

Concept for LTA EuroApprentices (Erasmus+ Ambassadors in VET) – Phase II (2025-2027)

Introduction

The Long-Term Activity (LTA) EuroApprentices (Erasmus+ Ambassadors in VET) (2025-2027) enters its second phase building on the results achieved and activities carried out since 2017. The LTA is based on a sectoral bottom-up ambassador initiative by National Agencies (NAs), which strengthens on the one hand the visibility of learning mobility in Vocational Education Training (VET) and on the other hand social and political participation, European values and active citizenship of VET students. To enhance the visibility and the impact of mobilities in VET, Erasmus+ Ambassadors disseminate their individual success stories of learning mobility abroad by sharing their authentic experiences and its benefits for their personal and professional development. During the last years, the European EuroApprentices Network has grown. From 2025 there are 12 NAs participating in the network. The number of EuroApprentices differs from country to country. There are more than 300 EuroApprentices¹ at the moment in Europe in total. The second phase of the LTA focuses on the impact of the EuroApprentices Network, such as enhancing the visibility of learning mobility in VET, the societal and political participation of VET students, and the attractiveness of VET. It also targets to increase the number of participating NAs.

Rationale and background

The following strategies and statements serve as key principles and rationale of the LTA:

- **Council Recommendation ‘Europe on the Move’ – learning mobility opportunities for everyone:** The Council recommendation has set new targets to be achieved at EU level by 2030: At least 12 % of learners in VET should benefit from learning mobility abroad a share of at least 20 % of people with fewer opportunities among all learners benefiting from learning mobility abroad at EU level by 2027.
- The **EU Youth Strategy 2019-2027** addresses young people’s concerns and aims to encourage young people to participate in democratic life, support social and civic engagement, and ensure that all young people have the resources they need to play an active part in society.
- **“Participation in democratic life, common values and civic engagement”** is one of the horizontal priorities of the Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps Programmes. The Erasmus+ Programme addresses the citizens’ limited participation in democratic processes and their lack of knowledge about the European Union. Therefore, the Programme tries to help them overcome the difficulties in actively engaging and participating in their communities and in the Union's political and social life. The “Youth Participation Strategy” for the Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps Programmes underlines the relevance of the priority and the involvement of young people in democratic life.

¹ Status Quo: A survey among participating NAs revealed that there are 321 EuroApprentices on 02/09/2024 in Europe. The number is dynamic as Erasmus+ambassadors could leave the network according to their needs and availabilities.

- **Teaching and promoting democratic participation and European values** is a central task of education to maintain our democracies and ensure social and political participation of young people.

The EuroApprentices Network has cooperated in the last years with the European Alliance of Apprenticeship to highlight the importance of mobilities to make VET more attractive. The LTA will also keep an eye on a strategy on VET Ursula von der Leyen will propose corresponding to the political guidelines for the next European Commission (2024-2029), which aims to give VET the importance it deserves.

Objectives

The overarching objective is to promote the benefits of mobilities in VET, to showcase that VET is attractive and international and to enable the social and political participation of VET students through their engagement as Erasmus+ Ambassadors. Furthermore, it prepares aspects of an alumni structure for VET students.

The specific objectives of the LTA are:

1. **Raise awareness and visibility of EuroApprentices Network among stakeholders and NAs**
2. **Train Erasmus+ Ambassadors in VET**
3. **Strengthen participation in democratic life of VET students**
4. **Strengthen visibility of Inclusion and Diversity among the network**
5. **Extend cooperation with Salto Resource Centre Participation and Information (Salto PI) and other stakeholders**
6. **Enhance the community of Erasmus+ Ambassadors in VET in Europe**

Planned Activities and framework of the LTA

Participating in the LTA, every NA needs to implement a national network of Erasmus+ Ambassadors. The profile of potential EuroApprentices can differ from country to country. Each NA selects their own participants on the basis of the following criteria:

- They participate or have participated in a VET programme.
- They have realized a stay abroad through Erasmus+ Programme.

Each participating NA is responsible for detailed formal arrangements. It is a common standard that the participants get a training at national level before or after having joined the network. New and most active EuroApprentices are invited to the annual International EuroApprentices Meeting which is one of the core activities of the network. EuroApprentices in general should not get a payment for performing their activities, but their travel and subsistence costs are reimbursed. Further specific activities in the framework of the LTA will be defined in a yearly work plan. Potential activities with regards to the objectives can be:

1. **Raising awareness of the EuroApprentices Network among stakeholders, beneficiaries and NAs**

The EuroApprentices share their Erasmus+ experience and can be invited e.g. by enterprises, VET schools and training centers to share their stories. Furthermore, the EuroApprentices plan and carry out voluntarily different activities in their local or regional environment and via social media. They also participate in events on

European level e.g. the European Youth Event. Therefore, it is necessary that the Erasmus+ Ambassadors are known by stakeholders such as European Commission or associations, Erasmus+ beneficiaries and NAs, which includes the following activities:

- Promote the LTA EuroApprentices film via various channels,
- Include EuroApprentices in national and EU level Events,
- Create stories of Erasmus+ Ambassadors from different countries and promote them,
- Monitor and support activities of Erasmus+ Ambassadors and promote them.

2. Training of Erasmus+ Ambassadors in VET

To professionalize EuroApprentices in their role as Erasmus+ Ambassadors within VET, it is crucial to provide comprehensive training in various skills and competencies, including presentation techniques, public speaking, social media management and storytelling. Additionally, EuroApprentices need to be well-informed about the Erasmus+ Programme and its priorities, such as Democratic Participation, Sustainability, and Inclusion and Diversity. To achieve this, the LTA will implement the following activities:

- **National Training and Meetings:** Focused on enhancing competencies and fostering networking among Ambassadors.
- **International EuroApprentices Meetings:** centered on skill development, networking opportunities and understanding Erasmus+ priorities.
- **Training on European Institutions and Values:** focused on building a deeper knowledge of European institutions and values and networking
- **Bilateral/multilateral Meetings:** Aimed at exchanging best practices and strengthening networking
- **Online Social Events:** Designed to maintain regular contact.

The LTA will also work on developing a cohesive concept and a shared understanding for these training initiatives.

3. Strengthening democratic participation of VET students

To enhance the democratic participation of VET students including Erasmus+ Ambassadors, the initiative will focus on increasing their engagement in societal and political processes. This will be achieved through the following activities:

- **Active Involvement in Network Development:** The initiative will promote active engagement of EuroApprentices in the development and management of the network's activities. Ambassadors will be invited to contribute ideas, and participate in decision-making processes. This will foster a sense of ownership and responsibility, empowering them to influence the direction and effectiveness of the network.
- **Participation in events:** Erasmus+ Ambassadors will be encouraged to attend and actively participate in relevant political and societal events. This includes involvement in key events such as the European

Youth Event, events of European Commission e.g. Alliance of Apprenticeship or European Apprentices Network. These experiences will provide EuroApprentices with a deeper understanding of policy-making processes and the role of VET students in shaping educational and societal outcomes.

- **Critical Engagement and Media Literacy:** Ambassadors receive training on media literacy, critical thinking, and effective communication. By developing these skills, Ambassadors will be better equipped to contribute to informed discussions and advocate for relevant issues within their networks and beyond.

Through these activities, the initiative aims to empower VET students and Erasmus+ Ambassadors to become more active and informed participants in democratic and societal processes, contributing to their personal development and the broader goals of the Erasmus+ Programme.

4. Strengthen visibility of Inclusion and Diversity in Erasmus+ and among the network

To enhance the visibility of Inclusion and Diversity within the EuroApprentices Network, the following activities could be implemented:

- **Inclusion and Diversity as selection criteria:** Inclusion and Diversity is important in the selection process of Erasmus+ Ambassadors and for events. to ensure that the EuroApprentices Network is representing VET students from all over society regardless of their origin, skin colour, gender, religion, sexual orientation und identity.
- **Showcasing Inclusion and Diversity:** The existing diversity within the EuroApprentices Network will be highlighted. This can include the dissemination of the film, print materials and digital content that showcase the diverse backgrounds and experiences of network members. These media will feature personal success stories and highlight how individuals have overcome barriers to participate in the Erasmus+ Programme.

This approach will help to inspire others, encourage broader participation, and ensure that the values of Inclusion and Diversity are embedded throughout the network.

5. Extending Cooperation with SALTO PI and other stakeholders

The LTA has established a fruitful exchange with SALTO PI since its implementation in 2023 and participated in LTA P.E.A.C.E. (*Participation Erasmus Alumni for Civic Engagement*) and its activities since 2022. In phase II, the cooperation will be continued through the following potential activities:

- **Mutual support in activities and advisory role of Salto PI:**
The LTA will collaborate with Salto PI on joint initiatives and activities and invite Salto PI to coordination meetings and events. Furthermore, the LTA will receive guidance on participation by Salto PI.

- **Ongoing Involvement in LTA P.E.A.C.E.:**

The LTA will continue active participation in the LTA P.E.A.C.E. initiative and ensure that EuroApprentices are actively involved in LTA P.E.A.C.E. events to promote cross-sectoral networking and gain knowledge.

6. Enhancing the Community of Erasmus+ Ambassadors in VET in Europe

To significantly strengthen the community of Erasmus+ Ambassadors in VET across Europe, efforts will be made to engage more countries and their NAs in the initiative. This includes:

- **Informing NA Directors:** Update NA Directors and heads of VET units about the network and its results.
- **Encouraging Communication Among Ambassadors:** Motivate Erasmus+ Ambassadors to actively communicate and collaborate with each other.

LTA Coordination and Cooperation

For the purpose of strategic planning and coordination, the LTA coordinator NA at BIBB (DE02) will organize virtual and on-site strategic and coordination meetings. All partner NAs are expected to participate in these strategic and coordination meetings organized once a year as one on-site meeting and two additional online meetings a year. The hosting of the physical strategic meeting rotates between the NAs. The coordinating NA is responsible for the content of the meeting, while the hosting NA covers the organizational tasks. To reach the objectives of the LTA and to develop and carry out certain activities, virtual working groups can be implemented. They can be led by the LTA coordinator or any partner NA. The core activity of the LTA is the International EuroApprentices Meeting which takes place annually, is hosted on a rotational basis and usually includes a physical preparation and coordination meeting.

LTA-Coordinator: NA BIBB (DE02)

Current Partner NAs: AT01, BE03, CZ01, FI01, ES01, IT01, PL01, PT01, RO01, SK01, SE01

Expected results

The following results are expected to be achieved by the activities of the LTA:

- **Raising awareness and visibility of EuroApprentices Network:** The EuroApprentices Network will gain significant visibility among stakeholders and NAs through targeted communication, participation in conferences, and engagement with NAs to showcase its benefits and success stories in VET.
- **Training of Erasmus+ Ambassadors in VET:** Training will be provided at national and international levels to equip EuroApprentices with skills and knowledge for effective advocacy of Erasmus+ and VET. This includes facilitating workshops and representing the Programme at various events, enhancing their impact and fostering democratic participation.

- **Strengthening Democratic Participation of VET students:** Activities such as workshops and discussions will promote active civic engagement, raise awareness about European values, and encourage EuroApprentices to engage in dialogues with politicians and society.
- **Strengthening visibility of Inclusion and Diversity in Erasmus+ and among the network:** The network will highlight stories of members who have overcome barriers, demonstrating the accessibility of the Erasmus+ Programme. Efforts will also include recruiting more Ambassadors from underrepresented groups to showcase their successes and inspire others.
- **Extending cooperation with Salto PI and other stakeholders:** Collaboration with SALTO PI will be enhanced, with SALTO PI advising and participating in online meetings. The NAs will continue to send EuroApprentices to events of stakeholder e.g. LTA P.E.A.C.E., European Alliance of Apprenticeship etc., promoting cross-sectoral networking and the understanding of civic engagement.
- **Enhancing the community of Erasmus+ Ambassadors in VET:** The community of Erasmus+ Ambassadors will be strengthened by involving more countries and NAs. Ambassadors will be encouraged to communicate and collaborate regularly, improving their ability to advocate for VET opportunities and contribute to the Erasmus+ Programme's success.

The predicted results will be revised in an Evaluation Meeting at the end of Phase II.

Memorandum of Understanding

The commitment and participation of the partner NAs will be defined in a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), which is to be signed by the director of each partner NA.

Budget

An annual budget will be calculated based on the planned activities in the LTA work plan for each year by the LTA members.

Bonn, September 16th 2024

Authors: Kristin Wilkens, Nicole von dem Bach, NA beim BIBB