

EUROPEAN COMMISSION

DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR EDUCATION AND CULTURE

DIRECTORATE-GENERAL MIGRATION AND HOME AFFAIRS

Brussels,

NOTE TO HEADS OF PERMANENT REPRESENTATIONS OF EU MEMBER STATES

Subject: Opening of the Erasmus+ programme to countries beyond Europe

Your Excellency,

Last January, we wrote to you about the international opening of the Erasmus+ programme beyond Europe and its practical implications in terms of visas and residence permits (see letter attached). We now have the pleasure to inform you about the results of the first Erasmus+ call for proposals fully opened to Partner Countries outside Europe.

In the higher education field

Over 600 mobility projects were selected, meaning that around **17,000 non-European nationals** will come for short periods to study, teach or train in European countries over the next 12 months. In addition, around **6,700 non-European Master students and doctoral candidates** will benefit from Erasmus Mundus full degree scholarships for studies/research beginning this autumn.

The European Commission expects a slight increase in the number of short-term mobile participants in 2016 due to the opening of the Erasmus+ programme to African Caribbean and Pacific Countries for the first time. With the increase in budget we are able to commit to doubling the number of scholarships for African students and academics in 2016 compared to 2014, in the frame of the Action Plan adopted in the **Valletta Summit** on 11 November 2015.

In the youth field (non-formal education)

Erasmus+ finances projects which allow for youth exchanges, European Voluntary Service and the training and networking of youth workers between European and Partner Countries. Since 2014, about **9,100 young people and youth workers** have moved from Neighbouring Countries to Europe. Furthermore, Youth Capacity Building projects with many regions in the world and additional funding to strengthen youth cooperation with the Western Balkan region will increase youth mobility in the coming years.

In summary, in the first year of activity, the external dimension of Erasmus+ has been welcomed enthusiastically by European higher education institutions and youth organisations and their partners worldwide.

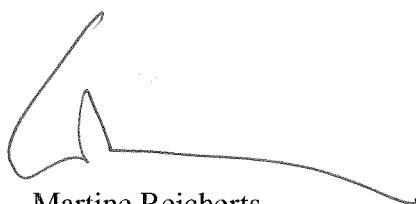
You may know that support is offered to mobile researchers by the network of EURAXESS Service Centers¹ located in all Member States.

However, we have been repeatedly alerted that visa issues remain one of the main difficulties met by universities, academic staff, students, young people and youth workers when implementing mobility projects.

We would be very appreciative if you could disseminate this note and its annexes to your authorities in charge of Home Affairs and to local consulates/embassies to make them aware of the aims, mechanisms and expected results of the Erasmus+ programme and consequently ease the process of visa and residence permit issuing.

We thank you in advance for your cooperation.

Yours faithfully



P.O.

Martine Reicherts
DG Education and Culture



Matthias Ruete
DG Migration and Home Affairs

Enclosures: 1. Initial letter Ares(2015)333150 dated 28 January 2015
2. Erasmus+ 2015 call for proposals results. Higher Education and Youth Actions

c.c.: Mr Ruete, Ms Corrado (DG HOME)
H. Hartung, D. Crowley (DG EAC), K. Haupt (EACEA)
International contact points of Erasmus+ National Agencies

¹ Network coordinated by the European Commission <http://ec.europa.eu/euraxess/index.cfm/services/index>