Funded by the European Union

Kosovo Erasmus+ Office

Kosovo Erasmus+ Office

Manual on Inclusion and Diversity for Erasmus+ Actions



Funded by the European Union

Kosovo Erasmus+ Office

Kosovo Erasmus+ Office

Manual on Inclusion and Diversity for Erasmus+ Actions

Table of Contents

Introduction	**3**
Target Audience	**3**
The scope and objectives of the manual	**4**
Defining Inclusion and identifying groups with fewer opportunities	**5**
Benefits of Inclusion and Diversity	**6**
Inclusive Learning Environments and Institutional Culture	**7**
Inclusive Curriculum Design and Flexible Teaching and Learning	**8**
KA1 - Integrating Inclusion and Diversity into International Credit Mobility actions	**8**
KA2 - Integrating Inclusion and Diversity into Capacity Building Projects	**12**
Identification, Data Collection and Monitoring	**14**
Practical Tools and Checklists	**15**
Conclusion	**18**

Introduction

This manual serves as a practical resource for higher education institutions (HEIs) engaged in Erasmus+ International Credit Mobility and Capacity Building in Higher Education activities. Through its focus on inclusion and diversity, it aims to support more equitable access to Erasmus+ opportunities and to contribute to educational environments in which participants from different backgrounds and circumstances can participate fully.

The Manual provides guidance to higher education institutions and other organisations involved in Erasmus+ on identifying and reducing barriers that may prevent students and staff from participating in mobility and project activities. It promotes equal opportunities and encourages institutions to consider the different needs, circumstances and backgrounds of participants when designing and implementing Erasmus+ activities.

The updated edition broadens this approach by connecting inclusion and diversity within Erasmus+ with the wider social dimension of higher education. Inclusion should not be limited to access to international mobility or participation in individual projects, but should also be reflected in the everyday practices of higher education institutions. This includes the organisation of learning and teaching, institutional services and support, accessibility, communication, student participation and the development of inclusive institutional cultures and learning environments.

Accordingly, the Manual encourages higher education institutions to consider how the principles and practices developed through Erasmus+ can contribute to wider institutional development. Particular attention is given to inclusive learning environments, diverse student needs and life circumstances, flexible approaches to teaching and learning, inclusion within capacity-building and institutional development, and improved identification and monitoring of barriers affecting disadvantaged and underrepresented groups.

By combining its original focus on inclusive Erasmus+ participation with this broader institutional perspective, the Manual aims to support higher education institutions in progressively embedding inclusion and diversity into both Erasmus+ activities and their regular institutional practices.

Target Audience

The target audience of this Manual includes individuals, institutions and organisations involved in Erasmus+ activities and in the development of inclusive practices within higher education. While maintaining its particular relevance for International Credit Mobility and Capacity Building in Higher Education, the updated Manual also addresses stakeholders whose work can contribute to strengthening the wider social dimension of higher education.

The primary target audience includes:
- Higher education institution leadership and management: responsible for institutional strategies, policies and procedures and for creating an institutional environment that supports inclusion and diversity;
- International Relations Officers and Erasmus+ coordinators: responsible for information, outreach, selection, preparation and support of students and staff participating in international mobility;
- Erasmus+ project coordinators and project partners: responsible for integrating inclusion and diversity throughout the planning, implementation, monitoring and sustainability of Capacity Building and other Erasmus+ projects;
- Academic staff, educators and trainers: responsible for teaching and learning and for adapting educational approaches to diverse student needs, learning styles and circumstances;
- Professional and administrative staff and student support services: responsible for providing accessible institutional services and appropriate support to students with different needs and circumstances;
- Curriculum and programme developers: responsible for developing curricula, learning activities

and educational content that support inclusive participation and respond to diverse student needs;
- Students and student organisations: as participants in Erasmus+ activities and important contributors to the development of inclusive learning environments and institutional practices;
- Monitoring and evaluation staff: responsible for monitoring participation, identifying barriers and assessing the effectiveness of institutional inclusion and diversity measures;
- Policymakers and relevant public authorities: responsible for supporting policies and measures that strengthen inclusion, diversity and the social dimension of higher education;
- Civil society organisations and other external stakeholders: particularly organisations working with disadvantaged and underrepresented groups that can support outreach, accessibility and participation;
- Researchers, experts and capacity-building professionals: involved in research, training and institutional development related to inclusion, diversity and the social dimension of higher education.
This broader target audience reflects the understanding that inclusion and diversity are not solely the responsibility of Erasmus+ coordinators or individual projects. They require the involvement and cooperation of different actors across higher education institutions and their wider communities.

The scope and objectives of the manual

The scope of this Manual is to provide practical guidance on integrating inclusion and diversity principles into Erasmus+ activities and, more broadly, into relevant practices of higher education institutions. It retains a particular focus on International Credit Mobility and Capacity Building in Higher Education while strengthening the connection between Erasmus+ inclusion measures and the wider social dimension of higher education.

The Manual covers different stages of Erasmus+ mobility and project implementation, including outreach and information, participant selection and support, project planning, curriculum development, implementation, monitoring, evaluation and sustainability. At the same time, it encourages higher education institutions to consider how inclusion and diversity can be incorporated into their everyday institutional practices, learning environments, teaching and learning arrangements, student support and institutional development.

Particular attention is given to identifying barriers that may affect the participation of disadvantaged and underrepresented students, recognising diverse student needs and life circumstances, promoting inclusive learning environments and institutional cultures, and developing flexible approaches to teaching and learning. The Manual also addresses the role of Capacity Building in Higher Education projects in supporting more systematic and sustainable institutional approaches to inclusion and diversity.

Objectives of the Manual

The Manual aims to:
- Strengthen understanding of inclusion, diversity and the social dimension: provide a clear understanding of inclusion and diversity within Erasmus+ and their connection with the broader social dimension of higher education;
- Support equitable access and participation: encourage higher education institutions to identify and reduce barriers that may prevent students and staff from accessing and participating fully in Erasmus+ activities and higher education;
- Support inclusive Erasmus+ mobility: provide practical guidance for incorporating inclusion and diversity throughout International Credit Mobility, from outreach and selection to preparation, participation and follow-up;
- Strengthen inclusion in Capacity Building in Higher Education: support project coordinators and partners in integrating inclusion and diversity into project design, implementation, monitoring, sustainability and institutional development;

- Promote inclusive learning environments and institutional cultures: encourage institutions to incorporate inclusion and diversity into their everyday practices and create environments in which students with different backgrounds, needs and circumstances can participate;
- Promote inclusive curriculum design and flexible teaching and learning: encourage approaches that recognise different learning needs, learning styles and personal circumstances and provide appropriate flexibility in the organisation of teaching and access to learning;
- Strengthen identification and monitoring of barriers: encourage institutions to identify disadvantaged and underrepresented groups, collect appropriate information and monitor participation in order to support evidence-informed improvements;
- Provide practical guidance for institutional development: offer recommendations and practical tools that institutions can use to review and progressively strengthen their inclusion and diversity practices.

The Manual is intended to provide a practical and adaptable framework rather than a single model applicable to every institution. Higher education institutions can use its recommendations according to their specific context, responsibilities and capacities, while progressively strengthening inclusion and diversity within Erasmus+ activities and their wider institutional practices.

Defining Inclusion and identifying groups with fewer opportunities

In the context of this Manual, inclusion refers to intentional and proactive efforts to create educational environments in which individuals, regardless of their background, circumstances or characteristics, have equitable opportunities to access, participate in and benefit from higher education and Erasmus+ activities. Inclusion involves identifying and removing barriers to participation, providing appropriate support and fostering learning and institutional environments in which all participants feel respected, valued and able to contribute.

Inclusion goes beyond representation or participation alone. It requires higher education institutions to consider how their policies, procedures, services, teaching and learning practices and Erasmus+ activities may affect students and staff with different needs and circumstances. This includes adapting institutional and educational practices where appropriate in order to support meaningful and equitable participation.

Within Erasmus+, particular attention is given to people with fewer opportunities, who may face barriers that prevent or limit their access to programme opportunities. In the wider context of the social dimension of higher education, similar barriers may affect access to, participation in and successful engagement with higher education more generally.

The existing Manual identified a number of groups that may experience marginalisation or barriers in the Kosovo context, including minority ethnic communities; Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities; persons with disabilities; women and girls; the LGBTQ+ community; and people experiencing economic marginalisation. These groups remain relevant to the Manual, while the updated approach recognises that barriers should not be understood exclusively through fixed categories.

Students may also experience barriers arising from their personal and life circumstances. As highlighted during the TAM seminar `Strengthening the Social Dimension of Higher Education`, particular attention should be given to circumstances such as pregnancy, parenthood and caregiving responsibilities. Such circumstances may affect a student's ability to participate in conventional forms of teaching, learning and mobility even when the student does not belong permanently to a traditionally identified disadvantaged group.

It is therefore important to recognise that disadvantage may be permanent, temporary or situational. Barriers can also overlap: an individual may experience several barriers simultaneously, which can increase their effect on participation. Higher education institutions should consequently focus not only on identifying particular groups, but also on understanding the actual barriers experienced by

individual students and participants.

For the purposes of this Manual, particular attention should therefore be given to circumstances and barriers that may affect equitable participation, including:
- belonging to minority ethnic or underrepresented communities;
- disability and accessibility-related barriers;
- socioeconomic and financial barriers;
- geographical barriers, including living in remote areas;
- gender-related barriers;
- discrimination or social stigma;
- pregnancy and parenthood;
- caregiving responsibilities;
- language and cultural barriers;
- other temporary or situational circumstances that may restrict participation in learning, institutional activities or Erasmus+ opportunities.

The identification of people with fewer opportunities should therefore not be treated simply as a process of assigning individuals to predetermined categories. It should help institutions understand which barriers exist, how they affect participation and what forms of support or adaptation may be appropriate. This approach can support both more inclusive Erasmus+ activities and the development of more inclusive everyday institutional practices.

Benefits of Inclusion and Diversity

Inclusion and diversity provide important benefits for students, staff, higher education institutions and the wider community. Within Erasmus+ International Credit Mobility and Capacity Building in Higher Education, inclusive approaches can help ensure more equitable access to opportunities while enriching educational experiences through interaction among participants with different backgrounds, perspectives and experiences.

Inclusive and diverse learning environments can contribute to enhanced learning experiences by exposing students to different perspectives, ideas and experiences. This can strengthen critical thinking, problem-solving, intercultural understanding and the ability to communicate and collaborate across differences.

Inclusion also contributes to equitable participation by recognising that students and staff may experience different barriers and may therefore require different forms of support to participate fully. Identifying and addressing such barriers can help institutions create educational and Erasmus+ opportunities that are more accessible to people with different needs and circumstances.

At institutional level, inclusion and diversity can contribute to the development of a stronger sense of belonging and community. Inclusive institutional practices can encourage mutual respect, participation and cooperation among students and staff and can help higher education institutions respond more effectively to the diversity of their student populations.

In Erasmus+ activities, diversity can also strengthen cross-cultural communication and international cooperation. Mobility and international projects provide opportunities for participants and institutions to encounter different perspectives and practices, develop intercultural competences and establish wider networks for cooperation.

Inclusive approaches can additionally strengthen the long-term impact of Erasmus+ projects and institutional initiatives. When inclusion and diversity are considered in project design, implementation, teaching and learning, institutional services and capacity building, their benefits can extend beyond individual participants and contribute to wider institutional development.

More broadly, promoting inclusion and diversity supports the principles of equal opportunity, respect and participation. By progressively embedding these principles into Erasmus+ activities and everyday institutional practices, higher education institutions can contribute to more inclusive learning environments and institutional cultures.

Inclusive Learning Environments and Institutional Culture

Inclusion and diversity should not be limited to participation in specific Erasmus+ activities. Higher education institutions can strengthen their contribution to the social dimension by progressively integrating inclusive principles into their everyday institutional practices and learning environments. An inclusive learning environment is one in which students with different backgrounds, needs and personal circumstances are able to participate meaningfully in academic and institutional life. This requires institutions to recognise that barriers to participation may arise not only in accessing higher education or Erasmus+ opportunities, but also through the way teaching, learning, institutional services and other activities are organised.

Developing an inclusive institutional culture therefore requires a shared commitment across the institution. Inclusion should not be considered solely the responsibility of International Relations Offices, Erasmus+ coordinators or individual projects. Institutional management, academic staff, professional and administrative staff, student support services and students themselves can all contribute to identifying barriers and developing appropriate responses.

Higher education institutions should pay particular attention to the accessibility of institutional services and information. Students should be able to obtain clear and accessible information about available opportunities, procedures and support. Communication should take into consideration the diversity of the student population and circumstances that may affect students' ability to access or use institutional services.

Student support is another important component of an inclusive institutional environment. Different students may require different forms of support depending on the barriers or circumstances they experience. Institutions should therefore consider how existing services and procedures can respond appropriately to diverse student needs and how relevant institutional units can cooperate when additional support is required.

An inclusive institutional culture also depends on student participation and a sense of belonging. Students should have opportunities to express their needs, provide feedback on barriers they encounter and contribute to discussions concerning institutional practices that affect their participation. Such engagement can help institutions better understand the diversity of student experiences and identify areas where improvement is needed.

Staff awareness and cooperation are equally important. Academic and professional staff should be aware that students may experience permanent, temporary or situational barriers to participation. Cooperation between institutional management, academic staff, International Relations Offices and relevant student support services can help ensure that inclusion is addressed in a coordinated manner rather than through isolated individual actions.

Higher education institutions should recognise the importance of strengthening the administrative and organisational capacity of International Relations Offices to ensure the effective implementation of Erasmus+ mobility activities. Adequate human resources, clearly defined responsibilities and continuous professional development of administrative staff are essential for providing timely and appropriate support to students and staff. Institutional management should regularly assess the operational needs of International Relations Offices and promote effective coordination between

academic departments, mobility commissions and relevant administrative services. Particular attention should be given to ensuring that limited administrative capacities do not create additional barriers to accessing and participating in international mobility opportunities.

Erasmus+ activities can contribute to this wider institutional development. Experience gained through inclusive mobility, Capacity Building in Higher Education projects and cooperation with partner institutions can provide practices and approaches that may also be relevant to the regular functioning of higher education institutions. In this way, Erasmus+ can serve not only as an opportunity for inclusive international participation, but also as a means of strengthening more inclusive institutional cultures and learning environments.

Inclusive Curriculum Design and Flexible Teaching and Learning

Inclusive higher education requires attention not only to access and participation, but also to the way curricula, teaching and learning activities are designed and delivered. Students may have different learning needs, learning styles and personal circumstances that influence their ability to participate in conventional forms of teaching and learning.

Higher education institutions should therefore consider inclusion when developing and reviewing curricula and organising teaching and learning activities. Inclusive curriculum design should seek to provide students with meaningful opportunities to participate in learning while recognising the diversity of the student population.

Particular attention should be given to students whose personal circumstances may temporarily or continuously affect their participation. These may include pregnant students, young parents and students with caregiving responsibilities. Such circumstances may create barriers even when students do not belong to groups traditionally identified as disadvantaged or underrepresented.

Flexible teaching and learning can help institutions respond to these different circumstances. Flexibility should not be understood exclusively as providing online teaching. While online participation may be appropriate in some situations, institutions should also consider other ways of organising teaching, learning activities and access to educational content that enable students experiencing particular barriers or circumstances to continue participating in their studies.

Inclusive teaching should also recognise that students may have different learning needs and ways of engaging with educational content. Academic staff should therefore consider appropriate teaching methods, learning activities and materials that enable participation by a diverse student population. Where necessary and feasible, adaptations should respond to identified barriers while maintaining the intended learning outcomes of the study programme or course.

Communication between students, academic staff and relevant institutional services is important for identifying appropriate arrangements. Students should have opportunities to communicate barriers affecting their participation, while institutions should seek appropriate responses through cooperation between academic and professional staff.

Inclusive curriculum design and flexible teaching and learning should form part of a wider institutional approach to inclusion. By considering diverse student needs and circumstances when organising education, higher education institutions can strengthen inclusive learning environments and help translate the principles of inclusion and diversity into everyday academic practice.

KA1 - Integrating Inclusion and Diversity into International Credit Mobility actions

Integrating inclusion and diversity throughout Erasmus+ International Credit Mobility (ICM) is

important for ensuring equitable access to international learning opportunities. Students and staff may experience different barriers before, during and after mobility, and higher education institutions should consider inclusion throughout the complete mobility cycle rather than only during participant selection.

An inclusive approach to mobility should therefore cover outreach and information, application and selection, preparation before mobility, support during mobility, and return and follow-up. Particular attention should be given to participants with fewer opportunities and to circumstances that may create additional barriers to participation.

1. Outreach and Accessible Information

Information about Erasmus+ mobility opportunities should be clear, accessible and available sufficiently early to allow potential participants to understand the opportunities and support available to them. Higher education institutions should:

- provide clear information on eligibility, application procedures, selection criteria, mobility arrangements and available financial support;
- ensure that information reaches students from different backgrounds and groups that may be underrepresented in international mobility;
- provide information about available accessibility arrangements and additional support for participants with fewer opportunities;
- cooperate, where appropriate, with student organisations, civil society organisations and other relevant actors to reach potential participants who may otherwise have limited access to information;
- use Erasmus+ alumni and former mobility participants to share experiences and encourage wider participation.

2. Application and Inclusive Selection

Selection procedures should be transparent, equitable and designed so that unnecessary barriers do not disadvantage potential participants. Institutions should:

- establish clear and transparent selection criteria;
- encourage applications from students and staff with different backgrounds and circumstances;
- consider whether application and selection procedures themselves create barriers for particular participants;
- ensure that relevant information concerning available support is communicated during the application and selection process;
- provide appropriate assistance where accessibility, language or other barriers affect a candidate's ability to participate in the procedure.

Inclusive selection does not mean reducing academic or programme requirements. Rather, it means ensuring that eligible candidates have an equitable opportunity to demonstrate their suitability for mobility.

Higher education institutions should establish transparent and effective procedures for managing withdrawals from planned Erasmus+ mobility activities. Where appropriate, institutions are encouraged to maintain reserve lists of eligible candidates to facilitate the timely replacement of selected participants who withdraw before departure. Such procedures should respect the established selection criteria and principles of fairness, transparency and equal opportunities. Particular attention should be given to ensuring that available mobility opportunities are fully utilised and that withdrawals do not unnecessarily reduce access to international learning experiences.

Higher education institutions participating in Erasmus+ International Credit Mobility activities

should ensure full compliance with the principles and commitments established under the Erasmus Charter for Higher Education (ECHE) and applicable Erasmus+ Programme requirements. Particular attention should be given to transparent and equitable selection procedures, the protection of participants' rights and the prevention of unauthorised fees associated with mobility participation. Institutions should provide clear information on participants' rights and obligations and establish accessible mechanisms for submitting complaints and addressing potential irregularities. Institutional management and International Relations Offices should regularly review mobility procedures to ensure compliance with Erasmus+ requirements and promote fairness, transparency and equal opportunities for all participants.

3. Financial and Additional Support

Financial circumstances can represent an important barrier to international mobility. Potential participants should therefore receive clear information about the financial support available through Erasmus+ and any additional support for which they may be eligible. Institutions should provide timely information about available grants and other forms of support and, where relevant, assist participants in understanding the procedures for requesting additional support related to their individual circumstances. Particular attention should be given to additional costs that participants with fewer opportunities may encounter when preparing for or undertaking mobility.

Higher education institutions should also consider the financial challenges arising from differences in living costs across destination countries, which may discourage students from participating in Erasmus+ mobility or lead to withdrawal from planned exchanges. Institutions should provide prospective participants with timely information on expected living expenses, available financial support and possible additional costs. Particular attention should be given to students from disadvantaged socioeconomic backgrounds, ensuring that financial constraints do not unnecessarily limit their access to international mobility opportunities.

4. Preparation before Mobility

Inclusive mobility requires appropriate preparation before departure. Preparation should take account of the academic, practical, linguistic, cultural and individual needs of participants. Higher education institutions should:

- provide appropriate pre-departure information and orientation;
- offer or facilitate language support where needed;
- provide information about accommodation, transportation, accessibility and relevant support services at the receiving institution;
- facilitate communication between the participant and the receiving institution concerning identified support needs;
- prepare participants for intercultural communication and the academic and social environment of the host institution.

Where individual circumstances may affect participation, appropriate arrangements should, as far as possible, be discussed before mobility begins.

Higher education institutions should provide appropriate guidance and administrative assistance to students and staff facing difficulties related to visa applications, residence permits and other entry requirements for international mobility. Particular attention should be given to participants who may encounter additional administrative, financial or procedural barriers due to their country of origin or destination. International Relations Offices should cooperate with receiving institutions to provide timely information on documentation requirements, application procedures, processing times and associated costs, thereby reducing the risk of delays, cancellations or withdrawal from planned mobility activities.

5. Accessibility and Support during Mobility

Support should continue throughout the mobility period. Participants should know whom they can contact at both the sending and receiving institution if they encounter academic, accessibility, social or practical difficulties. Where relevant, institutions should facilitate access to:

- appropriate academic and institutional support;
- accessible accommodation and transportation information;
- accessible learning materials and facilities;
- language support;
- mentoring and peer support;
- relevant student and support services.

Cooperation between the sending and receiving institutions is particularly important where participants require specific arrangements or additional support.

6. Peer Support, Mentoring and Intercultural Inclusion

Peer support and mentoring can help participants adapt to a new academic, social and cultural environment. Institutions should consider involving Erasmus+ alumni, student organisations and other students in providing practical guidance and peer support. Activities that encourage intercultural exchange and communication can also contribute to a stronger sense of belonging and mutual understanding among incoming and local students. Such activities should complement, rather than replace, formal institutional support where participants require specific assistance.

7. Return and Follow-Up

Inclusion should continue to be considered after the mobility period has ended. Returning participants can provide valuable information about barriers, support mechanisms and practices encountered during mobility. Higher education institutions should:

- provide opportunities for participants to give feedback on their mobility experience;
- identify any inclusion-related difficulties encountered during mobility;
- use participant feedback to improve future mobility procedures and support;
- encourage Erasmus+ alumni to share their experiences with prospective participants, particularly students who may have concerns about barriers to participation.

Experiences gained through inclusive mobility can also help institutions identify practices that may be relevant to their wider institutional environment.

Higher education institutions should ensure the timely and appropriate academic recognition of study periods successfully completed abroad within Erasmus+ International Credit Mobility activities. Particular attention should be given to differences between curricula, course syllabi and learning outcomes at sending and receiving institutions, which may create difficulties in transferring and recognising ECTS credits. International Relations Offices, academic departments and relevant institutional bodies should strengthen their cooperation to ensure that learning agreements are appropriately prepared before departure and that agreed academic achievements are recognised upon completion of mobility. Institutions should regularly review their internal recognition procedures and address potential obstacles that may discourage students from participating in international mobility opportunities.

8. Evaluation and Continuous Improvement

Higher education institutions should periodically evaluate the inclusiveness of their mobility activities. Evaluation should consider not only the number of participants, but also whether particular groups or circumstances are associated with barriers to application, participation or successful completion of mobility. Feedback from participants, staff, partner institutions and other relevant

stakeholders can help identify areas requiring improvement. The results should be used to strengthen outreach, selection procedures, preparation, support services and cooperation with partner institutions. By integrating inclusion and diversity throughout the complete mobility cycle, higher education institutions can help create more equitable opportunities for international participation while using the experience gained through Erasmus+ mobility to strengthen their wider institutional approaches to inclusion.

Higher education institutions should strengthen institutional accountability and coordination in the management and implementation of Erasmus+ International Credit Mobility activities. Clearly defined responsibilities among institutional management, International Relations Offices, mobility commissions and academic departments can contribute to more transparent, consistent and efficient mobility procedures. Institutions should regularly review their internal arrangements, identify recurring administrative and academic challenges, and develop appropriate measures to address them. Particular attention should be given to ensuring that institutional procedures facilitate equitable access to mobility opportunities and that students and staff receive adequate support throughout the mobility process.

KA2 - Integrating Inclusion and Diversity into Capacity Building Projects

Integrating inclusion and diversity into Erasmus+ Capacity Building in Higher Education (CBHE) projects requires a systematic approach throughout the project lifecycle. Inclusion should be considered from the initial identification of needs and project design through implementation, monitoring, evaluation and sustainability. Capacity-building projects also provide an opportunity to go beyond inclusive participation in individual project activities. They can contribute to longer-term institutional development by supporting more inclusive curricula, teaching and learning practices, institutional services, staff capacities, procedures and institutional cultures.

1. Needs Assessment and Project Design

Inclusion and diversity should be considered from the earliest stages of project development. A needs assessment can help identify barriers experienced by relevant student groups, staff or other beneficiaries and determine how the proposed project can respond to them. Project partners should:
- identify relevant barriers and needs within participating institutions;
- consider whether particular groups are underrepresented or experience difficulties in accessing relevant educational opportunities or institutional services;
- involve relevant stakeholders, where appropriate, in identifying needs;
- define clear inclusion-related objectives and expected results;
- ensure that inclusion and diversity are reflected in relevant project activities rather than treated as separate or additional issues.

2. Partnerships and Cooperation

Project partnerships can strengthen inclusion by bringing together institutions and organisations with different experiences, expertise and perspectives. When relevant to the project's objectives, partnerships should:
- involve organisations with relevant experience in inclusion and diversity;
- encourage cooperation between academic and professional staff;
- engage relevant student representatives, support services, civil society organisations or other stakeholders;
- promote respectful communication and cooperation across different institutional, cultural and linguistic contexts.

Partners should develop a shared understanding of the project's inclusion objectives and their

respective responsibilities for achieving them.

3. Inclusive Participation in Project Activities

Project activities should be organised in ways that support equitable participation. Project teams should consider:
- how participants are informed about project opportunities;
- whether selection procedures create unnecessary barriers;
- accessibility of project venues, activities and materials;
- language or communication barriers;
- support required by participants experiencing particular circumstances;
- appropriate adaptations that can facilitate meaningful participation.

Particular attention should be given to groups or individuals who might otherwise be underrepresented in project activities.

4. Inclusive Curriculum and Educational Development

Where CBHE projects involve curriculum development or modernisation, inclusion and diversity should be considered as part of that process. Project teams should consider whether curricula, learning materials and teaching approaches respond appropriately to diverse student needs and circumstances. Where relevant, projects can support the development of more inclusive teaching practices and flexible approaches to learning. Curriculum-related activities should be connected with the broader principles of inclusive curriculum design and flexible teaching and learning presented in this Manual.

5. Staff Capacity Building

Sustainable institutional inclusion requires appropriate capacities among both academic and professional staff. CBHE projects can provide opportunities to strengthen staff knowledge and practices concerning inclusion, diversity and the social dimension of higher education. Relevant capacity-building activities may address:
- identifying barriers to student participation;
- inclusive teaching and learning practices;
- accessibility of institutional services;
- support for students with diverse needs and circumstances;
- cooperation between academic and professional services;
- monitoring and evaluation of inclusion-related measures.

Staff development should support the continuation of inclusive practices beyond the duration of the project.

6. Implementation and Accessibility

During project implementation, partners should regularly consider whether activities remain accessible and inclusive for the intended participants. This includes attention to physical and digital accessibility, communication, learning materials, language needs and organisational arrangements. Where barriers emerge during implementation, project teams should consider appropriate adjustments rather than waiting until the final evaluation. Feedback from participants can help identify difficulties that may not have been anticipated during project design.

7. Monitoring and Evaluation

Inclusion and diversity should form part of project monitoring and evaluation where relevant to project objectives and activities. Projects can monitor:

- participation of relevant target groups;
- barriers encountered during implementation;
- accessibility and effectiveness of support measures;
- participant experiences and feedback;
- changes in institutional practices resulting from project activities.

Monitoring should help project partners understand not only who participated, but also whether participants were able to participate meaningfully and whether project activities contributed to reducing identified barriers.

8. Institutional Development and Sustainability

A major objective of inclusive capacity building should be to ensure that relevant practices continue beyond the formal duration of the project. Where appropriate, project results should be incorporated into:

- institutional policies and procedures;
- curricula and teaching practices;
- student and staff support services;
- staff development activities;
- institutional guidance and resources;
- relevant institutional strategies and planning.

This can help prevent inclusion from remaining limited to individual Erasmus+ projects and support its progressive integration into everyday institutional practices.

9. Knowledge Sharing and Continuous Improvement

Experiences and practices developed through CBHE projects should be shared within participating institutions and, where appropriate, with other higher education institutions and relevant stakeholders. Project teams should document useful approaches, lessons learned and challenges encountered in implementing inclusion measures. Participant and stakeholder feedback should be used to improve both ongoing activities and future institutional practices. In this way, Erasmus+ Capacity Building projects can function not only as individual cooperation projects, but also as instruments for strengthening the capacity of higher education institutions to develop more inclusive practices and learning environments over the longer term.

Identification, Data Collection and Monitoring

Effective inclusion policies and practices require higher education institutions to understand which students experience barriers to participation and how these barriers affect their educational opportunities. The identification and monitoring of disadvantaged and underrepresented groups can therefore support institutions in developing more appropriate and evidence-informed inclusion measures. The categories of groups with fewer opportunities presented in this Manual can provide a starting point for identifying patterns of disadvantage and underrepresentation. At the same time, institutions should recognise that barriers may be permanent, temporary or situational and that individual students may experience more than one barrier simultaneously.

1. Identifying Barriers and Underrepresented Groups

Higher education institutions should consider which barriers may affect access to and participation in higher education and Erasmus+ opportunities within their particular institutional context. Identification should focus not only on predefined categories of students, but also on the barriers that students actually experience. These may relate to socioeconomic circumstances, disability and accessibility, geographical location, language or cultural circumstances, family and caregiving responsibilities, pregnancy and parenthood, or other circumstances affecting participation.

Information obtained through student services, Erasmus+ activities, consultations, participant feedback and other relevant institutional processes can help institutions better understand these barriers.

2. Data Collection

Where institutions collect information related to inclusion and the social dimension, relevant categories should, where appropriate, be considered systematically within existing institutional information and monitoring systems. Rather than collecting information only for individual projects or activities, institutions should consider how relevant information can contribute to a more consistent understanding of participation and underrepresentation over time. Data collection should have a clear and legitimate purpose connected with improving inclusion, identifying barriers and developing appropriate institutional responses. Particular care should be taken when information concerns students' personal circumstances.

3. Monitoring Participation

Monitoring can help institutions assess whether students from different backgrounds and circumstances are able to access and participate in educational and Erasmus+ opportunities. Depending on the activity and available information, institutions may consider:
- participation of groups with fewer opportunities;
- representation in Erasmus+ mobility and project activities;
- barriers identified by students and staff;
- use of available support measures;
- accessibility of activities and institutional services;
- participant experiences and feedback.

Monitoring should not focus exclusively on participation numbers. Where possible, institutions should also consider whether participants were able to engage meaningfully and whether the support provided responded appropriately to the barriers they experienced.

4. Using Information for Improvement

Information collected through monitoring should be used to support continuous improvement. Higher education institutions can use findings to identify areas in which existing practices are effective, recognise remaining barriers and determine where additional measures may be required. Results can inform the development or adjustment of outreach activities, mobility procedures, student support, teaching and learning arrangements, institutional services and Capacity Building activities. Regular monitoring can also help institutions assess whether inclusion measures are producing the intended results and whether particular groups or barriers continue to require additional attention. In this way, identification, data collection and monitoring can support a more systematic approach to inclusion and diversity and help higher education institutions move from individual inclusion measures towards evidence-informed institutional practices.

Practical Tools and Checklists

The following practical tools are intended to help higher education institutions reflect on how inclusion and diversity are addressed in Erasmus+ activities and in their wider institutional practices. They can be used during planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation and adapted according to the institutional context. The questions are intended primarily as self-assessment tools. They do not represent mandatory requirements, but can help institutions identify existing strengths, remaining barriers and areas where further action may be needed.

1. Institutional Inclusion Self-Assessment

Institutions can consider the following questions when reviewing their overall approach to inclusion and diversity:
- Are inclusion and diversity addressed beyond Erasmus+ projects and mobility activities?
- Are potential barriers to student participation regularly identified?
- Are the needs of students experiencing permanent, temporary or situational barriers considered?
- Do institutional services provide accessible information and appropriate support?
- Are students able to communicate barriers and support needs to relevant institutional staff?
- Do institutional management, academic staff, International Relations Offices and student support services cooperate on inclusion-related matters?
- Are staff sufficiently aware of different student needs and life circumstances?
- Are students given opportunities to provide feedback on institutional practices affecting their participation?
- Are experiences gained through Erasmus+ used, where relevant, to improve wider institutional practices?

2. Inclusive International Credit Mobility Checklist

When planning and implementing Erasmus+ International Credit Mobility, institutions can consider the following questions:
- Is information about mobility opportunities clear and accessible?
- Do outreach activities reach students who may be underrepresented in mobility?
- Do application and selection procedures avoid unnecessary barriers?
- Is information about financial and additional support provided in a timely manner?
- Are individual support needs identified before mobility, where possible?
- Is appropriate linguistic, cultural and practical preparation available?
- Are accessibility and relevant support arrangements discussed with the receiving institution?
- Do participants know where to seek assistance during mobility?
- Is peer support or mentoring available where appropriate?
- Are participants invited to provide feedback after mobility?
- Is participant feedback used to improve subsequent mobility activities?
- Are participants provided with timely information and appropriate assistance concerning visa applications, residence permits and related administrative requirements?
- Are potential financial barriers, including differences in living costs across destination countries, identified and addressed before mobility?
- Are procedures in place to ensure the timely and appropriate academic recognition of successfully completed mobility periods and the transfer of ECTS credits?
- Are transparent procedures and reserve lists established, where appropriate, to facilitate the replacement of selected participants who withdraw from planned mobility activities?
- Do International Relations Offices have adequate administrative capacity and institutional support to manage mobility activities effectively?
- Are responsibilities among institutional management, mobility commissions, academic departments and International Relations Offices clearly defined?
- Are mobility procedures consistent with applicable Erasmus Charter for Higher Education (ECHE) commitments, including the protection of participants' rights and the prevention of unauthorised fees?
- Are accessible mechanisms available for participants to submit complaints and report potential irregularities related to mobility activities?

3. Inclusive Capacity Building Checklist

When developing or implementing CBHE projects, project teams can consider whether:
- inclusion and diversity are addressed during the initial needs assessment;

- relevant barriers and underrepresented groups have been identified;
- inclusion-related objectives are incorporated into project design where relevant;
- relevant stakeholders are involved in identifying needs and developing responses;
- project activities and materials are accessible to intended participants;
- participant selection supports equitable participation;
- curriculum development takes account of diverse student needs and circumstances;
- staff capacity building includes relevant inclusion issues;
- inclusion is considered during project monitoring and evaluation;
- participant feedback is used to identify barriers and improve implementation;
- successful project practices can be incorporated into institutional procedures, services, curricula or staff development;
- arrangements exist for sustaining relevant inclusion practices after the project ends.

This shifts attention from inclusion only within the project towards the potential contribution of CBHE to longer-term institutional development, reflecting the direction identified during the TAM seminar `Strengthening the Social Dimension of Higher Education`.

4. Inclusive Curriculum and Teaching Review

Academic staff and programme developers can use the following questions when reviewing curricula and teaching and learning arrangements:
- Do teaching and learning arrangements take account of diverse student needs and circumstances?
- Could the organisation of teaching create barriers for particular students?
- Are learning materials and activities accessible to the intended students?
- Can appropriate flexibility be introduced where students experience particular barriers?
- Is flexibility considered more broadly than online participation alone?
- Are the circumstances of pregnant students, young parents and students with caregiving responsibilities considered where relevant?
- Are students able to communicate difficulties affecting their participation?
- Can appropriate adaptations be introduced without changing the intended learning outcomes?
- Is student feedback used to identify areas where teaching and learning arrangements could become more inclusive?

The emphasis on different learning needs and personal circumstances, including pregnancy, parenthood and caregiving responsibilities, and on understanding flexibility more broadly than online teaching, derives directly from the expert recommendations.

5. Review of Reasonable Adaptations and Support

When a barrier to participation is identified, institutions can use the following questions to guide their response:
- What specific barrier is affecting participation?
- Is the barrier permanent, temporary or situational?
- What does the student or participant identify as the main difficulty?
- Which institutional unit or staff member is best placed to respond?
- Can existing arrangements be adapted to reduce the barrier?
- Is cooperation between academic and professional services required?
- Does the proposed adaptation enable meaningful participation?
- Should the effectiveness of the adaptation be reviewed after implementation?

The purpose is not to assume that all students within a particular group require the same support, but to focus on the actual barriers and circumstances affecting participation.

6. Basic Monitoring Questions

Institutions and Erasmus+ project teams can periodically consider:

- Who is participating and who may be underrepresented?
- What barriers to participation have been identified?
- Which inclusion measures or forms of support have been provided?
- Are participants able to make effective use of the available support?
- What does participant feedback indicate about accessibility and inclusion?
- Have recurring barriers been identified?
- Have institutional or project practices been adjusted in response to the findings?
- Are relevant improvements being sustained over time?

These questions complement the preceding section on Identification, Data Collection and Monitoring. They deliberately remain at the level of practical self-assessment rather than establishing mandatory indicators or data-collection requirements, because the TAM material supports systematic identification and monitoring, but does not prescribe a specific technical methodology.

Using the Tools

The checklists can be used separately depending on the activity being reviewed. International Relations Offices may use the mobility checklist when preparing or evaluating ICM activities; CBHE project teams may use the capacity-building checklist throughout the project lifecycle; academic staff can use the curriculum and teaching questions; and institutional management and relevant services can use the broader self-assessment and monitoring questions. The results can help institutions identify areas requiring further attention and support continuous improvement. The tools should therefore be understood as flexible instruments for institutional reflection rather than as a formal compliance mechanism.

Conclusion

Inclusion and diversity are fundamental to ensuring equitable opportunities for participation in Erasmus+ and to strengthening the wider social dimension of higher education. This Manual provides higher education institutions with practical guidance for identifying barriers, supporting people with fewer opportunities and integrating inclusive approaches into International Credit Mobility and Capacity Building in Higher Education activities.

The updated Manual broadens this approach by recognising that inclusion should not be limited to individual mobility activities or Erasmus+ projects. The principles and practices of inclusion and diversity can also contribute to the everyday functioning of higher education institutions, including their learning environments, institutional cultures, teaching and learning practices, student support and institutional development.

Creating inclusive higher education environments requires attention to the diversity of students' needs and circumstances. Barriers may be permanent, temporary or situational and may affect students in different ways and at different stages of their educational experience. Institutions should therefore seek to understand the barriers affecting participation and consider appropriate and flexible responses.

Erasmus+ International Credit Mobility provides an important context for applying inclusive approaches throughout the mobility cycle, from outreach and selection to preparation, support, return and follow-up. Similarly, Capacity Building in Higher Education projects can contribute to longer-term institutional change by strengthening inclusive curricula, institutional services, staff capacities, internal procedures and practices.

Identification, data collection and monitoring can further support institutions in understanding patterns of participation and underrepresentation, assessing existing measures and identifying areas where additional action may be needed. The practical tools and self-assessment questions provided in

this Manual are intended to support institutional reflection and continuous improvement rather than to establish a uniform model applicable to every institution.

The Manual should therefore be understood as a practical and evolving resource. Higher education institutions are encouraged to adapt its guidance to their own contexts, regularly reflect on their practices and use the experience gained through Erasmus+ activities to strengthen inclusion and diversity more broadly.

By connecting inclusive Erasmus+ participation with everyday institutional practices, the Manual aims to support higher education institutions in progressively developing more inclusive learning environments and institutional cultures in which different needs and circumstances are recognised and equitable participation is promoted.