

INCLUSION AND DIVERSITY

The Programme seeks to promote equal opportunities and access, inclusion, diversity and fairness across all its actions. Organisations and the participants with fewer opportunities themselves are at the heart of these objectives and with these in mind, the programme puts mechanisms and resources at their disposal.

The Erasmus+ programme includes students who belong to the group “students with fewer opportunities” and who are eligible for additional funding for students from less advantaged backgrounds.

The list of such potential barriers, spelt out below, isn't exhaustive and is meant to provide a reference in taking action with a view to increasing accessibility and outreach to people with fewer opportunities. These barriers can hinder their participation both as a stand-alone factor and in combination among them:

- **Dissabilities**
This include physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which, in interaction with various barriers, may hinder someone's full and effective participation in society on the same footing as others.
- **Health problems**
Barriers may result from health issues including severe illnesses, chronic diseases, or any other physical or mental health-related situation that prevents from participating in the programme.
- **Barriers linked to education and training systems**
Individual struggling to perform in education and training systems for various reasons, early school-leavers, NEETs (people not in education, employment or training) and low-skilled adults may face barriers. Although other factors may play a role, these educational difficulties, while they may also be linked to personal circumstances, mostly result from an educational system which creates structural limitations and/or does not fully take into account the individual's particular needs. Individuals can also face barriers to participation when the structure of curricula makes it difficult to undertake a learning or training mobility abroad as part of their studies.
- **Cultural differences**
While cultural differences may be perceived as barriers by people from any backgrounds, they can particularly affect people with fewer opportunities. Such differences may represent significant barriers to learning in general, all the more for people with a migrant or refugee background – especially newly-arrived migrants-, people belonging to a national or ethnic minority, sign language users, people with linguistics adaptation and cultural inclusion difficulties, etc. Being exposed to foreign languages and cultural differences when taking part in any kind of programme activities may put off individuals and somehow limit the benefits from their participation. Such cultural differences may even prevent potential participants from applying for support through the programmes, thereby representing an entry barrier altogether.
- **Social barriers**
Social adjustment difficulties such as limited social competences, anti-social or high-risk behaviours, (former) offenders, (former) drug or alcohol abusers, or social marginalization may represent a barrier.

Other social barriers can stem from family circumstances, for instance being the first in the family to access higher education or being a parent (especially a single parent), a caregiver, a breadwinner or an orphan, or having lived or currently living in institutional care.

- **Economic barriers**

Economic disadvantages like a low standard of living, low income, learners who need to work to support themselves, dependence on the social welfare system, in long-term unemployment, precarious situations or poverty, being homeless, in debt or with financial problems, etc., may represent a barrier.

- **Barriers linked to discrimination**

Barriers can occur as a result of discriminations linked to gender (gender identity, gender expression, etc.), age, ethnicity, religion, beliefs, sexual orientation, disability, or intersectional factors (a combination of one or several of the mentioned discrimination barriers).

- **Geographical barriers**

Living in remote or rural areas, on small islands or in peripheral/outermost regions, in urban suburbs, in less serviced areas (limited public transport, poor facilities) or less developed areas in third countries, etc., may constitute a barrier.

In accordance with the European Commission and National Agency guidelines, the eligibility of students for these funds is determined for each country individually. The sending institution itself determines the students eligible for additional funds for students with fewer opportunities. The institution must keep all documentation showing that students are eligible for these additional funds.