

Erasmus+ Programme

Supporting higher education institutions to facilitate the integration of refugees

The European Commission supports the integration of migrants and refugees in higher education and research institutions. The Commission funds projects in this field, notably through the Erasmus+ programme.

When it comes to hosting refugees, higher education institutions (HEIs) face several challenges. They need to provide additional services for international students, which take into account the specific difficulties encountered by refugees.



In Programme Countries¹, Erasmus+ funds strategic partnerships², some of which deal specifically with the integration of refugees. Strategic partnerships support the development, transfer and implementation of innovative practices as well as joint initiatives promoting cooperation, peer learning and exchanges of experience.

In Partner Countries³, Erasmus+ finances capacity-building projects⁴ to modernise their higher education institutions and systems. HEIs established in a Programme Country or in an eligible Partner Country can apply for funding to the EACEA⁵. The project proposals must clearly address the national or regional priorities⁶ defined for the Partner Countries concerned. Special attention will be given to projects addressing **the integration of refugees from conflict-affected countries in higher education**, as this is a **cross-cutting priority valid for all regions**.

¹ All EU Member States, plus Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, Serbia, Turkey and the Republic of North Macedonia.

² https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/programme-guide/part-b/three-key-actions/key-action-2/strategic-partnerships-field-education-training-youth_en

³ Partner Countries refers to countries which are not Programme Countries. See in the Erasmus+ Programme Guide which specific countries are eligible for each action: http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/resources_en.

⁴ https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/programme-guide/part-b/three-key-actions/key-action-2/capacity-building-field-higher-education_en

⁵ Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency: https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/erasmus-plus/funding/capacity-building-in-the-field-of-higher-education-2020_en

⁶ See priorities on the EACEA website: https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/erasmus-plus/funding/capacity-building-in-the-field-of-higher-education-2020_en

Examples of strategic partnerships

Counselling for refugee and migrant integration into the labour market⁷

Labour market integration has social, economic and psychological goals. Career counsellors working in public employment agencies play a key role in helping refugees and migrants integrate into the labour market. Yet they are rarely prepared for the specific needs of these groups. Matching the demand and supply of skills is a challenging task, especially in cases of non-formal or non-European certified skills and when migrants do not speak the local language. This project aims to develop **higher education courses that qualify career counsellors** to give innovative guidance to refugees and migrants in the future.

inHERE⁸

This project aims to **empower higher education staff and faculty members** so that they are able to actively work towards the integration of refugees at institutional and local level. This project will strengthen knowledge-sharing, peer-support and academic partnership among HEIs through initiatives and by providing resources aimed at facilitating the integration and access of refugees in European universities.

Examples of capacity-building projects

Refugees Education Support in MENA Countries (RESCUE⁹)

Programme Countries like Germany and Turkey, and Partner Countries like Lebanon, Jordan or Iraq are experiencing a very critical situation due to the high number of refugees present on their territory. Some of them are former university students who had to interrupt their academic studies. This project helps Partner Country universities **create ad-hoc units to structure specific services which support refugee students** to resume their academic training path, either by accessing curricula or by following ad-hoc training courses for employment purposes.

Mediterranean Network of National Information Centres on the Recognition of Qualifications / MERIC-NET¹⁰

In some Southern Mediterranean countries, higher education reforms based on the Bologna structure of degrees have led to recognition challenges. **The MERIC-Net project addresses the recognition of refugees' qualifications.** The European experience will contribute to sharing and developing a common methodology in the Southern Mediterranean countries, in order to facilitate the integration of refugees and displaced people. The reactivation of the MERIC network will be the first step towards enhanced cooperation between the two shores of the Mediterranean, and on a larger scale, with the European Union as a whole.

⁷ <http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/projects/eplus-project-details-page/?nodeRef=workspace://SpacesStore/0667cda2-3c50-40cf-8126-af289ef59b51>

⁸ <http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/projects/eplus-project-details-page/?nodeRef=workspace://SpacesStore/47215162-dd09-4815-accd-f2cc5ef65821>

⁹ <http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/projects/eplus-project-details-page/?nodeRef=workspace://SpacesStore/b4981c7d-2205-4445-aa6e-5fa6890542f8>

¹⁰ <http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/projects/eplus-project-details-page/?nodeRef=workspace://SpacesStore/9b1f46f8-7f06-4389-9f22-633e55f7f656>