

# I care. Mantas story.

Inclusion in my organisation:  
the present and a vision for  
the future



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# Introductory word



# Introductory word

“I CARE. MANTAS STORY”, the title of the publication, not only symbolises the importance of inclusion and equality, but also invites you to focus on the human dimension. At first glance, it may resemble a human name Mantas, thus, expressing the personal, human connection we have with inclusion.

The European Union emphasises the principles of equality and inclusion as one of its core values. The strategy of the programmes Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps stress that the afore-mentioned principles must not be mere words, but must be at the heart of all activities. But they must also be a part of our personal responsibility to build a fairer and more inclusive society.

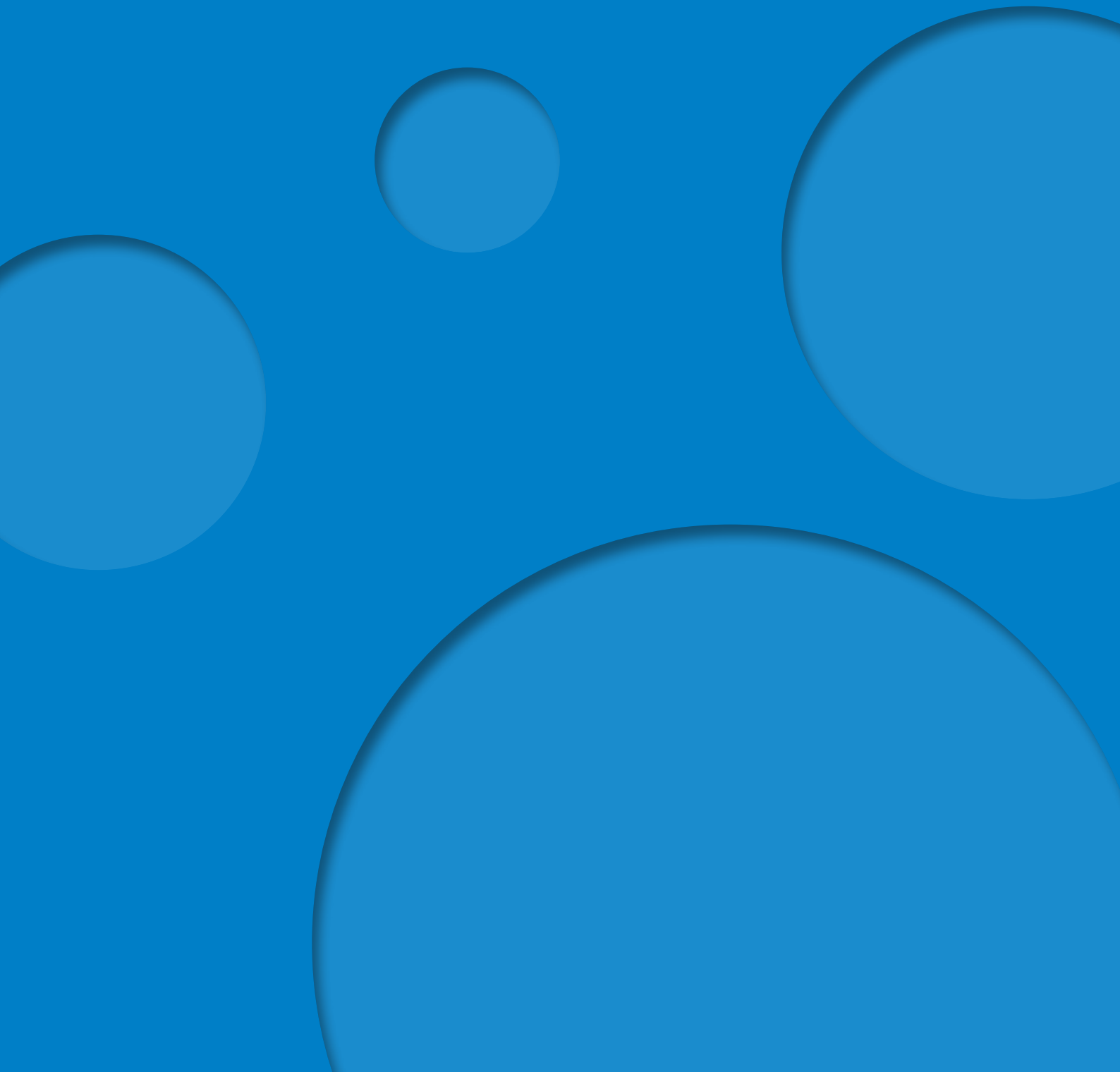
The publication you are reading invites you to note that “I CARE. MANTAS STORY” is not only a general principle, but also a symbol of the particular human experience, the name and the commitment. It reminds us that prioritising inclusion is not just an abstract goal, but also a practical action that we may take to contribute to the promotion of justice, solidarity and equality in our organisations, our work and our daily lives.



This publication invites you to realise that each of us may be “Mantas”, a person who cares and creates conditions for equality and inclusion. This is a common goal that we may achieve together, following the recommendations and experiences shared by the *VET National Team*. "I CARE. MANTAS STORY" is a call not only to talk about inclusion, but also to act for it.

This publication is a reference guide, thus, the mobility projects should be implemented in accordance with the mobility project grant agreement and annexes to it, as well as by official documents of the European Commission.

# **Inclusion and diversity in the organisation**



# Inclusion and diversity in the organisation

Let's see what the principles of inclusion in an organisation mean by trying to understand them through the eyes of a character. Let me introduce you to the story of Mantas.

The concept of inclusion, as described in the Cambridge Dictionary, is the idea that everyone should be able to take part in common activities and enjoy the same experiences, regardless of individual differences or barriers. It is about equality, understanding and the fact that each person can be unique.

Let's meet Mantas, a young man who really cares. Mantas has more obstacles in his life than others. He has a disability and faces challenges that others may not even think about every day. But Mantas is not just a symbol of exclusion. He is friendly, intelligent and always ready to help others.

The [objectives](#) of the European Union emphasise the importance of giving everyone a chance. Margaritis Schinas, the Vice-President of the European Commission, says that inclusion and diversity are an essential part of the European way of life. This vision cannot be achieved unless we look at each person as a unique individual, giving them the opportunity to share their experiences and engage in activities.

Mobility projects are a great way to promote inclusion and diversity. Project coordinators must not only lead, but also give this opportunity to everyone, including Mantas. They can draw on the principles of Erasmus+ and prepare themselves to effectively implement the ideas of inclusion.

Thus, let's imagine the journey of life of Mantas. Project coordinators and members of the team may ask themselves: how inclusive am I with people like Mantas? How can I make my work activities more inclusive and open to everyone, regardless of their individual characteristics? What tools may help Mantas and others to feel equally important?

Mantas not only has an important place in this story, but also in our organisation. Each of us, as Mantas, may influence inclusion and diversity by promoting tolerance and understanding. Project promoters have the opportunity to create an environment where everyone can feel accepted and important. This is a step towards a fairer and more inclusive society.

In order to involve participants with fewer opportunities in mobility activities, it is useful for the project coordinators or members of the team to ask and answer the following questions:



- How inclusive am I, personally?
- To what extent does my work include inclusion measures?
- How inclusive are the tools used by me?
- How can I make my tools more inclusive?





## Advice

- **Familiarise yourself** with the Document of the Implementation Guidelines for Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps Inclusion and Diversity Strategy and other documents in this area.
- **Actively cooperate** with the organisation's student support specialists, class/group leaders, educators of dormitories or other staff working with the target group with fewer opportunities.
- **Involve** the student support specialists (social pedagogue, special educator, psychologist, teaching assistant) in the project team or mobility project activities.
- **Familiarise yourself** with the information of the report of social situation and social indicators of the school for the last academic year, or information of the carried out surveys or studies. Note the information on the social situation of pupils: pupils from large families; pupils from families with a disabled child; pupils with special educational needs; pupils with divorced parents; pupils living with only one parent.  
The social indicators identifying inclusion may include: families where one or both parents are unemployed; pupils who live in particularly difficult material conditions; pupils who do not have one of the parents or both parents; pupils from families where one or both parents have a disability group due to their disability; pupils where one of the parents has gone abroad to work; and pupils who are single parents.

- **Please note** that the information in the report of social situation and social indicators of the school for the last academic year only partially reflects the actual social situation of pupils. Pupils may not trust or want to disclose their family's social situation. Therefore, the social situation of some pupils may only be known through personal contact with the pupil or his/her family by the pupil support officer and/or the supervisor of the class/group.
- **Carry out** surveys of pupils and staff on social inclusion in the school and find out if your organisation is as inclusive, how the principles of inclusion and diversity are implemented and what tools may be used when working with persons with fewer opportunities.
- **Prepare** a simple online survey for pupils to find out about the need for mobility activities for pupils with fewer opportunities. Keep the questions in this survey simple and avoid open-ended questions. In the survey, you may ask students about the information process, what reasons prevent them from participating in mobility activities, what preparation they need for the mobility activity, what support they need for the mobility activity abroad, etc.
- **Organise** mobility activities not only for the brightest and best pupils, but also for those who are underachieving, have attendance or behavioural problems. Motivate such pupils to discover the advantages of the career chosen by them, encourage them to seek new knowledge and gain professional experience.

- There are pupils who are willing and able to **take part** in projects, but their parents do not encourage or support their participation. In such case, consider the possibility to contact and talk to their parents in person. Inform their parents more about the project activities, how they are being implemented, and illustrate how you have dealt with problems and risks during the mobility activity with real examples.
- **Provide** information about the mobility project, implemented activities, opportunities to participate in mobility actions, funding, responsibilities, duties, recognition, etc. in an easy-to-understand language. Do not use complex terms that are difficult for pupils to understand in the Erasmus+ Mobility (KA1) action. Prepare the information in a way that shows the pupils that the activities of the mobility project are aimed at them and at the same time shows how they may benefit from the mobility activity abroad.
- **Involve** participants from existing mobility projects in the outreach process, not only to share success stories and good emotions, but also to reveal what problems they encountered, how they dealt with them, whether they received help, etc. Provide simpler and more fair “experience-based” information, thus, revealing the positive and negative sides of the mobility activity.

- The number of pupils with individual learning needs participating in mobility project activities in vocational training institutions is low. **Encourage** these pupils to join mobility project activities and carry out mobility activities in foreign countries. You need to find trusted partners who already have experience of work with these pupils and together help them to overcome their fears and motivate them to develop a “yes, you can do it” attitude.



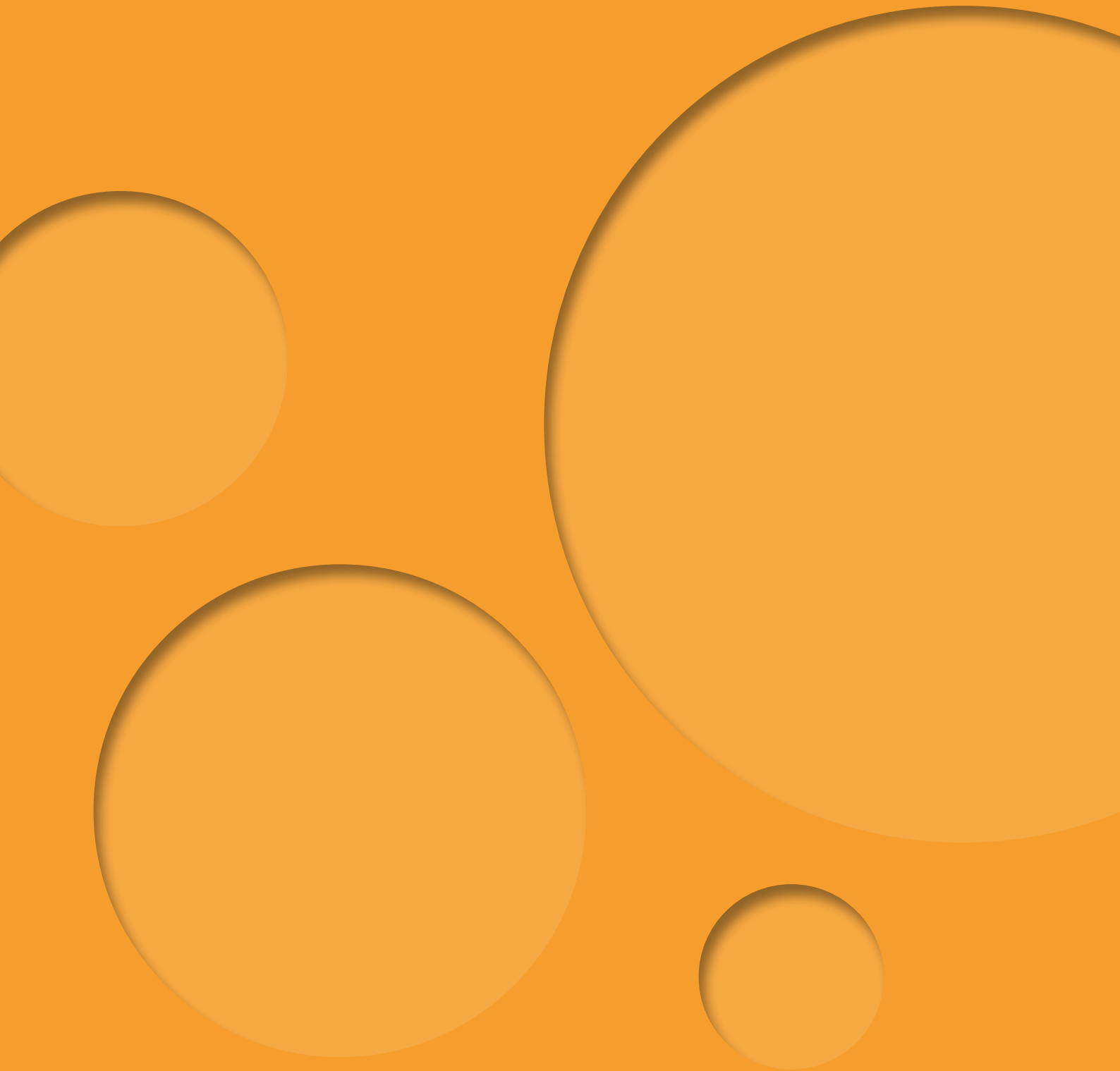


## Sources where you can find more information:

1. Information published on [Erasmus+ website](#).
2. [Platform and Inclusive Mobility System](#).
3. [SALTO “Inclusion and diversity” website](#)
4. Source of images: Microsoft Word Icons
5. [Implementation Guidelines for Erasmus+ European Solidarity Corps Inclusion and Diversity Strategy](#).

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**Target group with  
fewer opportunities**



# Target group with fewer opportunities

The target group with fewer opportunities is an important aspect to pay particular attention to in vocational training. To grasp this important concept, let's imagine the story of Mantas.

Mantas is a student with fewer opportunities, who came to vocational school with great enthusiasm and a desire to achieve his goals. However, he faces a number of obstacles that affect his participation in school activities. Mantas is confronted with various situations that hinder him from full participation in the educational process. He also does not always receive the help and support he needs to make the most of his school experience.

Mantas perfectly illustrates the target group with fewer opportunities. These are people who, for a variety of reasons, may experience difficulties in participating in education and training. This may include not only physical challenges but also emotional, social, cultural or economic factors.

The Guidelines for the implementation of the Inclusion and Diversity Strategy of the European Commission pay particular attention to the afore-mentioned target group. They are aimed at ensuring that people with fewer opportunities have equal access to the Erasmus+ programme and the whole education and training system. The above guidelines provide for recommendations and action plans to strengthen inclusion and propose appropriate measures to ensure that this target group may fully benefit from educational opportunities.

The story of Mantas helps us to understand that the target group with fewer opportunities are people who need special attention and support to reach their full potential. By fostering inclusion and diversity and helping them to overcome barriers, we not only empower them but also enrich our community and our organisation.

It is important to use inclusive language when describing the target group.

**Inclusive language** is language that does not contain words, phrases or tones, that reflect prejudice, stereotyping or discriminatory attitudes. Inclusive language is essential whenever there is a risk of discrimination or a violation of a person's dignity on the grounds of race, colour, descent, political opinion, religion, marital status, sexual orientation, gender, age, disability. Inclusive language is person-centred and not based on a person's abilities, disabilities or capabilities. According to the rules of this language, the term "person with fewer opportunities" is a misnomer. We should use the term "person with different/varied abilities".



**What are the main barriers that** might prevent people with fewer opportunities from more active participation in the programmes?



## Availability

To overcome this barrier, all state and municipal authorities, educational institutions and the public sector should follow the **Universal Design** Guidelines and the Universal Design Principles. Buildings, materials, tools, products, learning programmes, services should be designed to provide equal access to the same facilities for everyone, without excluding people according to their abilities.



## Information

To overcome this barrier, all state and municipal authorities, educational institutions, and the public sector should provide information in a way **that is easy to understand** and in an easy-to-understand language. Make the information environment accessible to people with intellectual, visual and hearing disabilities.

Environmental accessibility, understanding and knowledge of information will enable a person with fewer opportunities to participate.

## Person with fewer opportunities:



**Person with a disability.** A person with an established level of ability and a person who has a document to prove it.

The ability of a person to take part in everyday life, education, cultural and social activities, the labour market, politics, etc. Ability is determined by assessing the individual range of needs of the person and environmental barriers in different areas of life.

**Rokas** is learning programming. He is doing well. He would love to gain international mobility experience, but he doesn't expect to be able to do everything only with the help of a wheelchair. To ensure that this challenge does not become a barrier to mobility, it is possible to find a host organisation with a fully accessible environment. Also, if the need is properly explained in the application, there is a possibility to receive funding for a person who could accompany him on this mobility and for the transportation of the wheelchair.



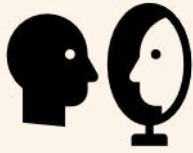
**Person with health problems.** A person with health problems, including serious or chronic illnesses.

**Arūnas** has diabetes. He requires insulin injections 1 or 2 times a day. Arūnas knows how to store his insulin when travelling, but injecting himself is too challenging. To ensure that this challenge does not become a barrier to mobility, funding for an accompanying person is available if the need is properly explained in the application.



**Person with learning difficulties.** A person who has difficulty in learning for a variety of reasons. They are school leavers, those who are not in education, employment or training, and those with low skills.

**Sandra** does not orient herself with unfamiliar surroundings and is very scared of new places. But she learns quickly. Once she has walked a route once or twice, she can find her way around without help. To prevent this challenge from becoming a barrier to mobility, a targeted preparatory visit may be planned.



**Person dealing with cultural differences.** This includes people from national and ethnic minorities, users of sign language, bilinguals, speakers of other languages, migrants, refugees with difficulties in linguistic adaptation and cultural integration, etc.

**Olesia** is a war refugee from Ukraine. She speaks only Ukrainian and Russian. Olesia learns Lithuanian and English, but still struggles to speak, read, write and understand these languages. To prevent this challenge from becoming a barrier to mobility, it is important to provide information in a language that is easy to understand and encourage the use of translation apps.



**Person experiencing social difficulties.** A person who finds it difficult to fit in because of his behaviour, experiences and lifestyle. This a person who has addictions, a tendency to crime, special prejudices, a lack of social contacts, etc.

**Marius** needs to take his medication on time, but he often forgets. At home, his mother helps him to remember. To prevent this challenge as a barrier to mobility, reminders may be set on his phone or smartwatch to help him be independent during mobility. If it is too costly for Marius to purchase a smart device, funding may be available if the need is properly explained in the application.





**Person facing economic difficulties.** A person who has financial difficulties, is in debt, does not have enough income to satisfy his basic needs, receives social assistance services or targeted social benefits, is homeless, and has to work and study to survive.

**Rasa** lives in the countryside with her grandmother. The family is in dire need for money for even the most basic necessities. To ensure that this challenge does not become a barrier to mobility, with a proper explanation of the need in the application, funding is available to help Rasa to purchase travel essentials such as a suitcase, hygiene products, work clothes, etc.



**Person facing discrimination.** A person who is or may be discriminated against on the grounds of sex (gender identity, gender expression, etc.), age, ethnic origin, religion, belief, sexual orientation, disability, or a combination of factors.

**Kezija** is Roman. She cannot and will not wear trousers because it is not acceptable in her family. Kezija studies to become a finisher/builder and is constantly confronted by people who do not understand why she cannot wear trousers while working. To avoid this challenge becoming a barrier to mobility, the host organisation may be informed that the work clothes of Kezija will be adapted to her cultural needs in advance.



**Person facing geographical barriers.** A person living in a remote or rural area, peripheral and outermost regions, suburban areas, underserved areas (with less public transport, fewer educational facilities, poor infrastructure), etc.

**Adrian** lives in a single-yard house. The family does not own a car and the nearest town can be reached by walking 3 kilometers to the nearest bus stop. Buses run only 2 times during the day. Public transport does not run on the weekend. Adrian rides a bicycle in a good weather, but in a bad weather doesn't have the opportunity to meet friends, participate in events and attend so beloved football training sessions, because after the training there is no bus back home anymore. His options for informal learning is very limited.

To ensure equal opportunities, a specific project or person involved in a project receives **additional support** to ensure inclusion and diversity.



More information on additional support may be read [here](#), click on the blue link.



## Sources where you can find more information:


1. [Implementation Guidelines for Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps Inclusion and Diversity Strategy.](#)
2. [Council of Europe Resolution ResAP\(2007\)3 “Ensuring full participation through Universal Design”](#)
3. [United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and its Optional Protocol. Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities](#)
4. [Republic of Lithuania Law on Social Integration of Disabled Persons](#)
5. [Republic of Lithuania Law on Equal Opportunities](#)
6. Explanation of Universal Design by the Norwegian Ministry of the Environment
7. [Website of the Universal Design Organisations](#) (English)
8. [A public consultation to discuss the new guidelines on Universal Design for Learning \(UDL\).](#)
9. Source of images: Microsoft Word Icons

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# **Additional support for inclusion and diversity**



# Additional support for inclusion and diversity



The Mobility Action application may be used for planning and receipt of additional funding to support inclusion, taking into account families with fewer opportunities who are experiencing economic and social exclusion. For example, let's look at the situation of Mantas:

Mantas is a pupil from an economically and socially excluded family. His parents are capable to work, but for various reasons they are not able to buy the travel essentials, such as new shoes, a suitcase, work clothes etc. The challenges faced by his family go beyond financial problems and include a lack of social skills. This is where the project coordinators need to understand the importance of inclusion and help Mantas to ask himself the question "Do I care about this?". If I care, I can offer additional funding to enable him to participate in the project.

This additional funding could be used for a range of expenses to help to ensure successful participation of Mantas. This could include not only specific learning tools, but also additional assistance in organising mobility. The funding could be used to provide Mantas with the necessary hygiene, clothing and travel supplies to facilitate his integration into the international training project.

This example illustrates how additional funding can help disadvantaged families experiencing economic and social exclusion to participate in international mobility activities. This not only ensures equal opportunities for everyone but also underlines the commitment of the organisation to social responsibility and inclusion.

**Budget category: Support for inclusion.**




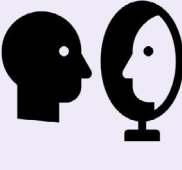
- **Support for the inclusion of organisations:** this is funding for the organisation of mobility activities for participants with fewer opportunities.


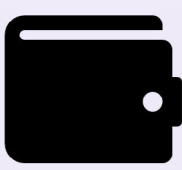


The applicant receives EUR 100 for each less-favoured participant planned in the application. **Supporting the inclusion of participants:**

This is additional costs directly related to the participants with fewer opportunities and their accompanying persons (including travel and subsistence costs if no grant has been requested for these participants under the budget categories “Travel costs” and “Individual support”). It is important to justify and describe the requested funds in detail.

The applicant can claim for 100% of the eligible costs.

It is advisable to plan inclusion support according to the individual needs of each participant with fewer opportunities.

Target group	Possible ways of support
 <p>Person with a disability</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accompanying person</li> <li>• Enhanced mentoring</li> <li>• Easy-to-understand language</li> <li>• Individual needs</li> <li>• Additional preparatory activities</li> <li>• Language training activities</li> </ul>
 <p>Person with health problems</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individual needs</li> <li>• Additional preparatory activities</li> </ul>
 <p>Person with learning difficulties</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accompanying person</li> <li>• Enhanced mentoring</li> <li>• Easy-to-understand language</li> <li>• Individual needs</li> <li>• Additional preparatory activities</li> <li>• Language training activities</li> </ul>
 <p>Person dealing with cultural differences</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individual needs</li> <li>• Additional preparatory activities</li> <li>• Language training activities</li> </ul>

Target group	Possible ways of support
 <p>Person experiencing social difficulties</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accompanying person</li> <li>• Enhanced mentoring</li> <li>• Individual needs</li> <li>• Additional preparatory activities</li> </ul>
 <p>Person facing economic difficulties</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monetary support</li> <li>• Language training activities</li> </ul>
 <p>Person experiencing discrimination</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individual needs</li> <li>• Additional preparatory activities</li> </ul>
 <p>Person facing geographical barriers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individual needs</li> <li>• Additional preparatory activities</li> <li>• Monetary aid</li> </ul>



## Explanation of the support options:

- The **accompanying person** means the person who accompanies the participants in the mobility activity in order to ensure their safety, provide support and assistance, and help the participant to learn effectively during the mobility period. The accompanying person may accompany participants with fewer opportunities in case of individual and group activities.
- **Individual needs** are needs related to a person's daily activities. If such needs are not compensated for, the person would not be able to participate in the project, as the person with a disability may have difficulties with mobility (movement), memory, concentration, orientation in time and space, understanding of the visual and/or audible environment, writing, reading and counting, speaking (message production) and/or understanding of language (receipt of messages), independence, eating, using the toilet, and other difficulties. For example, a person with mobility needs may need to rent a wheelchair in another country or pay for transport to that country. Another example is that you may need to prepare a guide to using public transport.
- **Enhanced mentoring**, which is additional support for participants with fewer opportunities, if they are unable to implement the activity on their own and the usual help is not enough. This support may be provided by the learner to the learner or by a member of staff from the host/referring institution/organisation.

- **Easy-to-understand language** is a method of simplifying a language or text and adapting it to the needs of the listener or reader. You may read more about easy-to-understand language [here](#), click on the blue link.
- **Monetary support** is the opportunity to buy travel essentials such as a suitcase, clothes for school activities, etc.
- **Additional preparation activities**, such as targeted training, sessions with specialists such as psychologists, social pedagogues, etc.
- **Language training activities** are an opportunity for participants to improve their knowledge of a foreign language and to participate in online language courses to improve their knowledge.

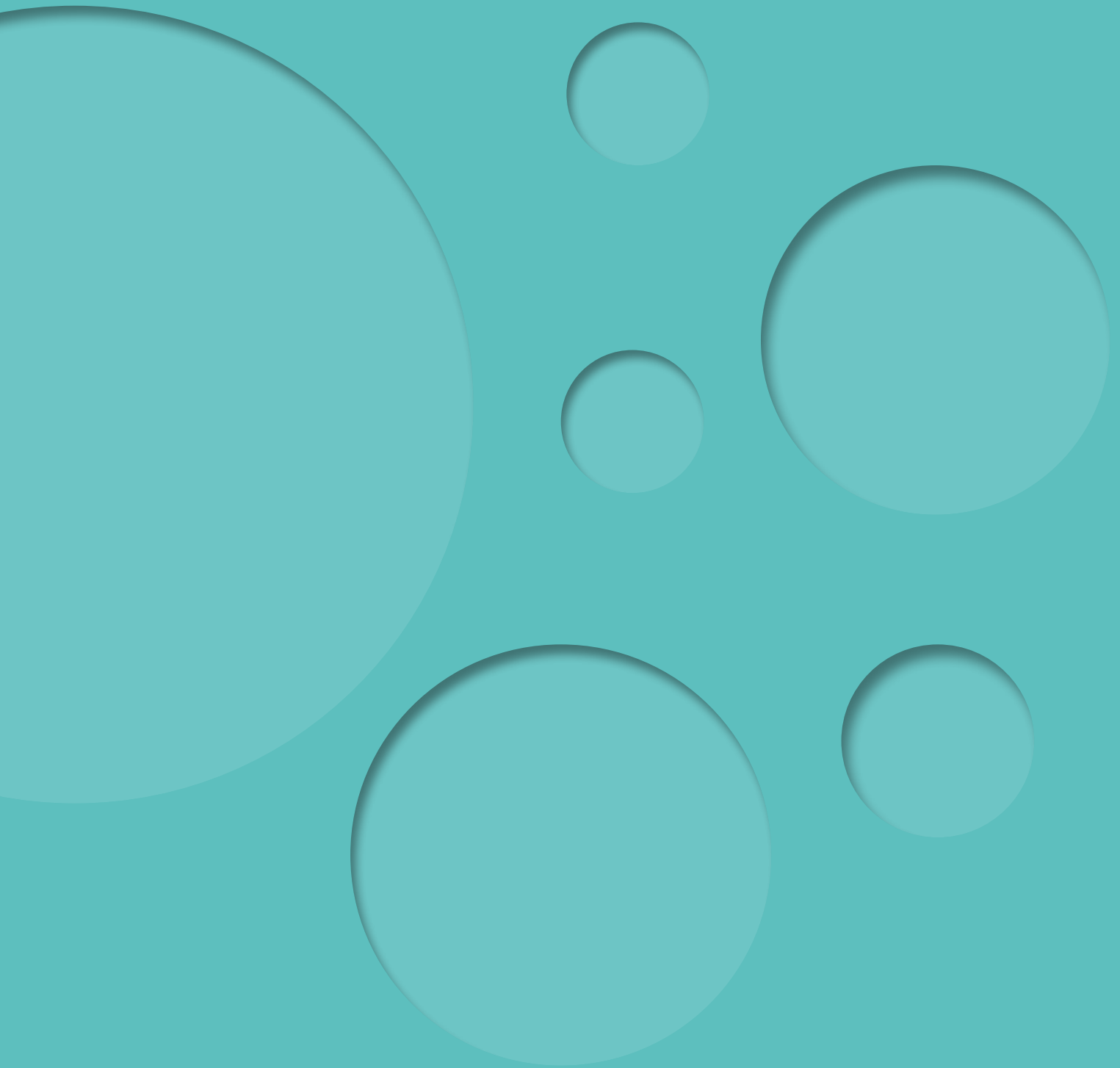


## Sources where you can find more information:

1. [Erasmus+ Programme Guide 2023](#) (Version 3, 04.04.23)
2. Source of images: Microsoft Word Icons

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# Easy-to-understand language



# Easy-to-understand language

Every school has learners who have communication, reading and reading comprehension difficulties. This can make it difficult for them to engage in project activities. We can look at the situation of Mantas:

Mantas, who has difficulties with reading and reading comprehension, wants to take part in the project activities, but may find it challenging to understand complex terminology. If the project coordinators care about Mantas, they provide all the information in easy-to-understand language.

For example, if the aim of the project is “to promote intercultural understanding and dialogue”, in the case of Mantas, the coordinators could simply explain this as “to promote communication and understanding between people from different cultures”.

This would help Mantas to understand the objectives of the project.

In addition, project coordinators can use visual aids such as illustrations, charts or graphs to help Mantas visually grasp important information.

Project coordinators may offer personal support or advice if comprehension difficulties faced by Mantas pose more serious obstacles.

Information about project activities in school should be tailored to the individual needs of learners. For example, students with visual impairments should be provided with tactile aids or audio information, while hearing impairments may be compensated for by visual aids. For learners with autistic spectrum disorders, it is important to avoid unnecessary information noise, etc.

For learners with intellectual disabilities and learning difficulties, all information must be presented in an easy-to-understand language.

The afore-mentioned examples show how an organisation can adapt to the individual needs of learners with difficulties by tailoring information and using simplified language and visual aids to ensure that all participants are involved.

**Easy-to-Read (E2R) or Easy-to-Understand (E2U) language** is a method of simplifying language or text and adapting it to the needs of the listener or reader.

It is important to remember that each of your learner has the right to receive, understand and respond to information.

When speaking or writing in easy-to-understand language, it is important to keep sentences short and clear, use simple words, and illustrate texts with pictures, photos or icons.

Depending on the needs of the readers, the text can be produced in easy-to-understand language at **three levels of simplification**.

For example, level 1 texts are relevant for people who have very severe difficulties in comprehending any text, while level 3 texts are relevant for people who have some difficulties in comprehending more complex texts and, therefore, need help.

Texts in easy-to-understand language should be tested with the people for whom they are intended.

### **Top tips for writing in easy-to-understand language:**

- follow the principle “one paragraph, one thought”;
- choose easy-to-read fonts such as Arial, Tahoma, Verdana and at least 14 font size;
- choose one font and use it for the entire text in the document;
- it is not recommended to capitalise words;
- to highlight key information, such as chapter headings or individual words, bold them or use a larger font. Use the same highlighting technique for all parts of the text;
- various embellishments such as shadows, strikethroughs, colours, gradients, etc., are an additional load on the text and make it very difficult to read. They should be avoided;
- write numbers in figures, not in words;

- align the text from the left side. Avoid centring or aligning from the right. Also, do not align the text across the full width of the line;
- leave enough space between lines. Choose at least 1.5 line spaces. This will make the text easier to read;
- complete the word on one line. The lines should be arranged in such a way that the words are not transposed;
- if you move part of a sentence to the next line, divide the sentence where the pause naturally occurs. If it is difficult to identify where the pause is in a sentence, read the sentence aloud. This will make it easier to identify the place in the sentence where the pause occurs;
- a sentence or paragraph started on one page should be finished on the same page;
- choose a pastel rather than white background for your text. Pastel backgrounds reduce the glossiness of a white page and make it easier to read;
- maintain contrast between text and background. If you choose a pastel background, note a few things. First, the chosen background should not be too bright and the text too pale;
- leave enough blank space on the page;
- try not to overload the page with information – it's better to leave more blank space. A page that is not cluttered with text or illustrations looks less intimidating and will not take away the desire to read. It is also easier to navigate on a more empty page;



- if you illustrate the text with pictures, leave enough space for them, i.e. a margin of 8 centimetres or more;
- when producing a single text in a language that is easy to understand, it would be best to use the same style of illustrations. To clarify the meaning of an image, you may add a caption to it.  
Indicate the source or author of the figures (or each figure);
- think about the colour coding for individual columns. Colour-coding different parts of the information will help the reader to orient;



- the use of the the easy-to-read logo is recommended if the text meets the easy-to-read language requirements and has been tested with representatives of the prospective readers.

## Example of easy-to-understand language

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Level 3 easy-to-understand language text

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What is a vocational training mobility project?

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It is learning in another country.

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It is new knowledge, skills and experience.

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This is an additional certificate of experience.

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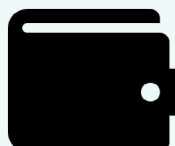
The project is open to:

- learners,
  - teachers.
- 



Duration of the project is from 6 to 8 months.

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Travel and subsistence costs are covered by the project.

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## Sources where you can find more information:

1. [Handbook of Easy Languages in Europe](#)
2. [Results of the project “Create for Lithuania”](#)
3. [Results of the project PERS I](#)
4. [Results of the project PUZLE project](#)
5. [Results of the project “Train to Validate”](#)
6. Source of images: Microsoft Word Icons.

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# Do your Traineeship in Finland with Erasmus+

Learners in initial and continuing vocational training programmes are invited to participate in the Erasmus+ KA1 mobility project. We also invite learners from the Gymnasium section who are studying a vocational module to join the activities.

Project costs are covered by the project No. 2023-1-LT01-KA121-VET-010101010101, it is possible to apply for inclusion funds.

The mobility visits will take place in May and June. The participants of mobility project will be accompanied on the visits by accompanying persons.

If you think you are brave enough to take part in an international project, please send your motivation letter and fill in the selection form, which you may obtain from the supervisor of your group. Do not forget to attach a copy of your identity document to the selection form.

**PLEASE SUBMIT YOUR DOCUMENTS BY 12 APRIL.**

For more information, please visit [www.mokykla.lt](http://www.mokykla.lt) or address by e-mail [projektai@mokykla.lt](mailto:projektai@mokykla.lt)

Try to use fewer technical terms to make the information more easily understandable for any student.

Consider whether it is truly necessary to include the project number. After all, this information doesn't mean much to students and only makes the content more complicated.

It's likely that students won't understand this term. It would be beneficial to provide more information.

Consider whether it's really necessary to require such a long list of documents. This can be intimidating for students, especially those with learning difficulties. Perhaps only a questionnaire might suffice. If documents are essential, they could be provided only by students who are selected to participate in the project, to make the process less daunting.

Don't forget the requirements for personal data protection!

Providing a phone number or office location would help in reaching more students.

**Comment:** This model notice of selection is presented as inappropriate and is not recommended. Often, notices of selection are cluttered with unnecessary details, overloaded with terms that confuse students and make it more difficult for them to understand the information. We pay particular attention to the collection of personal data and documentation, as requirements are changing and becoming more stringent.

## Traineeship in Finland with Erasmus+



### Who can participate?

Cook trainees in years 2-3 of the training programme.

When compiling texts for information dissemination, follow the recommendations for [easy-to-understand language](#).

The question-and-answer format is more easily understood by students.




### How much does it cost?

All project costs are covered by the project funds:

Images and icons help to understand information more easily.

- flight,
- insurance,
- accommodation,
- meals,
- cultural programme,
- work clothes.

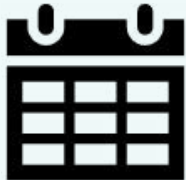
If the learner's family experiences financial difficulties, for example if one parent is unemployed, the learner may receive an additional grant in the amount from EUR 100,00 to EUR 150,00.

Present information in an easy-to-understand language, and include examples. 



### **Where will we go?**

Helsinki, Finland



### **When will we go?**

May 2023.

The traineeship will last 4 weeks.



The accompanying teachers and the host organisation abroad will take care of you.



### **What will we do there?**

You will carry out a traineeship in a real workplace, in the café “Good food”.



### **How many times can I participate?**

You can participate in Erasmus+ several times, you can test yourself in different countries, you can gain different experiences.



## Do I have to attend a selection interview?

A student who wants to do a traineeship abroad, must appear at the selection interview.



The selection form **must** be completed **until 17 March**.

The questionnaire can be found [here](#) by clicking on the blue link.



For traineeships in Finland, enquire by calling the telephone number +370 000 0000

Students and their parents find it convenient to discuss their concerns over the phone.



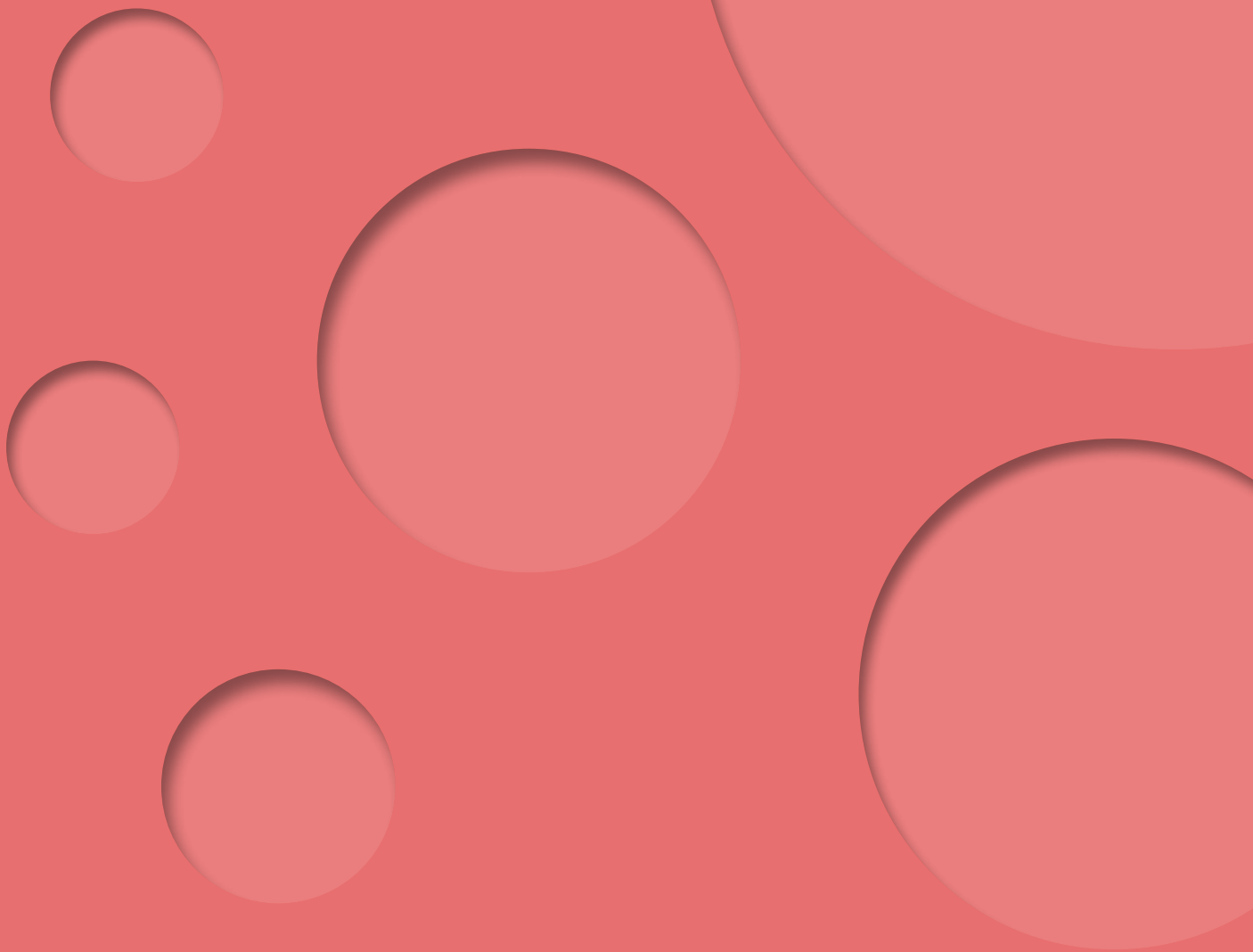
You can ask for the project manager Inga.

Inga can be found on the 1st floor of the school, in room 102.

If possible, provide as much contact information as possible, so that students have various ways to find answers to their questions.



# Organisation of the process of selection of the project participants



# Organisation of the process of selection of the project participants

The mobility project coordinator launches and organises public calls for selection of participants of the mobility project. The selection of project participants must ensure fair, equal and equivalent rights and opportunities for all members of the community, with a focus on including the less advantaged, such as Mantas. Mantas wants to take part in the project but has difficulty in understanding the selection processes: the text of the advertisement contains terms he does not understand, his lack of social skills makes him hesitant to ask for help, and he realises that his family's financial shortage is a barrier to participation in international activities (Mantas has not been abroad!).

## Does the project coordinator care about Mantas?

The situation of Mantas and his motivation to participate are very important, thus, the selection process needs to offer opportunities that facilitate his involvement and help him to overcome any barriers.

When organising and conducting the selection of participants, it is essential to ensure that selection procedures are fair, transparent, consistent and documented. The project coordinator establishes clear rules and procedures to ensure a fair and transparent participant selection process that meets the interests and needs of Mantas and other potential participants.

Thus, the example of Mantas clearly illustrates how an organisation must strive to involve people with fewer opportunities, like Mantas, and ensure that the project is accessible to them as well, in order to ensure a fair opportunity for all those who want to participate.



## Advice

- Update your organisation's descriptions (procedures) for organising and implementing mobility in accordance with the information in the Erasmus+ Accreditation and Implementation Agreement 2021–2027 or the Erasmus+ Quality Standards document;
- Update the selection criteria for participants in line with the Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps Inclusion and Diversity Strategy: inclusion is central to the afore-mentioned documents, thus, strengthen it in your organisation;
- Simplify the procedures for participation in the selections, update the selection criteria and documentation.

- Create a template for the call for applications, and don't forget to include the logos of the EU funding and the project coordinator. Tailor the information in the selection notice to the needs of the target group, visualise it and present it in an easy-to-understand language (see an example below);
- Include information on the possibility for participants with fewer opportunities to obtain individual support taking into account their needs in the selection notices;
- Don't limit the age of the selected participants and make the mobility activities open to minors. These learners may be accompanied during the mobility activity;
- Use electronic documents for selection of participants, e.g. an electronic registration form may be prepared.
- Avoid collecting personal data in the registration form and avoid open-ended and lengthy questions that require a long description.
- Include a question in the questionnaire asking learners to indicate whether they are participants with fewer opportunities. Furthermore, ask if they need additional individual support (see an example);

# Registration for selection and traineeships abroad

Erasmus+ Mobility Project No ..... short-term mobility for learners



The selection is open to learners who are enrolled in vocational training programmes or vocational training modules.



Learners wishing to apply for selection and traineeships abroad must register by **12 September**.

The traineeships will take place **during the academic years 2023–2024**.



Please answer the following questions in writing:



Your name and surname



How old are you?



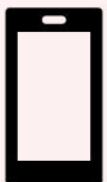
If you are under 18 years old, you must attach the consent of your parents or guardians.



Your telephone number



Your e-mail address



Telephone number of one of your parents/guardians



Name of your group or class



Title of your vocational training programme  
(vocational module)



Name and surname of your teacher who could recommend you.



Tick the languages in which you can communicate:

English

German

French

Russian

other \_\_\_\_\_



What is your level of **English**:

I can communicate freely

I know basic phrases

I need help communicating in a foreign language

other \_\_\_\_\_



Why do you want to do a traineeship abroad?



Does any of the following apply to you?

If yes, please tick which one.

I have a disability

I find it difficult to study

I have health problems

one or both of my parents are unemployed

I am from a large family (3 or more children)

my family does not have enough money

I am an orphan

I live only with one parent

I live in a village far from the city

I have speech and language difficulties

I have special dietary needs

I don't agree with any of the above listed statements





What do you want to ask about the traineeship?



Write your questions here.

Do you consent to collection, processing and storage of your personal data for the purposes of your participation in the Erasmus+ project activities during the project period (name of the school).

Yes

No

# Success stories

# Success stories

## Lukas

Lukas studies at a vocational school and plans to become a successful car mechanic. He lives in the school dormitory and on Fridays after school he rushes to get back home as soon as possible to help his parents. The parents of Lukas are elderly and his father suffers from Alzheimer's disease, thus the mother of Lukas needs constant help of her son in the family's farm. He does not have the opportunity to travel at weekends or during school holidays, have fun and at the same time to broaden his horizons, socialise and get to know new places and people. However, Lukas had the opportunity to take part in an Erasmus+ project and do a traineeship in Spain. Participation in mobility activities gave him something he couldn't get in his family environment, i.e. travelling, improving his English language skills, communicating and discussing with his peers about his hobbies, music and sports.

## Laurynas

Laurynas studies under a vocational training programme for cooks, which is designed for students with individual learning needs.

Students in his group went on traineeships in Turkey and Italy during their first and second years of study. We also talked to Laurynas, but he wouldn't even take part in the selection process. We noticed that when the classmates of Laurynas came back from their traineeships abroad and told us their impressions, his body language showed that he was very interested in the information. We organised another traineeship for learners with individual learning needs and invited Laurynas to take part in the selection again. At first, Laurynas was silent, but then he mentioned that he had talked to his mother about the possibility of going abroad, and she did not encourage him, did not say those supportive words "you can do it, you will make it". We decided that we needed to talk to his mother in person.

The special educator of the school called his mother and told her about the organisation of the traineeship, what Laurynas would be doing during the traineeship, that he would get extra support to prepare for the trip and that he would be able to buy a suitcase, shoes and clothes.

When Laurynas, a student who used to quietly and calmly carry out his tasks in the kitchen workshop during lessons, was asked about the traineeship, and about something else, he was silent and smiled. During his traineeship in Italy, he was a completely different pupil, i.e. he talked a lot, shared his emotions, joked and even had to be asked to be more discreet. We guess his only regret after the traineeship was that he realised too late how fun and rewarding it can be to take part in a mobility project.

## Roberta

Roberta studies to become a waiter and. Although this profession requires good communication and teamwork skills, Roberta is the kind of learner who struggles to communicate and come into contact with new people. Maybe it is because she is an orphan, a very sensitive child who is afraid to open up, show her fears, share her joys. It is easier for her to hide behind a wall of indifference and separate herself from the rest of the group. When all the learners enthusiastically participated in the process of selection for a placement abroad, the social pedagogue and the group teacher suggested that Roberta should also participate. The reaction of Roberta was different from that of all the other learners. She was not happy, on the contrary, she was angry. Roberta said “I was born in Lithuania, I live here and I will live here. I don’t need to go anywhere from Lithuania, leave me alone”. The attitude of Roberta changed after the mobility activities of the invited experts in our school. The colleagues stayed in the learners’ dormitory and in the evenings came to the lounge to talk to the learners. They told the learners about their country, the site of the placement and taught them traditional dances. Of course, they also talked with Roberta about coming to their company and gaining practical experience. Roberta became interested, started to trust people from another country and overcame the barrier of communicating in a foreign language. She personally came to the project coordinator to ask about the possibility of a traineeship. The two months she spent on the traineeship abroad were one of the best months in her life. She became much more courageous, open, tolerant and confident. The traineeship of Roberta has come to an end, but she has returned with the idea of taking part in an Erasmus+ mobility project again if the opportunity arises.

## Saulius

Saulius grew up in his grandparents' home. His mother is addicted to psychotropic substances, thus, she left Saulius to be raised by her parents when he was still young. Saulius was keen to take part in a traineeship as a car mechanic in Portugal, but the selection committee had many doubts about him going to the traineeship.

The learner support specialists had received information from his former school that Saulius was an occasional user of psychotropic substances and that his psychological state was not stable. However, the learner was very supportive and recommended by his group teacher, who convinced the selection committee that the learner should be given a chance.

Even though we knew that it would be difficult and that there might be crisis situations, we decided to send Saulius to Portugal for three weeks.

During the placement, a learner support specialist was with the group of learners to help Saulius at the right moment. Yes, there were problems, but we talked to Saulius and solved them. During the placement, we saw a happy learner who was eating well, buying new clothes, having fun and even starting to like his chosen profession. We were happy that we trusted Saulius and provided him the opportunity to gain international experience, try himself in a new environment and gain life experience.

## Giedra

I am Giedra Sadauskienė, an expert teacher of the profession at Kaunas Education Center of Technologies. I have been working with learners with individual educational needs under the cook modular vocational training programme for 23 years. In my work practice I often participate in the Erasmus+ programme. I accompany learners with individual educational needs on traineeship under the programme. The most common duration of a traineeship is 1 month. I often hear concerns from colleagues that it can be very difficult to work with pupils with individual educational needs on placements. There are all kinds of fears and questions. How will such a learner adapt to a new environment? How will they overcome the foreign language barrier? Will there be behavioural and emotional problems? In my experience, travelling with these people gives you an insight into their personal worldview. They have a lot of fears when it comes to changes in their daily activities. When they go on traineeship, they change in a good way. An Erasmus+ project is often the only opportunity they have to improve their skills in a foreign country and learn work skills in a different culture. Every person with a disability feels important when they have an opportunity to go abroad. He or she feels proud that someone has believed in him or her, that someone has given him or her a helping hand. At the beginning of their traineeship, they are silent observers, when they feel emboldened, they replicate the actions of their mentors, and then take the initiative. Often, their efforts exceed their capabilities. They try to carry out every work in the kitchen with the utmost care and responsibility, often surprising their foreign partners with their perseverance, sincerity, responsibility and effort in the work. For me as an accompanying person during

the traineeship, it is very rewarding to see the growing skills of my learners. You see how people who used to say just a few words in Lithuania speak non-stop at the end of their traineeship abroad. How they learn words of another language and when they arrive at their foreign partners' homes, they greet them with pride and ask how they are doing. I also notice how everyday skills change during the trip, i.e. they start washing more often, tidying up, paying attention to their clothes, watching what they eat, discussing the sights they see and the work they do. When the learners return, they share their impressions with their peers and demonstrate what they have learned. They travel cautiously go to employers and tell them that they have worked and studied in a foreign country, and later, thanks to this experience, they find courage to enter the Lithuanian labour market. Some learners even dare to dream of going back, and in some cases, their dreams become realised goals. The placement of the accompanying person is a 24-hour-a-day job, but travelling with these people allow realising the added value you are adding to their professional path. I would like to encourage all vocational trainers not to be afraid of travelling with learners with special educational needs. Give them a helping hand, believe in them and their dreams will become reality thanks to your kindness.



# Final word



# Final word

This publication highlights the importance of inclusion and diversity in Erasmus+ mobility projects and at the same time reveals the impact of individual needs on the success of projects. As the example of Mantas shows, each potential participant may face his own unique challenges that must be addressed and overcome to ensure equal participation opportunities for everyone.

In order to actually achieve inclusion, it is important not only to adhere to the principles in theory, but also to take action in practice.

The principles of inclusion and diversity must become an integrated part of the project planning and implementation process. This includes understanding that each participant is unique and may have different needs. It is important to offer the right tools, such as easy-to-understand information, support for people with difficulties and other means in the preparation process, so that everyone could actively participate and contribute to the achievement of the objectives of the projects.

The European Union and the Erasmus+ programme promote inclusion and diversity in order to build a fairer and more equal society.

We, the project promoters, coordinators, and all interested parties, must work together so that the afore-mentioned principles were implemented not only theoretically, but also practically. This means understanding everyone's personal context, providing the right tools and creating an environment where all participants feel accepted and valued.

Thus, the story of Mantas is an example of how inclusion and diversity must be given special careful attention and consistent care.

When project managers, coordinators and all stakeholders pay attention to the individual needs of participants like Mantas, it allows them to truly engage and participate in activities, albeit with specific challenges.

Mantas is just one of thousands of examples that prove that true inclusion is possible when every person is seen and understood, and their individual needs are included in the planning and implementation of all activities. Erasmus+ projects become not only a platform for learning and cultural exchange, but also an important step towards a fairer and more tolerant society.

This publication invites you to pay attention to the individual needs of every person and at the same time enjoy the opportunity to share your experiences, strengthen the community and shape an inclusive future. The Erasmus+ programme is more than just going abroad, it is a great opportunity to learn from each other, share and together create a future of education where everyone has a place.

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**Education Exchanges Support Foundation**

**2023**