most frequently reported obstacles.

Finally, country reports refer to the lack of strategic vision as an obstacle to participation in Erasmus+. According to the Finnish report, some organisations are missing, because their leadership has not prioritized internationalisation or lacks a clear strategy to integrate Erasmus+ into their operations.

Country report Finland

“One of the main obstacles for our organisation in engaging with Erasmus+ projects is the absence of a clear strategic direction and vision for adult education within the organisation. This lack of alignment makes it difficult to integrate and prioritise international development initiatives such as KA2 projects.”

At the same time, most country reports also indicate that a considerable share of organisations experience few or no significant barriers to participation and refer to successes in increasing participation. The Finnish country report, for example, highlights the important role of Erasmus+ ambassadors and communication

and outreach through various channels, including the ambassadors' network, information events, newsletters, and social media, which make the programme more visible to organisations that had not previously considered applying. Positive experiences among beneficiaries also appear to be spreading through professional networks, with several interviewees reporting that they first heard about the programme from a peer organisation or colleague.

Meeting applicants where they are:

Finland's adult education Erasmus+ ambassadors

Finland's National Agency for Education (EDUFI) has established a network of national ambassadors to promote and support participation in the Erasmus+, Nordplus and EPALE programmes in the field of adult education. Currently the network consists of nine ambassadors representing different adult education sub-sectors, providing both geographical and thematic coverage across Finland. Ambassadors are drawn from organisations including adult education centres, folk high schools, study centres, museums, summer universities and NGOs.

The ambassadors work under an agreement with the Finnish National Agency for Education, receive a small annual contribution to support their activities, and develop their own annual activity plan. Their tasks include reaching out proactively to potential applicants, supporting projects in the application phase in an advisory capacity, promoting EPALE, and contributing to programme development and content work. The ambassadors meet twice a year in person and hold monthly online meetings organised by the Finnish National Agency for Education, which also provides guidance and support for their activities.

Ambassadors serve as an accessible, peer-level first point of contact especially for adult education organisations considering their first application or needing practical guidance. Survey and interview data from this study suggest that organisations who used this support valued its informality and accessibility. The model represents a low-cost, decentralised approach to supporting wider access to Erasmus+ that complements the National Agency's own guidance services.

Sources: Finnish National Agency for Education (EDUFI); coordinator interviews; (<https://www.oph.fi/fi/ohjelmat/ota-vhteytta>)

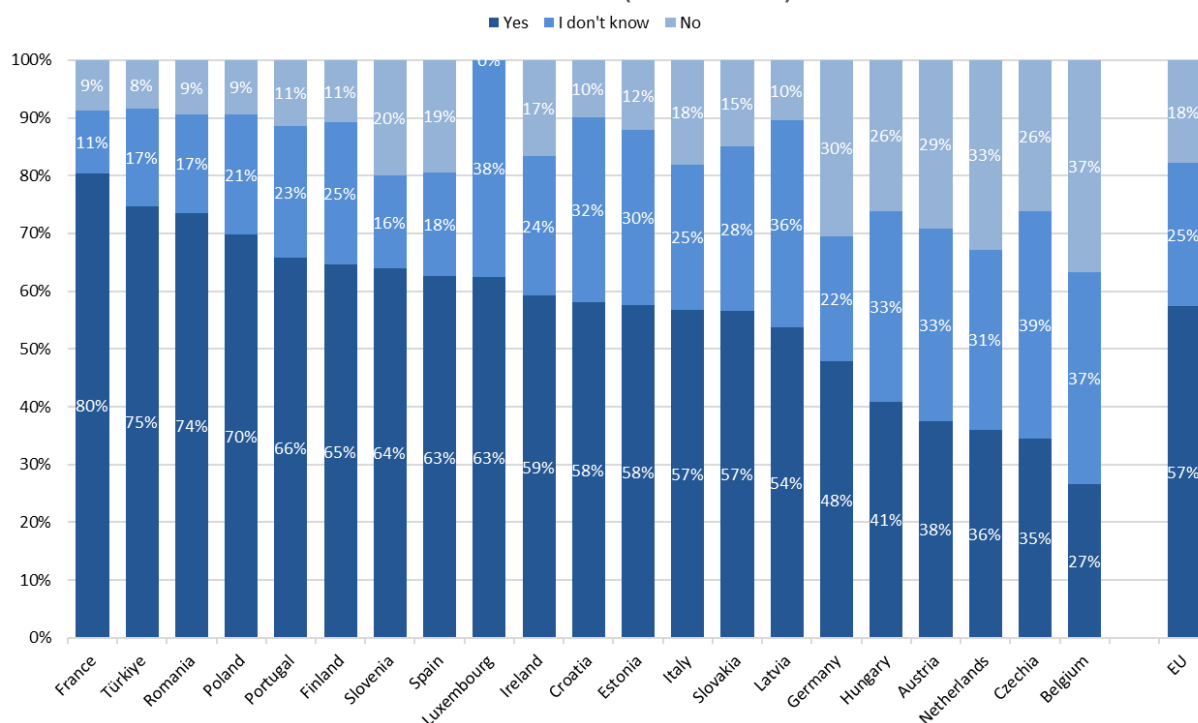
2.3.3 Obstacles specific to KA2 (Cooperation and small-scale Partnerships)

Some obstacles are more pronounced in KA2 projects, especially those related to partnership development and project management. Organisations report difficulties in identifying suitable partners and share concerns about partner reliability. Coordination difficulties are also described, with differences in working methods and digital skills among partners that create frictions. These difficulties are often compounded by limited experience, knowledge or skills related to Erasmus+, particularly among newcomers, who may struggle to understand programme requirements or prepare competitive applications. Country reports refer to the fact that the effort required to prepare a KA2 proposal is often perceived as high risk due to intense competition and low approval rates under this action. Other reports indicate that smaller organisations and associations experience difficulties in meeting the creditworthiness checks required for KA2 applications. The Austrian country report also finds that partner organisations in particular experience insufficient coverage of staff time, expert involvement and related costs to manage the complex cooperation project.

2.3.4 Obstacles specific for organising KA1 mobilities for adult learners

A slight majority of responding organisations intend to apply (again) for future KA1 mobility projects for adult learners (see Figure 11a). At EU level, 18% state that they do not intend to apply, while 25% remain unsure. This is consistent with Figure 9, where 39% had participated in only one KA1 project so far.

FIGURE 11A: INTENTION OF BENEFICIARY ORGANISATIONS TO APPLY TO KA1 MOBILITY FOR ADULT LEARNERS IN THE FUTURE – N VARIES PER COUNTRY (SEE TABLE 1)



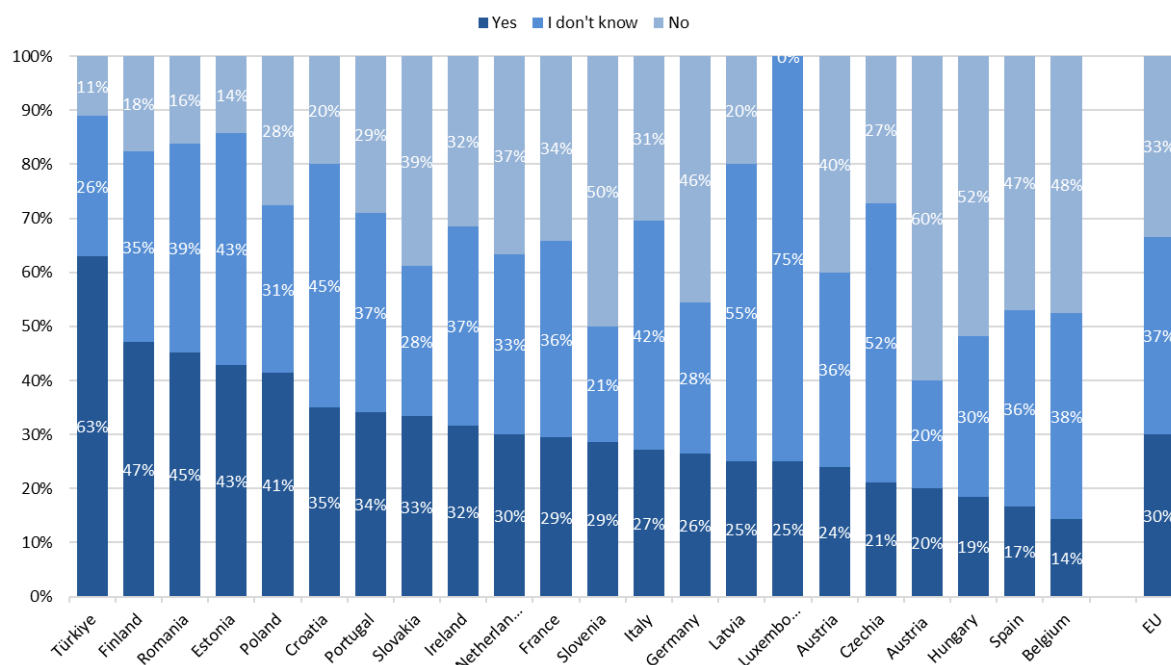
Source: Online survey beneficiary organisations RIA-AE network (2025-2026)

Based on the data per country (see Figure 11a), beneficiary organisations' intentions to organise mobility activities for adult learners in the framework of future KA1 mobility projects vary significantly across Europe, ranging from high enthusiasm in some countries to substantial uncertainty and declining interest in others. A first group of countries has an especially high share of positive responses, with around 70% or more. This includes France, Türkiye, Romania and Poland. A second group of countries, from Portugal to Latvia, also shows generally positive interest, ranging between 54% and 70%. However, these countries also display somewhat higher levels of uncertainty, reflected in larger shares of "I don't know" responses, particularly Latvia with 36%. A final group of countries, including Germany, Hungary, Austria, the Netherlands, Czechia and Belgium (FWB), reports comparatively lower levels of interest in future participation. In these countries, between 48% and 27% chose "Yes", while uncertainty and negative responses are substantially more frequent compared to the previous groups. Belgium (FWB) stands out in particular, with the lowest share of organisations reporting interest and the highest levels of uncertainty and "No"-responses.

The percentage of beneficiary organisations intending to organise learning mobility for adults in a future KA1 project has remained stable since the previous survey in 2023/2024, when, at EU level, willingness was indicated by 56% of the respondents. However, the picture differs between countries, with some countries seeing an increase and others a decrease. The most significant increase in positive responses is found in France, nearly doubling from 46% to 80% now. Germany (seven

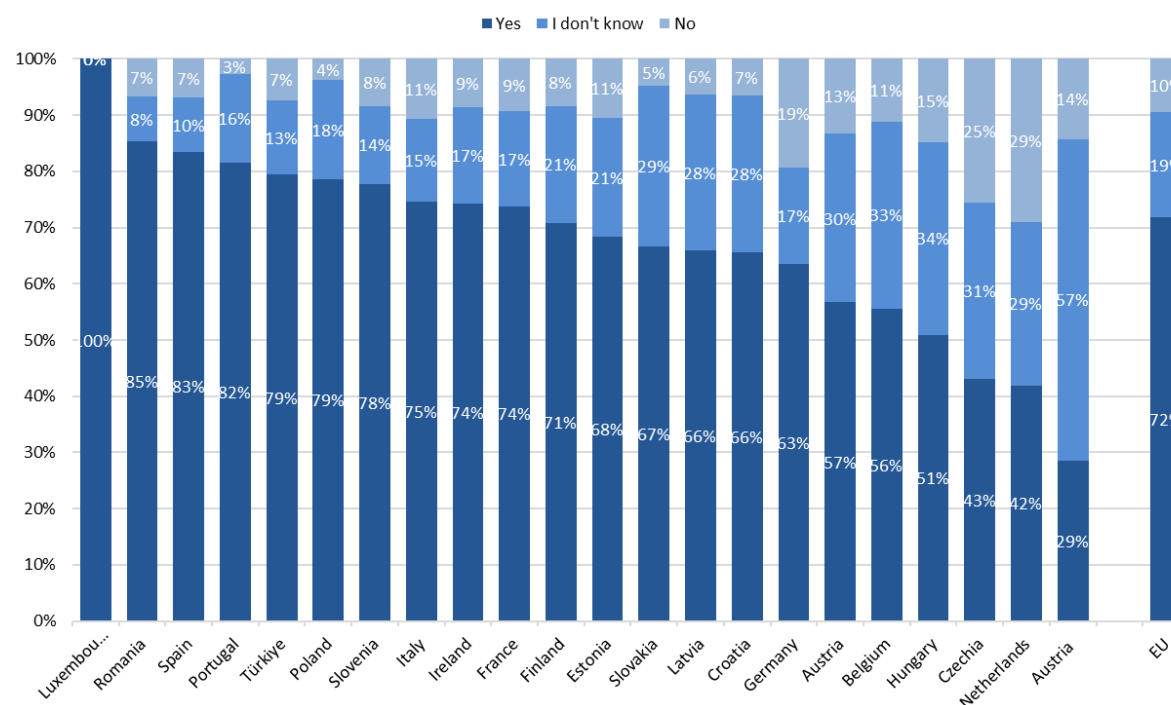
percentage point increase) and the Netherlands (eight percentage point increase) also show a more noticeable increase compared to previous years. By far the largest decrease is found in Czechia, going from 56% to 35%. This is followed by Austria, experiencing a decrease of 8% and Hungary, with a decrease of 7%.

FIGURE 11B: INTENTION OF BENEFICIARY ORGANISATIONS THAT PARTICIPATED IN KA1 PROJECT(S) TO APPLY TO KA1 MOBILITY FOR ADULT LEARNERS IN THE FUTURE – N VARIES PER COUNTRY



Source: Online survey beneficiary organisations RIA-AE network (2025-2026)

FIGURE 11C: INTENTION OF BENEFICIARY ORGANISATIONS THAT DID NOT PARTICIPATE IN KA1 PROJECT(S) TO APPLY TO KA1 MOBILITY FOR ADULT LEARNERS IN THE FUTURE – N VARIES PER COUNTRY



Source: Online survey beneficiary organisations RIA-AE network (2025-2026)

Figures 11b and 11c point to an important nuance concerning intentions to organise learner mobility in the framework of a future KA1 project: future application intentions are strongly dependent on whether organisations are currently participating in one or more KA1 projects. Organisations that already participate are much more likely to indicate that they intend to apply again in the future and organise learner mobility. 70% of organisations currently involved in KA1 projects gave a positive response, compared to only 30% of organisations that are not currently participating in KA1. This suggests that a substantial share of organisations may not be interested in organising adult learner mobility at all, while organisations that already participate are generally inclined to continue their involvement in mobility activities in future Erasmus+ calls.

Based on the individual country reports it becomes clear that several of the obstacles identified for Erasmus+ projects more generally, such as limited staff capacity and time, administrative burden, financial constraints, and limited experience with the programme, are also reported in relation to KA1 mobility for adult learners. These challenges similarly affect organisations' ability to plan, organise and manage mobility activities.

In addition to these general barriers, a number of more specific factors are highlighted. **A key issue concerns organisational priorities and strategic focus.** The Dutch and Hungarian country reports indicate that learner mobility is not always considered compatible with an organisation's mission, target groups or core activities. This is particularly relevant for organisations that do not work directly or systematically with adult learners. In some cases, organisations prioritise other activities within Erasmus+. The Slovenian country report, for example, includes organisations that prioritised staff mobility, generally incorporated mobility only into KA2 projects or considered KA2 cooperation projects to offer greater added value than KA1 learner mobility. These findings suggest that non-participation does not always reflect a lack of interest in Erasmus+ itself, but can instead result from uncertainty about the relevance and benefits of learner mobility for the organisation's particular role and target group.

A distinct set of challenges relates to adult learners themselves. Organising learner mobility is noted as significantly more labour-intensive than staff mobility, requiring extensive planning, risk management, and physical accompaniment of learners. Organisations report that learners may face barriers to participation, including work and family responsibilities, limited availability, and low motivation or confidence. Reference was also made to problems experienced by some learners who lack valid travel documents (e.g. passports and residence permits). Particular difficulties are noted for vulnerable or disadvantaged groups, who may require substantial preparation and additional individual support throughout the mobility, further increasing the complexity and time needed to organise group mobilities.

Country report Poland

Additionally there are specific obstacle for Key Action 1 strongly related to participation and mobility logistics, including: language barriers among participants, lack of confidence in participating in international mobility, health, availability, and life situation of adult learners, difficulties in organising mobility within work schedules, inclusion challenges (e.g. persons with disabilities).

Country report Finland

“Migrants and refugees with unstable life situation; learners with limited educational backgrounds; or learners with disabilities, mental or chronic illnesses or other health challenges may need extensive preparation and additional individual support.”

A related challenge concerns the financial costs and lack of incentives for hosting learner mobilities and the resulting difficulty in finding suitable host organisations. Several country reports point to the resources required from host organisations to organise learning activities and support international groups, while the funding available may not fully cover these costs. This can reduce organisations’ willingness to act as hosts, particularly where participation entails substantial staff time or where commercially oriented organisations have little incentive to provide activities without adequate compensation. The challenge can be greater when hosting learners with fewer opportunities, as accessible transport, accommodation and additional support may require further logistical and human resources. The German report specifically highlights the absence of a dedicated budget or flat-rate grant for host organisations, with hosting costs instead generally having to be covered through the organisational support provided to the sending organisation. It also points to differences in the flat-rate allowances for learners and accompanying persons as an obstacle to ‘inclusive travel on an equal footing’.

Finally, language barriers, particularly insufficient English proficiency, can hinder participation and international cooperation, while difficulties in engaging target groups, especially vulnerable or disadvantaged adults, require additional effort and resources. Several reports note that current language support (like OLS) is considered ineffective for these groups.

2.4 Conclusion

The findings presented in this chapter demonstrate that Erasmus+ in the field of AE succeeds in reaching a broad and diverse range of organisations across Europe, while at the same time revealing persistent inequalities in accessibility and participation. Overall, the programme is strongly characterised by the active involvement of NGOs, associations, and foundations, which form the backbone of participation in both KA1 and KA2 projects. Public educational institutions and private companies play a more variable role depending on national adult education systems and institutional traditions. The results also confirm that Erasmus+ reaches organisations beyond the traditional adult education sector, particularly those active in social welfare, arts and culture, and vocational education and training, reflecting the increasingly cross-sectoral nature of adult learning.

The analysis further shows that participation is dominated by relatively small organisations, many with fewer than 50 staff members. Although organisations with more employees tend to reach more adult learners, these smaller organisations regularly reach large numbers of learners, indicating that small-scale structures can still have substantial educational impact. At the same time, participation patterns suggest that Erasmus+ tends to rely heavily on organisations with prior experience in the programme, as many beneficiaries repeatedly participate in multiple projects. This points to positive experiences and institutional continuity, but it may also indicate barriers for newcomers attempting to access the programme.

Although the programme prioritises inclusion and equal access, several structural gaps remain visible. Certain sectors that play an important role in adult learning ecosystems, such as museums, libraries, cultural centres, environmental organisations, and community-based organisations, remain underrepresented in some countries. In addition, uncertainty about whether CVET institutions that provide adult learning activities are eligible to apply can create obstacles to participation among institutions that are active in lifelong learning but do not identify with the formal AE category. Strong regional disparities are consistently found across country reports, with participation often concentrated in urban centres and more developed regions, while peripheral and rural areas remain less represented despite potentially high needs among disadvantaged populations.

The findings also highlight that accessibility is shaped not only by sectoral or geographical representation, but also by organisational capacity. Across almost all countries, organisations report limited staff capacity, administrative complexity, financial pressures, and uncertainty about funding outcomes as major barriers to participation. These challenges are especially significant for smaller organisations, volunteer-led initiatives, and newcomers with limited international experience. For KA1 learner mobility specifically, additional barriers emerge at the level of adult learners themselves, including work and family responsibilities, low confidence, limited availability, and difficulties engaging vulnerable target groups.

Improving accessibility and inclusiveness therefore requires not only continued financial support, but also targeted outreach, simplified procedures, stronger support for newcomers, and greater recognition of the diversity of adult learning providers and contexts across Europe.

3 Impact of Erasmus+ at organisation and staff level

3.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on the outcomes and expected impacts of Erasmus+ on the organisations. This includes the impact of Erasmus+ on the development and improvement of the quality of learning opportunities offered by the participating organisations. It begins by presenting the concrete project results and products as well as the topics prioritised because of participation. Subsequently, findings on the effects of Erasmus+ participation on staff are reported.

3.2 Topics and products of Erasmus+ projects

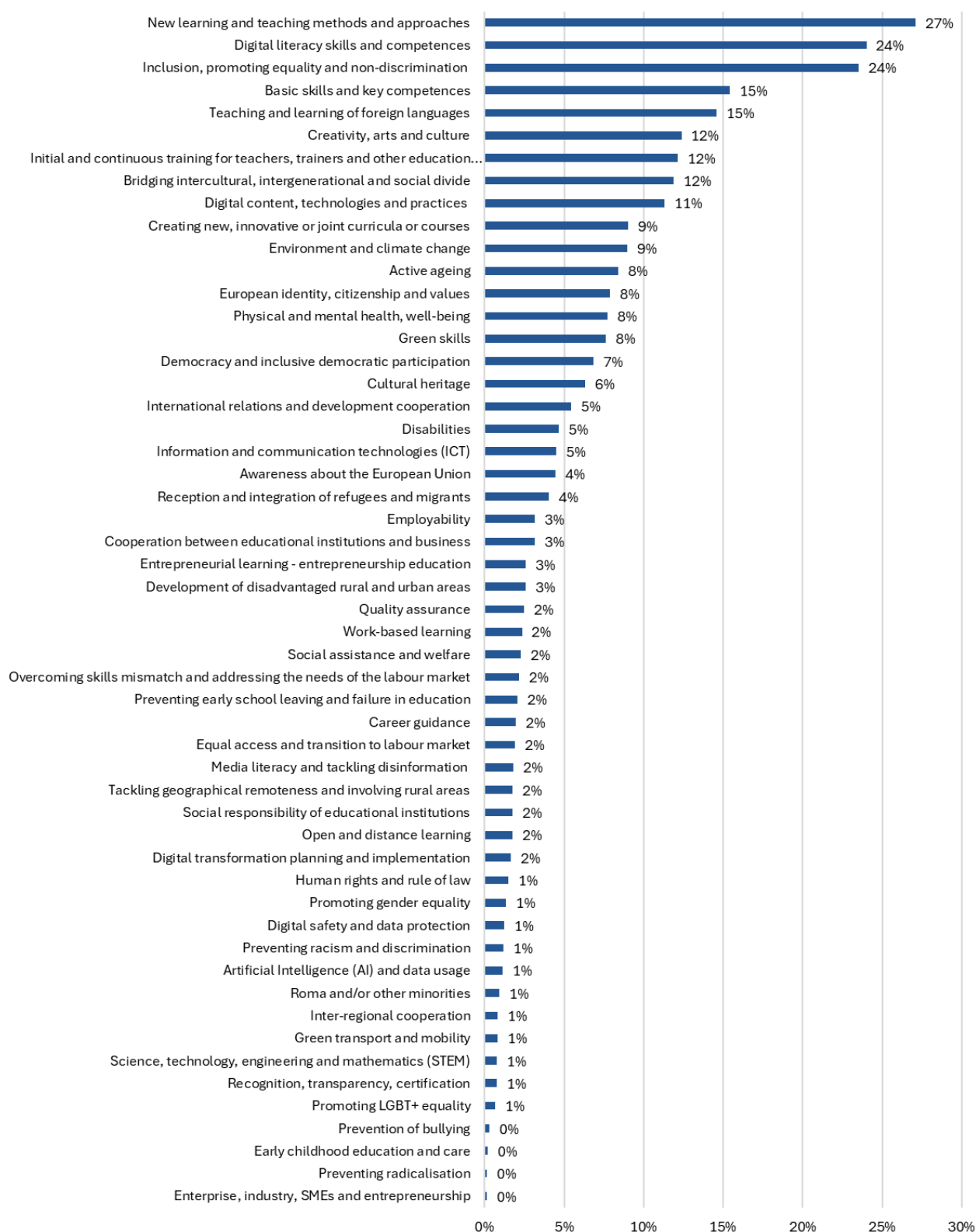
3.2.1 Topics of KA1 projects

Figure 12 displays the wide variety of topics that short-term KA1 (KA122) projects may choose to address. Overall, the data shows that while short-term KA1 projects do indeed cover a broad spectrum of topics, there is a clear concentration around teaching methods, digital skills, and inclusion. These topics are each chosen by around a quarter of all projects.

A second group of frequently selected topics includes basic skills and key competences and teaching and learning of foreign languages (both 15%), as well as creativity, arts and culture, initial and continuous training for staff, and bridging intercultural, intergenerational and social divides (all 12%), and digital content, technologies and practices (11%).

The remaining topics account for smaller shares, below 10%. These include themes such as environment and climate change, active ageing, European identity and values, and well-being (8%-9%), as well as democracy and inclusive participation (7%) and cultural heritage (6%). A large number of topics are selected only marginally, with shares of 5% or less, while several topics are almost absent.

FIGURE 12: TOPICS OF SHORT-TERM KA1 PROJECTS IN THE PERIOD OF 2021-2025 (EACH PROJECT MAY HAVE 1 TO 3 TOPICS) – N=1616



Source: European Commission monitoring data

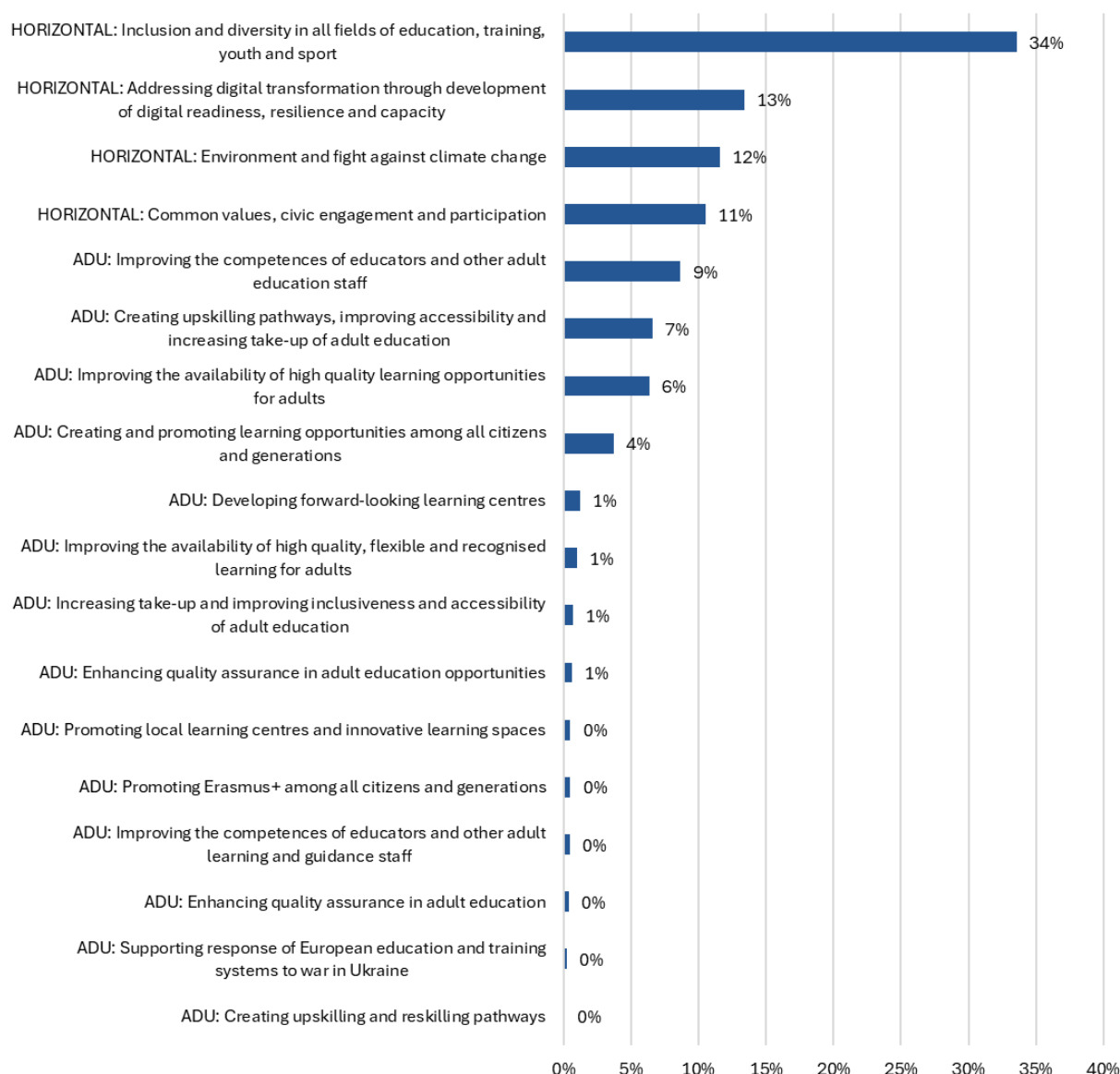
3.2.2 Priorities of KA2 projects

Figure 13 lists the main priorities chosen by KA2 projects. Noteworthy is that the first four most frequent priorities each belong to the horizontal priorities as set out by the European Commission. This indicates that the fundamental policies and principles that the Commission has prioritised are taken seriously by Erasmus+ projects within the adult education sector. Of these four priorities, inclusion and diversity stands out by a substantial margin (34%). The other horizontal priorities account for smaller shares: digital transformation (13%), environment and climate change (12%), and common values, civic engagement and participation (11%). The horizontal priorities are followed by priorities that are related to the adult education sector, such as improving staff competences, access and the quality of learning opportunities for adults.

In Annex 2, Figure 37, shows the 'other' priorities of KA2 projects. Here, the priorities of the adult education sector become far more dominant, in an order that broadly mirrors the order of main priorities in Figure 13. This is not unexpected. However, a notable difference emerges when looking at horizontal priorities when chosen as secondary priority. The priority of common values, civic engagement and participation is more frequently selected (16%) than digital transformation (12%) and environment and climate change (7%). This contrasts with the pattern shown in Figure 13 for the primary priorities and suggests that democratic participation is more often included as an additional, or indirect priority, rather than as a primary objective of KA2 projects.

Comparing the two figures related to the priorities of KA2 projects to the topics of KA1 projects in Figure 12, a similar image comes to light: Erasmus+ projects focus particularly on inclusion, teaching practices and digitalisation.

FIGURE 13: PRIMARY HORIZONTAL OR SECTORAL OBJECTIVE OF KA2 PROJECTS IN THE PERIOD OF 2021-2025 – N=1836



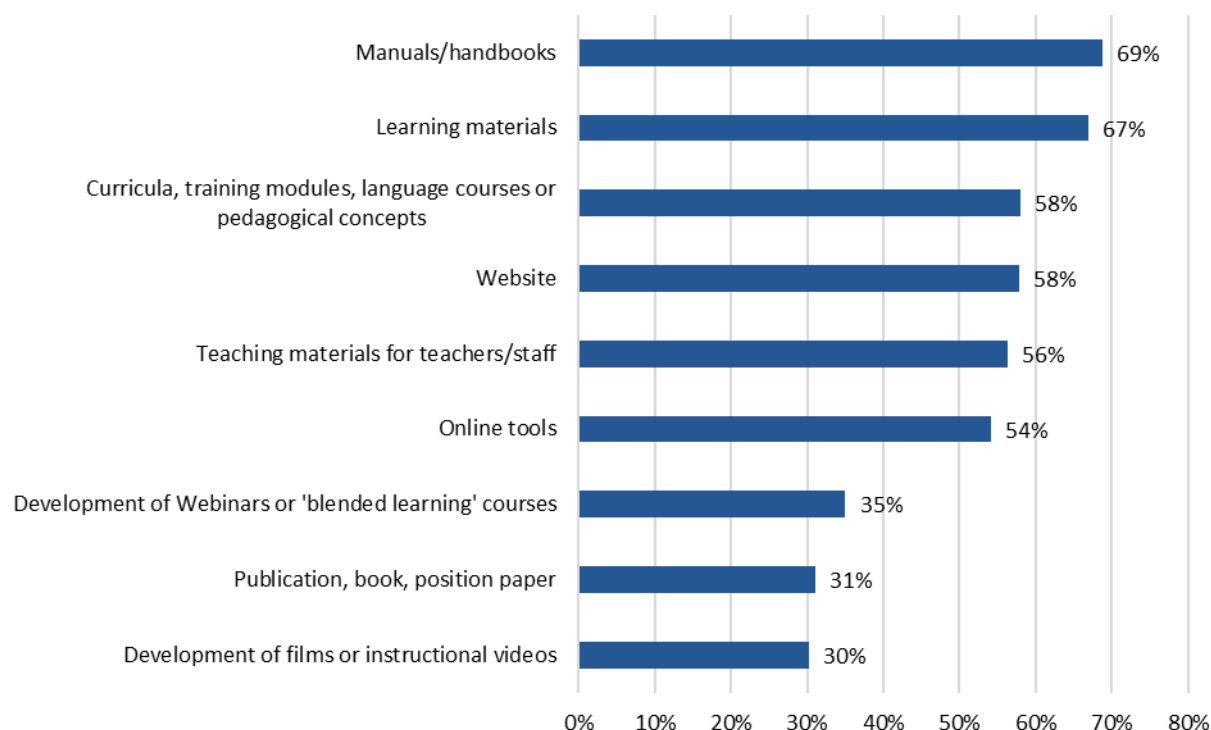
Source: European Commission monitoring data

3.3 Impact on beneficiary organisations

3.3.1 Types of output developed by KA2 projects

KA2 partnerships projects offer a strong opportunity for organisations to generate useful materials and typically result in concrete learning and teaching outputs, often with multiple products resulting from a single project (see Figure 14). The most common outputs are manuals or handbooks (69%) and learning materials (67%). These are followed by curricula, training modules or pedagogical concepts and websites (both 58%), as well as teaching materials for staff (56%) and online tools (54%). The remaining types of outputs are less frequently developed. Around one third of projects lead to webinars (35%), publications (31%), and instructional videos (30%).

FIGURE 14: TYPE OF OUTPUTS OR PRODUCTS DEVELOPED AS PART OF PARTICIPATION IN KA2 IN ERASMUS+ – N=1419



Source: Online survey beneficiary organisations RIA-AE network (2025-2026)

3.3.2 The extent to which KA2-outputs are used after finalising the project

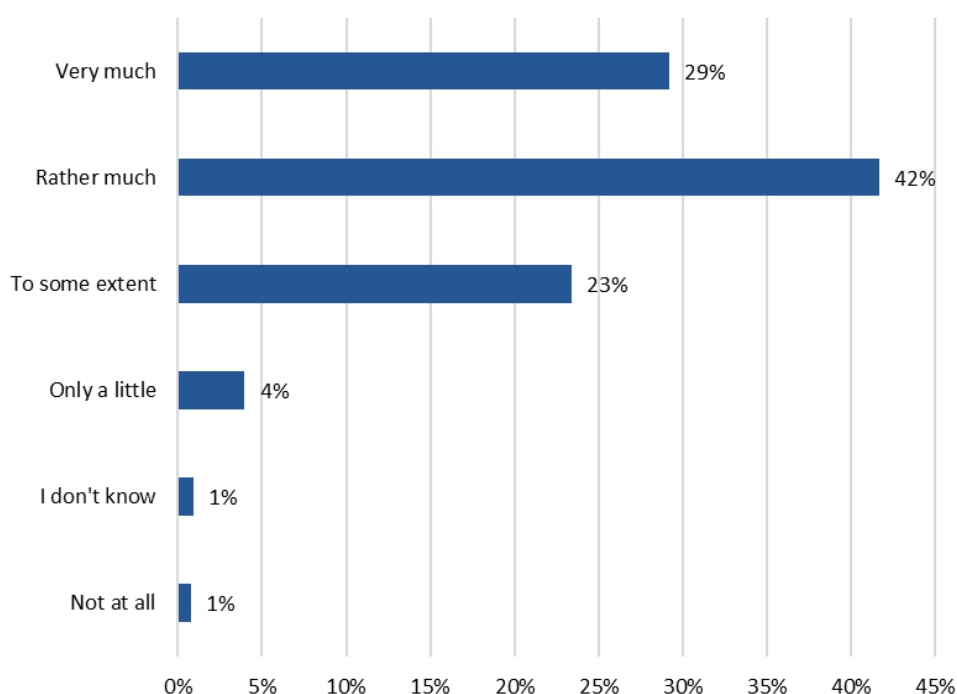
The extent to which a product or output is used after a KA2 project has been finalised provides meaningful insight into the sustainability of Erasmus+ and its potential longer term impact. As shown by Figure 15, a majority of organisations report that produced outputs are used either rather much (42%) or very much (29%) after participation in Erasmus+ has ended. A further 23% indicate that outputs are used to some extent. Only a small share report limited or no continued use, with 4% indicating that outputs are used only a little and 1% not at all. A final 1% report that they do not know. These numbers are comparable to the outcomes of the 2024 survey, pointing to a consistent share of organisations that use KA2 outputs sustainably.

While most countries report relatively high levels of sustainability, the share of organisations indicating “very much” or “rather much” continued use of KA2 outputs varies considerably between countries. According to the survey data, Romania, Italy and the Netherlands report particularly high levels of continued use, with combined shares for “very much” and “rather much” nearing 90%, and more than 40% of organisations in each country selecting “very much”. At the other end of the spectrum, Latvia reports the highest relative share of “only a little” responses, while Czechia stands out with 3% selecting “not at all” and 39% “to some extent”. Nevertheless, even in these two countries, organisations more often than not report continued use of outputs after participation in Erasmus+ has ended.

The country reports identify several common factors that determine whether these outputs are sustained or abandoned. A central enabling factor is the alignment of outputs with concrete needs of organisations and existing activities with relevant target groups. Closely linked to this is the practical usability. Materials that are clear, adaptable and ready to use, such as curricula or handbooks resources, are more

easily integrated and reused. In many cases, organisations highlight that materials developed within projects are structurally integrated because they correspond directly to their day-to-day work or target groups.

FIGURE 15: EXTENT TO WHICH KA2 OUTPUTS AND PRODUCTS ARE STILL USED AFTER PARTICIPATION IN ERASMUS+ – N=1283



Source: Online survey beneficiary organisations RIA-AE network (2025-2026)

Outputs developed through co-creation processes and active involvement of staff and learners tend to be more embedded in organisational practice, as they increase ownership and applicability. The quality of outputs and their accessibility also play an important role. High-quality, user-friendly and well-structured materials are more likely to be reused in addition to facilitating wider usage beyond the organisations, especially when made freely available online or translated into different languages. The country report of Latvia and Estonia state that language barriers (insufficient English skills among staff) hindered the ability to widely apply or adapt international outputs.

The use of outputs is also supported by effective dissemination and communication, including sharing through networks, platforms, workshops, and cooperation with other organisations.

On the other side, several structural barriers limit the continued use of outputs. The most consistently mentioned constraint is the lack of financial resources after project completion, which restricts the ability to maintain, update, or further develop outputs. Limited staff capacity, time constraints, and workload, which are also prevalent in the accessibility of Erasmus+, reduce the ability of organisations to engage with new materials or sustain project results once funding ends.

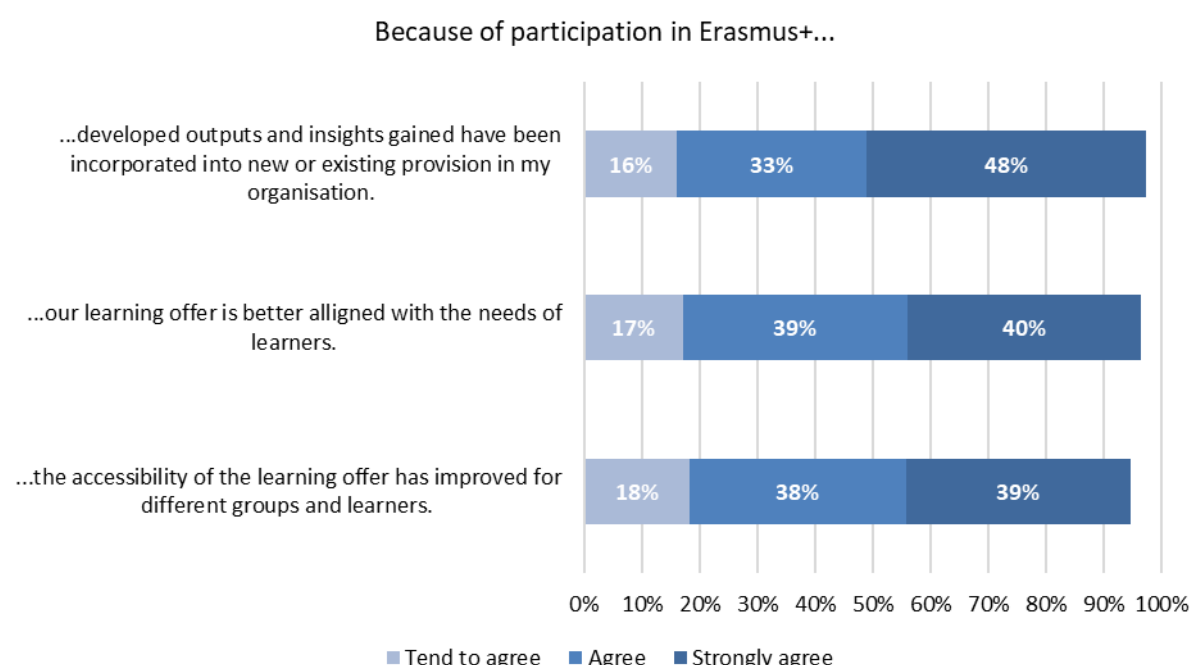
To a lesser extent organisations also refer to organisational changes and instability, such as staff turnover or shifting priorities, which disrupt continuity and reduce institutional memory of project outputs. In some cases, limited competences or lack of support, particularly in digital or pedagogical areas, further hinder effective use.

Finally, motivational and cultural factors also play a role. Resistance to change, low staff motivation, or established working routines can limit the adoption of new tools and approaches. In some cases, limited interest from target groups or the perceived relevance of the topic affects the extent to which outputs are taken up.

3.3.3 Impact of participation in Erasmus+ on learning offer

Figure 16 shows that participation in Erasmus+, being KA1, KA2 or both, has a clear perceived impact on the learning offer of beneficiary organisations. A large majority of organisations report positive effects across all three dimensions included in the online questionnaire.

FIGURE 16: THE IMPACT OF PARTICIPATION IN ERASMUS+ ON THE LEARNING OFFER – N=1502



Source: Online survey beneficiary organisations RIA-AE network (2025-2026)

The strongest effect is observed in the incorporation of outputs and insights into organisational practice. In alignment with Figure 16, a total of 48% of the respondents strongly agree and 33% agree that results have been integrated into new or existing learning offer. Similarly, 40% strongly agree and 39% agree that their learning offer is better aligned with the needs of learners. Improvements in accessibility are also widely reported, with 39% strongly agreeing and 38% agreeing that the accessibility of their learning offer has improved for different groups of learners. Across all three statements, only a relatively small share of organisations indicate a lower level of agreement (16% to 18%), while barely any of the respondents disagree with statements (3% to 5%).¹⁷

¹⁷ The reliability of these results are supported by a single overall variable focusing on the impact of Erasmus+ participation on the learning offer. Based on this variable, 94.8% of beneficiaries reported a positive impact on the improvement of the learning offer. The variable has a strong reliability, as indicated by a Cronbach's Alpha ($\alpha = 0.845$), and the scores are statistically significant, as indicated by the One Sample T-test ($t(1502) = 245.75$, $p < .001$). See Annex 3 for more details on the statistical analyses of the survey.

Figure 17 shows which topics organisations most frequently give greater attention following participation in Erasmus+ projects. The most frequently mentioned topics include increased attention for digital skills, as well as for inclusion and diversity, both at 65%. These are followed by networking and learning partnerships (58%), active citizenship, democratic participation and civic engagement (54%), and European common values (49%). Other topics that frequently receive more attention are professional development of staff (47%), teaching and learning with digital technologies (45%), greening and climate change (43%), motivation and well-being of learners (42%), and inclusive learning environments (42%). The remaining topics show more limited increases in attention after participation in Erasmus+. This applies especially to work-based learning, validation of prior learning, and differentiation in teaching.

FIGURE 17: TOPICS RECEIVING MORE ATTENTION AFTER PARTICIPATING IN ERASMUS+ – N=1501



Source: Online survey beneficiary organisations RIA-AE network (2025-2026)

This finding is largely consistent with the corresponding figure in the first synthesis report from 2024. Both then and now, digital skills and inclusion and diversity are the two topics that received the greatest increase in attention following participation in Erasmus+. The most notable change is that active citizenship and social engagement has risen from the seventh-ranked topic in the previous survey round (43%) to the fourth-ranked topic in the current reporting period (52%). Other changes are smaller, suggesting that the thematic impact of Erasmus+ has remained largely consistent between 2018 and 2025.

When looking at the data at individual country level, the overall picture changes little. Almost without exception, the country reports identify either digital skills or inclusion and diversity as the main topic that received increased attention. In the few countries where this does not apply, such as Finland, Estonia and Croatia, networking or

professional development of staff instead emerges as the most prominent topic. Even in these cases however, digital skills and inclusion and diversity still rank among the most important themes. In other words, it is well supported that the main shifts in attention associated with Erasmus+ participation concern, inclusion, digitalisation, and citizenship, while more practice-oriented topics of education tend to see a much smaller increase in received attention.

The concrete examples portrayed in the country reports demonstrate how Erasmus+ participation has led to structural changes within organisations, in their learning offer and staff competences. These changes are most visible where project results are integrated into regular organisational practice, such as through the permanent inclusion of new programmes, teaching methods, tools, or partnerships. For example, in Slovenia an organisation explained how Erasmus+ allowed them to explore and address new topics.

Country report Slovenia

“Erasmus+ has become very important to us recently, not only financially but above all in terms of content. Through Erasmus+ projects, we are engaging with a range of topics that we had not previously addressed ... In this sense, Erasmus+ complements our core activities and, in some cases, further develops them. It also helps us build an international network, which then enables us to prepare and submit new joint project applications together with our partners.”

International cooperation can lead to new perspectives, inspiration and strengthened organisational identity while also leading to new joint projects.

Country report Germany

“Participation in several Erasmus+ projects since 2021 has strengthened the organisation in a variety of ways and on a lasting basis. The international professional exchange with partners from Greece and Spain has provided an opportunity to broaden the organisation’s own perspective and gain impetus for innovation, for example in the field of digital education or education for sustainable development. [...] The organisation now benefits from a strengthened self-image as a driving force for digital participation and sustainable learning in the region, an expanded network, and the long-term improvement in staff skills, enabling them, for example, to successfully implement and pass on new concepts such as smart TV-based e-learning and participatory methods.”

Country reports point out that participation also boosts an organisation’s reputation and visibility. The Finnish country report serves as clear example, concluding that in remote areas, Erasmus+ projects are helpful for staff recruitment and retention, offering professional development opportunities that are otherwise unavailable.

Country report Finland

Participation in Erasmus+ have proved to contribute to the reputation and visibility of adult education organisations. For organisations in remote or peripheral areas, staff mobility serves an important function in staff retention and recruitment, signalling that international professional development is possible regardless of location. At the learner level, the visibility of mobility activities strengthened the image of the institution as one that offers real opportunities and takes its learners seriously, supporting both enrolment and learner motivation. For smaller organisations and those operating in communities with limited international exposure, Erasmus+ participation also increased visibility among local stakeholders, funders and partner organisations, reinforcing the role of adult education as an active contributor to community life.

Overall, the examples analysed within the individual country reports illustrate how Erasmus+ can lead to sustained improvements in the learning offer, staff competences, internationalisation and organisational development.

3.3.4 Impact on staff

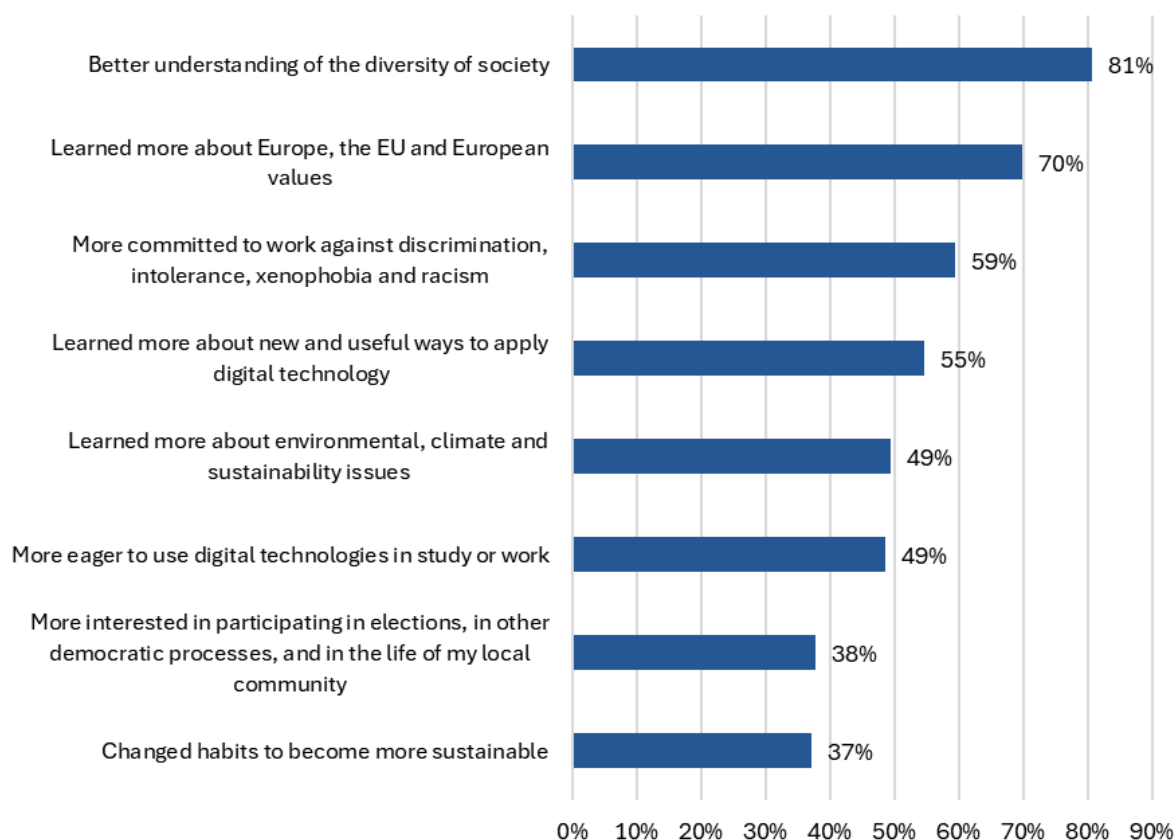
Figure 18 shows in what manner staff who participated in KA1 mobility activities benefit from Erasmus+. The most frequently reported benefit is the development of practical skills relevant for current work and professional development (88%). Other commonly reported benefits include improved organisational, management and leadership skills (63%) and improved knowledge of the teaching subject and professional field (59%). The least frequently reported benefit, although still indicated by almost half of respondents, relates to improved career opportunities (48%).

FIGURE 18: WAYS IN WHICH STAFF BENEFITTED FROM PARTICIPATION IN ERASMUS+ – N=1406



Source: European Commission monitoring data

FIGURE 19: WAYS IN WHICH STAFF GAINED KNOWLEDGE ABOUT HORIZONTAL PRIORITIES – N=1406



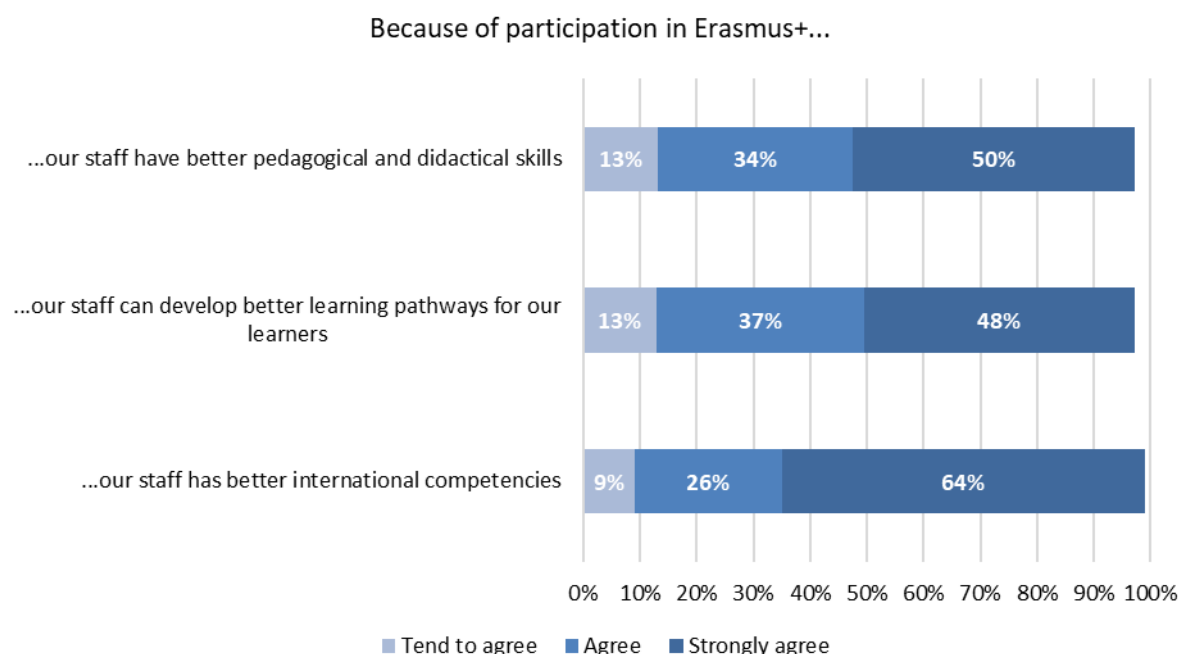
Source: European Commission monitoring data

Participation in Erasmus+ is associated with increased knowledge and awareness across several horizontal priorities (see Figure 19). The most frequently reported outcome is a better understanding of the diversity of society (81%), followed by increased knowledge about Europe, the EU and European values (70%). A majority of respondents also indicate being more committed to addressing discrimination and related issues (59%) and having learned new and useful ways to apply digital technology (55%). Around half report increased awareness of environmental and sustainability issues (49%) and a greater willingness to use digital technologies in their work or studies (49%). The lowest levels of reported impact are observed for increased interest in democratic participation (38%) and for changes in behaviour towards more sustainable practices (37%).

As portrayed by Figure 20, participation in Erasmus+ is associated with clear improvements in staff competences. The strongest reported effect relates to international competences, with 64% of respondents strongly agreeing and a further 26% agreeing that staff have improved in this area. High levels of agreement are also observed for pedagogical and didactical skills and for the ability of staff to develop better learning pathways for learners. In both cases, around half of respondents strongly agree that these have improved, while a further approximately 35% agree. Across all three statements, a small share of respondents indicate a lower level of

agreement (9%-13% tend to agree), and disagreement is nearly non-existent (1%-3% disagree).¹⁸

FIGURE 20: THE IMPACT OF PARTICIPATION IN ERASMUS+ ON STAFF – N=1502



Source: Online survey beneficiary organisations RIA-AE network (2025-2026)

The country report of Croatia provides an example of long-term development of staff competences and careers, as well as improved ability to work with diverse groups and embedding of the organisation in the broader community.

Country report Croatia

“3 volunteers who were participants of various educations became employees”;

“Members of the association who participated in the Erasmus+ project strengthened their digital and communication skills, and took on a more significant role in the education of other members of the association and the wider community ...”

3.4 Conclusion

The findings in this chapter demonstrate that Erasmus+ has a substantial and multifaceted impact on beneficiary organisations in the adult education sector.

A first important conclusion is that Erasmus+ projects strongly reflect the horizontal priorities of the European Commission, particularly inclusion and diversity, digital transformation, and participation and civic engagement. Both the selected KA1 topics and KA2 priorities show a clear concentration around teaching methods, digital skills,

¹⁸ The reliability of these results are supported by a single overall variable focussing on the impact of involvement in Erasmus+ projects on the competencies of the staff. Based on this variable, 97.4% of beneficiaries experienced an impact on the improvement of the competences of staff. The variable has a strong reliability, as indicated by a Cronbach's Alpha ($\alpha = 0.818$), and the scores are statistically significant, as indicated by the One Sample T-test ($t(1503) = 296.78, p < .001$). See Annex 3 for more details on the statistical analyses of the survey.

inclusion, and learner-centred approaches. This demonstrates that Erasmus+ projects are closely aligned with broader European policy objectives and that organisations actively translate these priorities into educational practice. Priorities and topics such as environmental sustainability, democracy and European values also receive greater attention following participation in Erasmus+, although to a lesser extent and more often as complementary dimensions of projects.

The results further show that KA2 partnerships generate a wide range of tangible and sustainable outputs. Manuals, learning materials, curricula, pedagogical concepts, online tools, and websites are among the most common products developed. Importantly, the majority of organisations continue to use these outputs extensively after project completion, indicating that Erasmus+ projects often lead to long-term institutional benefits rather than short-lived effects. The sustainability of outputs is strongest when materials are closely connected to organisational needs, co-created with staff and learners, and embedded within existing educational practices. At the same time, limited financial resources, staff capacity, and organisational continuity remain important barriers to the long-term maintenance and dissemination of project results.

Participation in Erasmus+ is also associated with clear improvements in the quality and accessibility of the learning offer. Organisations report that project results are frequently integrated into new or existing educational provision, contribute to better alignment with learner needs, and improve accessibility for diverse target groups. Particularly strong thematic shifts are visible in relation to digitalisation, inclusion and diversity, active citizenship, and networking. In contrast, more practice-oriented educational elements, such as work-based learning and validation of prior learning, appear to receive comparatively less attention.

The impact on staff is equally significant. Erasmus+ mobility and cooperation projects contribute strongly to the development of practical professional skills, pedagogical competences, international orientation, and organisational capacities. Staff members report increased knowledge of diversity, European values, digital technologies, and sustainable development, while organisations emphasise strengthened confidence, innovation capacity, and international cooperation. The examples from the country reports illustrate that these developments often become structurally embedded in organisations through broader learning offers, strengthened staff competences, new (international) partnerships, and organisational identity and visibility. At the same time, sustaining and scaling these impacts requires continued attention to resources, dissemination, and organisational capacity, particularly for smaller organisations that may struggle to maintain project results after funding ends.

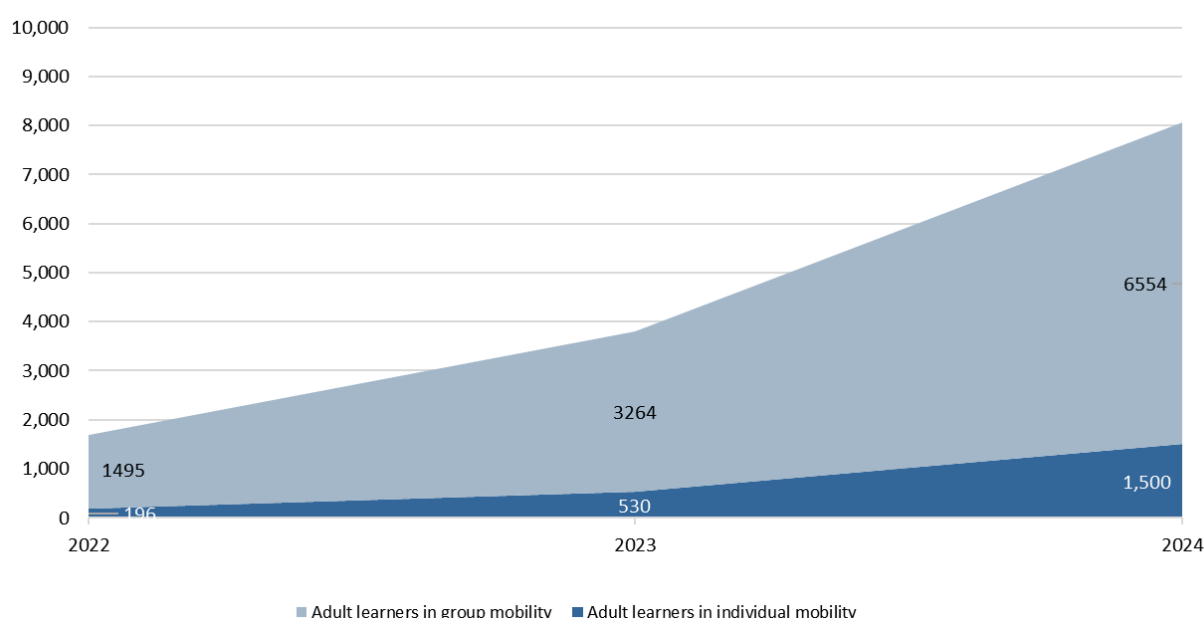
4 Impact of KA1 mobility on learners

4.1 Introduction

Learners in adult education are reached in various ways through Erasmus+ projects. On the one hand, they can participate directly in project activities, such as mobility schemes in KA1 projects. On the other hand, they can benefit indirectly from the results of the projects, such as learning materials or new courses developed within KA2 projects. This chapter focuses exclusively on the direct impact of KA1 mobility activities on adult learners. The results are based on data from the European Commission as well as two studies conducted among adult learners having participated in KA1: a qualitative interview study and a pre- and post-test study – additional modules A and B.

Learner mobility in adult education, which has only been funded under the Erasmus+ programme since 2021, is gaining in importance following a difficult start due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Figure 21 shows a steady increase with 6,554 participants in group mobilities and 1,500 participants in individual mobility in the RIA-AE member countries in 2024.

FIGURE 21: ADULT LEARNERS IN GROUP AND INDIVIDUAL MOBILITY (SHORT AND LONG TERM) IN FINALISED PROJECTS (BY 31 MAY 2026) IN RIA-AE MEMBER COUNTRIES



Source: QlikSense

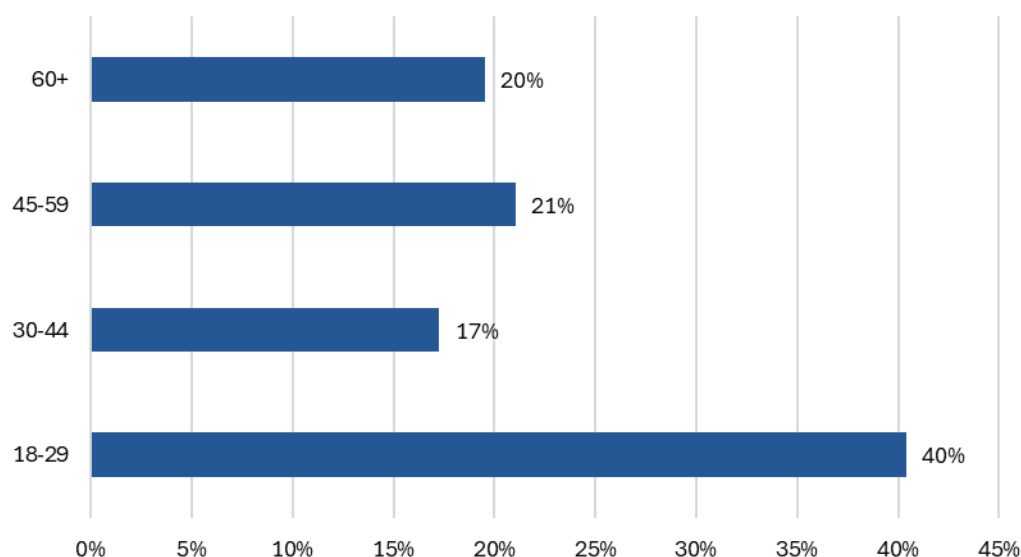
While the programme distinguishes between individual and group mobility, case studies among KA1-accredited organisations and short-term projects suggest that there are not necessarily substantial differences between the two types of mobility in practice: it is possible for an organisation to send several of its learners together on an individual mobility. Differences do exist, however, with regard to administrative processes. In particular, for group mobility, certain participant-related data are reported for the entire group by accompanying staff. In contrast, participants in individual mobility complete an online participant report themselves at the end of the mobility. As a result, the data set for group mobility is less informative than that for

individual mobility. These technical differences in data collection, together with missing entries, limit to some extent the significance of the figures reported here.

The following results refer to data from participant reports of individual mobility in the period between 2021 and summer 2025 (N=2,425) shared by the EU Commission. In this data set, 66% of the adult learners were women and 72% were registered as 'participants with fewer opportunities' (as opposed to the group mobilities, where only 16% were registered as having fewer opportunities). 82% of the individual participants indicated it was their first individual mobility, while 18% said they had participated in two or more.

Across all RIA-AE network countries, learners aged 18-29 constitute the primary target group for individual mobility programmes, accounting for 40% of participants (see Figure 22). The remaining age groups – 30-44, 45-59, and 60+ – are represented at broadly similar levels, with shares of 17%, 21%, and 20%, respectively. A closer look at the data, however, reveals notable differences between RIA-AE network countries regarding the age groups most frequently reached. At national level, a particularly strong concentration of learners aged 18-29 can be observed in countries such as France (74%) and Croatia (63%). In Belgium (FWB) and Spain, by contrast, learners aged 45-59 constitute the largest group of participants (54% and 37%, respectively). Meanwhile, countries such as Estonia (43%), Germany (40%), Latvia (44%), and Slovenia (60%) report the highest shares among learners aged 60+. The country reports suggest that these differences partly reflect the profiles and characteristics of individual countries. In France for example, many participating organisations work with groups such as early school leavers, migrants and young adults in child-protection or specialised prevention programmes, which may help explain the strong representation of learners aged 18–29. The German country report notes that organisations working with older learners, many of whom have limited English-language skills, often prefer to organise exchanges with German-speaking partners in neighbouring Austria.

FIGURE 22: AGE OF PARTICIPANTS IN INDIVIDUAL MOBILITY IN ADULT EDUCATION, N=2383

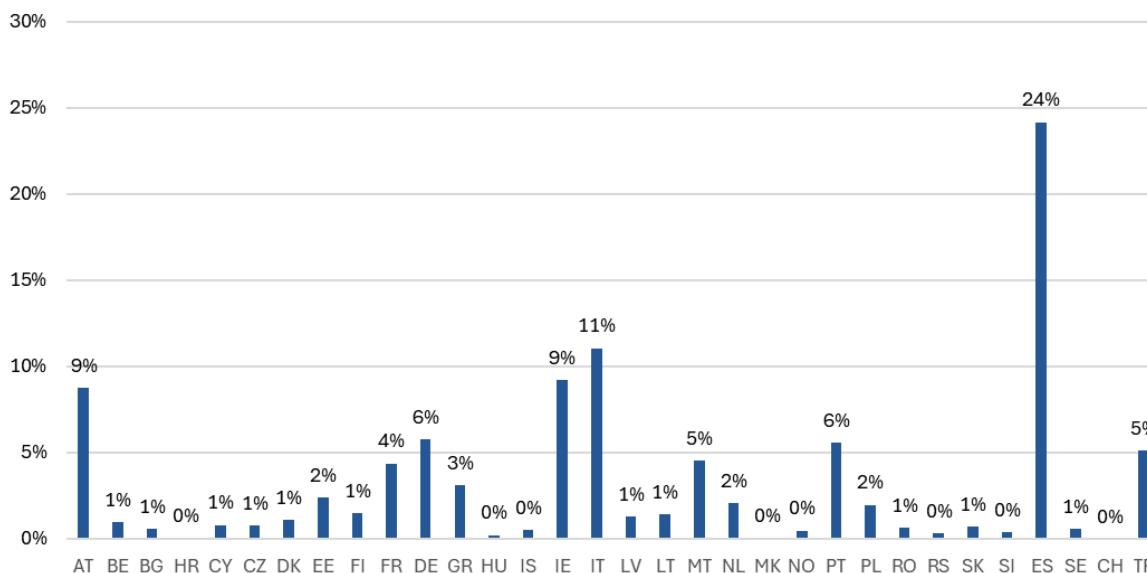


Source: European Commission monitoring data

The extent to which the differences between countries can be attributed to different choices and priorities regarding the target group of KA1 projects, the general

orientation of adult education in each country, or to limitations in the quality of the data cannot be conclusively determined. It can nevertheless be stated that learners across all age groups report a high level of satisfaction with the mobility experience: 99% of all learners indicated that they are satisfied or very satisfied with the mobility.

FIGURE 23: RECEIVING COUNTRY FOR INDIVIDUAL MOBILITY OF ADULT LEARNERS (N=2409)



Source: European Commission monitoring data

When looking at individual mobilities (see Figure 23), Spain stands out clearly as the preferred destination: with 24% of all individual mobilities, it hosts by far the largest share of participants. Other frequent destinations are Italy (11%), as well as Austria and Ireland, each accounting for 9% of all individual mobilities (N=2409 individual mobilities). In the case of group mobility, Spain (15%) appears almost as frequently as Italy (16%), followed by Germany (9%) and Portugal (6%; N=1764 group mobilities). In total, a share of 23% of adult learners in individual mobility and 24% in group mobility used green travel.

4.2 Motivation, expectations and challenges from the participants' perspective

Across all countries that conducted qualitative research among adult learners, common patterns emerge regarding the motivation to participate in KA1 activities, learners' expectations of mobility, and the challenges they experienced. First, mobilities in adult education are seldom the result of individuals searching for opportunities and applying on their own initiative to open calls. Instead, participants usually learn about opportunities through institutions they know, or through teachers and trainers, colleagues or friends. As pointed out in the Polish country report, mobility opportunities are therefore embedded in the structure of everyday relationships and educational or support practices.

Second, the decision to participate in mobility is usually related to personal and intrinsic motivations, rather than to external incentives such as certificates or formal requirements. A key motive is curiosity about the destination, as well as a general interest in going abroad and discovering new things, or comparing preconceived ideas about a country with reality: "I knew the island by name, but I didn't know what

it was really like.” (KA1 interview, Poland). Especially for participants with fewer opportunities, going abroad on a learning mobility can be a unique chance to discover new countries and people, as reported by this participant from Austria: “Because I am curious and if I have the opportunity, I do it [...]. I mean if there is a chance, with my disability, the chance of learning, then I do it” (I311). For many participants, mobility is also seen as an opportunity to build relationships, meet like-minded people and exchange ideas. In some cases, a strong link can be identified between the mobility theme and the participant’s activities at home – for instance when participants go abroad in the context of a course programme (e.g. language learning, music) or in the context of volunteering activities. In such cases, reasons to participate in the mobility include the wish to expand specific skills, to discover good practices or to expand networks with similar organisations abroad. Some learners also see the participation in a mobility as a chance to distance themselves from daily concerns, rest, and reflect on their situation. Some caregivers, especially mothers, expressed the wish to step back and do something for themselves, as one Spanish interviewee puts it: “leaving home and going out on our own, as women, without husbands and children, is even better” (KA1 interview, Spain).

Ultimately, Erasmus+ also represents a unique opportunity for many learners to take part in European exchanges, a possibility that their life circumstances or place of residence may have previously prevented.

According to the country reports, several groups of adult learners are consistently identified as underrepresented or difficult to reach within the Erasmus+ programme. These groups face a combination of psychological, socio-economic, and structural barriers that limit their participation. The reports refer to various demographic groups that are insufficiently represented in mobility activities. Adults aged between 30 and 50 are frequently mentioned as facing barriers related to caregiving responsibilities, family obligations, and heavy workloads. In Latvia, for example, adults aged 30–44 are among the least involved in mobility activities, likely due to childcare responsibilities. Although older adults and seniors are often targeted by projects, they also remain difficult to engage in international mobility, particularly when they lack English language skills. Men are likewise identified as underrepresented among participants. Despite the fact that KA1 projects already reach a relatively high proportion of learners with fewer opportunities, the country reports continue to identify several vulnerable and marginalised groups as particularly difficult to engage. These include Roma and Traveller communities, who are described as experiencing high levels of social exclusion and deep-seated mistrust towards institutions. In Ireland, for example, the Galway Traveller Movement highlights that cultural factors, such as the expectation of family chaperones, may limit opportunities for independent travel. Migrants and refugees are also identified as difficult-to-reach target groups. They often face emotional and psychological barriers, while those with irregular residence status or unstable housing conditions may not perceive international mobility as a realistic priority, as described in the country report of Spain. In addition, the Polish report notes that homeless individuals and people struggling with addictions are often not yet “ready” for participation until they have reached a certain level of personal stabilisation and social reintegration. Other groups mentioned in the country reports include people not in education, employment, or training (NEETs), early school leavers, adults with disabilities, and low-skilled adults. The latter group is often described as lacking the “inner readiness” or self-confidence necessary to participate in international mobility activities. Finally, several reports also point to the underrepresentation of adults living in peripheral and rural areas.

4.3 Perceived benefits of mobility

The European Commission's participant reports provide some insights into the benefits of KA1 mobility programmes for learners, which can be compared to the findings of the RIA-AE additional modules on KA1 mobility. However, since the questions in the participant reports are not specifically geared towards adult education, not all of the programme's potential impacts are covered. Furthermore, the results must be interpreted with caution, taking into account the limited relevance of the results in the context of adult education.

As shown in Figure 24, participants who participated in individual mobility activities mostly state that they have benefitted from mobility in terms of further developing practical skills (86%) and in terms of improved self-confidence, independence and responsibility (72%). Although half report having gained clearer ideas about their personal and professional goals, only a minority report having improved their chances of finding a job (33%) or entering a study programme (27%). These results are not surprising, since mobility projects for learners in adult education are not necessarily related to a professional context and also target individuals who are not in the labour force. Benefits in the area of employment and studies are more often acknowledged by younger adults (18-29 years old) as might be expected, while older participants (60+) are less likely to notice these kinds of effects.¹⁹ Other influencing factors have not been tested statistically, but may also play a role, such as the type of organisations conducting the mobility and the extent to which adult education and VET overlap in different countries.

FIGURE 24: WAYS IN WHICH ADULT LEARNERS BENEFITTED FROM PARTICIPATION IN INDIVIDUAL MOBILITY – N=2425



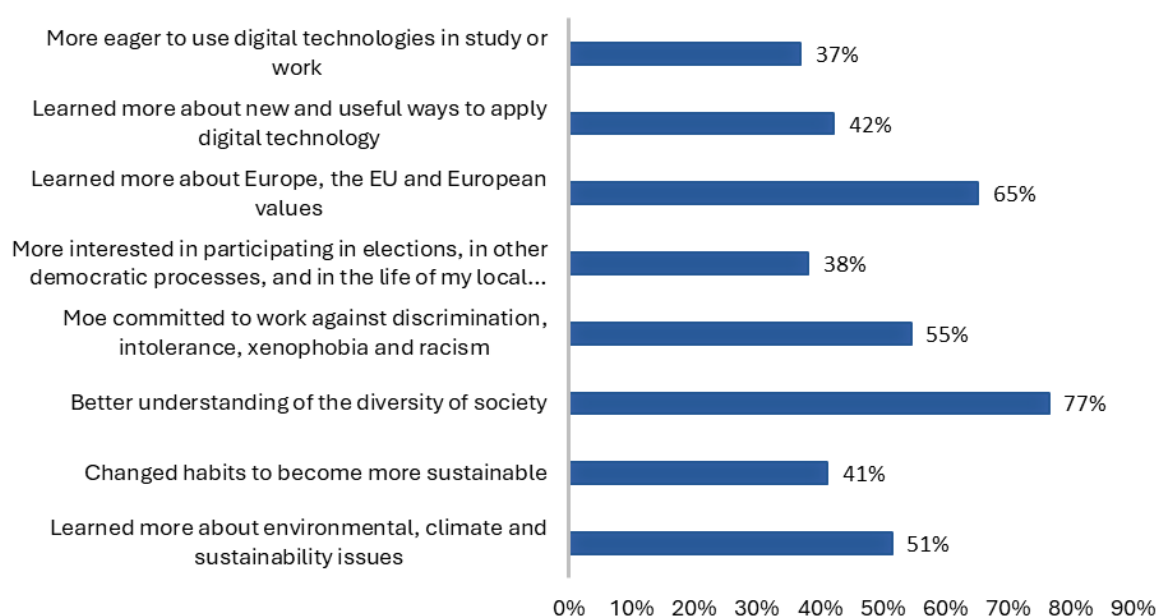
Source: European Commission monitoring data

Looking at the horizontal priorities of Erasmus+, learners participating in individual mobility are asked whether the mobility experience has led them to gain new knowledge or change their motivation and habits in the fields of digitalisation, social

¹⁹ The relationship between participants' age and their response patterns was analysed using a chi-square test followed by post hoc analyses based on standardized residuals, which identify categories that occur significantly more or less often than expected (see also Annex 4).

inclusion, European citizenship and environmental issues (see Figure 25). The most frequently cited outcomes are a better understanding of the diversity (77%) of society and learning about Europe, the EU and European values (65%). Effects on habits or motivation to change behaviours are less pronounced, for instance using more digital technologies in study or work, participating in elections or changing habits to become more sustainable. Without further research, however, this cannot be interpreted as a shortcoming of the programme, since it could be that participants to KA1 mobilities are already regularly using digital technologies or participating in democratic processes, resulting in a selection bias.

FIGURE 25: WAYS IN WHICH ADULT LEARNERS GAINED KNOWLEDGE ABOUT HORIZONTAL PRIORITIES IN INDIVIDUAL MOBILITIES – N=2425



Source: European Commission monitoring data

In addition, 76% of respondents state that they made progress in a foreign language, compared to 20% who made no progress because they already had a good command of the language and 4% who simply did not make any progress. In order to better understand the range of different impacts and how mobility affects participants' attitudes and skills, personal development and everyday life, an in-depth qualitative study was conducted among learners in four RIA-AE member countries (see Section 4.4).

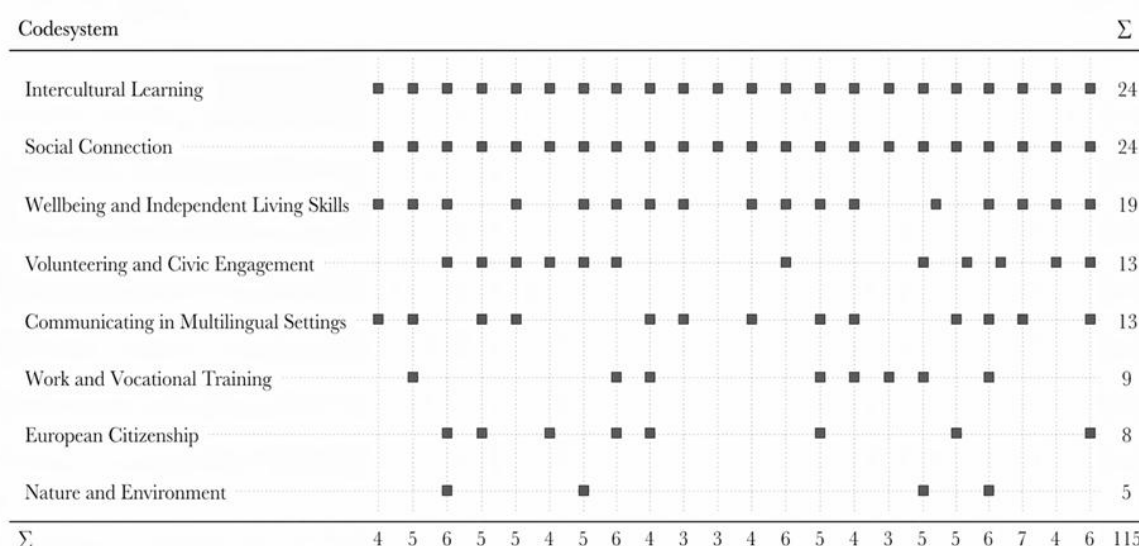
4.4 The transformative potential of mobility for learners in adult education

The qualitative study of the impacts of KA1 mobility on learners in adult education in the additional Module A was designed to capture the wide spectrum and depth of possible effects of KA1, thereby complementing and enriching the picture provided by the participants' reports and illustrative learner interviews. As a result, a typology of effects was developed, grouped into impact areas and further detailed along different dimensions. The basis for the typology are 24 interviews conducted in

February/March 2025 with learners from Austria, Germany, Latvia and Slovenia who recently participated in a KA1 mobility.²⁰

Overall, the results of the qualitative study highlight the broad range of effects that learners attribute to their mobility experience. Although individual interests, life circumstances and the topics of mobility actions shape the outcomes, and the relevance of these outcomes for the learners' life, some patterns can still be identified- (see Figure 26). Most strikingly, all participants interviewed reported changes in the area of intercultural learning as a consequence of their mobility experience. In all cases, mobility also strengthened participants' sense of social connection, whether with other participants or with people in the host country. In most cases, participants also gained new practical skills and insights relevant to their wellbeing and everyday life, enabling them to act more independently and with greater self-confidence. Finally, the interviews also bring to light diverse effects that seem to be more strongly related to the particular circumstances of the mobility and to individual characteristics. These are effects related to communication in multilingual settings, to volunteering and civic engagement, to work and vocational training, to European citizenship, and to nature and environment.

FIGURE 26: IMPACT AREAS OF MOBILITY FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF ADULT LEARNERS IN KA1 – N=24



Interpretation: e.g. on the horizontal line '24 interviewees mention effects of mobility in the area of Intercultural Learning and Traveling', and on the- vertical line 'interviewee mentioned effects in 5 impact areas'. Source: learner interviews RIA-AE Network 2025

The impact areas identified in this qualitative study cover the outcomes mentioned in the programme's participant reports, in particular language skills, environmental awareness, knowledge of Europe and awareness of shared European values such as inclusion and diversity. However, they also go beyond this, for example in areas such as well-being and independence in everyday life, or in the area of social integration. Digital skills, on the other hand, were not identified as a separate category in the qualitative study. Statements regarding newly acquired digital skills were

²⁰ A detailed report about the methodology and findings of the study conducted in Module A is published: [insert reference of the paper]

assigned to their respective contexts of use – for example, travel or communication in multilingual contexts. In the following sections, more details are provided to illustrate the breadth and depth of mobility effects in adult education.

The category **‘Intercultural learning’** summarises impacts on attitudes, motivation, skills and knowledge that enable learners to engage with people from other cultures and reflect on their own cultural identity. As a result of mobility, learners demonstrate, for example, an increased awareness of cultural differences, knowledge of the host country’s culture, and new perspectives on their own culture. They also express an increased appreciation for European mobility and intercultural dialogue, and a greater openness and curiosity towards people from different cultural backgrounds, as in the following example *“And more understanding... it’s hard to say, but you try, or you have more understanding of certain things you’ve just seen and experienced, particularly regarding the friendliness and openness of people, whereas before I didn’t really have much contact with Turkish people. That’s much easier now.”* (Learner interview 422)

As a results, some interviewees expressed their wish to participate in future mobilities or other travel activities.

The category **‘Social Connections’** describes learners’ abilities and motivation to build relationships with others, develop social networks, and share a sense of belonging to a community. In the interviews, participants indicate, for instance, being better aware of the value of exchange and cooperation for progress and social cohesion. They also mention improved communication skills and greater self-confidence in social interactions. Learners also report a sense of connection with the people they met during their mobility experience, and a feeling of belonging to a (transnational) community. *“Or another time we were with a Polish group and we sang. In German and Polish, so together like that, and despite the language barriers, to have that experience of communicating with our hands and feet, no matter how. And to realise that the other person has the same issues too, whether it’s health problems, or [...] similar problems. Having that experience. Then I realise, hang on, they’re in the same boat as me.”* (I422)

“We always learn something new, we always bring some new knowledge with us. But it seems to me, from all this, that not just new knowledge and work counts, but also communication between people.” (I122).

In some cases, newly formed networks and friendships continue to exist even after the mobility period, indicating longer-term effects of participation at the individual level.

The category **“Well-being and independent living”** refers to skills and practices that enable learners to look after themselves and act independently in everyday life. Among the observed effects of mobility are new insights and perspectives on life, practical everyday skills to promote autonomy, a strengthened sense of self-efficacy, and the adoption of practices that support one’s own well-being, as illustrated by this interview:

If you want to keep up with the pace of the workshop and the other visits, you have to be physically strong. That’s one kind of exercise, because the spine was often an excuse not to go. I really took that up, exactly after mobility, neck,

and spine exercise, to avoid those problems, to overcome them more easily.
(I115)

Especially for learners with mental disabilities and low basic skills, taking part in a mobility represented an opportunity to practice their skills in new situations, for instance when ordering meals in a restaurant, using public transports and seeking orientation in a foreign city. Some interviewees reported how this strengthened their self-confidence and helped them to better face unfamiliar situations also at home.

The category **‘Volunteering and civic engagement’** summarises the effects on political and social views, as well as on the skills, motivation and practices required to actively help shape change in society. Following their mobility experience, learners report, for example, being more aware of social and economic differences between countries and of discrimination. They also report new insights into tackling societal challenges, as well as increased motivation and skills for social and civic engagement, such as this person:

“What I have taken with me is that I am now involved in, I don’t know how many activities in the aid community and have become a volunteer myself and am involved in several groups, which was not really an issue for me before. I’ve definitely taken that with me.” (I_327)

The category **‘Communication in multilingual contexts’** describes the ability and motivation to communicate in multilingual situations, for example through the use of foreign languages and digital tools. For learners with no foreign language skills, effects are evident, for instance, in the ability to recognise the language itself and individual words, whilst others report more advanced progress in the application of their foreign language skills. The use of translation apps is particularly important for participants with no foreign language skills or in contexts where English does not work as a bridging language. Learning how to use such apps is therefore one possible outcome of mobility programmes. Another effect of mobility is a renewed motivation among learners to expand their foreign language skills and undertake relevant learning activities:

“I think I was opening up to speak English. Because if you don’t use the language in your daily life, it’s hard to start speaking. [...]. I think language is a gateway. I used to read books in English, but now I’m even drawn to it, I want to know those words and hear those. I think the biggest benefit is that you open up [to speaking English].” (I215)

The category **‘European citizenship’** encompasses knowledge, attitudes and behaviours relating to European integration and citizenship within the European Union. The study observed effects in this area that include, for example, reflection on the EU’s values and objectives, knowledge of its institutions, and active engagement in promoting European integration:

“As I said, we do have close ties with Poland, but I have to say that these have become much stronger. [...] We have so much in common, yet unfortunately people often focus on what divides us [...] And I think Europe is our shared future. I think that’s what your Erasmus programme is all about; it’s really important, and we need to get that message across to the wider public.” (I 422)

The category **“Work and vocational training”** encompasses attitudes, motivation, skills and knowledge related to professional activity. This includes increased self-confidence in the professional environment, technical skills and knowledge,

reflections on differences in work cultures, as well as considerations regarding professional development and further learning opportunities. Effects in that impact area were predominantly noted in countries where KA1 mobility projects are also implemented in the context of continuing VET, or when participants had a professional background matching the topic of the mobility (e.g. education, culture and tourism). Thus, a participant in a course on sustainable business practices reports about different approaches in his field of work:

“I am definitely more knowledgeable, with a different perspective on things. Making estimates in Finland is simpler. There are differences in different countries, the approach there is different - simpler. It is typical of Scandinavians that there are things that are simpler.” (I223)

Finally, the category **‘Nature and the Environment’** encompasses awareness of environmental issues, as well as the skills and motivation to promote sustainability. In some cases, participants reported about new plans for environmentally friendly behaviour originating from their mobility experience, and the introduction of so-called ‘green’ practices in their everyday life, such as this interviewee who took part in an upcycling workshop:

“Plastic awareness has led me to the point where we separate the waste into those that I can creatively turn into something else, and let the rest go.” (I114)

4.5 Impact of KA1 mobility on learners’ practical life skills (based on additional quantitative module)

Based on the exploratory, tentative qualitative research into the impact of the KA1 mobility projects (see Section 4.4), a quantitative study was carried out to examine the impact of participation in KA1 mobility projects on the daily lives of the adult participants. In particular, this study examined the impact on the adult participants’ self-reliance in daily life, as well as on their social network and their role as European citizens.

4.5.1 Research instrument

To assess the impact on participants, the research method developed by De Greef et al. (2009) was employed, in which the impact on participants in adult education was assessed via a pre- and post-test based on the self-perception scale. The SIT-instrument measures whether adult learners experience an increase in their level of social inclusion and several life skills, such as whether they meet more people, are more active, or have better language skills after joining adult education.²¹ Only part of the scale was used as part of this study because it was not fully suited to the specific context, such as the learning environment of KA1 mobility projects that slightly differs from a standardised adult education setting. Therefore, additional items were developed and added to the scale.

The measures of impact are based on the qualitative study (see section 4.4). Where possible, validated measures were used. Where no suitable validated measures were available, the measures were first tested and validated in an additional study involving

²¹ De Greef, M., Segers, M. & Verté, D. (2010). Development of the SIT, an instrument to evaluate the transfer effects of adult education programs for social inclusion, *Studies in Educational Evaluation* (36), 42 - 61.

a comparable group of adult education participants. The impact on participants has been assessed using the following outcome measures:

- Assertiveness (e.g. of an item: I have self-confidence)
- Social connection (e.g. of an item: I make new contacts)
- Capability reflection (e.g. of an item: I can say what I will do to get the job I want)
- Foreign-language proficiency (e.g. of an item: I can produce sentences in the language of the host country)
- Intercultural attitude (e.g. of an item: I am curious about other cultures and countries)
- European citizenship (e.g. of an item: I think it's important to work together in Europe)
- Volunteering (e.g. of an item: I organize activities in the neighbourhood)

Based on a Principal Component Analysis and the calculation of Cronbach's Alpha, it is clear that these are reliable measures (see Annex 4). In addition, a variable has been developed to demonstrate the influence of the learning environment of the KA1 mobility projects.²²

Finally, an analysis was conducted to determine whether the impact differs across different groups of participants. First and foremost, sociodemographic characteristics such as gender, ethnicity, age, years of education and job status were examined. The nature of KA1 mobilities was also assessed to see whether it influences the learning outcomes. In this regard, the analysis examined several characteristics of each participant's KA1 mobility experience, including whether it was individual or group-based; its duration; whether it took place in a country where the same language as, or a different language from, the participant's mother tongue was spoken; whether it formed part of another learning activity; and whether the participant had previous experience of studying abroad.

4.5.2 Background characteristics of the participants

A total of 1,650 adult learners from 12 countries were involved in this study. Of these, 1045 adult learners completed a pre- and a post-test, which could be matched. Based on the participants' socio-demographic characteristics, it is clear that the group is highly diverse (see Table 2). The majority are women (71.6%), were born in the country in which they currently live (82.1%) and are aged between 26 and 65 (69%). According to Table 2, both those with lower levels of education and those with higher levels of education are represented, as are participants in paid employment (45.6%) and those not in paid employment (54.3%).

²² Based on the analysis it is also clear that this measure is reliable, again based on a Principal Component Analysis and the calculation of Cronbach's Alpha (see Annex 4).

TABLE 2: SOCIODEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF KA1 MOBILITY PARTICIPANTS – N=1,045

Socio-demographic background of adult learners		
Socio-demographic factor		% of total group
Gender		
	Men	27.6
	Women	71.6
	Unknown	0.8
Country of origin		
	Country of residence	82.1
	Other country	17.9
Age		
	25 or less	12.7
	26 - 45	30.0
	46 - 65	39.0
	66 or more	18.4
Years in education		
	5 or less	23.2
	6 - 10	13.5
	11 - 15	29.9
	16 or more	33.4
Job status		
	Paid job	36.2
	Voluntary work	6.5
	Paid job & voluntary work	9.4
	Unemployed	47.8

Source: Survey adult learners, including a pre- and post test

Table 3 shows that most participants took part in a group mobility project (95.4%) and a mobility project most frequently lasted between 2 and 6 days (71.2%) or between 7 and 14 days (27.9%). Furthermore, the majority travelled to a country where a language differently than their mother tongue was spoken (89%); for the majority, the KA1 mobility was part of another learning activity in their own country (76%); and a majority of the adult learners had no previous experience studying abroad (61%).

TABLE 2: CHARACTERISTICS OF KA1 MOBILITIES – N=1,045

Background (of kind) of mobility		
Factor KA1 Mobility		% of total group
Type of mobility		
	Individual	4.6
	Group	95.4
Days of mobility		
	1 day	0.0
	2 – 6 days	71.2
	7 – 14 days	27.9
	15 – 29 days	0.3
	More than 30 days	0.6
Country with a different language		
	Yes	89.0
	No	10.8
	Unknown	0.2
Part of learning activity in 'sending country'		
	Yes	76.0
	No	19.1
	Unknown	4.9
Earlier study-experience abroad		
	Yes	39.0
	No	61.0

Source: Survey adult learners, including a pre- and post test

4.5.3 Impact on learning outcomes

To assess the overall impact on the daily life of the participants, the percentage of participants who felt they had made progress in one or more areas following their participation in KA1 mobility projects was examined. The descriptive analysis shows that 96.1% of participants reported progress in at least one area. For comparison, a benchmark of 85% is used to classify an intervention as successful.²³

Looking at the different learning outcomes, a first finding is that 96.1% of participants experienced progress in at least one practical life skill, while more than half reported progress across each of the individual impact areas measured. The strongest reported improvement concerns participants' ability to reflect on their own capabilities (62.3%).²⁴ Improvements related to foreign-language proficiency, intercultural attitudes and social connection are also reported by around six in ten participants.

²³ De Greef, M. et al. (2026). SAVE monitor: Scientific Analysis and Valorisation of Education for Adults. Retrieved: 01-07-2026. < <https://savemonitor.nl/>>.

²⁴ Calculated based on differences between the mean score of pre- and post-test.

The lowest shares are found for European citizenship and volunteering, although here too more than half of participants report an increase. Table 4 provides an overview of the reported changes across all practical life skills.

TABLE 3: EXPERIENCED INCREASE FOR THE DIFFERENT PRACTICAL LIFE SKILLS AMONG THE ADULT LEARNERS – N=1,045

Practical life skill	Number of participants experiencing increased (in %)
At least in one of the practical life skills	96.1
Assertiveness	56.2
Social connection	58.7
Capability reflection	62.3
Foreign-language proficiency	59.7
Intercultural attitude	59.5
European citizenship	54.7
Volunteering	53.0

Source: Survey adult learners, including a pre- and post test

Based on a Paired Samples T-test, the increase was statistically significant for all learning outcomes. Therefore, it can be stated that there is a significant growth across all learning outcomes. The results of the Paired Samples T-test are presented in Annex 4.

4.5.4 Influence of the learning environment

The question remains whether the successful learning outcomes were actually influenced by the learning environment of the KA1 mobility project. For this reason, for each learning outcome, the analysis examined whether the learning environment of KA1 mobility projects influenced reported progress. The results indicate that the learning environment has an influence on all examined learning outcomes. This was measured using a validated variable based on the elements of the learning environment. The learning environment of a KA1 mobility activity refers to the educational setting provided through the programme in the host country visited by the adult learners. The analysis suggests that, first, participants received support and, where necessary, feedback from a mentor or facilitator. Second, they took part in activities that matched their interests and needs and were neither too difficult nor too easy. Third, they understood what was expected of them during the KA1 mobility activity and felt that their questions were answered. Fourth, they received support for their learning from family and friends. Finally, the adult learners reported having opportunities to apply what they had learned. In other words, they perceived that sufficient opportunities were available to transfer the practical life skills acquired during the mobility activity to other areas of their lives. These findings were examined using Spearman's rho correlations and logistic regression analyses (see Annex 4). The results show that the learning environment was among the most important predictors of progress for almost all learning outcomes, even when sociodemographic characteristics and other factors were taken into account. The exception was European citizenship: although the learning environment was associated with this

outcome, it was not its most important predictor, indicating that other factors also played a substantial role.

4.5.5 Impact by participant subgroup

Finally, for each learning outcome, it was assessed whether the perceived impact varied across participant subgroups. Firstly, it is clear that women in particular and participants taking part in a KA1 mobility project which is not part of another learning activity, report becoming more assertive. Secondly, it is clear that, in particular participants who spent fewer years in initial education (0 to 10 years) feel more able to use a foreign language in another country. It is also evident that, in particular, participants who spent 11 to 15 years in initial education are more likely to feel that they are European citizens. For all other learning outcomes, no significant differences were found between the subgroups. These findings are based on Kruskal-Wallis tests, Mann-Whitney tests, chi-square tests and logistic regression (see Annex 4).

4.6 Conclusion

Learner mobility in adult education has gained increasing importance after a slow start during the COVID-19 pandemic, also reaching out to learners with fewer opportunities. The available data show that adult learners participating in KA1 mobility projects are diverse in terms of age, although younger learners are most strongly represented overall. At the same time, notable differences between countries point to varying national priorities and contexts in adult education.

Based on the participant reports from the European Commission and the two studies in Module A and B, insights into the impact of mobility in adult education from the learners' perspective can now be gained for the first time. The results show a very wide range of effects, both in terms of attitudes and skills, as well as in terms of behaviour. Overall, learners express a very high level of satisfaction with their mobility experience and indicate that the experience is beneficial for them.

PART D – Impact of Erasmus+ on “Participation in democratic life, common values and civic engagement”

5 Characteristics of Erasmus+ projects addressing “Participation in democratic life, common values and civic engagement”

5.1 Introduction

Erasmus+ states that one of its key goals is to “promote citizens’ right to take part in democratic life, and encourage active involvement at all levels – local, national and European”.²⁵ For adult learners reinforcing their ability to engage in democratic life is particularly important, as well the development of European common values, supporting civic engagement and developing critical skills and literacy. This chapter addresses the question to what extent Erasmus+ projects address the Erasmus+ priority “Participation in democratic life, common values, and civic engagement”.²⁶ It also analyses the characteristics of these projects in term of objectives set and activities implemented. The data presented in this chapter are based on the online survey, complemented by a case-study analysis (based on 55 casestudies²⁷) that examines how the priority is addressed in practice (see also chapter 5.5).

5.2 Projects directly and indirectly addressing the thematic priority

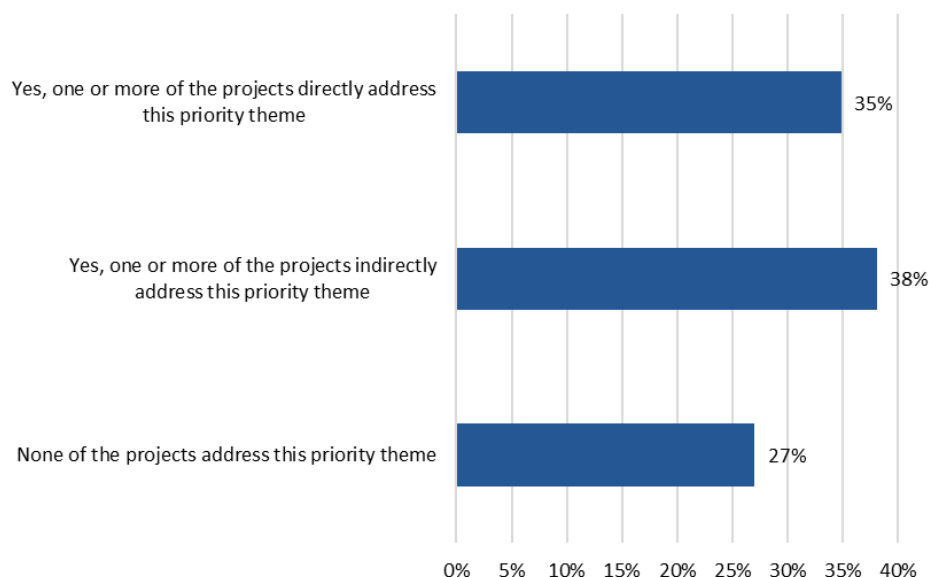
A majority of beneficiary organisations responding to the online survey (73%) report that one or more of their Erasmus+ projects address the priority theme of participation in democratic life, common values, and civic engagement (see Figure 27). More precisely, 35% indicate that the theme is addressed directly by one of their projects, while 38% report that it is addressed indirectly. Directly means that the priority theme is a main objective of the project, with activities or outputs specifically designed to address it. Indirectly means that the project primarily addresses another objective, but its activities or outputs also contribute to the priority theme as a secondary effect. Just over a quarter of organisations (27%) state that none of their projects address this priority.

²⁵ <https://erasmus-plus.ec.europa.eu/about-erasmus/programme-priorities>

²⁶ The Erasmus+ horizontal priority “Participation in democratic life, common values and civic engagement” has been chosen as thematic focus of the second monitoring round of the RIA-AE network. This thematic focus is highly relevant within Erasmus+ because one of the programme’s core aims is to empower citizens through education and lifelong learning activities to become active, responsible members of their communities and the wider European society. Of the guidance documents for SR2, see *Annex_1_SR2_conceptual_note_Participation in democratic life_common values_and_civic engagement_2025_June* for further information.

²⁷ Across the country reports, 57 case studies covering 60 Erasmus+ projects formed the basis for the case study analysis. Three case studies covered two Erasmus+ projects; these projects were treated as separate in the analysis. The 9 case studies from Portugal were excluded from the analysis due to delays in their delivery.

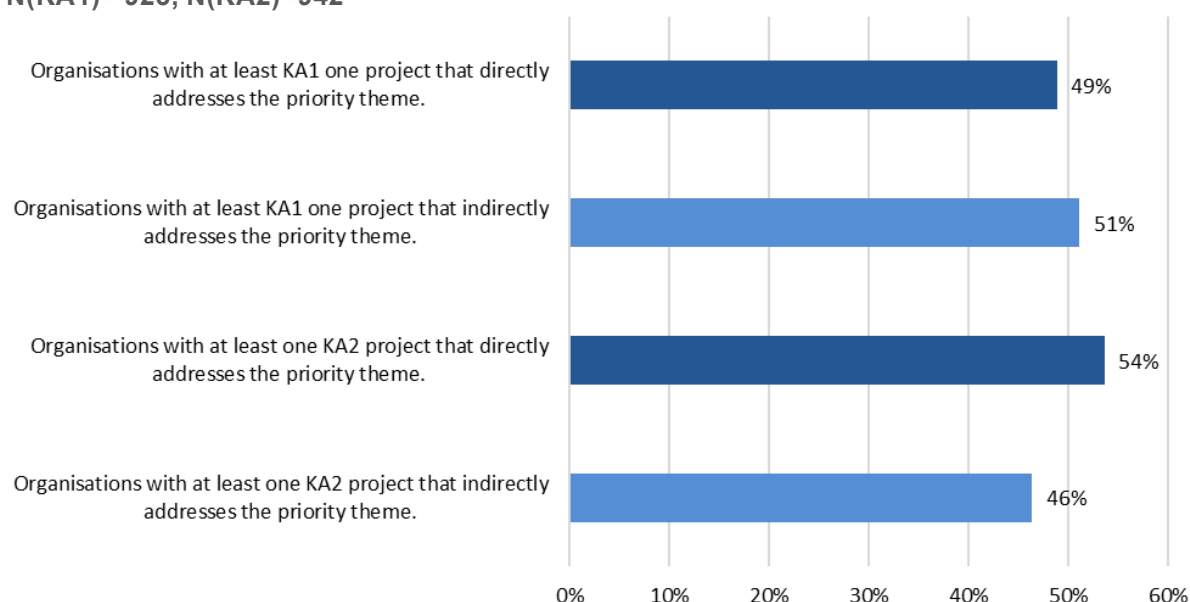
FIGURE 27: THE EXTENT TO WHICH PROJECTS (KA1 AND KA2) ARE ADDRESSING THE PRIORITY THEME “PARTICIPATION IN DEMOCRATIC LIFE, COMMON VALUES AND CIVIC ENGAGEMENT” – N=2402



Source: Online survey beneficiary organisations RIA-AE network (2025-2026)

Separating the projects by type – KA1 and KA2 – shows that in both groups, around half of the projects that address the priority theme, address this priority theme directly and the other half indirectly (see Figure 27). Among organisations with at least one KA1 project that addresses this priority theme, 49% address the priority directly, while 51% do so indirectly. For KA2 projects, the pattern is reversed: of the group that addresses this priority theme in at least one project slightly more than half address the priority directly (54%), compared to 46% indirectly.

FIGURE 28: THE EXTENT TO WHICH KA1/KA2 PROJECTS DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY ADDRESS THE PRIORITY “PARTICIPATION IN DEMOCRATIC LIFE, COMMON VALUES, AND CIVIC ENGAGEMENT” – N(KA1)= 923, N(KA2)=942



Source: Online survey beneficiary organisations RIA-AE network (2025-2026)

Across the countries participating in the RIA-AE network, there are significant differences in the extent to which Erasmus+ projects (KA1 and KA2) address the priority theme of "Participation in democratic life, common values, and civic engagement." While in most countries, a majority of respondents report that their projects engage with this theme, the balance between direct (main objective) and indirect (secondary theme) engagement varies widely. In several countries, a substantial portion of beneficiary organisations identify this theme as a primary project objective of one of their projects, such as Ireland, Austria, Portugal, France, Belgium (FWB), Romania and Germany. In other countries, the theme is frequently present but more often integrated as a secondary element rather than a core focus, like in Estonia, Spain, Latvia, Czechia, the Netherlands, and Poland. By contrast, the Slovenian and Hungarian country reports identify this priority as less prominent in their national contexts. For Slovenia only 21% of organisations addressed this priority directly with one or more of their projects, while 44% did so indirectly. Notably, 37% of Slovenian organisations reported that none of their projects addressed this theme at all. The country report for Slovenia concludes that this priority remains 'under-addressed' in the Slovenian context. Hungary shows a similar pattern: 22% address it directly and 27% indirectly, whereas 52% do not address it at all – the highest share among the countries examined. The Hungarian country report consequently concludes that the priority is visible but not yet mainstreamed in the adult education field.

TABLE 5: STATUS OF KA1/KA2 PROJECTS THAT ARE DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY ADDRESSING THE PRIORITY "PARTICIPATION IN DEMOCRATIC LIFE, COMMON VALUES, AND CIVIC ENGAGEMENT"

	KA1 projects directly addressing the priority theme	KA1 projects indirectly addressing the priority theme	KA2 projects directly addressing the priority theme	KA2 projects indirectly addressing the priority theme
One or more projects are finalised	165 (48%)	201 (51%)	287 (57%)	255 (58%)
One or more projects are almost finalised	80 (24%)	102 (26%)	114 (23%)	99 (23%)
All project(s) are ongoing	96 (28%)	89 (23%)	102 (20%)	81 (19%)
Total	341 (100%)	392 (100%)	503 (100%)	435 (100%)

Source: Online survey beneficiary organisations RIA-AE network (2025-2026)

Respondents were also asked about the status of projects that directly or indirectly address the priority theme (see Table 5). At the time of the online survey, most participating organisations had already finished, or nearly finished, at least one project. This trend is consistent for all types of Erasmus+ projects. For around a quarter (19%-28%) of organisations, the projects addressing the priority theme are still ongoing. This last group of respondents may therefore have more difficulties to assess the impact of their projects in the thematic area.

5.3 Objectives and activities supported

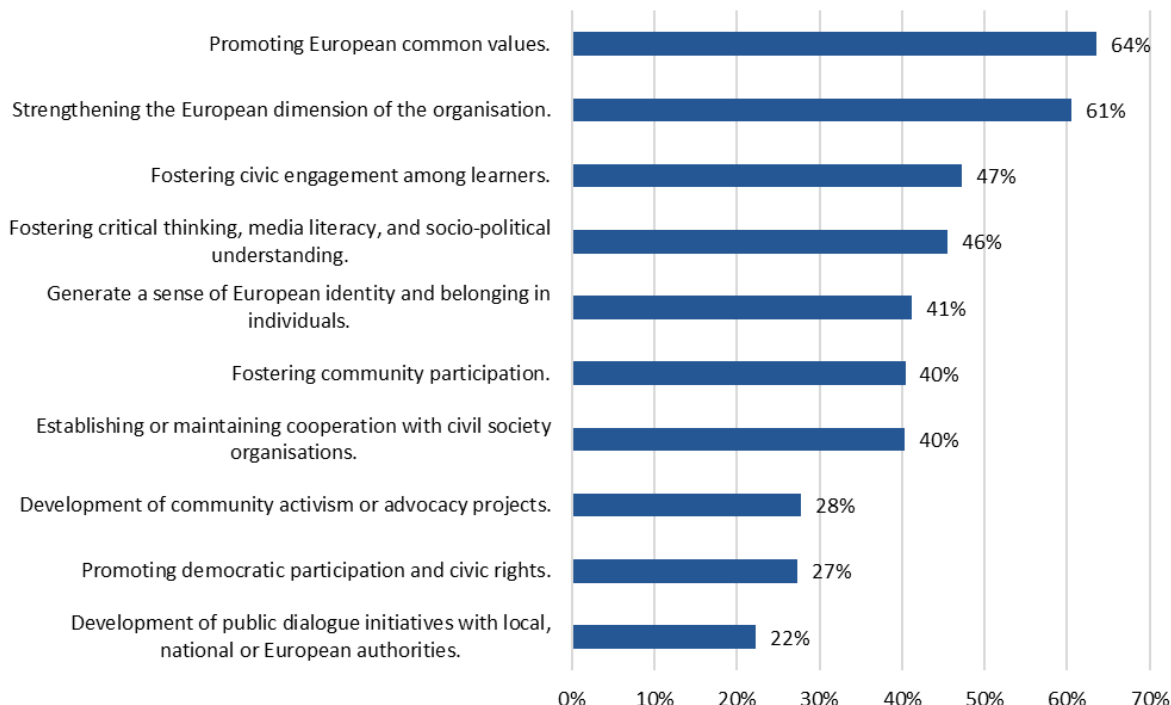
Projects that address the priority theme do not inherently pursue the same goals or target groups but can focus on a range of different objectives. Figure 29 illustrates which goals are most common within this priority. The two most prevalent goals are

closely related: promoting European common values (64%) and strengthening the European dimension of the organisation (61%). The least commonly pursued goals are developing public dialogue initiatives with authorities (22%), promoting democratic participation and civic rights (27%), and the development of community activism (28%).

When separating the goals of KA1 and KA2 projects, three types of goals show a particularly clear difference between the two. All three relate to the European dimension and are more prevalent among KA1 projects: strengthening the European dimension of organisations (73% compared with 44% for KA2), promoting European common values (71% compared with 50%), and generating a sense of European identity and belonging (52% compared with 28%). At first sight, this suggests that KA1 projects place greater emphasis on the European dimension of participation. However, the first two of these goals are also the most common among KA2 projects, indicating that they are important across both types of projects. Moreover, KA1 respondents selected more goals on average than KA2 respondents, which may partly account for the generally higher percentages observed for KA1. The only goal selected more frequently for KA2 projects is the development of community activism or advocacy projects (28% compared with 23% for KA1).

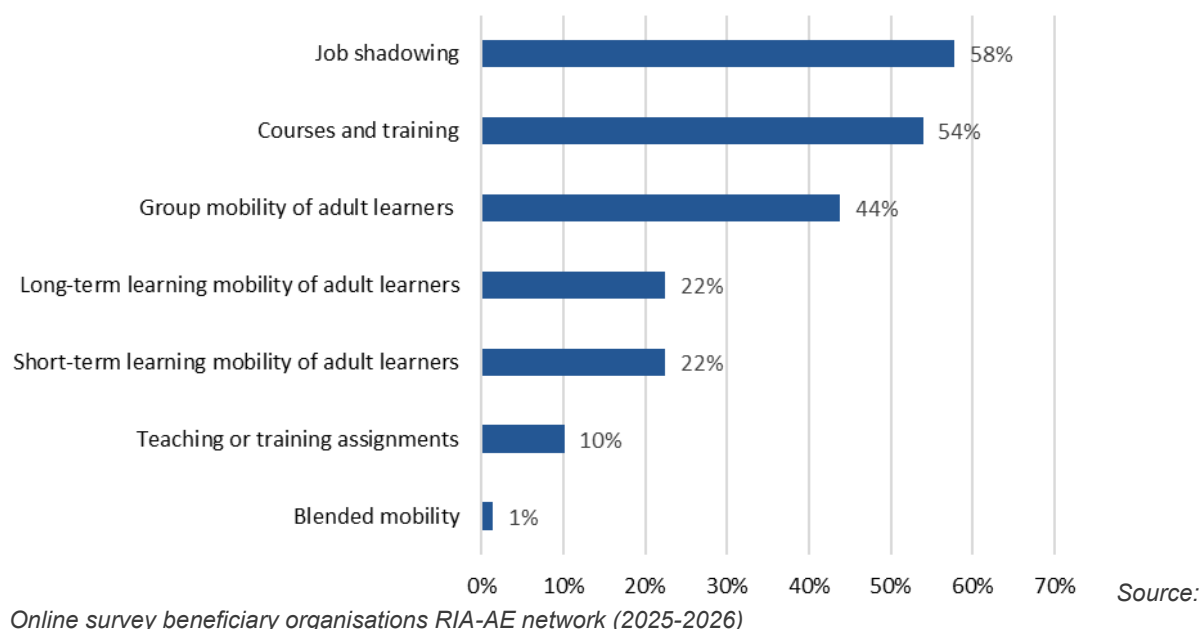
Overall, both KA1 and KA2 projects appear to place greater emphasis on strengthening learners' and organisations' knowledge of European values and related competences than on democratic participation, dialogue or advocacy.

FIGURE 29: GOALS OF PROJECTS (KA1 AND KA2) THAT ADDRESS ONE OR MORE ELEMENTS OF THE PRIORITY "PARTICIPATION IN DEMOCRATIC LIFE, COMMON VALUES AND CIVIC ENGAGEMENT" – N=1560



Source: Online survey beneficiary organisations RIA-AE network (2025-2026)

FIGURE 30: ACTIVITIES OF KA1 PROJECTS THAT ADDRESS ONE OR MORE ELEMENTS OF THE PRIORITY “PARTICIPATION IN DEMOCRATIC LIFE, COMMON VALUES AND CIVIC ENGAGEMENT” – N=701



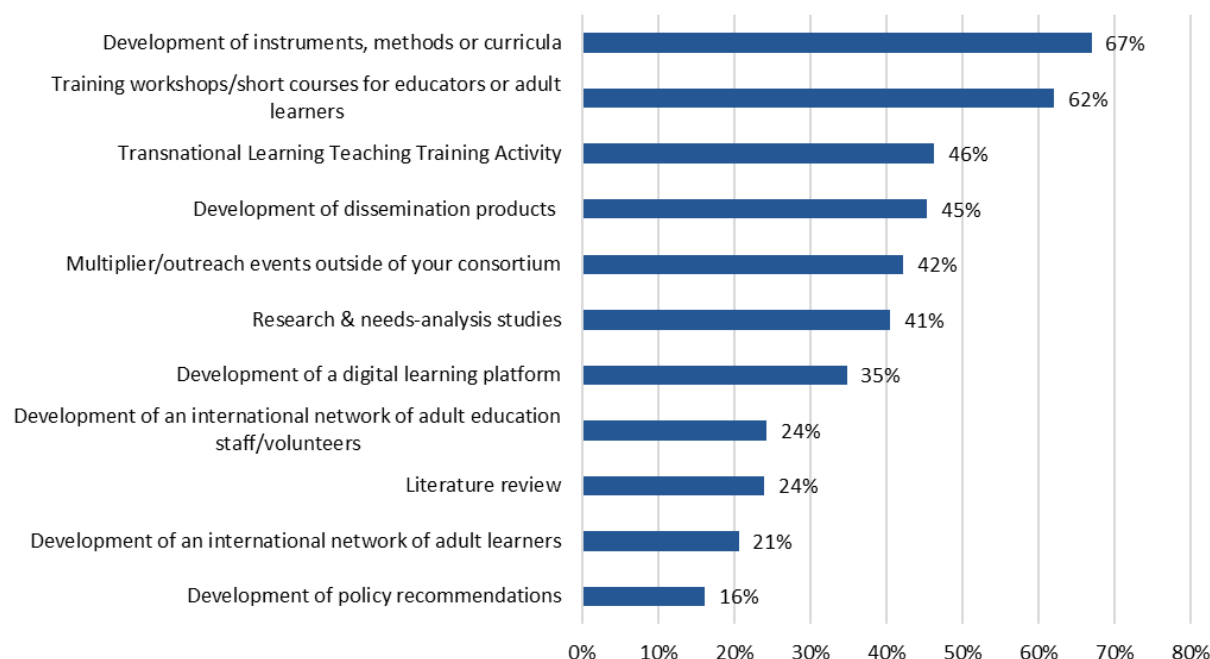
In line with the findings presented in Chapter 4, Figure 30 shows that most KA1 activities addressing the priority theme are targeted at staff of education organisations. Job shadowing (58%) and courses and training activities (54%) are the most common formats, both of which are exclusively aimed at staff. For adult learners, there is a clear emphasis on group mobility activities (44%), while long-term individual mobilities (22%) and short-term learning mobilities (22%) are considerably less common. Blended mobilities remain rare, with only 1% of responding organisations reporting their use.

The range of activities implemented by KA2 projects addressing the priority theme is represented by Figure 31. The most common activity is the development of instruments, methods or curricula (67%), followed by training workshops or short courses (62%). This illustrates that KA2 projects primarily translate this priority into concrete educational tools and learning activities. A number of mid-range activities are reported by around 40% of organisations, including transnational learning, teaching and training activities (46%), the development of dissemination products (45%), multiplier or outreach events (42%), research and needs analyses (41%), and the development of a digital learning platform (35%). The remaining activities are considerably less common: the development of policy recommendations (16%), the development of an international network of adult learners (21%), the development of an international network of adult education staff/volunteers (24%), and literature reviews (24%).

Overall, the figure indicates that KA2 projects addressing this priority focus primarily on developing practical outputs and delivering training and learning activities, while activities aimed at influencing policy or building networks receive significantly less attention. The case studies reflect this practical orientation. Training and workshops are the most recurrent activities, followed by transnational exchanges, mobility and study visits. The most frequently reported outputs in the case studies are guides, toolkits, manuals and handbooks, followed by digital platforms and other online learning resources. These outputs are commonly intended for continued use by adult

educators and other multipliers after the funded project has ended. Interestingly, the development of policy recommendations is mentioned less frequently, suggesting that limited attention is given to translating the outputs developed into concrete policy messages and, ultimately, achieving impact at the system level.

FIGURE 31: ACTIVITIES OF KA2 PROJECTS THAT ADDRESS ONE OR MORE ELEMENTS OF THE PRIORITY “PARTICIPATION IN DEMOCRATIC LIFE, COMMON VALUES AND CIVIC ENGAGEMENT” – N=874



Source: Online survey beneficiary organisations RIA-AE network (2025-2026)

5.4 Target groups addressed

When examining the target groups addressed by KA1 and KA2 projects focusing on this priority, a broad and fairly dispersed range of groups emerges (Figure 32). Although staff of adult education organisations (39%) appear as the most frequently targeted group, this category – as well as volunteers in adult education organisations (15%) – should be interpreted separately, as these groups are defined under the category of staff rather than adult learners. Excluding these staff-related categories, the general adult population (25%) emerges as the most common group of adult learners addressed by Erasmus+ projects. In addition, around half of the specific groups are addressed by around 14%-15% of organisations. This includes: young adults, women, adults living in peripheral areas, adults with health problems or physical or mental disabilities, migrants and adults with low levels of education or basic skills. At the lower end, several vulnerable groups are only marginally represented. This applies especially to NEETs²⁸ (3%), (ex-)prisoners (2%), and adults experiencing addiction problems or homelessness (each 1%).

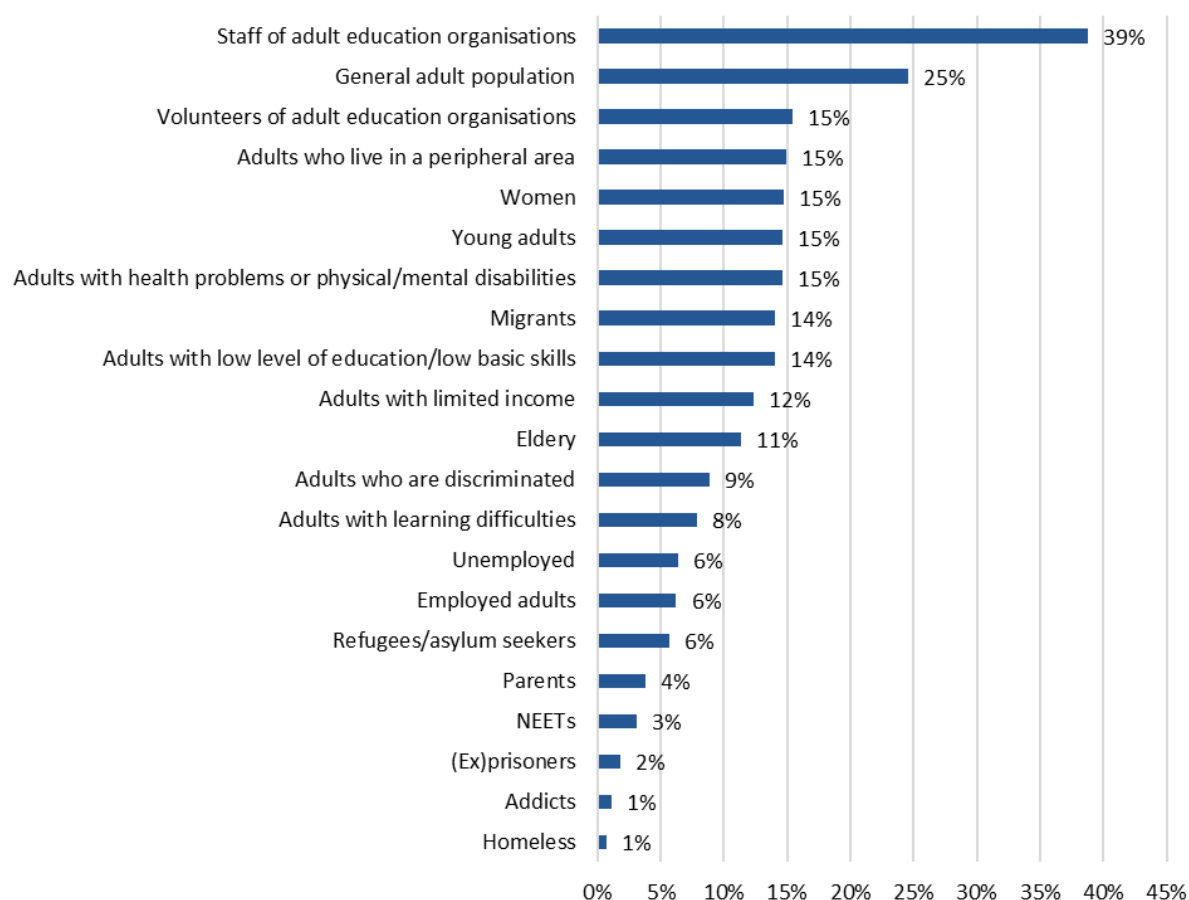
In comparison to the previous synthesis report of the first survey round, published in 2024, which analysed target groups independently from the thematic focus of the projects, the ranking of target groups remains fairly similar. Young adults, women,

²⁸ NEETs refers to young people aged 15 to 29 who are neither in employment nor in education or training.

migrants, and adults with low levels of education/basic skills continue to appear among the most frequently addressed groups. Some shifts are nevertheless visible. Adults living in peripheral areas constitute the most common specific target group for projects focusing on the thematic priority, whereas previously, it was in the middle of the pack. The largest difference can be observed for employed adults, which constituted one of the more prominent target groups and are now on one of the lower positions.

Comparing individual countries, there are substantial differences in the target groups of adult learners most frequently addressed. Some countries place a strong focus on migrants, such as Germany (31%) and the Netherlands (26%), whereas this group is rarely targeted in some other countries such as Romania (2%) and Latvia (0%). Slovenia and Croatia frequently address elderly learners (31% and 25% respectively), while Ireland and Portugal focus more strongly on adults with low levels of education or basic skills (34% and 23% respectively), and Belgium (FWB) and Slovakia place greater emphasis on adults with physical or mental disabilities (26% and 24% respectively). Türkiye frequently targets women (30%), while Estonia focuses strongly on adults living in a peripheral areas (38%). Overall, these differences in target groups reflect the diversity of national contexts as well as the varying ways in which Erasmus+ opportunities are utilised across countries.

FIGURE 32: GROUPS OF ADULT LEARNERS AND STAFF TARGETED BY PROJECTS (KA1 AND KA2) THAT ADDRESS ONE OR MORE ELEMENTS OF THE PRIORITY “PARTICIPATION IN DEMOCRATIC LIFE, COMMON VALUES AND CIVIC ENGAGEMENT” – N=1571



Source: Online survey beneficiary organisations RIA-AE network (2025-2026)

The case studies similarly cover a broad and diverse range of target groups. Staff, educators, trainers and volunteers frequently participate as the immediate target

group, while adult learners are reached either directly or through the subsequent application of new methods and learning materials. Among the more specifically identified groups of adult learners, people with disabilities, older adults, and migrants and refugees recur most frequently. Projects often address several groups rather than focusing exclusively on one group.

A key distinction emerging from the case studies is therefore between direct and indirect reach. Of the 60 projects included in the analysis, ten primarily involved adult learners directly, twelve reached them mainly through trained staff or improved educational provision, and 36 combined direct learner participation with an indirect multiplier route. This mixed model was particularly common where projects trained educators or facilitators, developed curricula and learning resources, and subsequently tested or applied these with adult learners. The Polish cases illustrate how such multiplication can extend a project beyond its initial participants. Trained facilitators organised dialogue sessions in different institutions, while older participants and volunteers developed civic initiatives and transferred their learning through activities in schools, senior clubs and cultural organisations.

A further Polish case identified an important barrier to involving adults experiencing severe or multiple forms of disadvantage. In that project, participation in international mobility required a minimum level of stability: adults experiencing an active crisis, recent homelessness, relapse or severe emotional instability were often not yet ready to participate. This does not establish that the most vulnerable adults are generally beyond the reach of Erasmus+. Rather, it suggests that standard mobility and project formats may be more accessible to people who have already achieved a degree of stability, and that additional support or locally based forms of participation may be needed to involve adults facing acute barriers.

5.5 Case studies and their link to the thematic priority

To examine the different ways in which Erasmus+ projects in adult education contribute to the priority “Participation in democratic life, common values and civic engagement”, the case study analysis based on 60 projects, builds on and adapts the four ways of supporting participation identified in the EU Youth Participation Strategy published by SALTO PI.²⁹ Although these were originally developed for the youth field in Erasmus+ and ESC, they provide a useful basis for organising the adult education case studies. For the purposes of this case study analysis, they have been adjusted and more broadly operationalised as four impact narratives: democratic participation; promoting common values; encouraging civic engagement; and developing competences and critical skills. The impact narratives are used to describe the main way in which a project is linked to the thematic priority. Projects can contain elements of more than one narrative, but were assigned the narrative that best represents their primary contribution. The projects were also coded according to their overall relationship with the thematic priority and their primary thematic focus. The resulting overview can be found in Annex 5, Table 7. In addition, the case studies were analysed according to their primary and secondary target groups and their main activities and outputs.

²⁹ https://participationpool.eu/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/ParticipationStrategy_Download_EN.pdf

The case studies should not be interpreted as representative of Erasmus+ adult education projects as a whole. Their number is too limited for this and the cases were selected purposively by country researchers rather than through random sampling. The interpretation is therefore limited to illustrating recurring patterns in relation to the thematic priority.

Table 6 shows that encouraging civic engagement is the most common primary impact narrative, accounting for 35% of the projects. A further 18% primarily contribute through developing competences and critical skills, while 13% primarily contribute through promoting common values. Only 7% primarily contribute through democratic participation itself. For 24% of the projects, the available case-study evidence did not support the assignment of a sufficiently clear impact narrative to one of the defined categories.

TABLE 6: IMPACT NARRATIVES OF COUNTRY CASE STUDIES

Impact narrative	Projects
Democratic participation	4 (7%)
Promoting common values	8 (13%)
Encouraging civic engagement	21 (35%)
Developing competences and critical skills	11 (18%)
Less clearly defined impact narrative	16 (24%)
Total	60 (100%)

Source: Case studies as part of Module 3, conducted by country researchers

The examples below provide examples of each of the four impact narratives and describes what it means when an Erasmus+ projects receives the label ‘less clearly defined impact narrative’.

Democratic participation. This narrative covers projects that create concrete opportunities for adult learners to take part in democratic processes, public dialogue or decision-making. This may include deliberation, co-decision, advocacy or interaction with public authorities, where participants can express views, influence decisions or practise democratic participation. A France case study 1 (CS1) provides a direct illustration. In the project called “week-long residencies”, a local resident, an elected representative and an artist lived and worked together on equal terms, debating a locally selected issue and jointly determining the concept for a public artwork. By systematically analysing the residencies the project provided evidence on how participatory art can foster democratic dialogue in complex urban contexts. Another project in Hungary (CS1) similarly placed adults with intellectual disabilities in decision-making and representative roles. Participants proposed and voted on their learning priorities, taught peers, helped organise and moderate a public event and presented their own perspectives, demonstrating a shift from being recipients of support to exercising choice, voice and self-advocacy.

Promoting common values. These projects make European common values, rights and principles a central subject of learning and reflection. A project in Latvia (CS3) developed and tested an updated human-rights learning methodology, an online

knowledge-assessment tool and a collection of cases drawn from courts and other institutions. Its content addressed human rights and their restrictions, migration, trafficking and democratic participation, making rights themselves – rather than a more general inclusion outcome – the focus of learning. Another project in Poland (CS1) addressed human dignity, freedom, equality, democracy, human rights and the rule of law through workshops, educational mobility and institutional visits. Participants subsequently used and disseminated the resulting materials locally. These cases are strong illustrations because common values were explicitly taught, examined through concrete cases and embedded in reusable educational resources.

Encouraging civic engagement. This is the most common impact narrative found in the case studies and concerns projects that encourage or involve adult learners in concrete action in their communities or civil society, including volunteering, community initiatives and collective action. A project in Estonia (CS2) brought together 668 volunteers from diverse backgrounds, built volunteer communities and developed training resources and a digital tool for recognising learning acquired through voluntary work. Volunteering was also incorporated into formal learning, while networks established through the project continued beyond its funding period. A project in Germany (CS5) supported rural citizens' initiatives through mobility, peer learning, curricula and guidance for intergenerational volunteer networks. The associated initiatives established volunteer networks, village shops, supported housing and community meeting places.

Developing competences and critical skills. This impact narrative covers projects whose principal contribution is to strengthen the knowledge, competences and critical skills that can support informed participation in democratic and civic life. These include, for example, critical thinking, media and information literacy, dialogue and communication skills, and the ability to understand and critically engage with social and political issues. A project in Slovenia (CS2) developed and tested training resources that helped older adults recognise misinformation, assess online information critically and participate more confidently in informed civic discussion. The competence mechanism is explicit: media literacy and critical thinking are connected directly to active citizenship rather than to general digital inclusion. A project in Ireland (CS5) addressed misinformation, algorithmic influence and the effects of social media on political opinions and elections through training and discussion with parents. The case reports that these political and media-related questions became a recurring subject in parent meetings, providing evidence of sustained critical engagement rather than only acquisition of generic digital skills.

No clearly defined impact narrative. For 14 projects, the available evidence did not support assignment to one of the four impact narratives. This does not mean that the projects lacked social or educational value. Rather, they generally contributed through enabling conditions, such as accessibility, inclusion, well-being or general skills development, without a sufficiently clear link to democratic participation, common values, civic action or participation-specific competences. For example, a project in Austria (CS1) provided accessible AI training for blind and visually impaired adults, thereby strengthening their digital competence and independence. However, the case study does not identify a civic or democratic objective or report participation-related outcomes, besides social inclusion related objectives. Similarly, a project in (CS4) involved older adults in co-designing and testing environmental-learning resources and reported improvements in environmental literacy, sustainable behaviour, digital confidence and ownership. However, the case does not demonstrate a clear link to civic engagement or democratic participation. Another

example is a project in Ireland (CS4), which improved women's digital skills, confidence and access to learning, services and employment. These outcomes may create favourable conditions for wider participation, but the project does not provide evidence that the skills were participation-specific or translated into civic or democratic engagement.

The presence of cases with a less clearly defined impact narrative also points to a broader challenge in how the thematic priority is understood and operationalised. Because the priority encompasses several broad and partly overlapping concepts, some projects are associated with it through inclusion, participatory teaching methods, well-being or general competence development without clearly explaining how these activities are expected to lead to common values, civic engagement or democratic participation. This does not diminish the value of these activities, but the absence of an explicit framework or intervention logic makes the project's intended contribution to the priority difficult to establish. Clearer guidance on the distinctions and connections between competence development, common values, civic action and participation in democratic decision-making could help beneficiaries formulate more coherent objectives, activities and intended outcomes.

5.6 Conclusion

The findings show that the Erasmus+ priority "Participation in democratic life, common values and civic engagement" is addressed by a substantial majority of beneficiary organisations, although slightly more often indirectly than directly.

The survey findings indicate that projects place particular emphasis on European common values, inclusion, intercultural understanding and strengthening the European dimension of participating organisations. Their activities are predominantly educational and practice-oriented. KA1 projects frequently support staff development through job shadowing, courses and training, alongside group mobility for adult learners. KA2 projects commonly translate the priority into concrete outputs such as educational instruments, methods, curricula and training workshops.

The case-study analysis adds nuance by showing the different ways in which projects are linked to the priority. Encouraging civic engagement is the most common primary impact narrative, followed by developing competences and critical skills and promoting common values. Only a small proportion of the selected projects primarily create opportunities for participation in democratic processes or public decision-making. In some case studies, projects produce valuable outcomes relating to inclusion, accessibility, well-being or general competence development, but the available evidence does not establish a sufficiently clear civic or democratic narrative. These case studies point to some of the difficulties in operationalising the broad and partly overlapping elements of the thematic priority. Clearer guidance on what the priority of democratic participation and civic engagement entails could help beneficiaries connect their projects more directly to this priority.

Staff of adult education organisations, the general adult learner population and volunteers most frequently constitute the immediate target groups of projects addressing the thematic priority. Among more specific groups of adult learners, adults living in peripheral areas, women, adults with physical/mental health disabilities and young adults recur relatively often. By contrast, adults experiencing homelessness, addiction, people with a prison background, and NEETs are reached less frequently.

One Polish case study illustrates how adults experiencing an active crisis, such as homelessness, can face particular barriers to participating in Erasmus+ mobility activities.

Although staff of adult education organisations are by far the most common immediate target group, projects often reach wider groups of adult learners and local communities through train-the-trainer approaches and improved educational practices. The case studies also show how the thematic priority is translated into responses to local challenges such as social exclusion, disinformation, polarisation and limited civic engagement. Participatory and co-creative approaches can further strengthen learners' confidence, voice and sense of agency.

Overall, Erasmus+ appears to contribute meaningfully to democratic participation and European values in adult education, primarily by strengthening civic competences, community engagement, inclusive educational practices and awareness of European values, rather than through direct participation in democratic decision-making.

6 Impact in the thematic area

This chapter describes the impact of Erasmus+ projects addressing the priority “Participation in democratic life, common values and civic engagement” on different aspect of the learning offer of the beneficiary organisations, their staff and learners. It discusses whether Erasmus+ enhanced the focus of provision on democratic process and political rights, volunteering activities, learners’ influence on training offer, European citizenship, European common values, civic competences, media literacy, critical thinking and strengthening partnership with civil society organisations. The online survey amongst beneficiary organisations and the case studies, as discussed in the previous Chapter, informed the analysis.

6.1 Impact on the learning offer

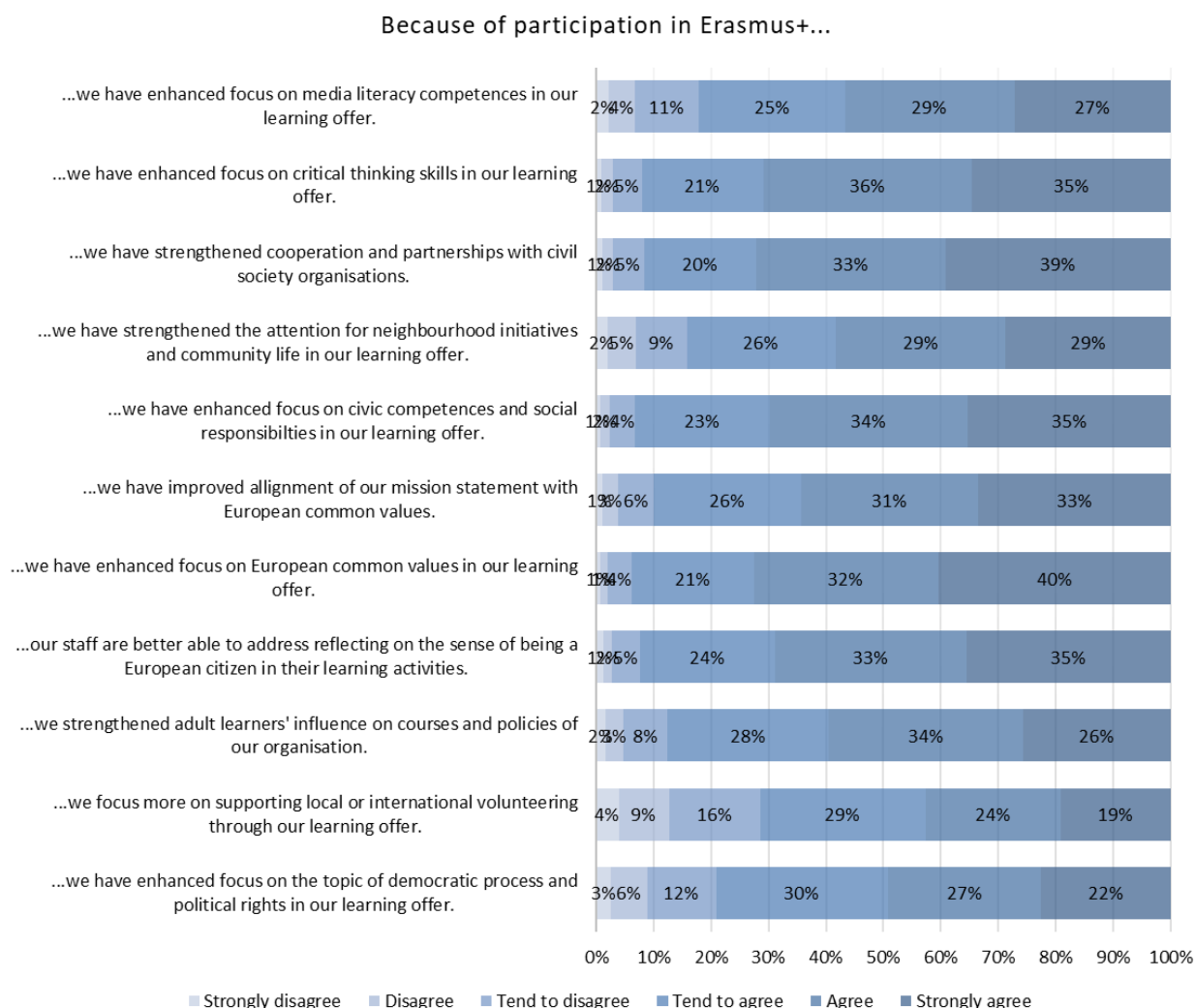
Participating organisations that address the thematic area are consistently positive about the impact of Erasmus+ across all dimensions (see Figure 33). For most statements, a clear majority of respondents agree or strongly agree that participation has led to improvements in the learning offer.

The strongest effects are visible in the increased focus on European common values, the strengthening of cooperation with civil society organisations, the enhancement of critical thinking skills, the enhanced focus on civic competences, and the ability to address European citizenship. For all these statements, over 90% of respondents agree that there has been an improvement, and a significant portion strongly agrees.

The lowest levels of perceived impact are related to increasing support for local or international volunteering and to enhancing attention to democratic processes and political rights. Around 72% of respondents agree that Erasmus+ has led to a greater focus on volunteering, while approximately 79% report increased attention to democratic processes and political rights. Although these percentages still represent a clear majority, they are noticeably lower than for other dimensions, indicating that the positive impact of participation in Erasmus+ is less pronounced in these areas.³⁰

³⁰ The reliability of these results are supported by a single overall variable regarding the impact of Erasmus+ on the learning in relation to the thematic area “Participation in democratic life, common values and civic engagement”. Based on this variable, 84.1% of beneficiaries reported a positive impact on the improvement of the learning offer. The variable has a strong reliability, as indicated by a Cronbach’s Alpha ($\alpha = 0.895$), and the scores are statistically significant, as indicated by the One Sample T-test ($t(1236) = 208.11, p < .001$). See Annex 3 for more details on the statistical analyses of the survey.

FIGURE 33: IMPACT OF ERASMUS+ ON LEARNING OFFER RELATED TO THE PRIORITY "PARTICIPATION IN DEMOCRATIC LIFE, COMMON VALUES AND CIVIC ENGAGEMENT" – N=1369



Source: Online survey beneficiary organisations RIA-AE network (2025-2026)

Across the country reports, the open answers in the online survey and the case studies show that Erasmus+ projects addressing the priority have a convincing impact on both the learning offer and organisational development, through the introduction of new content and approaches that emphasise learner participation and critical reflection. Organisations frequently report that participation in Erasmus+ has led to a stronger focus on civic competences, European values, democratic processes and social responsibility as exemplified by two responses in the Croatian country report.

Country report Croatia

“Our organisation has promoted engagement in democratic life, common values, and civic engagement even before this project. After the implementation of these two projects, we have included this type of activity in several other projects that we are/were implementing.”

“In the programme for adult participants, we included content that encourages critical thinking, intercultural dialogue, and understanding of European institutions. For example, during language workshops, we used texts and materials on EU citizens’ rights, which enabled participants to learn the language through content that is directly related to democratic participation.”

The second of the two examples above indicates that reflection, critical thinking and dialogue receive a larger role because of Erasmus+ projects. This is also clearly supported by other country reports.

Country report Slovenia

“We introduced training programmes in media literacy and evaluation of media content, including a dedicated set of content that promotes critical thinking and active participation.”

“We empowered elderly to become more competent in decision-making processes and participation, as well as in the critical evaluation of various types of information, including fake news.”

Country report Germany

“The project has enabled the organisation to develop innovative and practical educational formats that make civic education accessible in rural regions and strengthen civic engagement. A key success was the development of the course module ‘Democracy in Dialogue’, which uses personal exchange formats such as shared meals to promote democratic awareness and the participants’ communication skills. This empowers learners to express their own opinions, listen to others and work together to develop solutions to local challenges.”

In accordance with the Figure 33, negative evidence is limited. However, one Croatian respondent also highlighted a limitation of projects indirectly addressing the priority since the theme was a small side objective.

Country report Croatia

“Participation in democratic life, shared values and civic engagement was one of the secondary goals of the project in which we were a partner. Through the project, the CHEDI theme (community, health, environment, diversity, innovation) was incorporated into the curricula, of which ‘community’ partly covers this theme. However, it is such a small part of the project that we cannot claim a large effect in this regard. Our projects were mainly focused on other programme priorities.”

Although the case studies do not allow for a precise assessment of where impact is strongest, they nevertheless convincingly demonstrate how the priority of democratic participation and civic engagement is integrated across Erasmus+ projects.

6.2 Impact at staff level

Participation in Erasmus+ is associated with clear improvements in staff competences related to this priority area (see Figure 34). Across all statements, a strong majority of respondents agree with the statements.

The strongest effects are observed in the impact that Erasmus+ has on the ability of staff to foster local community development, in teaching common European values and in exploring issues pertaining European common values. At least 93% of respondents agree with these statements, with around a third strongly agreeing.

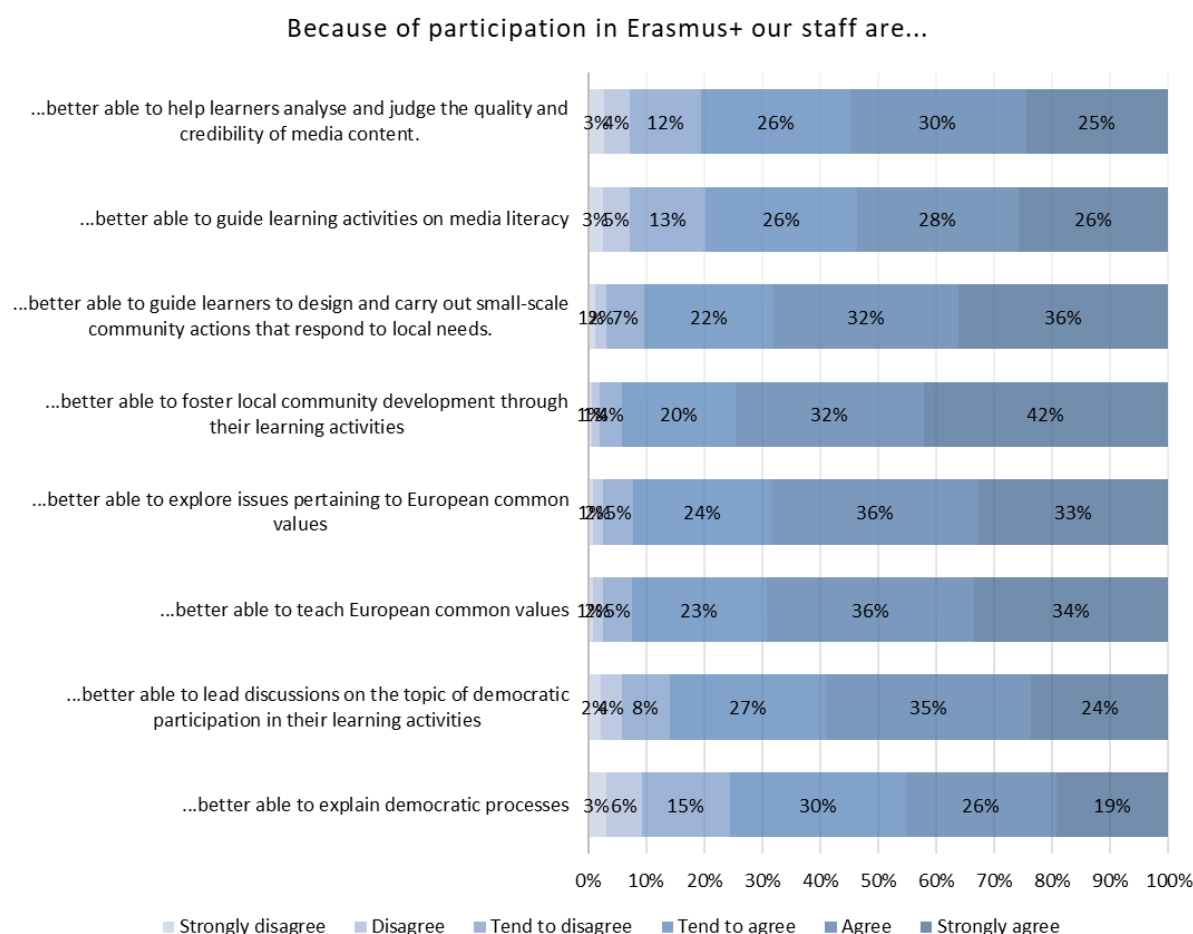
The smallest perceived impact of Erasmus+ on staff is found in their ability to help learners to judge the quality of media content, guide learning activities about media literacy, and in their ability to explain democratic processes. Although, the latter of these topics receives the lowest score, three quarters (75%) of the respondents still

agree that there has been an improvement due to participation in Erasmus+ in explaining democratic processes.

Both Figure 33 and 34 indicate that the impact of Erasmus+ on the area of democratic processes is most limited. This is consistent with earlier findings throughout the report, which showed that projects tend to place greater emphasis on European values, inclusion, digitalisation, local communities and the development of practical skills, rather than on more political forms of democratic engagement and advocacy. The comparatively lower impact in democratic processes this area therefore reflects a broader pattern.³¹

³¹ The reliability of these results are supported by a single overall variable regarding the impact of Erasmus+ on staff competences in relation to the thematic area “Participation in democratic life, common values and civic engagement”. Based on this variable, 83.7% of beneficiaries reported a positive impact on the improvement of the learning offer. The variable has a strong reliability, as indicated by a Cronbach’s Alpha ($\alpha = 0.895$), and the scores are statistically significant, as indicated by the One Sample T-test ($t(1236) = 191.47, p < .001$). See Annex 3 for more details on the statistical analyses of the survey.

FIGURE 34: IMPACT OF ERASMUS+ ON STAFF RELATED TO THE PRIORITY "PARTICIPATION IN DEMOCRATIC LIFE, COMMON VALUES AND CIVIC ENGAGEMENT" – N=1369



Source: Online survey beneficiary organisations RIA-AE network (2025-2026)

The case studies and open answers of the online survey provide more concrete evidence of the various ways in which projects contribute to the ability of staff knowledge and competences in relation to the priority “Participation in democratic life, common values and civic engagement”. A consistent finding is that staff do not only acquire new knowledge, but also develop the ability to translate abstract concepts such as democracy, participation and European values into concrete educational practice.

Country report Poland

“First, projects contributed to strengthening subject-specific competences, particularly in areas related to democracy, European values, and countering disinformation (CS1, 2, 3). A key challenge was the need to operationalize abstract concepts – such as democracy, equality, or freedom – and translate them into the lived experiences of participants. This issue was especially evident in rural contexts, where EU-related topics were often perceived as distant or politicized (CS1), as well as in work with seniors with low levels of information literacy (CS2). In response, staff developed the ability to simplify and contextualize complex content, build narratives based on real-life examples, and address potentially controversial topics in an accessible way.”

Country report Austria

“Erasmus+ appears to have contributed not merely to expanding the range of methods and materials available to educators, but to shifting pedagogical practice in more fundamental ways. Participatory approaches developed through project work have been systematically integrated into classroom settings, enabling teaching staff to embed democratic engagement as a consistent and deliberate element of their instructional repertoire.”

Country report Germany

“Colleagues who have taken part in Erasmus+ mobility schemes are increasingly integrating topics such as diversity, participation and European values into their educational work, thereby strengthening the democratic culture within our organisation. Furthermore, Erasmus+ has intensified internal dialogue in the organisation on the understanding of democracy, a culture of participation and the formation of values.”

Another recurring element is that Erasmus+ participation is associated with increased confidence, motivation and professional identity. Staff report feeling more capable of taking on new roles, experimenting with innovative approaches and engaging with diverse target groups.

Country report Spain

Staff note that, at a personal level, the experience “was very positive, as it allowed them to take on a new coordinating role and learn about international best practices. Being able to see what other people and institutions in Europe are doing, and even draw inspiration from it, is incredibly valuable” (CS3). This suggests that participation in this type of project can strengthen professional capacities related to management, organisational responsibility and the assumption of new roles within the organisation.

Country report Poland

Finally, one of the most durable outcomes was the transformation of participants into local community leaders (CS 1, 3, 4). In contexts characterized by a shortage of active civic leaders, projects functioned as incubators of leadership competences. Participants not only developed their own skills but also initiated educational and community-based activities in their local environments, indicating both a multiplier effect and the sustainability of project outcomes.

The Polish report provides some nuance about the role of staff within organisations, noting that those involved in the case studies frequently have temporary employees and volunteers that increase impact beyond the core organisation.

Country report Poland

The dominant operational model is project-based and volunteer-driven, in which the implementation of activities – including Erasmus+ projects – relies on the temporary engagement of external actors such as volunteers, task-based collaborators, and members of informal networks (CS 1, 3, 4). This organisational structure fosters flexibility and enables a broad outreach. At the same time, it implies that the impact of Erasmus+ projects on competence development extends beyond a narrow group of formal employees and instead encompasses a wider ecosystem of individuals connected to the organisation.

Overall, these findings suggest that the impact on staff goes beyond the acquisition of knowledge, resulting in a transformation of professional roles, practices and perspectives that supports the integration of democratic participation within adult education.

6.3 Impact at learners level

Across the case studies and interviews performed with adult learners in Europe there is plentiful evidence to support that Erasmus+ projects have a strong and multi-dimensional impact on adult learners, particularly in terms of empowerment, confidence, participation, social connection and civic engagement. This subsection focuses specifically on impact on learners related to the priority of democratic participation and civic engagement, adding more empirical evidence and illustrative examples to the findings on the overall impacts of KA1 mobility on adult learners as described in chapter 4.

The Latvian report provides a characteristic example of a 67 year old woman who became more engaged with the disability association of her town after her international experience in Erasmus+.

Country report Latvia

“I have become kinder toward people. [...] I try to help the people in my association as much as I can. And four times a year we distribute food products; I personally get into the car and deliver them. I try to feed them with whatever we can provide. Of course, we don’t bring bread and butter, but we bring products from which they can prepare a meal. To those who cannot walk, we bring bed linens. We bring clothes. [...] We organise workshops; we invite an instructor who teaches us something, for example, decoupage, candle making, soap making, making small pillows, or re-sewing clothes from old to new. We invite people to learn. [...] Many people are lonely; their children grow up. But in the association, they feel needed. They are happy that someone remembers them. [...] The experience I gained abroad has given me a strong motivation to go out and do things. [...] I want to do this, seeing how everything works elsewhere.”

Interviews in Estonia portray how Erasmus+ can reduce isolation of participants and serve as a bridge towards active community engagement. Four of the five case studies in Estonia show that participation in Erasmus+ can lead to meaningful impact related to the priority of civic engagement and democratic participation.

Country report Estonia

At the social level, the projects generated learner impact by reducing isolation and widening participation in communities of practice. Many of the activities brought together adults with different ages, backgrounds, nationalities, confidence levels and professional roles. This created opportunities not only to acquire knowledge, but also to form relationships, expand networks and develop a stronger sense of belonging. For some learners, the project space appears to have functioned as a bridge into a wider community, which is an important outcome in adult education contexts where social disconnection can otherwise limit participation and persistence.

The five case studies also show that impact at learner level can meaningfully include participation in democratic life, civic engagement and common values. Here, the strongest finding is that such outcomes were learned through practice rather than abstract instruction. Learners engaged with volunteering, explored community needs, discussed social issues through media, took part in dialogue formats, encountered diverse perspectives and learned to communicate in ways that are inclusive and responsible.

Another frequent finding related to the priority is that Erasmus+ projects can lead to a stronger sense of belonging and identity, both at local and European level. Learners report feeling more aware of their role within society, while also feeling more confident and that they have a role to play in their broader community.

Country report Ireland

“...the main change is in the way in which our learners see themselves within the larger European context and the barriers of bias which are broken down as a result of partnerships/exchanges/interactions. The 'fear of the other' is diminished when you put people from different backgrounds together in an educational, non-formal, non-threatening setting. We have noticed a relaxation in bias throughout the communal events/classes we organised as part of our learner mobilities.”

Country report Germany

“That’s really something I now appreciate about this project too – that we older people get the feeling that we can pass on a valuable treasure trove of knowledge. And not just within the family, but with people from migrant backgrounds. [...] As career changers, we can then also get involved in nurseries, kindergartens and schools where there is all-day care. The Erasmus+ programme was crucial in showing that we older people are still important there and can contribute.”

Country report Hungary

Across the Hungarian case studies, learner-level impact was rarely described as formal political learning. Instead, it appeared through increased confidence, stronger voice, improved ability to communicate needs, greater awareness of one’s own role in a community, and more opportunities to take part in learning, group work or public-facing activities. This is important because, for several learner groups, participation in democratic life begins with very practical conditions: being heard, understanding information, being able to make choices, and being recognised as a person with agency.

In one of the case studies, adults with intellectual disabilities were not treated only as recipients of support. The project strengthened self-advocacy, accessible communication and supported decision-making, helping learners take a more active role in expressing their views and participating in learning and representation. In this case, learner impact was closely connected to dignity, voice and the right to understandable information.

Taken together, these examples show that the impact on learners goes beyond participation in project activities, contributing to a broader transformation in how individuals perceive their role in society and their own capacity to engage in democratic and community life.

6.4 Impact beyond the organisational level

Impact beyond the organisational level is an important dimension of Erasmus+ impact that has not yet been discussed in this report. Generally speaking, wider impact on the broader adult education sector, at organisation, policy level, or across other sectors is more difficult to demonstrate and attribute to Erasmus+, as such effects are often indirect, develop over time and are difficult to measure. As a result, country reports sometimes describe wider impact in terms of potential or emerging effects rather than clearly demonstrated influence. Nevertheless, the ten country reports – Slovenia, Latvia, Hungary, Estonia, Croatia, Finland, Ireland, Spain, Germany and the Netherlands – that include findings on impact beyond the organisational level point to several recurring patterns, alongside a number of less common forms of wider impact, namely the dissemination and transfer of methods and approaches to other organisations and stakeholders, the strengthening of cooperation networks, wider effects on inclusion, participation and civic engagement, and local and community development.

The most widely supported form of impact beyond the organisational level concerns the dissemination and transfer of methods, materials and approaches to other organisations and stakeholders. In the Hungarian country report, wider impact in KA2 is primarily understood as a process of “horizontal diffusion”, whereby organisations test, adapt and share methods and professional learning through local partnerships, professional networks and community-based activities, enabling them to be used by other organisations and stakeholder groups.

Country report Hungary

The evidence does not suggest large-scale systemic change at this stage, but it does show that Erasmus+ projects can create wider professional and community value when their results are accessible, relevant and actively shared.

A concrete example comes from Ireland. In this project the content from a handbook developed through an Erasmus+ project on supporting people living with dementia is being used to inform a pilot training programme with HSE nurse managers working in dementia care. This illustrates how project-generated approaches can begin to be taken up by professional stakeholders beyond the original organisation and partnership. Other reports describe comparable processes where project outputs develop in Erasmus+ and good practices are used beyond the original partnership.

The expansion and strengthening of cooperation networks is another broadly supported form of wider impact. In Latvia for example, projects foster both national and international partnerships that continue beyond the project lifecycle, creating platforms for knowledge exchange, future cooperation and joint initiatives.

Country report Latvia

“First of all, the network is becoming increasingly popular in the non-governmental sector, which has provided us with a steady demand from participants over all three years.” (CS 1)

“The project was initially planned only at the Baltic level, but it has reached much further (France, Croatia, etc.) [...] The impact of the project is much greater than originally planned.” (CS3)

The Spanish country report similarly illustrates how relationships created through Erasmus+ can generate longer-term effects. Participants remained in contact with European organisations after the original activities had ended and used these connections to develop subsequent initiatives and partnerships; in one case, two participants went on to establish their own organisation and continued to develop projects with European partners.

A third, somewhat less common but important form of wider impact concerns awareness-raising, civic participation and, in some cases, contribution to policy dialogue. This type of wider impact is particularly relevant to the Erasmus+ priority on participation in democratic life and civic engagement. The Latvian country report for example, describes how projects addressing European values, equality and democratic participation can contribute to changes in attitudes and understanding among diverse groups, including vulnerable and socially isolated participants. Participants may subsequently transfer this knowledge to others through informal dissemination and civic engagement, extending the effects beyond those directly involved in the project. Finland provides a strong example of how such effects can

extend to policy level. Following an Erasmus+ mobility experience, participants in mental-health recovery, transferred approaches based on personal storytelling. Participants shared their lived experiences directly with members of Parliament and regional authorities. Other Finnish projects engaged ministries, national advisory bodies and European institutions, suggesting that Erasmus+ can contribute to policy processes through awareness-raising, agenda-setting and stakeholder dialogue even where direct policy change is harder to demonstrate. Related examples are found in Hungary, where projects strengthened self-advocacy and the visibility of adults with intellectual disabilities in learning and representation, and Estonia, where projects strengthened connections between organisations, communities and local government.

A further recurring form of wider impact concerns local communities and the broader social environment. The Slovenian country report describes how beneficiary organisations use Erasmus+ to respond to local community needs, work with vulnerable groups and contribute to community development. Organisations seek to connect project content directly to needs in the local environment, while some projects also aim to strengthen the capacity of community members themselves to participate and act within their communities.

Country report Slovenia

“This is our greatest strength—that we strive to connect project content with local needs, and I believe this contributes most to the sustainability of the projects in the long run. This is because municipalities can clearly see that the content we develop within projects is genuinely needed in the local environment.” (Participant CS4)

“Erasmus projects are a driving force for progress, pushing you to reflect on what is missing in society. I will therefore always believe in project-based work and in the need to apply for new projects, to develop and expand the network of partners, and then to transfer these results into the local environment.” (Participant CS2)

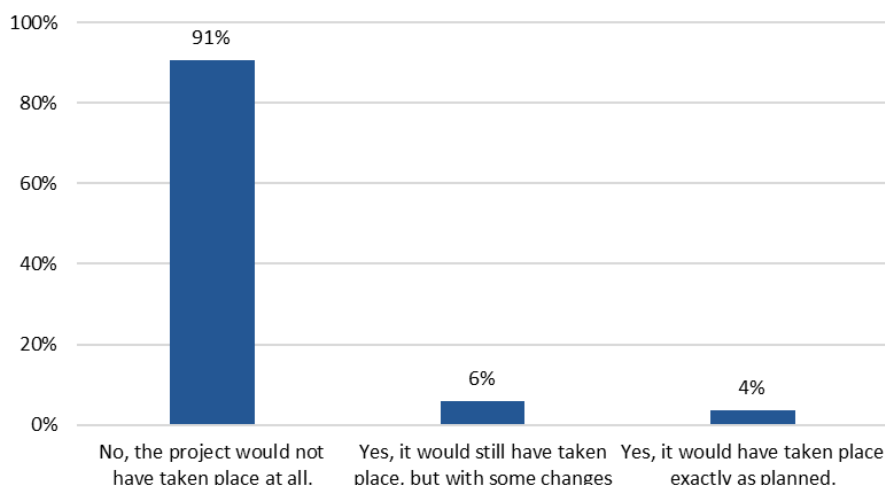
Spain similarly identifies the revitalisation of the social environment and stronger local learning and cooperation ecosystems as part of the wider impact of Erasmus+.

Overall, the country reports suggest that the impact of Erasmus+ beyond the organisational level occurs primarily through the gradual spread of project outputs, activities, learned lessons and networks/relationships rather than through adult education policy and large-scale systemic change.

6.5 Added value of Erasmus+ support

Previous figures and chapters have already highlighted a range of improvements resulting from Erasmus+ participation. Figure 35 provides concrete evidence of the programme’s added value. It shows that the large majority of projects that address the priority theme (91%) would not have taken place without Erasmus+ funding, while only a small proportion would have gone ahead with some changes (6%) or exactly as planned (4%). The latter group of 4% indicates that Erasmus+ had no effect on the planning of their project. In all other cases, Erasmus+ funding not only allow the projects to be realised, but the programme also had an impact on shaping their objectives and increasing their outreach, as evidenced below.

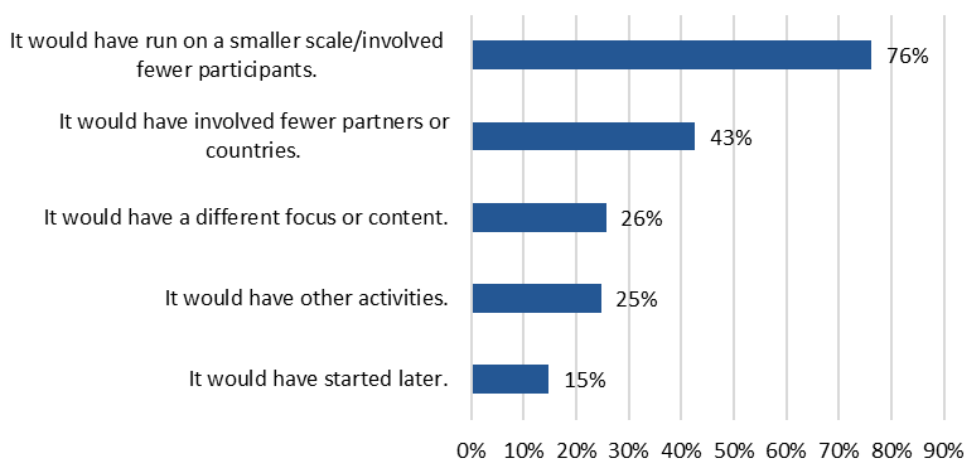
FIGURE 35: ADDED VALUE OF ERASMUS+ SUPPORT – N=1739



Source: Online survey beneficiary organisations RIA-AE network (2025-2026)

Of those projects that would still have taken place without Erasmus+ funding, but in a different form, respondents indicate that these would most often have been implemented on a smaller scale (see Figure 36). Around 76% report that the project would have been implemented on a smaller scale or would have involved fewer participants, while 43% indicate that it would have included fewer partners or countries. Second, around a quarter of respondents state that the project would have had a different focus or content (26%) or would have involved different activities (25%). Finally, 15% report that it would have started later.

FIGURE 36: ASPECTS OF PROJECT THAT WOULD HAVE BEEN DIFFERENT WITHOUT ERASMUS+ – N=101



Source: Online survey beneficiary organisations RIA-AE network (2025-2026)

6.6 Conclusion

Overall, the findings suggest that Erasmus+ provides a significant contribution to strengthening democratic participation, civic engagement and European values in the adult education sector. Based on the survey, many more beneficiary organisations consider that their projects directly or indirectly address these issues, than one could expect based on data generated in the application process. The programme

primarily achieves this primarily by supporting inclusive educational practices, intercultural exchange, critical reflection, and community participation. Moreover, the overwhelming majority of organisations indicate that their projects would not have taken place without Erasmus+ support, underlining the programme's crucial role in enabling innovation, international cooperation, and long-term organisational and societal impact in this thematic area.

A main avenue for Erasmus+ projects to achieve an impact on the thematic priority is by contributing to the professional development of staff and further development of learning provision. Participation in KA1 and KA2 activities enhances not only the staff members' knowledge of democratic participation and European values, but also their ability to translate abstract concepts such as democracy, equality, media literacy, and civic engagement into practical educational activities. Through their involvement in Erasmus+, staff of adult education organisations increasingly adopt participatory and learner-centred approaches, strengthen their confidence and professional identity, and become more capable of acting as facilitators of dialogue and inclusion within their communities. In many cases, Erasmus+ also contributes to the emergence of local civic leaders and broader networks of engaged educators, volunteers, and community actors, thus achieving an impact beyond the project participants.

At learner level, the European dimension of Erasmus+ projects as such already has an impact on skills and attitudes that are relevant to increased participation in democratic processes, civic engagement and strengthening of common European values. The case studies illustrate that Erasmus+ projects can strengthen learners' confidence, sense of belonging to a (transnational or European) community, social participation, and civic engagement. Learners frequently describe increased openness towards others, stronger community involvement, and a greater awareness of their role within both local society and the broader European context as a consequence of their participation in project activities. Importantly, these outcomes are often achieved through practical experiences, dialogue, mobility, and community-based learning rather than through formal instruction alone. While projects examined in the case studies seldom explicitly aimed at increasing political mobilisation of adult learners, there is evidence that they succeed in empowering learners to better articulate their interests and wishes and to strengthen their motivation and capacities to take an active role in their community.

PART E – Conclusion and policy pointers

7 Conclusion and policy pointers

7.1 Conclusions

7.1.1 The accessibility and inclusiveness of the programme for (potential) beneficiaries

Erasmus+ in adult education reaches a broad and diverse range of organisations across the participating countries. NGOs, associations and foundations account for a substantial share of participation in both KA1 and KA2, while the involvement of public educational institutions and private companies varies according to national adult education systems. The programme also reaches organisations beyond the traditional adult education sector, including organisations active in social welfare, arts and culture, and vocational education and training, illustrating the cross-sectoral nature of adult learning.

Participation is characterised by a large number of relatively small organisations, many with fewer than 50 staff members. Although larger organisations generally reach more adult learners, smaller organisations can also reach substantial numbers. In addition, many beneficiaries participate in multiple projects, indicating recurring participation among organisations with previous Erasmus+ experience.

A consistent finding across the country reports is that participation is geographically uneven and often concentrated in urban or economically stronger regions. This suggests that regional infrastructure, organisational networks and institutional capacity remain important factors in programme accessibility. Evidence concerning underrepresented types of organisations is limited, and the groups identified vary according to the national context. Depending on the country, these include libraries, museums, cultural and environmental organisations, social-sector and community-based organisations, or smaller volunteer-led and minority-serving organisations.

Organisational capacity is a major determinant of accessibility. Across both KA1 and KA2, the most commonly reported barriers are limited staff capacity and time, administrative complexity and financial constraints. At the same time, some interviewees described Erasmus+ as comparatively manageable in relation to other funding programmes, particularly because of lump-sum funding and the support provided by National Agencies. Administrative requirements therefore remain an important barrier, especially for organisations with limited capacity, but the evidence does not suggest that Erasmus+ is uniformly more burdensome than other funding schemes.

Less widely reported obstacles include uncertainty about eligibility or funding outcomes, and limited experience with international projects. For KA2, the main additional challenges concern finding reliable partners, coordinating transnational cooperation and investing substantial effort in competitive applications. For KA1 learner mobility, the main additional burden lies in preparing, accompanying and supporting adult learners, particularly those facing language, confidence, practical or accessibility barriers. These demands weigh particularly heavily on smaller, newcomer and volunteer-led organisations. Several country reports additionally indicate that limited financial support for hosting activities can reduce the willingness of hosting organisations to accommodate learners, particularly where participants require additional support.

7.1.2 Impact at organisation level

Erasmus+ has a clear positive impact on beneficiary organisations and their learning provision. Overall, 94.8% of beneficiaries report that participation contributed to improvements in their learning offer. This overall finding is broadly unchanged compared with the first survey round. Project results and insights are frequently incorporated into new or existing provision, helping organisations to respond better to learners' needs and improve accessibility for different groups. Organisations also report introducing new topics, programmes and teaching approaches, particularly in relation to digitalisation, inclusion and diversity, active citizenship and international cooperation. Across project topics of KA1 projects and primary priorities of KA2 projects, inclusion and digital transformation are most prominent, while environmental sustainability and democratic participation are addressed less frequently as a principal focus.

KA2 projects generate a wide range of tangible outputs, including manuals, learning materials, curricula, training modules, pedagogical concepts and digital tools. Most organisations continue to use these outputs after the project has ended: 71% report using them rather much or very much, while a further 23% use them to some extent. Sustainability and continued use are most likely when outputs respond to concrete organisational needs, are practical and adaptable, and are integrated into regular educational provision. Co-creation with staff and learners can further strengthen ownership and applicability.

Participation in Erasmus+ is also associated with stronger international cooperation, organisational networks, visibility, a stronger European dimension and greater openness to innovation. The durability of these broader organisational effects depends on their strategic embedding within the organisation and on the availability of staff time and resources. Organisational impact may remain limited when knowledge and experience are concentrated among individual staff members rather than systematically shared and embedded within the organisation. Limited follow-up funding, limited staff capacity, workload, staff turnover and changing organisational priorities can impede the maintenance and further development of project results. Organisational impact is therefore more likely to be sustained where Erasmus+ forms part of a longer-term development strategy rather than remaining an isolated project activity.

7.1.3 Impact at staff level

Erasmus+ has a strong positive reported impact on staff competences and professional development. Overall, 97.4% of beneficiaries report a positive impact on staff competences. Among staff participating in KA1 mobility, 88% report developing practical skills relevant to their work and professional development, while substantial shares also report improvements in organisational, management and leadership skills and in their knowledge of their teaching subject or professional field. Beneficiary organisations additionally report strong improvements in international, pedagogical and didactical competences and in staff members' ability to develop learning pathways that respond better to learners' needs. International exchange also strengthens staff members' ability to collaborate across cultures, manage projects and engage in international partnerships.

Participation also increases staff knowledge and awareness of the Erasmus+ horizontal priorities. The strongest reported effects concern understanding the diversity of society and gaining knowledge about Europe, the EU and European

values. In addition, staff report greater commitment to addressing discrimination and increased knowledge and use of digital technologies. The country reports further suggest that staff become more attentive to inclusive educational practice and more aware of the wider societal role of adult education. By comparison, increased interest in democratic participation and changes towards more environmentally sustainable behaviour are reported less frequently. The impact on staff is therefore broad, but varies considerably between different dimensions of the programme priorities.

The country reports further associate Erasmus+ participation with increased confidence, motivation, independence and openness to innovation. Staff become more willing to experiment with new teaching methods, work with diverse learner groups and assume new responsibilities within their organisations.

7.1.4 Impact at learners' level

Erasmus+ projects reach a diverse range of adult learners, including people with disabilities, older adults, migrants and refugees, and adults experiencing social or economic disadvantages. Learners can benefit directly from KA1 mobility and project activities or indirectly from provision and materials developed through Erasmus+ projects. The evidence presented below concerns the direct effects of KA1 learner mobility.

The Commission participant reports indicate a broad range of benefits. Overall satisfaction is very high, with 99% of participants in individual mobility reporting that they were satisfied or very satisfied with their experience. Participants particularly report developing practical skills, improving their self-confidence, independence and responsibility, and making progress in a foreign language. The most frequently reported effects related to the horizontal priorities are a better understanding of societal diversity and increased knowledge of Europe, the EU and European values. Changes in motivation or behaviour, such as participating in elections or adopting more sustainable habits, and effects on employment or entry into further study are reported less frequently.

Additional Module A, based on a qualitative content analysis of 24 interviews with recent KA1 learner-mobility participants, provides more detailed insight into how learners experience these effects. All interviewees reported changes related to intercultural learning and a stronger sense of social connection, while most also described acquiring practical skills and insights that supported their well-being, independence and self-confidence in everyday life. Depending on learners' circumstances and the focus of the mobility, the interviews also identified effects on communication in multilingual contexts, volunteering and civic engagement, European citizenship, work and vocational development, and environmental awareness. The findings illustrate that the value of mobility extends beyond the acquisition of specific skills and can encompass changes in attitudes, social relationships and everyday behaviour.

The pre- and post-test conducted as part of Additional Module B provides further evidence of learner impact: 96.1% of participating learners experienced progress in at least one of the measured areas. Statistically significant increases were found across the self-reported measures of assertiveness, social connections, reflection on one's own capabilities, foreign-language use, intercultural attitudes, European citizenship and volunteering. The analysis indicates that the learning environment provided by KA1 mobility is significantly associated with progress across all these

outcomes, pointing on the importance of quality. Differences between participant subgroups were generally limited, suggesting that benefits are experienced across a diverse learner population.

7.1.5 Impact beyond the organisational level

Impact beyond the organisational level is less consistently evidenced than impact at the individual and organisational levels and is generally more difficult to attribute to Erasmus+, as wider effects are often indirect, develop over time and are difficult to measure. Nevertheless, the country reports suggest that Erasmus+ generates impact beyond participating organisations, primarily through the gradual spread of project outputs, activities and lessons learned, and through the development of networks and relationships. Evidence of impact through direct policy influence or systemic change is more limited and even more difficult to attribute to Erasmus+.

The most widely evidenced forms of wider impact are the dissemination and transfer of methods, materials and educational approaches to other organisations and stakeholders, and the expansion and continuation of cooperation networks. Less frequently, projects are reported to affect local communities and the wider social environment, support civic participation, or contribute to policy dialogue and engagement with public authorities.

7.1.6 Characteristics of Erasmus+ projects addressing “Participation in democratic life, common values and civic engagement”

Although democratic participation is less prominent as a principal project focus than inclusion and digital transformation, 73% of beneficiary organisations report that at least one of their Erasmus+ projects addresses the priority “Participation in democratic life, common values and civic engagement”: 35% directly and 38% indirectly. The priority is therefore widely present, but is often incorporated as a transversal element within projects pursuing broader educational or social objectives.

Projects most commonly aim to promote European common values and strengthen the European dimension of participating organisations. Goals more directly connected to democratic participation, public dialogue, civic rights, community activism or advocacy are less common. KA1 projects primarily address the priority through staff job shadowing, courses and training, alongside group mobility for adult learners. KA2 projects commonly translate it into practical educational provision through curricula, methods, learning materials, workshops and digital resources, while policy-oriented activities and the development of networks are less frequent.

Staff, educators, trainers and volunteers frequently constitute the immediate target group, but projects often combine staff development with activities involving adult learners. The case studies show that projects frequently combine direct learner participation with an indirect multiplier route, through which trained educators and facilitators transfer new methods and practices to broader groups of learners. Aside from staff of adult education organisations and the general adult population, the specific, often disadvantaged, groups of adult learners targeted vary substantially across national contexts.

The case-study analysis further distinguishes the principal mechanisms through which projects relate to the thematic priority. Encouraging civic engagement is the most common primary impact narrative, followed by developing competences and

critical skills and promoting common values. Only a small proportion of the selected projects primarily create opportunities for participation in democratic or public decision-making. A further group produces valuable outcomes relating to inclusion, accessibility, well-being or general competence development, but the available evidence does not fall clearly within any of the four defined impact narratives. This suggests that some beneficiaries face difficulties in operationalising the priority and articulating how project activities relate to civic or democratic outcomes.

7.1.7 Impact of Erasmus+ projects addressing “Participation in democratic life, common values and civic engagement”

The thematic impact of Erasmus+ is most clearly visible within participating organisations and among their staff. Overall, 84.1% of beneficiaries that address the thematic priority report that their learning offer became more focused on democratic participation, common values and civic engagement following participation in Erasmus+, while 83.7% report a positive impact on relevant staff competences. The programme also demonstrates strong added value in this thematic area: 91% of respondents report that their project would not have taken place without Erasmus+ support.

Within the learning offer, the strongest reported effects concern increased attention to European common values, critical thinking, civic competences and European citizenship, as well as stronger cooperation with civil society organisations. At staff level, Erasmus+ particularly strengthens the capacity to teach and explore common values, foster local community development, and translate abstract concepts such as democracy, equality and participation into accessible educational activities. Comparatively weaker effects concern attention to democratic processes and political rights and support for volunteering within the learning offer, as well as staff competences related to media literacy and explaining democratic processes. This pattern indicates that Erasmus+ has a stronger reported impact on awareness, educational capacity and participation-related competences than on direct involvement in democratic processes or collective civic action.

At learner level, the case studies provide examples of increased confidence, voice, social connection, community involvement and a stronger sense of local and European belonging. These outcomes are often developed through practical experience, dialogue, mobility and community-based learning rather than through formal instruction alone. Some learners subsequently became involved in volunteering, community initiatives or other forms of civic action. However, such behavioural outcomes are less consistently evidenced than changes in awareness, competences and sense of agency. Overall, projects contribute most visibly by strengthening the educational conditions and individual capacities that can support participation, while evidence of effects on political participation and public decision-making remains more limited.

7.2 Policy pointers

Based on the conclusions above and the national reports provided by the RIA-AE network, the policy pointers can be synthesised into seven action areas aimed at improving the Erasmus+ programme’s reach and impact within the adult education sector. The emerging policy pointers were subsequently discussed in workshops with

National Agency representatives during the RIA-AE network meeting in Riga in 2026, where they were validated and further developed.

7.2.1 Targeted Outreach to Underrepresented Organisations

The conclusions show that, although Erasmus+ reaches a broad range of adult education organisations, participation remains uneven across regions and types of organisations. Which organisations are underrepresented differs between national contexts, meaning that outreach strategies need to reflect the structure of the adult education sector in each country. A particular challenge is reaching organisations that contribute to adult learning but do not primarily identify themselves as adult education providers and may therefore not recognise Erasmus+ adult education calls as relevant to their work. More targeted outreach should therefore combine tailored communication with practical entry points, stronger use of existing adult education networks and peer support from organisations already familiar with the programme.

1. Clarify the scope of the Erasmus+ adult education eligibility for organisations outside the traditional adult education sector – European Commission & National Agencies

Programme guidance should explain more clearly what constitutes adult learning and which types of non-formal and informal learning settings can participate in the adult education programme. Practical examples should be provided for organisations whose primary mission is not education, as well as for organisations operating across the boundaries between adult education and other sectors, such as VET/CVET. This would help reduce uncertainty about programme relevance and eligibility and could widen the potential applicant pool.

2. Build outreach partnerships with regional and sectoral intermediaries – National Agencies

Regional authorities, professional associations, umbrella organisations and other well-embedded organisations can help National Agencies identify and establish contact with potential beneficiaries that are currently outside Erasmus+ networks. Regional and thematic events can provide opportunities to make personal contact with these organisations and introduce the programme in relation to issues that are directly relevant to their work.

3. Strengthen the use of ambassadors and good-practice examples – National Agencies & Beneficiaries

Experienced beneficiaries and Erasmus+ ambassadors can make the programme more accessible to potential newcomers by sharing practical experience and demonstrating how Erasmus+ can be used in different adult learning settings. Cooperation with EPALE, sectoral organisations (see point 2), local/ regional/ national events, good-practice showcases and peer-to-peer exchanges can increase the visibility of successful projects while providing potential applicants with accessible contact persons and examples that are relevant to their own context.

4. Strengthen incentives for newcomer participation – European Commission & National Agencies

The programme should explore targeted incentives that make it easier for newcomers and currently underrepresented organisations to enter Erasmus+, while maintaining transparent and quality-based selection procedures. For example, additional points could be awarded to high-quality applications or consortia that include a genuine

newcomer, or temporarily to applications involving organisation types or sectors identified as underrepresented. Appropriate safeguards would be needed to prevent organisations from formally presenting themselves as newcomers when they are effectively continuations of previous beneficiaries. Such incentives could be complemented by targeted support for unsuccessful newcomers. Applicants whose proposals meet quality standards but fall just below the funding threshold could receive concrete feedback and guidance to improve and resubmit their application in a subsequent call. More emphasis could be given to this in the expert assessment, as well as in the follow-up by NAs. This may help prevent potentially strong newcomers from disengaging after an unsuccessful first application.

5. Position Erasmus+ more clearly as an instrument for organisational development and innovation – European Commission & National Agencies

Outreach should present Erasmus+ not only as a programme supporting international mobility and cooperation, but also as an instrument for innovation, organisational development and improving adult learning provision. Communication should therefore also target management-level decision-makers in organisations that may currently regard Erasmus+ as peripheral to their core activities. A clearer emphasis on its strategic value, including powerful examples of how participation contributes to organisational development and innovation (e.g., case studies), could help engage organisations that have not previously considered participation.

7.2.2 Inclusion of Learners with Fewer Opportunities in Mobility Activities

The conclusions show that Erasmus+ is increasingly reaching adult learners with fewer opportunities, but that participation in mobility still depends heavily on the support provided by beneficiary organisations. Learners may face financial, language, health-related, practical or confidence-related barriers that require additional preparation and assistance before, during and after mobility. Group mobility appears particularly important for reaching learners who would be unlikely to participate independently, as it provides peer support and a safer and more familiar environment. At the same time, inclusive mobility is more demanding for the organisations involved and can require additional staff time, preparation, accompaniment and financial resources. Policy measures should therefore ensure that the programme framework adequately supports the additional effort required to make learner mobility genuinely inclusive.

1. Strengthen preparatory support for learners with fewer opportunities – National Agencies & Beneficiary Organisations

Inclusive mobility often requires substantial preparation before participants are ready to travel, particularly for learners with limited international experience, low confidence or additional support needs. Beneficiary organisations should therefore be encouraged to invest in preparatory activities that build learners' confidence and readiness for mobility. Preparation should also take account of practical barriers such as employment and caring responsibilities and, where possible, make use of flexible planning and existing provisions such as educational or study leave. National Agencies should support organisations through guidance, capacity-building and systematic exchange of good practices on recruitment, preparation, accompaniment and follow-up. Experienced beneficiaries can play an important role in sharing practical approaches with organisations that have less experience in organising inclusive mobility.

2. Support group mobility as an important instrument for inclusive participation – European Commission & National Agencies

Group mobility can provide the peer support, trust and practical assistance needed by learners who would face significant barriers to participating independently. Programme arrangements should therefore continue to facilitate group mobility and recognise that organising inclusive group mobility can require considerably more preparation, coordination and staff input than other forms of mobility.

3. Ensure that funding arrangements reflect the additional costs of inclusive mobility – European Commission & National Agencies

Financial arrangements should take better account of the additional costs associated with supporting learners with fewer opportunities. This includes reviewing whether existing allowances for individual and group mobility adequately cover the costs of accompanying persons and the additional preparation, logistical and support requirements associated with inclusive mobility. In this context, it is important to clarify in which cases projects apply for group mobility or individual mobility for financial reasons, while actually aiming to organise a group mobility (as combining individual mobilities is financially more attractive). The adequacy of financial support for organisations hosting learner groups should also be considered, including the costs they incur in preparing for participants requiring additional support. Currently, there are no dedicated grants for hosting organisations exist, making it difficult to mobilise them. Adequate compensation could strengthen organisations' willingness and capacity to act as hosts, thereby making it easier for beneficiary organisations to find suitable partners and host organisations.

4. Improve accessible and appropriate language support for adult learners – European Commission & National Agencies

Language barriers can be particularly significant for older learners and participants with lower levels of formal education or foreign-language competence. Existing language-support arrangements should therefore be reviewed to ensure that they are accessible and appropriate for adult learners with different starting levels. Where online language support alone is insufficient, it should be possible to complement it with more tailored or face-to-face preparation. Learner-facing documentation and registration procedures, including access to language-support tools, should also be as simple and accessible as possible to avoid creating additional barriers for participants with lower literacy or digital skills.

7.2.3 Strategic Sustainability and Internal Knowledge Transfer

The conclusions show that the organisational impact of Erasmus+ is strongest when participation is embedded in a longer-term organisational strategy rather than implemented as a series of isolated projects. At the same time, sustainability concerns arise at different levels. Knowledge and competences gained by staff may remain concentrated among individual participants and can be lost through staff turnover, while outputs developed through KA2 projects may continue to be used within organisations but are not always systematically disseminated, adapted or transferred beyond the original project context. Strengthening the long-term impact of Erasmus+ therefore requires attention to strategic embedding, internal knowledge transfer and institutional memory, as well as the sustained use and wider dissemination of project outputs. This concern is also reflected by the European

Association for the Education of Adults (EAEA) in its 2025 reflections on the future of Erasmus+. ³² EAEA argues that projects promoting democratic participation, community resilience, inclusion and social cohesion need time to build trust and meaningful engagement. As real change often extends beyond the formal duration of project funding, it calls for mechanisms that ensure continuity through follow-up or multi-phase funding, clear pathways for integration into national and regional policy, stronger incentives for institutional change rather than isolated success stories, and dedicated resources for implementation and mainstreaming, not just for experimentation.

1. Embed Erasmus+ more systematically in long-term organisational development – National Agencies & Beneficiary Organisations

Beneficiary organisations should connect Erasmus+ activities and results systematically to their wider organisational objectives and development strategies. From the outset, organisations should consider both how knowledge and competences gained by staff will be embedded in organisational practice and how outputs developed through KA2 projects will be used, adapted and maintained after the project ends. Where relevant, intended users should be involved in the development, testing and piloting of outputs to strengthen their relevance and subsequent uptake. National Agencies can encourage this strategic approach through guidance and by rewarding sustainability, uptake and organisational impact during project application assessment and follow-up.

2. Strengthen internal knowledge transfer and institutional memory – Beneficiary Organisations & National Agencies

Organisations should establish practical mechanisms to ensure that knowledge and competences acquired through Erasmus+ are shared beyond the staff members directly involved. These can include structured debriefings, internal training, peer learning, job shadowing, shared documentation and clear handover or succession arrangements. Such mechanisms are particularly important where staff turnover risks leading to the loss of accumulated Erasmus+ experience and organisational knowledge. National Agencies can support this through guidance and by giving greater attention to internal knowledge transfer within accreditation and project follow-up. Assessors should also receive appropriate guidance or training on how to assess the quality of knowledge-transfer arrangements.

3. Strengthen knowledge sharing and transfer beyond individual projects – National Agencies & Beneficiary Organisations

National Agencies can play a stronger role in connecting projects working on similar themes or with similar target groups, thereby making it easier to transfer successful approaches beyond individual organisations. Project clustering, thematic networks, Annual Events and dedicated knowledge-sharing activities can help beneficiaries exchange experiences, avoid duplication and reach wider audiences. Professional and umbrella organisations can also support the transfer of project results through their existing networks. Beneficiaries should make systematic use of relevant European platforms, such as SALTO, to disseminate good practices beyond their immediate organisational and national context.

³² https://eaea.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/11/Erasmus-statement_November-2025.pdf

4. Consider targeted follow-up support for successful results with potential for wider uptake – European Commission & National Agencies

A considerable share of project resources may be devoted to developing high-quality outputs, leaving limited time and capacity for their subsequent dissemination, adaptation and mainstreaming. Targeted follow-up mechanisms, such as small dissemination or implementation grants, extended implementation periods or opportunities for multi-phase funding, could therefore be considered where project results demonstrate clear quality, relevance and potential for wider use. Such support should complement, rather than replace, the expectation that sustainability and knowledge transfer are embedded in projects from the outset.

7.2.4 Improving Programme Accessibility and Reducing Administrative Barriers

The conclusions show that participation in Erasmus+ continues to require substantial organisational and administrative capacity, which can create particular difficulties for smaller organisations and newcomers. At the same time, further simplification cannot be the only response: administrative requirements are also necessary to ensure accountability and reduce the risk of misuse, while several simplification measures have already been introduced. A more balanced approach is therefore needed, combining proportionate and accessible procedures with stronger practical guidance, capacity-building and organisational support.

1. Apply proportionate administrative requirements while maintaining appropriate safeguards – European Commission & National Agencies

Application, management and reporting requirements should be proportionate to the scale and complexity of the project. Rather than continuously reducing requirements for all beneficiaries, simplified procedures or entry routes could be considered where clearly predefined criteria are met, while maintaining appropriate safeguards against fraud and misuse. Smaller-scale projects can also provide a more accessible entry route for newcomers.

2. Strengthen practical guidance and beneficiary capacity – European Commission & National Agencies

Administrative accessibility depends not only on the number of requirements but also on whether organisations understand how to meet them. Programme guidance should therefore be complemented by practical and easily accessible materials, such as concise manuals, checklists and one-page guidance documents. National Agencies should provide targeted coaching and support, particularly for newcomers and organisations with limited administrative experience. At the same time, beneficiary organisations remain responsible for familiarising themselves with programme requirements and making use of the guidance available. Where National Agencies are expected to provide more intensive support, sufficient capacity and resources for this role should also be considered.

3. Improve digital tools and practical support for their use – European Commission & National Agencies

Digital application, management and reporting tools should be stable, accessible and user-friendly for organisations with different levels of administrative and digital capacity. Practical tutorials should accompany key digital tools so that technical complexity does not itself become an additional participation barrier. National

Agencies should communicate recurring technical problems and user needs to the European level.

4. Strengthen financial and organisational capacity for project management – European Commission & Beneficiary Organisations

Financial arrangements should take account of the cash-flow and project-management pressures faced by organisations with limited reserves or staff capacity. This includes support for project-management costs, particularly where rising costs affect the feasibility of planned activities. At organisational level, Erasmus+ participation should also receive sufficient management backing and dedicated staff time rather than relying primarily on additional work by individual coordinators.

5. Ensure continuity – European Commission

Changes between programme generations should be introduced in ways that minimise unnecessary disruption for beneficiary organisations. Where possible, continuity in programme architecture, documentation, procedures and accreditation arrangements should be maintained so that organisations can develop efficient routines and retain accumulated programme knowledge. Transitions between programme generations should also be communicated sufficiently clearly to allow organisations to prepare for changes in requirements.

7.2.5 Strengthening the Thematic Priority on Democracy and Civic Engagement

The study shows that Erasmus+ contributes to democratic participation, common values and civic engagement in several ways. Its international dimension can strengthen participants' sense of European belonging and openness to other cultures, while projects also contribute to civic awareness, critical thinking, media literacy and community engagement.

At the same time, these effects are often indirect, and projects less frequently address more direct forms of democratic participation, advocacy or engagement with democratic institutions. Strengthening this thematic priority therefore requires clearer incentives and guidance for projects that address it explicitly, while preserving the broader contribution of adult education to active citizenship, social cohesion and democratic resilience.

This is also reflected in the European Association for the Education of Adults' (EAEA) reflections on the future of Erasmus+. EAEA stresses the contribution of adult learning to democratic participation, social cohesion and resilient, inclusive communities, while cautioning against framing adult education primarily in terms of upskilling and reskilling for labour-market needs. The findings of this study similarly underline the importance of recognising social, civic and personal outcomes alongside more easily measurable skills-related outcomes.

The case study analysis shows no consistent approach across projects to operationalising the priority, partly due to its broad scope. This hampers a systemic mapping of approach and monitoring. Also, the Programme Guide and related documents lack a clear framework outlining how the priority can be translated into concrete project activities, serving as example of future applicants.

1. Make the priority more visible and clearly defined in programme implementation and assessment – European Commission & National Agencies

The priority should remain clearly visible within Erasmus+ programme objectives, calls and communication. Beneficiary organisations should receive practical guidance on how the priority can be translated into adult education projects, including examples of relevant approaches and good practices. National Agencies can support this through thematic information activities, training and the dissemination of good-practice examples, including through EPALE and other relevant networks. Where appropriate, targeted incentives or funding opportunities could be used to stimulate projects that address democratic participation and civic engagement explicitly. The priority could also be made more visible in application and reporting processes, for example by explicitly asking beneficiaries in final reports how their activities contributed to it. Clearer conceptual guidance should support both applicants and assessors in understanding what meaningful engagement with the priority entails, where appropriate building on existing European frameworks and resources.

2. Encourage deeper forms of democratic and civic learning – European Commission, National Agencies & Beneficiary Organisations

Adult education activities can strengthen learners' political agency by creating opportunities to engage with public debate, democratic institutions, collective decision-making and other forms of active citizenship. This does not imply promoting particular political positions, but rather strengthening learners' ability and confidence to participate meaningfully in democratic life. The European Commission could also explore whether a dedicated action specifically focused on participation in democratic life, possibly inspired by the Youth participation activities available in the youth field,³³ would add value in adult education. Such an action could lower entry barriers for grassroots organisations, allow relatively small grants and support activities at local or national level where these provide a first step towards wider European participation.

3. Strengthen educator capacity for democratic and civic education – National Agencies & Beneficiary Organisations

Educators need appropriate competences to facilitate learning on democracy, civic participation and contested societal issues. Professional development should focus on pedagogies and learning processes that enable participants to experience democratic practice, including participatory, dialogical and deliberative approaches, critical discussion and co-creation. Learners can also be involved more directly in shaping learning offers and organisational decision-making as a practical form of democratic participation.

4. Rebalance Programme Framing – European Commission & National Agencies

The framing and communication of Erasmus+ in adult education should continue to recognise adults not only as learners and workers, but also as citizens, community members and participants in democratic life. Skills for civic and democratic participation should be recognised as basic and transversal skills that also contribute to the objectives of the Union of Skills and to participation in working life. At the same time, these skills should be strengthened in their own right rather than treated merely as a side-effect of labour-market-oriented upskilling and reskilling. This is particularly important for vulnerable and marginalised adults who may have limited opportunities

³³ <https://erasmus-plus.ec.europa.eu/programme-guide/part-b/key-action-1/youth-participation>

to participate in public and democratic life and for whom a focus on labour-market skills alone does not address the full range of barriers to participation and inclusion.

7.2.6 Strengthening the link between Erasmus+ and policymaking

The findings repeatedly point to the importance of Erasmus+ as an instrument for innovation and cooperation in adult education. However, the knowledge and practical experience generated through Erasmus+ projects do not automatically feed into wider policy development. Stronger links are therefore needed between project experience, research and policymaking so that relevant lessons and innovations can more effectively inform adult education strategies and policy development. In addition, stronger synergies between Erasmus+ and other national and European funding mechanisms could help successful project outcomes reach a larger scale and improve the long-term sustainability of innovative practices developed through Erasmus+.

1. Strengthen the evidence-to-policy link – European Commission & National Agencies

Develop more structured mechanisms to bring Erasmus+ research findings and project experience into policymaking. National Agencies should strengthen regular links with relevant policymakers and policy structures so that the exchange of evidence is less dependent on individual contacts. Findings could be communicated through concise and accessible formats, such as policy briefs and factsheets.

2. Enhance knowledge utilisation and scaling-up – European Commission, National Agencies & Beneficiary Organisations

Create clearer pathways for successful Erasmus+ approaches and innovations to reach wider adult education practice and policy. As recommended in the previous transnational report of the first survey round, the Commission and National Agencies should consider providing additional organisational support for disseminating project results at system level and facilitating knowledge exchange between projects. Related projects could be clustered according to their objectives, target groups or methodologies and brought together in thematic knowledge networks. These networks could exchange experience, jointly disseminate and mainstream successful approaches, and translate project findings into policy-relevant insights. Facilitators or Erasmus+ ambassadors could support this process and strengthen connections with relevant professional, civil-society and policy networks. National Agencies would require sufficient capacity and resources to establish and facilitate these networks. The thematic-network approach used under the European Union's EQUAL initiative provides a relevant precedent.

3. Improve synergies between funding instruments – European Commission & National Agencies

Strengthen coordination between Erasmus+ and other relevant funding schemes, such as ESF+ and national or regional initiatives. Better information on complementary funding opportunities and stronger connections between programmes could help successful approaches continue or expand beyond the original Erasmus+ project period.

4. Support systemic innovation in adult education – European Commission & National Agencies

Position Erasmus+ as an important source of innovation and learning for the wider adult education sector, not only for individual participating organisations. Where relevant, cooperation between local, national and European actors should be encouraged so that lessons and successful approaches emerging from Erasmus+ can contribute to wider and longer-term developments in adult education policy and practice.

7.2.7 Improving Monitoring and Evidence-Informed Policy

The second survey round provides substantially more evidence on the impact of Erasmus+ in adult education, particularly through the increased availability of participant data and additional research implemented on learner mobility. At the same time, important limitations remain in how outcomes are measured and how learner mobility is recorded and monitored. Existing tools do not always capture the social, civic and personal effects that are particularly relevant in adult education, while some data stemming from the European Commission are not always sufficiently tailored to the characteristics of the sector. Strengthening the evidence base therefore requires more appropriate impact-measurement tools, better learner-level data and improvements in the timeliness, quality and comparability of programme monitoring.

1. Strengthen the measurement of learner outcomes and wider impact – European Commission & National Agencies

Develop and make available simple tools that allow beneficiary organisations to assess changes in learners' attitudes, competences, values and behaviours before and after participation. Such tools could help capture outcomes that are currently difficult to measure, including social and civic effects and changes related to participation in democratic life, common values and civic engagement. Where possible, these tools should be practical for beneficiary organisations to use and should not create disproportionate additional reporting requirements. An example is the pre- and post-measurement instrument with validated impact scales, developed by the RIA-AE network for the current monitoring which could be made available to all projects as a voluntary tool (see also Chapter 4.5).

2. Improve Participant Report data collection – European Commission

As far as possible, participant questionnaires should aim to reach the full population of adult learners participating in mobility, including participants in group mobility, rather than relying on aggregated reporting by project coordinators. This would also help reduce potential sampling bias in research on learner outcomes. Questionnaires should be designed in an accessible and learner-friendly format, using clear and easy-to-understand language and, where appropriate, visual elements so that learners with fewer opportunities can understand and complete them independently. The Commission could consider revising participant reports taking into account the impact areas and scales identified as most relevant for Erasmus+ in adult education (see Chapter 4).

3. Strengthen comparative analysis and mutual learning – European Commission & National Agencies

Differences between countries in participation patterns, including the profiles of learners reached through mobility, provide an opportunity for further comparative analysis and mutual learning. To make such comparisons more meaningful,

European Commission monitoring data should provide a more detailed and reliable picture of the organisations and learners reached by Erasmus+ adult education, drawing on information similar to that collected through the online beneficiary survey used in this monitoring round. This could include more detailed information on organisational size and capacity, programme experience, the number adult learners reached, target groups addressed, the types of activities undertaken, and approaches to dissemination (e.g., multiplier events, social media, newsletters). Such data would allow National Agencies, researchers and national policymakers to relate participation patterns to their national adult education systems and better distinguish structural differences from genuine gaps in programme reach.

Future research should also deliberately include less successful projects and organisations, rather than concentrating mainly on successful or highly visible examples. Examining cases where implementation was difficult or expected impacts were not achieved can provide important evidence on barriers and the conditions that enable or constrain Erasmus+ impact. Such analysis can help National Agencies and the European Commission identify practices that may be transferable between countries and where countries can learn from each other's experiences.

4. Strengthen the use of for programme and policy development – European Commission & National Agencies

Improved monitoring and evaluation should not only generate better data but also feed systematically into programme development and policy decisions. A regularly updated dashboard could translate the collected data into an accessible overview of key developments in Erasmus+ participation, inclusion and impact at European and national level. The European Commission should also strengthen its connections with research networks such as RAY and RIA-AE, which use programme data to generate sector-specific insights, and consider supporting similar networks for the other education and training sectors. Together, these efforts could generate actionable insights to inform adjustments to programme design, implementation and outreach.

Annex 1 Mission statement RIA-AE network

RIA-AE Network mission statement

Adult education provides skills development opportunities that help EU citizens find better jobs and improve their well-being. As an education sector, adult education is largely disconnected from the rest of the education system and receives limited funding and policy attention compared to other sectors. However, research shows that adult education is important and that it can contribute significantly to the personal, social and economic well-being of individuals and the social cohesion of a society.

The impact of Erasmus+ on adult learners and on the field of adult education has been little researched to date. To better coordinate research activities on the impact of international cooperation and mobility projects in adult education and to enable the further development and quality improvement of the Erasmus+ programme, a transnational research network is being set up: the Network for Research-based Impact Analysis of the Erasmus+ Programme in Adult Education (RIA-AE Network).

The aims of the RIA-AE network

The RIA-AE network pursues the following objectives:

- contributing to a better understanding of the impact of international cooperation and mobility projects in adult education under the Erasmus+ programme.
- strengthening cooperation and dialogue between research, politics and practice.
- contributing to the further development and quality improvement of the Erasmus+ programme by enabling high-quality and practice-oriented evaluation and impact research.
- increasing the visibility of the benefits of adult education and the Erasmus+ programme in the EU and the Member States.

Procedure

To achieve these goals, the RIA-AE network brings together the National Agencies for Erasmus+ from different European countries to work together on the development of a new approach to programme evaluation and impact assessment of Erasmus+.

The starting point for the joint activities is an inventory of existing research and knowledge on the benefits and effects of mobility projects and international partnerships in adult education. Building on this, a research concept with a

multi-level approach and coordinated research methods offers the opportunity to investigate the effects of Erasmus+ at an individual, organisational and systemic level in the respective countries and on an international comparative basis.

Principles of cooperation

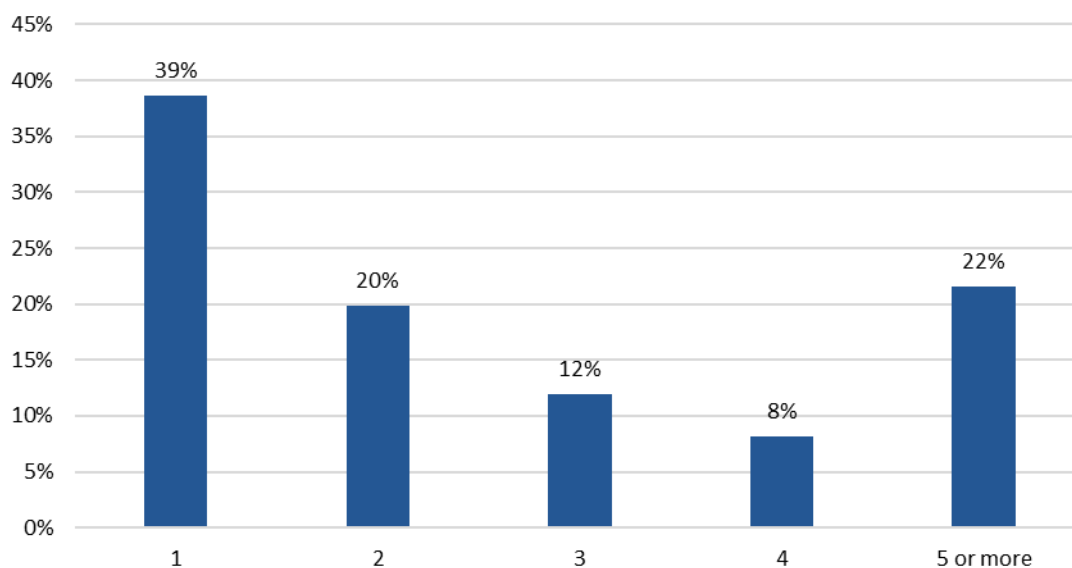
Co-operation within the network is based on shared responsibility and is always open to new members. The cooperation framework includes several National Agencies and external research partner organisations (e.g. universities, research institutes). Each NA involved in the network can decide whether to carry out the research projects itself or to commission a research partner.

Values

To achieve the goal of high-quality research, the network partners adhere to common standards of social and educational research. The methods used for the research activities can include all methods commonly used in empirical social research - quantitative, qualitative or a mixture of different methods.

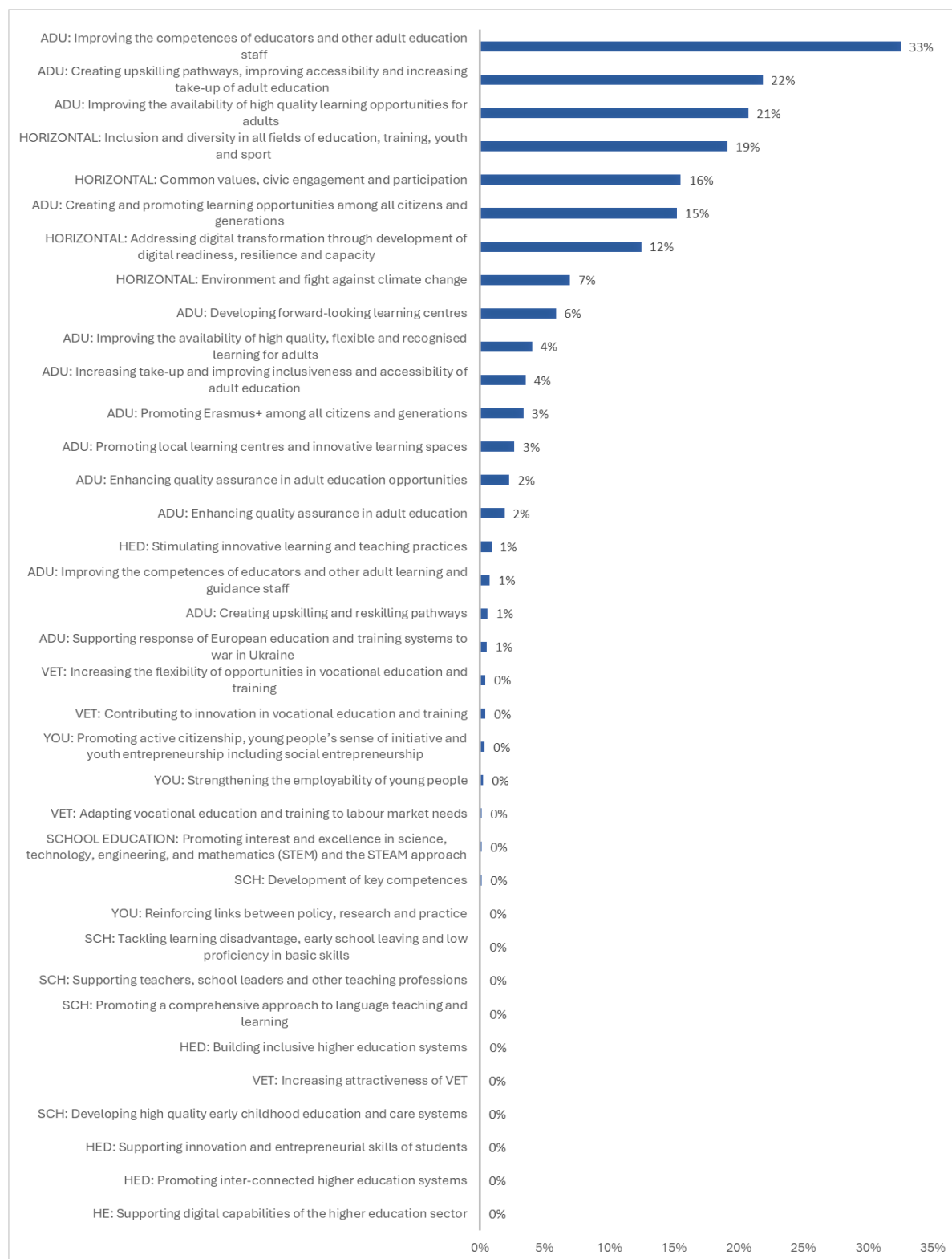
Annex 2 Additional figures

FIGURE 37: NUMBER OF KA2 PROJECTS ORGANISATIONS HAVE PARTICIPATED IN SINCE 2021 – (N=1480)



Source: Online survey beneficiary organisations RIA-AE network (2025-2026)

FIGURE 38: OTHER HORIZONTAL AND SECTORAL OBJECTIVES OF KA2 PROJECTS - TWO 'OTHER' OBJECTIVES PER PROJECT POSSIBLE (N=1836)



Source: Online survey beneficiary organisations RIA-AE network (2025-2026)

Annex 3 Explanation of statistical analyses for European Survey Round 2

A large proportion of the research data is based on the results of 'Module 2 (Online survey among beneficiary organisations)'. The beneficiaries who participated in KA1 or KA2 projects under the Erasmus+ programme indicated how they perceived the impact of participating in the Erasmus+ programme. Various statistical analyses have been carried out with the survey data, which are explained below.

1. Descriptives of perceived impact

Firstly, the beneficiaries' responses were mapped out through the analysis of the descriptives. This involved examining the percentage of respondents who responded positively or negatively to the statements regarding participation in and the impact of Erasmus+ projects on their organisation. Among other things, the analysis examined what percentage of respondents experienced an impact from participating in an Erasmus+ project in the following areas, amongst others:

- Types of products and services delivered for their own organisation and learners in adult education
- Sustainable use of the new products and services
- Impact of participation on learning provision for learners in adult education
- Impact of participation on staff competences
- Increased focus on substantive themes
- Increased focus on the European horizontal priority 'Participation in democratic life, common values and civic engagement', particularly through new activities, newly recruited adult learners, a revised learning offer and updated staff competencies
- Barriers to participation in Erasmus+ projects

The results of the descriptive analysis are included in sections B, C, D and E of the report.

2. Analysis of impact on learning offer and staff competencies

To give greater meaning to the perceived impact on the learning offer and staff competencies, variables have been constructed for both factors. A Principal Component Analysis was carried out for this purpose, with reliability and validity established.

Besides for both variables, the Principal Component Analysis (PCA) has been used to examine the potential interdependence among the items.

First, the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy was considered moderate and acceptable for both variables (Hutcheson & Sofroniou, 1999)³⁴: learning offer (0.716) and staff (0.685). In addition, Bartlett's test of sphericity was

³⁴ Hutcheson, G. & Sofroniou, N. (1999). *The Multivariate Social Scientist*. London: Sage.

significant for both variables ($p < .001$). Together, these tests indicate that the minimum requirements for conducting a principal components analysis were met. Furthermore, the number of factors retained for each variable was determined by examining the eigenvalues and scree plots. Based on the discriminative performance of the items, none were removed, as the item loadings were sufficient (learning offer: item 1 (0.845), item 2 (0.899) and item 3 (0.877); staff: item 1 (0.880), item 2 (0.894) and item 3 (0.795)). Besides, in order to check the criterion/convergent validity a Pearson has been calculated. For learning offer the Pearson correlation varies from $r(1496) = .589$, $p < .001$ to $r(1498) = .710$, $p < .001$., which means a strong positive correlation. For the staff competencies, the Pearson correlation varies from $r(1499) = .522$, $p < .001$ to $r(1499) = .722$, $p < .001$., which means a strong positive correlation. In addition, Cronbach's alpha indicated that both variables have high reliability: learning offer $\alpha = 0.845$ and staff $\alpha = 0.818$.

Based on these results, we can conclude that the validity and reliability of both variables are strong.

We then assessed the perceived impact of participating in Erasmus+ projects on beneficiaries in relation to their learning offer and staff competencies. For this reason, a One-Sample T-test was conducted on the data for both variables. Given the size of the sample (more than 1500 respondents), it is possible to conduct a One-Sample T-test for both variables. This allows us to determine whether the obtained score for both variables differs significantly from an expected value. Generally, a score of 60% to 80% (but sometimes it's rather less) is interpreted as a positive result (Borrego et al., 2010; Piza et al., 2024; Pietsch et al., 2024)^{35, 36, 37}. If the score for both variables is significant, one could speak of a significant different result. This could be either more positive or more negative. The results of the One-Sample T-test show that there is a significant difference for both variables, namely:

- Learning offer: $t(1502) = 245.75$, $p < .001$.
- Staff: $t(1503) = 296.78$, $p < .001$.

Looking at the scores for both variables, we see that:

- Learning offer: 94.8% of the beneficiaries experienced an impact on the improvement of the learning offer.
- Staff: 97.4% of the beneficiaries experienced an impact on the improvement of staff competences.

This means that the impact of participation in Erasmus+ projects on the learning offer and staff competences is significantly higher than one would expect.

³⁵ Borrego, M. & Froyd, J. & Hall, T. S. (2010). Diffusion of Engineering Education Innovations: A Survey of Awareness and Adoption Rates in U.S. Engineering Departments. *Journal of Engineering Education*, 99., p. 185 - 207.

³⁶ Piza, C., Zwager, A., Ruzzante, M., Dantas, R. & Loureiro, A. (2024). Teacher-led innovations to improve education outcomes: Experimental evidence from Brazil. *Journal of Public Economics*, 234, 105123, ISSN 0047-2727.

³⁷ Pietsch, M., Cramer, C., Brown, C., Aydin, B. & Witthöfft, J. (2024). Open Innovation in Schools: A New Imperative for Organising Innovation in Education?. (2024). *Technology Knowledge and Learning*, 29, p. 1051 – 1077.

3. Analysis of the impact on the learning offer and staff competences related to the European horizontal priority 'Participation in democratic life, common values and civic engagement'

In order to provide further insight into the perceived impact in the area of 'Participation in democratic life, common values and civic engagement', two comprehensive variables have been constructed on the basis of a literature review, which examine the learning offer and staff competencies relating to 'Participation in democratic life, common values and civic engagement'. A Principal Component Analysis has been carried out for this purpose, during which reliability and validity were established. The results of the Principal Component Analysis (PCA) has been used to examine the potential interdependence among the items.

First, the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy was considered good for both variables (Hutcheson & Sofroniou, 1999)³⁸ : learning offer (0.915) and staff (0.816).

In addition, Bartlett's test of sphericity was significant for both variables ($p < .001$). Together, these tests indicate that the minimum requirements for conducting a principal components analysis were met.

Furthermore, the number of factors retained for each scale was determined by examining the eigenvalues and scree plots.

Based on the discriminative performance of the items, none were removed, as the item loadings were sufficient:

- learning offer: item 1 (0.693), item 2 (0.650), item 3 (0.679), item 4 (0.728), item 5 (0.730), item 6 (0.749), item 7 (0.768), item 8 (0.683), item 9 (0.648), item 10 (0.703), and item 11 (0.640);
- staff: item 1 (0.807), item 2 (0.828), item 3 (0.794), item 4 (0.779), item 5 (0.631), item 6 (0.657), item 7 (0.759) and item 8 (0.757).

Besides, in order to check the criterion/convergent validity a Pearson has been calculated. For learning offer all Pearson correlations show $p < .001$, which means a strong positive correlation. For the staff competencies all Pearson correlations show $p < .001$, which means a strong positive correlation

In addition, Cronbach's Alpha showed that both variables have high reliability: learning offer $\alpha = 0.895$ and staff $\alpha = 0.890$.

Based on these results, we can conclude that the validity and reliability of both variables are strong.

We then assessed the perceived impact of participating in Erasmus+ projects on beneficiaries in relation to their learning offer and the competencies of staff in the area of 'Participation in democratic life, common values and civic engagement'. For this reason, a One-Sample T-test has been carried out on the data for both variables. Given the size of the sample (more than 1200 respondents), it is possible to conduct a One-Sample T-test for both variables. This allows us to determine whether the score obtained for both variables differs significantly from an expected value.

³⁸ Hutcheson, G. & Sofroniou, N. (1999). *The multivariate social scientist*. London: Sage.

Generally, a score of 60% to 80% (but sometimes it's rather less) is interpreted as a positive result (Borrego et al., 2010; Piza et al., 2024; Pietsch et al., 2024)^{39, 40, 41}. If the score for both variables is significant, one could speak of a significant different result. This could be either more positive or more negative. The results of the One-Sample T-test show that there is a significant difference for both variables, namely:

- Learning offer: $t(1236) = 208.11, p < .001$.
- Staff: $t(1236) = 191.47, p < .001$

Looking at the scores for both variables, we see that:

- Learning offer: 84.1% of the beneficiaries experienced an impact on the learning offer being more focused on this thematic area.
- Staff: 83.7% of the beneficiaries experienced an impact on staff competencies being more focused on this thematic area.

This means that, for the beneficiaries, participation in Erasmus+ projects has resulted in a significantly higher focus on the area of 'Participation in democratic life, common values and civic engagement' than would be expected without involvement on an Erasmus + project, in terms of both the learning offer and staff competencies.

³⁹ Borrego, M. & Froyd, J. & Hall, T. S. (2010). Diffusion of Engineering Education Innovations: A Survey of Awareness and Adoption Rates in U.S. Engineering Departments. *Journal of Engineering Education*, 99., p. 185 - 207.

⁴⁰ Piza, C., Zwager, A., Ruzzante, M., Dantas, R. & Loureiro, A. (2024). Teacher-led innovations to improve education outcomes: Experimental evidence from Brazil. *Journal of Public Economics*, 234, 105123, ISSN 0047-2727.

⁴¹ Pietsch, M., Cramer, C., Brown, C., Aydin, B. & Witthöfft, J. (2024). Open Innovation in Schools: A New Imperative for Organising Innovation in Education?. (2024). *Technology Knowledge and Learning*, 29, p. 1051 – 1077.

Annex 4 Overview statistical results concerning impact KA1 mobility on learning outcome of adults (based on additional quantitative module)

In section 4.5 the results of the pre- and post-test study among 1045 adult learners involved in KA1 mobilities from 12 countries have been described. To realise this, various statistical analyses have been carried out, which are explained below.

1. Validation and reliability of scales

To provide a clearer understanding of the perceived impact on the learning outcomes and the influence of the learning environment of KA1, variables have been developed and validated. For this, the SIT-instrument has been used to measure if adult learners experience an increase on their rate of social inclusion and several life skills, example given if they meet more people and are more active or have better language skills after joining adult education.⁴² The self-perception scale used among the respondents proved to be a reliable measure for these results, as previous research by De Greef et al. (2009) has shown that, when participants self-assessed their proficiency in various skills, the expected overestimation did not occur. Indeed, the scores given by teachers (regarding the participants' relevant skills) were found to be much higher than those given by the participants themselves. Furthermore, by comparing scores on the SIT instrument's scales with scores on objective international language tests⁴³, it has been shown that the average increase in participants' test scores is comparable. In this context, the scores on the objective international language tests were compared with the scores obtained via the SIT instrument.

A Principal Component Analysis was carried out for this purpose, with reliability and validity established.

Furthermore, for all variables, Principal Component Analysis (PCA) was used to examine the potential interdependence among the items.

Firstly, the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy was deemed high for all variables⁴⁴ :

⁴² De Greef, M., Segers, M. & Verté, D. (2010). Development of the SIT, an instrument to evaluate the transfer effects of adult education programs for social inclusion, *Studies in Educational Evaluation* (36), 42 - 61.

⁴³ Alamprese, J.A. et al. (2011). Effects of a structured decoding curriculum on adult literacy learners' reading development. *Journal of Research on Educational Effectiveness*, 4, (2): pp. 154-172.

Sabatini, J.P. et al. (2011). Relative effectiveness of reading intervention programs for adults with low literacy. *Journal of Research on Educational Effectiveness*, 4, (2): 118-133.

Greenberg, D. et al. (2011). A Randomized Control Study of Instructional Approaches for Struggling Adult Readers. *Journal of Research on Educational Effectiveness*, 4, (2): pp. 101-117.

Hock, M.F. & Mellard, D.F. (2011). Efficacy of learning strategies instruction in adult education. *Journal of Research on Educational Effectiveness*, 4, (2): 134-153.

⁴⁴ Hutcheson, G. & Sofroniou, N. (1999). *The Multivariate Social Scientist*. London: Sage.

- Assertiveness: 0.874
- Social connection: 0.742
- Capability reflection: 0.866
- Foreign-language proficiency: 0.921
- Intercultural attitude: 0.748
- European citizenship: 0.790
- Volunteering: 0.710
- Learning environment KA1 mobility: 0.917

In addition, Bartlett's test of sphericity was significant for all variables ($p < .001$). Taken together, these tests indicate that the minimum requirements for conducting a principal components analysis were met.

Furthermore, the number of factors retained for each variable was determined by examining the eigenvalues and scree plots. Based on the discriminant validity of the items, none were removed, as all item loadings were sufficient.

Furthermore, to assess criterion and convergent validity, a Pearson correlation was calculated. For all items, the Pearson correlation scores $p < .001$, indicating a strong positive correlation.

In addition, the Cronbach's alpha for each variable indicated that all variables have high reliability:

- Assertiveness: $\alpha = 0.933$
- Social connection: $\alpha = 0.838$
- Capability reflection: $\alpha = 0.889$
- Foreign-language proficiency: $\alpha = 0.976$
- Intercultural attitude: $\alpha = 0.826$
- European citizenship: $\alpha = 0.845$
- Volunteering: $\alpha = 0.824$
- Learning environment KA1 mobility: $\alpha = 0.930$

Based on these results, we can conclude that the validity and reliability of all variables are strong.

2. Perceived impact

Then the perceived impact on learning outcomes after joining a KA1 mobility project has been assessed. For this reason, a Paired Samples T-test was conducted on the data for both variables (referring to all practical life skills (e.g. assertiveness and social connection)). Given the size of the sample (more than 1000 respondents), it is possible to conduct a Paired Samples T-test for all variables. This enables us to determine whether the scores obtained for all variables differ significantly from an expected value. If the score for all variables is significant, one could speak of a significantly different result. This could be either more positive or more negative. The results of the Paired Samples T-tests show that there is a significant difference for all variables, namely:

- Assertiveness: $t(1044) = -11.868, p < .001.$
- Social connection: $t(1044) = -13.474, p < .001.$
- Capability reflection: $t(1044) = -14.613, p < .001.$
- Foreign-language proficiency: $t(1044) = -12.537, p < .001.$
- Intercultural attitude: $t(1044) = -14.609, p < .001.$
- European citizenship: $t(1044) = -14.071, p < .001.$
- Volunteering: $t(1044) = -10.294, p < .001.$

This means that the impact on learning outcomes after joining a KA1 mobility project among the adult learners is significantly higher than one would expect among others due to the learning-environment of the KA1 mobility projects.

3. Influence of learning-environment

Due to the fact that the scores of the learning outcomes are not normally distributed a non-parametric correlation analysis has been conducted in order to analyse the relation between the learning-environment of the KA1 mobility with all learning outcomes. The scores of the Spearman's Rho show that the correlation between the learning-environment of the KA1 mobility and each learning outcome is significant, namely:

- Assertiveness: $r_s(1044) = .150, p < .001.$
- Social connection: $r_s(1044) = .208, p < .001.$
- Capability reflection: $r_s(1044) = -.205, p < .001.$
- Foreign-language proficiency: $r_s(1044) = .127, p < .001.$
- Intercultural attitude: $r_s(1044) = .159, p < .001.$
- European citizenship: $r_s(1044) = .114, p < .001.$
- Volunteering: $r_s(1044) = .119, p < .001.$

Besides, to determine the uniqueness of the influence of the learning-environment of the KA1 mobility and each learning outcome a logistical regression analysis has been conducted (by which the model has created in which the variable of the learning-environment was included in comparison with a model without the learning-environment). The results show that for almost all learning outcomes the learning-environment of the KA1 mobility is one of the most important influentials compared to e.g. socio-demographic factors on the increase of the learning outcomes except for 'European citizenship', namely:

- Assertiveness: $\chi^2(1) = 16.032, p < .001.$
- Social connection: $\chi^2(1) = 23.549, p < .001.$
- Capability reflection: $\chi^2(1) = 30.983, p < .001.$
- Foreign-language proficiency: $\chi^2(1) = 19.708, p < .001.$
- Intercultural attitude: $\chi^2(1) = 17.050, p < .001.$
- European citizenship: $\chi^2(1) = 3.489, p = .062.$
- Volunteering: $\chi^2(1) = 7.888, p = .005.$

4. Subgroups among adult learners experiencing an increase in learning outcomes

Finally, for each learning outcome, we have assessed whether the perceived impact varies by participant subgroup. Based on the Kruskal-Wallis tests, Mann-Whitney tests, chi-square tests and logistic regression we could conclude that:

- For assertiveness:
 - women in particular report becoming more assertive ($H(2) = 8.449, p = .015$);
 - participants taking part in a KA1 mobility project which is not part of another learning activity report becoming more assertive ($U(2) = 7.263, p = .026$).
- For Foreign-language proficiency:

- participants who spent fewer years in initial education (0 to 10 years) feeling more able to use a foreign language in another country ($H(3) = 10.176, p = .017$).
- For European citizenship:
 - participants who spent 11 to 15 years in initial education are more likely to feel that they are European citizens ($H(3) = 11.844, p = .008$).

For all other learning outcomes, there are no significant differences between the subgroups.

Annex 5 Impact narratives and theme of country case studies

TABLE 7: OVERVIEW OF COUNTRY CASE STUDIES INCLUDED IN THE TRANSNATIONAL ANALYSIS⁴⁵

Country case study	Impact narrative	Theme
Austria CS1	Less clearly defined impact narrative	Media literacy and digital access
Austria CS1(B)	Less clearly defined impact narrative	Media literacy and digital access
Austria CS2	Developing competences and critical skills	Civic voice and dialogue
Austria CS2(B)	Less clearly defined impact narrative	Other
Austria CS3	Democratic participation	Civic voice and dialogue
Estonia CS1	Less clearly defined impact narrative	Other
Estonia CS2	Encouraging civic engagement	Community action and volunteering
Estonia CS3	Encouraging civic engagement	Rights, equality and inclusion
Estonia CS4	Developing competences and critical skills	Civic voice and dialogue
Estonia CS5	Developing competences and critical skills	Civic voice and dialogue
Finland CS1	Developing competences and critical skills	Civic voice and dialogue
Finland CS2	Encouraging civic engagement	Community action and volunteering
Finland CS3	Developing competences and critical skills	Media literacy and digital access
Finland CS4	Less clearly defined impact narrative	Other
Finland CS5	Less clearly defined impact narrative	Media literacy and digital access
France CS1	Democratic participation	Civic voice and dialogue
France CS2	Promoting common values	Rights, equality and inclusion
France CS3	Encouraging civic engagement	Community action and volunteering
France CS4	Developing competences and critical skills	Media literacy and digital access

⁴⁵ The case study analysis does not include all case studies conducted by national researchers because some were submitted late or were incomplete at the time of writing.

France CS5	Promoting common values	Rights, equality and inclusion
Germany CS1	Encouraging civic engagement	Civic voice and dialogue
Germany CS2	Democratic participation	Civic voice and dialogue
Germany CS3	Encouraging civic engagement	Rights, equality and inclusion
Germany CS4	Promoting common values	Rights, equality and inclusion
Germany CS5	Encouraging civic engagement	Community action and volunteering
Germany CS6	Encouraging civic engagement	Other
Hungary CS1	Democratic participation	Rights, equality and inclusion
Hungary CS2	Encouraging civic engagement	Community action and volunteering
Ireland CS1	Encouraging civic engagement	Community action and volunteering
Ireland CS2	Encouraging civic engagement	Civic voice and dialogue
Ireland CS3	Encouraging civic engagement	Community action and volunteering
Ireland CS4	Less clearly defined impact narrative	Rights, equality and inclusion
Ireland CS5	Developing competences and critical skills	Media literacy and digital access
Italy CS1	Encouraging civic engagement	Rights, equality and inclusion
Italy CS2	Encouraging civic engagement	Civic voice and dialogue
Italy CS3	Promoting common values	Rights, equality and inclusion
Italy CS4	Encouraging civic engagement	Community action and volunteering
Latvia CS1	Developing competences and critical skills	Rights, equality and inclusion
Latvia CS2	Promoting common values	Rights, equality and inclusion
Latvia CS3	Promoting common values	Rights, equality and inclusion
Latvia CS4	Less clearly defined impact narrative	Other
Latvia CS5	Encouraging civic engagement	Other
Latvia CS6	Encouraging civic engagement	Other
Poland CS1	Promoting common values	Rights, equality and inclusion

Poland CS2	Developing competences and critical skills	Media literacy and digital access
Poland CS3	Encouraging civic engagement	Civic voice and dialogue
Poland CS4	Encouraging civic engagement	Community action and volunteering
Slovenia CS1	Less clearly defined impact narrative	Rights, equality and inclusion
Slovenia CS2	Developing competences and critical skills	Media literacy and digital access
Slovenia CS3	Less clearly defined impact narrative	Rights, equality and inclusion
Slovenia CS4	Less clearly defined impact narrative	Media literacy and digital access
Slovenia CS5	Developing competences and critical skills	Rights, equality and inclusion
Spain CS1	Encouraging civic engagement	Community action and volunteering
Spain CS2	Encouraging civic engagement	Community action and volunteering
Spain CS3	Less clearly defined impact narrative	Other
Spain CS4	Promoting common values	Rights, equality and inclusion
Spain CS5	Less clearly defined impact narrative	Other
Spain CS5(B)	Less clearly defined impact narrative	Other
Türkiye CS1	Less clearly defined impact narrative	Rights, equality and inclusion
Türkiye CS2	Less clearly defined impact narrative	Rights, equality and inclusion

Source: Case studies as part of Module 3, conducted by country researchers

Annex 6 Overview studies on Erasmus+ in the field of adult education⁴⁶

Country	Title	Methodology	Focus	Outcome (+ is positive impact)
Austria	NA	NA	NA	NA
Belgium	NA	NA	NA	NA
Croatia	Progress Consult. (2024). Searching for measures for the better exploitation of mobility for learners and staff in adult education: Case study on Croatia	Desk research, individual and group interviews (qualitative analysis), and analysis of data received from National Agencies (quantitative analysis).	Organisational challenges, good practices, and barriers to participant participation.	Participation in Erasmus+ contributed to organisational development and increased visibility, while supporting the creation of new programmes and strengthening staff capacities through innovative methods and technologies. Regular guidance and support enhanced engagement among participants and providers, and Erasmus+ ambassadors and institutional accreditation were identified as key drivers of programme success and outreach.
Croatia	Ančić, B., Vuković, M. B., Jaklin, K., Baketa, N., & Degač, Đ. (2024). Mid-term evaluation of the Erasmus+ programme: National report on the implementation and impact of Erasmus+ in Croatia. Institute for Social Research in Zagreb.	A mixed-methods approach was used, combining surveys and interviews with	Mid-term evaluation of the Erasmus+ programme in Croatia, covering the 2014–2020	The programme strengthened key competencies and skills, promoted linguistic diversity and intercultural dialogue, enhanced active citizenship, and reinforced the

⁴⁶ For Spain and Türkiye, the sources presented are broader in scope and include not only research on Erasmus+ adult education, but also studies on adult education more generally and/or on comparable non-Erasmus+ adult education projects.

		beneficiaries, stakeholders, and implementing bodies. The evaluation examined implementation, effectiveness, efficiency, relevance, coherence, European added value, and sustainability across education sectors, including adult education.	and 2021–2027 programme periods.	international dimension of work. It also supported cooperation among organisations and stakeholders and encouraged democratic participation and civic engagement.
Croatia	Gašparović, F., Kovač, I., & Degač, Đ. (2020). Mapping difficulties: How is a specific organisation identified as a potential applicant in the field of adult education in the framework of the Erasmus+ programme? Agency for Mobility and EU Programmes.	The research applied a qualitative methodology, using online questionnaires and semi-structured interviews conducted with representatives of beneficiary organisations.	Obstacles to participation in Erasmus+ and organisational challenges in project application and implementation.	The study identified structural and institutional barriers to participation in Erasmus+, including limited organisational resources, low motivation, complex application procedures, financial constraints, and difficulties in finding partners. It also highlighted the need for greater recognition and visibility of adult education.
Croatia	Ančić, B., & Brajdić Vuković, M. (Eds.). (2017). National report on the implementation and impact of the Erasmus+ programme – Croatia. Institute for Social Research.	The research applied a mixed methods methodology, integrating three complementary data collection and analysis methods:	Institutional challenges affecting the participation of adult education providers in Erasmus+.	The study identified key institutional barriers to Erasmus+ participation among adult education providers, including financial constraints, administrative burden, limited organisational capacities, insufficient recognition of professional development

		an online survey, semi-structured interviews, and desk research. These methods were used to gather both qualitative and quantitative evidence.		activities, and lack of information about participation opportunities.
Croatia	Agency for Mobility and EU Programmes. (2017). Rezultati analize izvješća sudionika mobilnosti – Erasmus+ – Ključna aktivnost 1 [Results of the analysis of mobility participant reports: Erasmus+ Key Action 1].	A quantitative descriptive methodology was applied, involving the analysis and synthesis of data from the final reports submitted by mobility participants in the fields of general education, vocational education and training, higher education, adult education, and youth.	Participant profiles, programme outcomes, and project impacts, including findings from the adult education sector.	Participation in Erasmus+ enhanced participants' professional, social, linguistic, and intercultural competences, expanded professional networks, facilitated the exchange of good practices, and increased job satisfaction. Participants also reported potential long-term benefits for their home institutions.
Czech Republic	NA	NA	NA	NA
Estonia	Estonian Ministry of Education and Research. (2025). Täiskasvanuhariduse arendamine – VÕTI [Development of adult education – VÕTI]. https://www.hm.ee/voti	document analysis, quantitative project data, personal and group interviews, focus group	decentralised Erasmus+ actions	The report concludes that the programme is irreplaceable for adult education, as equivalent opportunities could not be funded nationally. However, in such a broad and diverse field, more

		interviews and a validation seminar		proactive and targeted outreach toward priority groups is needed rather than relying on general Erasmus+ brand awareness. Four recommendations are most directly relevant. Reducing administrative burden is needed particularly for smaller institutions and participants with fewer opportunities. Improving feedback and monitoring is necessary as current data does not allow reliable conclusions about adult education impact.
Finland	“THE IMPACT IS AS HOLISTIC AS AUTHENTIC LEARNING IN CHILDHOOD” - Impacts of Erasmus+ KA1 individual mobilities in Finnish community colleges at project period 2014–2020 (Heidi Karppanen, 2023)	Evaluation study (Master’s thesis) using Outcome Harvesting, including qualitative content analysis, hermeneutic circle, thematization and quantification	Studying impact and effectiveness of internationality with Erasmus+ KA1 adult education individual mobilities in Finnish community colleges	Staff: development of professional competence and international skills (+), closer collaboration with colleagues and increased awareness (+)
Finland	Achieving great impacts through small actions together – Promoting inclusion and diversity: Experiences from Erasmus+ partnerships for cooperation coordinated by Finnish actors (Minna Laatu, 2024)	Evaluation study using case-study method, document analysis of EU application and reporting data, a questionnaire survey and a follow-up workshop	Impact of Erasmus+ KA2 partnerships coordinated by Finnish actors on inclusion and diversity (2017–2022); includes four adult education (KA204) case studies on self-directed support for people with disabilities, migrant women's entrepreneurship,	Adults with disabilities and their support networks: improved self-determination and inclusion in decision-making (+); volunteers: validated future-skills framework linked to EU non-formal-learning policy (+); minority/marginalised adult learners: stronger sense of community and improved learning outcomes via literacy training (+); migrant women: entrepreneurial

			volunteers' future-skills framework, and inclusion of minorities/marginalised groups	skills and financial independence (+)
Finland	Achieving great impacts through small actions together – Democratic life, common values and civic engagement as priorities: Experiences of Erasmus+ partnerships for cooperation coordinated by Finnish actors (Minna Laatu, 2024)	Evaluation study using case-study method, document analysis of EU application and reporting data, a questionnaire survey (n=14 project coordinators) and a follow-up workshop	Impact and innovative practices of Erasmus+ KA2 partnerships for cooperation coordinated by Finnish actors (2017–2022); includes three adult education (KA204) case studies on citizenship/sustainability education, self-directed decision-making support, and migrant women's entrepreneurship	Adult learners: strengthened critical thinking and civic engagement through sustainability-themed adult education (+); staff: improved competence and professional confidence in self-directed support and disability inclusion (+); migrant women: entrepreneurial skills, networks and increased financial independence (+)
Finland	Achieving great impacts through small actions together – Digital transformation as a priority: Experiences of Erasmus+ partnerships for cooperation coordinated by Finnish actors (Minna Laatu, 2024)	Evaluation study using case-study method, document analysis of EU application and reporting data, a questionnaire survey and a follow-up workshop	Impact of Erasmus+ KA2 partnerships coordinated by Finnish actors on digital transformation (2017–2022); includes three adult education (KA204) case studies on library/adult-education-centre collaboration, flipped learning for adults with low digital/basic skills, and digital entrepreneurship for women over 40	Adult learners: improved literacy, digital skills and independent-learning skills through flipped-learning methods (+); women aged over 40: improved digital and e-entrepreneurship competence and re-employment prospects (+); staff: 27 trained adult educators continued applying and disseminating the new method after project end (+)

France	Évaluation à mi parcours du programme Erasmus+ 2021-2027	Mixed methods, quantitative and qualitative analysis	Mid-term national evaluation of how Erasmus+ 2021–2027 is implemented and performing in France.	Strong, generally positive impact on individuals, institutions and systems; unequal reach and some structural limits.
France	« L'éducation des adultes dans le programme Erasmus+ », Erasmus+ France / Éducation Formation, 2025. Champ : Projets Erasmus+, Secteur « Éducation des adultes », 2021-2024	Mixed methods, quantitative and qualitative analysis	How Erasmus+ is used in France's Adult Education sector, and what effects the projects have on participants and mostly small associative organisations.	Clearly positive impact, strengthening vulnerable adults' skills and confidence while significantly professionalising and structuring mostly small, local associative organisations.
France	Cartographie des acteurs de l'éducation des adultes en France (Juillet 2024). [Rapport pour l'Agence Erasmus+ France].	A step-by-step "funnel" approach: 1.) mapping actors and publics in each field; 2.) identifying key relay and potential project-holding organisations; 3.) creating detailed "persona" profiles to understand local constraints, needs, and levers for Erasmus+ mobility.	Collaborative expert workshops; mapping and prioritising the French actors relevant to the Erasmus+ Adult Education sector (for KA1 mobility), identifying common obstacles and needs, and proposing strategic directions for the National Agency's promotion, support, and partnership work so that more and more diverse organisations use Erasmus+ mobility for adults.	Doesn't measure impact directly, but presents Erasmus+ mobility as a powerful potential lever for adult learners.
France	Éducation populaire : quel héritage pour les politiques culturelles ? Rapport du Cycle des hautes études de la culture, session 2024-2025, groupe 6.	Qualitative	How the heritage and practices of éducation populaire should inform French cultural policies,	Positive impact, but benefits are not evenly distributed; better funding, stronger outreach, and improved tools are needed.

and how to improve them.				
Germany	NA-BIBB (2020): Erasmus+ Erwachsenenbildung. Auswirkungen der Strategischen Partnerschaften in Deutschland. Bonn.	Document analysis, survey among KA2 project coordinators in Germany and case studies.	Impact of KA2 on organisations, staff, learners and the wider environment	Identifies impacts of KA2 on the professionalisation of staff, the digital education and communication strategies of beneficiary organisations, and the quality of learning programmes. The use of outputs is dependent on technical possibilities, available resources and organisational culture. Factors that promote successful implementation of the outputs are project conditions, cooperation, quality and impact.
Germany	BMBF/BMFSFJ/KMK/BMIH (2024): Nationaler Bericht zur Halbzeitevaluation der Erasmus+ Programmgeneration 2021-2027	Document analysis and online-survey among 5.200 beneficiaries in all education sub-sectors including adult education; use of RIA-AE data from first survey round	Answer to the European Commission's standard evaluation questions	Overall positive impact on the beneficiary organisations and the learners.
Hungary	Mobility Research Report 2024	Cross-national online survey + in-depth case studies	Erasmus+ KA1 adult learning mobility; barriers and challenges	Identifies hidden barriers to adult learner and staff mobility in Erasmus+ KA1, while also showing that stronger support, preparation and cooperation can improve

				participation and impact in adult education.
Hungary, France, Slovakia, Croatia, Portugal, Germany, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Serbia and Ireland	Progress Consult. (2024). Searching for measures for the better exploitation of mobility for learners and staff in adult education. Coordinated by Tempus Public Foundation (Hungarian NA).	Mixed-methods transnational research combining desk research; quantitative analysis of Erasmus+ KA1 mobility data; an online survey of National Agencies; and qualitative national case studies. Five in-depth case studies (France, Hungary, Portugal, Croatia and Slovakia) included interviews with National Agency staff and representatives of adult education providers and provided contextual evidence on barriers, enabling factors and effective practices. The quantitative analysis principally covers 2018–2022.	Factors influencing the uptake and effective utilisation of Erasmus+ Key Action 1 learning mobility in adult education, for both adult learners and staff. The research examines why KA1 mobility and available funding remain underutilised in some countries; identifies structural, contextual and operational barriers and enablers; explores practices associated with stronger performance; and considers how National Agencies can increase participation and improve implementation.	Identified key barriers and enabling factors affecting participation in KA1 adult education mobility. + Provided comparative evidence from 12 European countries and more detailed contextual evidence from five national case studies. + Identified transferable practices in outreach, participant support, accreditation, partnerships and capacity building. + Developed an actionable five-part enabling framework for National Agencies covering Awareness, Motivation, Capacity, Learning Opportunities and the Erasmus+ Mobility Framework. + Produced recommendations that NAs can use to assess national bottlenecks and develop context-specific actions to improve participation and utilisation of Erasmus+ KA1 mobility.

Ireland	AONTAS (2023). Learner Voices Across Ireland	Evidence based on approximately 1,716 contributions from adult learners participating in Further Education and Training courses or programmes across Ireland.	Experiences and outcomes of participation in adult learning in Ireland; not specifically Erasmus+.	Adult learning was associated with increased self-confidence (64%), a more positive outlook on the future (58%), and an increased sense of belonging and better health and well-being (31%).
Italy	Erasmus+ 2024 Report – INDIRE, 2025	Annual monitoring report based on programme participation, funding and mobility data.	Participation of Italian organisations in Erasmus+ Adult Education, with specific attention to mobility, cooperation partnerships and the consolidation of the sector.	The report shows a significant strengthening of the Adult Education sector within Erasmus+: 130 accredited Italian organisations, around EUR 9.6 million for mobility and cooperation, 2,697 staff mobilities, 1,326 adult learner mobilities, and 44 KA2 cooperation partnerships.
Italy	Medium- and Long-Term Report on the Erasmus+ Programme – INDIRE, 2025	Evaluation study based on surveys involving experts, beneficiaries and stakeholders from the Italian education system.	Medium- and long-term effects of Erasmus+ across Italian education sectors, including its role in organisational innovation, internationalisation and inclusion.	Erasmus+ is perceived as a strategic driver of educational innovation. The study highlights positive effects on institutional internationalisation, innovation in educational practices, inclusion of disadvantaged groups and access to learning for people with fewer opportunities.
Italy	EPALE Journal, Issue 17 – “The futures of adult education”, 2025	Thematic collection of scientific and professional contributions.	Transformations in adult education, the role of local adult education institutions, especially CPIAs, and the future of lifelong learning in the	The contributions highlight the growing strategic relevance of adult education institutions in lifelong learning systems and provide a broader interpretative framework for understanding the transformation of the sector.

			context of digital and social transitions.	However, the issue does not provide direct quantitative evidence of Erasmus+ impact.
Italy	EPALE Journal	Research agenda / call for scholarly contributions; not an empirical study in itself.	Evaluation of the impact of Erasmus+ in adult education and its effects on national education systems.	The call signals a growing and more structured research interest in Erasmus+ impact in Adult Education. It also confirms the need for stronger empirical evidence and more systematic impact evaluation.
Latvia	NA	NA	NA	NA
Luxembourg	NA	NA	NA	NA
Poland	NA	NA	NA	NA
Portugal	Martins, P. C., Tinoca, L. & Alves, M. G. (2025). On the effects of Erasmus+ KA1 mobilities for continuing professional development in teachers' biographies: a qualitative research approach with teachers in Portugal. <i>International Journal of Educational Research</i> , v.7,100368. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijedro.2024.100368	Qualitative Document analysis Interviews Research diary Biographical narrative	Perceptions	The Erasmus+ had a positive impact on professional development of teachers.
Portugal	Guimarães, P., Rodrigues, A. L. & Pereira, C. (2025). Impact of Erasmus+ on the Adult Education Sector in Portugal. https://epale.ec.europa.eu/en/resourcecentre/content/impact-erasmus-adult-education-sectorportugal	Mixed methods Web survey (quantitative data) Interviews and document analysis (qualitative data)	On impact	Erasmus+ has had a positive impact on organisations that had projects funded and on activities developed.
Portugal	Bronze, J. C., Leite, C. & Monteiro, A. (2025). <i>Emancipation or instrumentalisation in Erasmus+ mobility: A literature review</i> . CEPS Journal, Vol. 15, No. 4. https://www.cepsj.si/index.php/cepsj/article/view/1802	Meta analysis based on systematic literature review	Content analysis on instrumental and emancipatory perspectives	Erasmus+ has an impact on higher education, balancing instrumental and emancipatory perspectives of actors who get involved in this

				programme and mobility opportunities.
Portugal	Lourenço, D. (coord.), Cosmin, N., Sin, C., Aguiar, J., Fernandes, L., Tavares, O. & Biscaia, R. (2024). Relatório Final. Internacionalização da Educação e Formação. Desafios e Oportunidades do Programa Erasmus+ em Portugal.	Mixed methods Online survey interviews	Quantitative metrics and content analysis	Erasmus+ has allowed mobility of teachers, staff and students with significant impacts. Internationalisation of funded projects of institutions was also highlighted.
Romania	NA	NA	NA	NA
Slovenia	Professional development of adult educators and the role of the EU programme (Mikulec & Stanovnik Perčič, 2019)	Document analysis of 207 staff reports from participants in individual mobility. Case study of two selected AE organisations, including document analysis and interviews.	Experience with individual mobility and international cooperation of adult education institutions.	Mobility strongly influenced staff professional development through the acquisition of new knowledge, good practices from abroad, social, linguistic and cultural competences, teaching-related competences, and practical skills relevant to professional development. The case studies showed that staff involved in KA1 and KA2 projects gained knowledge about counselling, work with vulnerable target groups, basic education, key competences, education for sustainable development, inter-generational learning, motivational measures, the use of ICT in education, modern approaches to teaching and learning, and media literacy.
Slovenia	Mikulec, B., & Kristl, N. (2025). The impact of the Erasmus+ programme on adult education in Slovenia. <i>Int Rev Educ</i> 71, 631–654. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11159-025-10138-5	Document analysis, survey, case studies, and interviews with staff, directors and	To explore the impact of Erasmus+ on adult education in Slovenia at micro, meso and macro levels.	The study examined the impact of Erasmus+ on the adult education system, organisations, and the professional development of educators and learners

		Erasmus+ coordinators.		participating in mobility exchanges in Slovenia. The findings point to the important role of Erasmus+ in the professional development of organisations, educators and learners engaged in non-vocational adult education, as well as in supporting social goals and counterbalancing the dominant vocational orientation of European adult education policy.
Spain	Our own ERASMUS+ experience with KA1 mobilities. CEPER “Fuensanta” (a)	Experience systematisation methodology	ICT learning	Improvement in the use of new technologies, social media, and the development of digital skills
Spain	Acquisition of key competencies through improved digitalisation in adult education (b)	Experience systematisation methodology	New teaching and learning methodologies and approaches	- Improving the acquisition of key competences through digitalisation. - Implementation of new teaching and learning methodologies and approaches. - Promoting student participation from rural areas. - Fostering the inclusion of students with special educational needs.
Spain	E+CREATIT Project: Strategies to foster creativity in adult learners based on collaborative learning and digital competence (c)	Document analysis; experience systematisation methodology	Boosting creativity; social inclusion	- Motivating adult students to discover the importance of lifelong learning. - Training adult students to set new goals and objectives in order to reduce the gap separating them from social inclusion, access to higher

				levels of education, and better working conditions. • Development of collaborative methodologies, digital content, and apps.
Spain	Sustainable Competences in Adult Education	Document analysis; experience systematisation methodology	Sustainable skills	• Development of a framework of sustainable competences as a tool for designing, implementing, and evaluating sustainability learning programmes for adults outside the university environment.
Spain	eTwinning Projects and teachers' digital competence: "Euroheroes of our time" (Official School of Languages of A Coruña) (e)	Document analysis; experience systematisation methodology	Teacher empowerment through eTwinning and its application in the classroom	• Knowledge transfer to other teachers and to students, taking into account the diversity of levels and the adaptation of activities. • Improvement through student feedback. • Enhancing digital competences.
Spain	Art, experience, education and prisoners' words: Once upon a time there was a prison pedagogy with wings (f)	Document analysis; experience systematisation methodology	Prison education	• Good practices for a preventive, inclusive, and critical prison education system.
Spain	Employment and Inclusion, a European research project (g)	Document analysis; experience systematisation methodology	Adult education focused on fostering inclusion and employment opportunities	• Improving training practices, methodologies, and content for employment and combating exclusion, tailored to vulnerable adults. • Improvement in the cross-cutting skills taught.

Spain	International Projects as a New Way to Solve Global Problems: Case Study of a European Project (j)	Literature review; Case Study (n=1)	Design of international Erasmus+ projects.	- Formulation and description of guidelines for undertaking this type of project. - Training tailored to the specific needs of adult learners, including the promotion of lifelong learning opportunities
Spain	A novel context for project-based learning: A language school for adults in Spain (EOI) & an applied higher education institution (college) of a university in Estonia (k)	Document analysis; experience systematisation methodology	Good practices	Effective implementation of best practices recommended by the Council of the EU, such as promoting different learning approaches and environments, or fostering collaboration between the various educational sectors and levels.
The Netherlands	NA	NA	NA	NA
Türkiye	Developing Educators' Skills in the Prevention of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder in Adults	Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) can occur in people who have experienced or witnessed events such as natural disasters, epidemics, wars, serious accidents, intimate partner violence and bullying. This project aims to enhance the knowledge, skills and experience of adult educators so	Trauma and Mental Health Adult Education and Capacity Building for Educators Disaster and Crisis Preparedness Social Inclusion and Community Resilience Lifelong Learning and Mental Wellbeing	The professional qualifications of adult educators at partner organisations, as well as those working with our local and international partners who deliver adult education following dissemination activities, will be strengthened in relation to managing the psychology of trauma in adults. It is anticipated that this will enable adults who have experienced trauma or are at risk of trauma to recover from PostTraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and successfully adapt to social life

		they can support people in coping with potential psychological issues, thereby helping to prevent such trauma.		
Türkiye	Improving the Foster Care Process through Innovative Educational Models	To identify the needs of professionals and adult educators at European level; strengthen the skills and knowledge of adult educators and foster families; raise awareness of and improve foster care processes; support healthy and lasting family relationships for children in institutional care; and produce accessible digital learning resources.	Strengthening the Foster Care System and Child Welfare; Capacity Building for Adult Educators and Professionals; Innovative and Digital Learning Models; Foster Care Innovative Educational Content; Communication Network;	European Reference Framework on Foster Care; innovative educational content; digital and open-source tools; digital content and videos on foster care; a digital platform – Foster Care Communication Network; and a Frequently Asked Questions section on foster care.
Türkiye	Supporting Migrant Women with Learning and Literacy Difficulties	To equip volunteer trainers with the skills to address migrant women's literacy and learning gaps, increase access to language courses, strengthen the	Strengthening the Literacy and Language Skills of Migrant Women; Capacity Building for Adult Educators and Volunteer Tutors; Inclusion, Diversity and	We anticipate that the project will result in a well-equipped, professional team of volunteer teachers, improvements in literacy and learning outcomes among migrant women, increased access to language courses, and the development of teaching skills among staff.

		competencies of adult education staff, and promote inclusion and participation. The project will develop a digital teacher-training course, consult experts on curriculum development, and train an initial group of teachers and teaching assistants to professionalise volunteer teaching and create a more inclusive learning environment.	Social Integration in Education.	By promoting inclusion, diversity and social integration, the project will create a lasting impact and serve as a model for similar initiatives.
Türkiye	Transform Me: Enhancing Social Participation Among Adults as Transformative Learners	By implementing this project, we aim to help adult learners, adult educators, managers of adult education institutions, adult NGOs, SME employees and managers, and volunteers at adult education institutions understand the importance of transformative learning, develop	Transformative Learning Approaches in Adult Education; Social Participation and Active Civic Engagement; Institutional Cooperation and Capacity Building at European Level.	To ensure that educators and administrative staff working in adult education institutions learn transformative learning strategies; ensure that adult learners understand transformative learning; increase adult learners' participation in social life; and increase opportunities for European cooperation within adult education institutions. Enabling adults to integrate more effectively into life as transformative learners contributes to their social development and helps them create a harmonious environment.

	their capacity to collaborate with other adult education institutions across Europe, and enhance adults' participation in society.		
If It's the Future That You Walk Towards, Then Here the Step-by-Step Recycle	Through our project, we aim to provide information on environmental awareness and recycling to our target audience, to the wider public we can reach through our partners, and to anyone interested in our project through Erasmus+. We aim to increase our target audience's environmental awareness and make this an integral part of our culture in the long term.	Environmental Awareness and Sustainability Education; Promoting a Culture of Recycling and Responsible Consumption; Green Transition through Social Awareness and Behavioural Change	To raise individuals who consume consciously and cause the least harm to nature whilst doing so, and to make this awareness lasting; improve participants' language skills; understand environmental awareness across different cultures and foster individuals with heightened awareness; minimise waste generation and improve waste separation; enrich recycling workshops and utilise waste more efficiently; and take new steps towards preserving ecological balance through sustainable collaboration with partners.
Be Competent —Go Digital	It aims to contribute to equipping adult consumers with digital literacy. Digital literacy is defined as “the	Digital Qualification and Digital Literacy; Safe, Ethical and Sustainable Digital Consumption; Digital Rights, Data	Through the educational content and portal, the project aims to enhance the capacity of adult education institutions by offering online courses to students; improve adult learners' ability to search for,

	skills consumers need to navigate the digital marketplace actively, safely and confidently". In this way, consumers can search for and evaluate information about goods and services, opt for responsible and sustainable consumption, manage their digital identities online—including privacy and data protection—and use the internet to buy and sell products and services securely.	Protection and Online Safety.	filter and evaluate information about goods and services online; and promote responsible and sustainable consumption. The project will include a dedicated module on sustainable, greener and responsible consumption to support the EU's Green Deal.
Generation Z-Friendly Seniors	The project aims to build a unifying bridge across the generational divide with Generation Z in order to support vulnerable groups of older people by creating educational opportunities focused on active ageing. In this	Active Ageing and Lifelong Learning; Intergenerational Dialogue and Strengthening Social Ties; Developing an Age-Friendly Society and a Positive Perception of Ageing.	A bridge will be built across the intergenerational and intercultural social divide. Educational tools and methods will be provided to enable older people to develop the knowledge and social skills that will help them participate more fully in life. Older people will be prepared to facilitate workshops where they share their knowledge and experience with schoolchildren. The vocational qualifications of adult educators will be enhanced,

context, it implements the 'Senior-Friendly School' social campaign, which fosters long-term relationships between adult education organisations and schools. The project's activities encourage older people to adopt positive and proactive attitudes and take on responsibility; they also help shape a positive image of old age among schoolchildren.

and a campaign will be launched to foster long-term intergenerational relationships.