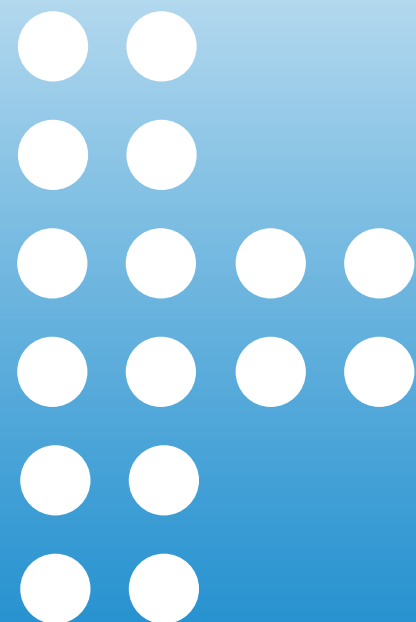


# Searching for measures for the better exploitation of Mobility for learners and staff in adult education

RESEARCH REPORT

OCTOBER 2024, BUDAPEST



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Erasmus+



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- Portugal: Isabel Duarte
- France: Julie Francioli

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# Executive Summary

## Executive Summary

This report presents an analysis of Erasmus+ KA1 mobility participation within adult education, aiming to identify factors that influence the effectiveness of mobilities for staff and learners across Europe. The study investigates why Erasmus+ learning mobilities in adult education are underutilised in some countries and how others better exploit their potential. The research was conducted through an online survey across 12 countries, complemented by in-depth case studies in five of these: France, Hungary, Portugal, Croatia, and Slovakia. These case studies involved interviews with National Agency (NA) staff and representatives from adult education providers, yielding qualitative insights into the operational and contextual factors influencing mobility uptake.

## Key Findings

The survey and case study data highlighted variability in KA1 mobility performance across countries, influenced by a mix of structural, contextual, and operational factors. High-performing countries—such as Lithuania, Estonia, and Latvia—demonstrated strong achievements in promoting E+ mobilities toward a variety of organisations, staff and learners as well as using their budget allocations, while countries facing challenges, including Hungary and Slovakia, reported barriers related to limited institutional capacity, geographic disparities, and fragmented policy support for non-formal adult learning. The impact of COVID-19 was evident, with mobility figures dropping sharply in 2020 but rebounding strongly in 2022, albeit with variations across countries.

Four primary hindering factors for mobility emerged: lack of foreign language skills, limited independence due to work and family commitments, insufficient information, and lack of external incentives. Financial constraints, administrative burdens, and a shortage of learning opportunities that match participants' needs were also commonly reported challenges. On the enabling side, mobility opportunities were found to be highly valued for their professional development potential, skill enhancement, and capacity to foster personal growth and intercultural exchange. Effective support from employers, alignment with national lifelong learning policies, and a strong culture of continuous learning were significant enablers for successful participation in KA1 mobilities.

## Conclusions and Recommendations

This report offers a comprehensive set of recommendations organised into an enabling framework. These recommendations provide a structure for NAs to review and address challenges in their national contexts, with a focus on five key areas:

- 1. Raising Awareness:** Targeted outreach strategies are essential to broaden awareness among adult learning providers and ensure that underrepresented groups recognise the benefits of KA1 mobility.
- 2. Boosting Motivation:** Increasing alignment between KA1 mobilities and national policies on inclusion, digitalisation, and other priorities can motivate more organisations to engage. Encouraging organisations to recognise the strategic value of mobility for professional development is also essential.

- 3. Enhancing Capacity:** Capacity limitations among smaller organisations require dedicated support and resources, including simplified processes and tools for application and reporting, along with support for organisational development.
- 4. Expanding Quality Learning Opportunities:** Improved access to quality learning mobility opportunities through initiatives such as networking platforms, curated partner search tools, and support for high-demand sectors is vital to better meet participant needs.
- 5. Enhancing the E+ KA1 Program Framework:** Regular review of financial provisions and support structures is recommended to ensure they reflect the actual needs, costs and requirements of participants, particularly given rising travel and accommodation expenses.

These recommendations, inspired by findings from case studies and survey data, offer a framework for NAs to assess and refine their approaches, with options for collaboration through Transnational Cooperation Activities (TCAs) and the RIA-AE Network. Collectively, they underscore the importance of adaptive, supportive strategies that can drive increased participation and impact of Erasmus+ KA1 mobility within adult education across Europe.

## List of Abbreviations

AE	Adult Education
ALE	Adult Learning and Education
ADU	Adult Education Sector
CPD	Continuous Professional Development
EAAL	European Agenda for Adult Learning
EACEA	European Education and Culture Executive Agency
EPALE	Electronic Platform for Adult Learning in Europe
E+	Erasmus+
KA1	Key Action 1
KA2	Key Action 2
LLL	Lifelong Learning
NA	National Agency
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
RIA-AE NETWORK	Network for research-based impact analysis of the Erasmus+ programme in adult education
TCA	Training and Cooperation Activities
VET	Vocational Education and Training

In this study, countries are referred to using their official names or their **ISO 3166-1 alpha-2 country codes** for brevity and consistency in tables, and figures. The following codes are used for the participating countries:

Croatia: HR	Germany: DE	Latvia: LV	Serbia: RS
Estonia: EE	Hungary: HU	Lithuania: LT	Slovakia: SK
France: FR	Ireland: IE	Luxembourg: LU	

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Background and Significance of Erasmus+ Key Action 1: Learning Mobility for Learners and Staff in Adult Education

The Erasmus+ programme, launched by the European Union, serves as a cornerstone in promoting international mobility, collaboration, and innovation in the fields of education, youth, and sport. One of its guiding principles is lifelong learning, which is crucial for preparing individuals to adapt and thrive in a rapidly changing labour market and society. Adult education and learning are major pillars of Erasmus+, representing the most diverse and least institutionalised sector in education across Europe. By facilitating the movement of adult learners, educators, and staff across borders, the programme plays an important role in enhancing personal and professional development, fostering European identity, and contributing to social cohesion and sustainable growth.

Erasmus+ has been structured to achieve these aims through three core Key Actions (KA):

- KA1: Learning mobility of individuals,
- KA2: Cooperation between organisations and institutions,
- KA3: Support for policy development and political cooperation.

Among these, **Key Action 1 (KA1)** focuses on learning mobility, particularly as a vehicle for enhancing the professional capacities of educational staff and the personal development of learners. KA1 emphasises the internationalisation of participating institutions and individuals, aiming to promote innovation, social cohesion, and political reform in the long term. In the current funding period (2021-2027), this action has expanded to include mobility for adult learners, a significant evolution from previous years where only educational staff were eligible. This shift highlights the growing recognition of lifelong learning and adult education as essential components in addressing key challenges such as skills gaps, unemployment, and social exclusion. It aligns with the ambitious EU target of having 60% of all adults participate in training annually by 2030, underscoring the vital role adult education plays in building a more resilient and inclusive society.

The expansion of Erasmus+ and the increased budget allocation—from €14.7 billion in 2014-2020 to approximately €26.2 billion for the 2021-2027 period—underlines the growing EU commitment to education. Notably, the budget for adult education measures within Erasmus+ has risen from 4.9% to 5.8%, signalling a heightened focus on the socio-economic resilience of adults and their participation in lifelong learning. In light of these advances, the persisting underutilisation of funds in certain countries and regions highlights the need for research into the barriers and opportunities related to mobility schemes for adult learners and educators.

## 1.2 Aim and Scope of the Research

This research is driven by the recognition that, in several countries benefiting from Erasmus+, a significant portion of the allocated funds for mobility in adult education remains underutilised. Despite the increased financial support for the 2021-2027 period and the extension of eligibility to adult learners, low application rates and insufficient

interest in mobility schemes continue to hinder the full exploitation of available resources. The introduction of new mobility options, including individual and group mobility for adult learners, presents both opportunities and challenges, particularly in countries with little prior experience in managing such schemes.

The primary aim of this research, initiated by the Tempus Public Foundation (Hungary's National Agency for Erasmus+), is to investigate the factors influencing the success and failure of Erasmus+ mobility schemes for adult learners and educators. By examining both high- and low-performing countries, this study seeks to uncover the contextual and systemic factors that contribute to the successful implementation of mobility programmes and identify barriers that prevent their optimal use.

Specific objectives of the research include:

- Identifying contextual factors and barriers that hinder the submission of quality applications for mobility schemes in low-performing countries.
- Exploring the factors and best practices that contribute to the success of high-performing countries in implementing mobility schemes for adult learners and staff.
- Formulating actionable recommendations for National Agencies (NAs) to enhance the utilisation of the Erasmus+ mobility scheme in underperforming regions.
- If necessary, propose modifications to the Erasmus+ KA1 criteria aimed at improving the efficiency and accessibility of mobility funds for adult education.

This research covers the period 2018-2022, a time of significant transition within the Erasmus+ programme, as the 2021-2027 funding cycle introduced new eligibility criteria and forms of mobility, extending participation to adult learners. The study also takes into account the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, which resulted in restrictions on mobility and reduced activity during 2020 and 2021. By analysing mobility data from both pre-and post-pandemic years, this research aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the factors influencing the success of KA1 in the adult education sector.

## 2. OVERVIEW OF ERASMUS+ KEY ACTION 1 MOBILITY FOR ADULT LEARNERS AND EDUCATORS

Mobility in the context of adult education serves as an effective instrument for both personal and professional growth. For adult learners, participating in cross-border mobility schemes allows them to acquire new skills, broaden their perspectives, and increase their employability. For educators, mobility offers opportunities for professional development, exposure to different teaching methods, and the chance to establish international networks that can contribute to their institutions' long-term internationalisation strategies. Moreover, mobility promotes the exchange of best practices and innovations, which can strengthen the quality and relevance of adult education across Europe.

Supported Activities in KA1 for Adult Learners and Educators

The Erasmus+ programme offers a variety of mobility opportunities for both staff and learners in adult education.

#### Staff Mobility:

- **Job Shadowing:** Staff members can participate in job shadowing at institutions in other European countries for periods ranging from 2 to 60 days. This allows educators to observe and learn from different teaching practices, gaining insights that can be applied in their home institutions.
- **Teaching or Training Assignments:** Staff members can take up teaching or training assignments abroad for up to 365 days, promoting the exchange of pedagogical techniques and fostering professional collaboration across borders.
- **Courses and Training:** Staff can attend courses or training events abroad for periods between 2 and 30 days, with a maximum of 10 days of course fees covered per participant. These opportunities enhance staff members' professional skills and broaden their understanding of adult education practices in other countries.

#### Learner Mobility:

- **Group Mobility:** Adult learners can participate in group mobility for periods ranging from 2 to 30 days. Group mobility provides an opportunity for learners to engage with peers from other European countries, fostering intercultural exchange and collaborative learning.
- **Short-Term Learning Mobility:** Individual learners can take part in short-term learning mobility for up to 29 days, giving them the chance to gain new skills in a foreign context.
- **Long-Term Learning Mobility:** Long-term mobility (up to 365 days) allows learners to fully immerse themselves in the educational systems of other countries, promoting deeper learning experiences and personal growth.

#### Other Supported Activities:

- **Invited Experts:** Organizations can invite trainers, teachers, or policy experts from abroad to help improve the quality of teaching and learning at the receiving institution.
- **Hosting Teachers and Educators in Training:** Institutions can host teachers in training who want to gain experience through a traineeship abroad.

**Erasmus+ National Agencies**, the decentralised administering bodies of Key Action 1. Their tasks include publicising and providing information about the programme, supporting applicants and beneficiaries, implementing the funding processes, monitoring and controlling the use of funding, and cooperating with the European Commission and other NAs.

## 3. APPLIED METHODOLOGY AND DATA COLLECTION

### 3.1 Research Design and Approach

This research was conducted as part of the Transnational Cooperation Activities (TCA) of National Agencies, coordinated by the Tempus Public Foundation (HU01) in collaboration with the National Agencies of France and Slovakia. The aim of the research is to explore the barriers and enablers of Erasmus+ Key Action 1 (KA1) mobility in adult education across multiple European countries, with the objective of improving utilization of the mobility schemes, particularly in underperforming countries and regions.

A mixed-methods approach was adopted to achieve a comprehensive understanding of mobility performance, encompassing both quantitative and qualitative data collection supplemented with desk research. The study combined:

- **Desk research** analyses of documents and studies, including relevant calls for proposals, accessible reports and program documents as well as studies with reference to the scope of the research,
- **Quantitative** analysis through an online survey distributed to National Agencies (NAs),
- **Qualitative** insights via national case studies, which allowed for in-depth exploration of local contexts and specific barriers or enablers.

This approach allowed the research team to obtain a holistic view of the factors influencing Erasmus+ KA1 participation, offering insights into both macro-level trends (quantitative) and micro-level experiences (qualitative).

### 3.2 Data Collection Methods

#### 3.2.1 Online survey

##### Survey objective:

The online survey aimed to collect detailed quantitative data from National Agencies (NAs) responsible for the management and promotion of Erasmus+ KA1 mobilities for adult learners and educators. The survey focused on:

- The statistical performance of mobility activities,
- The experiences of NAs in promoting and managing these mobilities,
- The identification of barriers and facilitators that affect the uptake of KA1 mobilities in their respective countries.

##### Survey respondents:

The survey was distributed to 12 National Agencies across Europe, with 10 completing the survey: Slovakia, France, Croatia, Luxembourg, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Hungary, Germany, and Serbia. In addition, NAs from Portugal and Ireland provided access to their statistical data, which was integrated into the analysis.

##### Survey structure:

The survey was divided into four main sections:

#### 1. National Agency attributes:

This section gathered basic information about the responding National Agency, such as the country, organizational status, and contact details.

#### 2. Mobility performance:

Respondents were asked to provide quantitative data on mobility budgets, types of beneficiaries, number of applications, granted mobilities, and implemented mobilities for both learners and staff. This data covered the period from 2018 to 2022, allowing for a longitudinal analysis of trends. The section also broke down data by organization types (e.g., public, private, NGOs, higher education institutions) to capture the diversity in participation.

### 3. Obstacles and enablers:

The survey explored various factors that either hinder or facilitate mobility participation. Key obstacles included issues such as lack of sufficient financial support, foreign language barriers, administrative burdens, and insufficient employer recognition of mobility experiences. Enabling factors, such as strong institutional support, availability of funding, and effective communication about opportunities, were also investigated. NA staff in charge of administering KA1 Mobility scheme in various roles were requested to share their views and assessments based on their experience.

### 4. Attributes and practices of National Agencies:

This section investigated how NAs communicate about mobility opportunities and promote participation. It examined the use of promotional campaigns, partnerships, and outreach strategies to raise awareness of Erasmus+ KA1 opportunities. Additionally, it sought to understand how NAs support applicants through processes like identifying host organizations and addressing common challenges.

The online survey yielded a rich dataset, offering a snapshot of mobility activities across various European countries. The insights from the survey were foundational to further qualitative analysis conducted through national case studies.

#### 3.2.2 National Case Studies

##### Objective of the case studies:

The case studies aimed to provide a deeper understanding of the national contexts influencing the uptake and success of KA1 mobilities in adult education. By focusing on individual country experiences, the case studies explored the unique socio-cultural, administrative, and educational factors that shaped the performance of mobility schemes.

##### Case study selection:

Five countries were selected for case study development: France, Slovakia, Portugal, Croatia, and Hungary. The selection was based on the availability of national experts and the performance of the respective NAs in managing Erasmus+ KA1 mobilities. The intention was to include high-performing countries based on mobility statistics; however, due to capacity constraints and administrative challenges, this was not always feasible.

##### Data sources for case studies:

Each national case study was prepared by a local expert and incorporated input from a variety of stakeholders, including:

- Adult learners and their experiences with mobility,
- Educators and management staff from adult education providers,
- National Agency staff, particularly those responsible for implementing KA1 mobilities.

National experts were also requested to reflect on the national KA1 Mobility data and the performance of their respective countries based on the international comparison of quantitative data of the survey.

The case studies addressed both the systemic factors (e.g., national policy frameworks, institutional support) and the specific practices of adult education providers in promoting and facilitating mobility participation. They also explored the role of the National Agency in raising awareness, motivating participants, and facilitating partnerships for mobility projects.

##### Key themes explored in the case studies:

- Barriers to participation: The case studies identified challenges such as lack of awareness, insufficient institutional support, and financial constraints that limited participation in KA1 mobility schemes. These barriers were examined at both the learner and organizational levels.
- Best practices and innovative approaches: Successful strategies for promoting KA1 mobilities were highlighted, such as targeted outreach campaigns, partnerships, and capacity building and support services to facilitate quality applications.
- Cultural and contextual factors: Each case study provided an analysis of how national structural frameworks, adult educational priorities, lifelong learning culture, and socio-economic conditions influenced mobility outcomes. For instance, in countries with a strong tradition of adult education, mobility uptake tended to be higher.
- Stakeholder perspectives: The views of adult learners, educators, and NA staff were captured to provide a comprehensive understanding of the motivations, expectations, and challenges faced by different actors involved in KA1 mobilities.

The case studies complemented the quantitative data collected through the survey, offering rich, contextual insights into the performance of Erasmus+ KA1 schemes in diverse national settings.

### 3.3 Limitations of the Research

While the research provides valuable insights into the factors affecting Erasmus+ KA1 mobility participation, several limitations must be acknowledged:

#### 1. Sample size:

Although 12 NAs participated in the survey and 5 countries were involved in the case studies, the sample size is relatively small given the scope of Erasmus+ across all European member states. As a result, the findings may not be fully representative of the entire Erasmus+ landscape, particularly in countries not included in the research.

#### 2. Self-reported data:

The data collected through the online survey relies on self-reporting by NA staff. While the NAs provided detailed and accurate information to the best of their ability, self-reported data can sometimes be subject to bias or incomplete reporting, particularly in areas such as obstacles to participation or internal administrative challenges.

#### 3. Country-specific contexts:

The case studies are highly contextual, and the findings from one country may not be easily generalizable to others. Factors such as national education policies, cultural attitudes towards mobility, and the socio-economic environment vary widely across countries, which limits the direct applicability of best practices identified in one country to another.

#### 4. Temporal limitation:

The research covers the period from 2018 to 2022, which includes the tail end of the previous Erasmus+ funding period and the launch of the new period (2021-2027). This overlap introduces complexity, as mobility schemes and rules were in transition during this period. Additionally, the COVID-19 pandemic significantly disrupted mobility activities in 2020 and 2021, which may skew the data and hinder an accurate assessment of long-term trends.

#### 5. Capacity constraints:

The capacity of NAs to participate in the research was limited in some cases due to administrative burdens or other priorities. This constraint affected the selection of countries for the case studies, resulting in a less than ideal sample of high-performing countries.

#### 6. Limited coverage of learner perspectives:

While the case studies provided insights from learners, the number of learners interviewed was limited, and their perspectives may not fully capture the diverse experiences of adult learners across Europe.

Despite these limitations, the mixed-methods approach adopted in this research may offer a valuable framework for understanding the enablers and barriers to Erasmus+ KA1 mobility in adult education. The combination of quantitative data from NAs and qualitative insights from case studies provides a comprehensive picture of the factors influencing mobility uptake and offers actionable recommendations for improving the utilization of Erasmus+ resources in the coming years. Cooperation with other transnational research initiatives like the RIA-AE Network could extend the validation of research results and supplement them with additional evidence. Further research could expand the sample size and include more diverse countries to enhance the generalizability of the findings.

### 3.4 Synergies with the RIA-AE Network Research

Parallel to this research, the RIA-AE Network (Research-based Impact Assessment in Erasmus+ Adult Education Programmes), funded by Erasmus+, has been conducting a transnational monitoring study on the impacts of Erasmus+ Key Actions 1 and 2 in adult education. The RIA-AE Network is a growing network that incorporates 15+ national agencies and researchers from each participating country and focuses on assessing the impact of Erasmus+ on funded organisations, learners, and the adult education sector, with special attention also paid to horizontal priorities such as inclusion, digital transformation, climate action, and civic engagement.

While the present study primarily identifies barriers and enablers to mobility participation and utilisation, the RIA-AE Network adopts a broader scope, examining Erasmus+'s impacts on internationalisation, institutional development, and individual outcomes across micro, meso, and macro levels. A deeper understanding of these impacts at both personal and institutional levels can provide valuable insights into addressing barriers, mitigating hindering factors, and strengthening motivational drivers, ultimately enhancing participation and supporting the implementation of high-quality mobility programs.

The countries and their national agencies that participated in this research initiative are also part of the RIA-AE Network, fostering opportunities for collaboration and shared insights and aligning research goals to address common challenges and leverage synergies. The RIA-AE Network's exploration of the broader impacts of KA1 and KA2 programs provides valuable context to complement the present study's focus on barriers and enablers of participation. The combined findings of both initiatives can inform policy discussions, providing a multidimensional perspective that supports improving the implementation of the Erasmus+ program and its overall impact.

## 4. OVERVIEW OF ERASMUS+ KA1 MOBILITY PERFORMANCE

A key driving force behind this research is to better understand the factors influencing mobility activities in adult education and training, and to identify measures that can help Erasmus+ countries fully utilize the scheme and corresponding funding opportunities. Within Key Action 1 (KA1), mobility measures are implemented in a decentralized manner, with each country receiving a budget allocation negotiated by the European Commission. This structure leads to varying levels of performance across countries—some operate more effectively than others in terms of mobilities. While there is no single, definitive indicator that clearly reflects a country's success in utilizing KA1 mobility opportunities, several performance indicators can collectively provide valuable insights into the differences in how countries engage with the program. Among these, one of the most tangible metrics is the number of mobilities implemented each year, offering a glimpse into how well countries are taking advantage of Erasmus+ opportunities in the adult education sector.

#### Overview of implemented KA1 mobilities for adult learners and educators (2018–2022)

Number of implemented mobilities by Country and Year

Year	Croatia	Estonia	France	Germany	Hungary	Ireland	Latvia	Lithuania	Luxembourg	Portugal	Serbia	Slovakia	Total
2018	36	57	535	1016	76	63	40	127	26	167	23	65	2231
2019	63	56	1293	1474	115	61	73	197	33	233	40	83	3721
2020	21	12	467	442	30	31	23	154	7	50	2	13	1252
2021	60	48	660	475	1	3	118	329	25	168	13	92	1992
Learner	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	42	0	0	0	0	45
Other Activity	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	6	0	0	0	0	7
Staff	60	48	660	474	1	3	115	281	25	168	13	92	1940
2022	197	332	3307	1480	107	108	395	403	3	576	56	365	7329
Learner	15	23	447	65	2	0	71	42	0	72	0	8	745
Other Activity	0	2	0	29	0	0	3	5	0	0	0	0	39
Staff	182	307	2860	1386	105	108	321	356	3	504	56	357	6545
<b>Total</b>	<b>377</b>	<b>505</b>	<b>6262</b>	<b>4887</b>	<b>329</b>	<b>266</b>	<b>649</b>	<b>1210</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>1194</b>	<b>134</b>	<b>618</b>	<b>16525</b>

1. Table: Number of implemented mobilities by country and year

Table 1 illustrates the number of mobilities implemented across 12 Erasmus+ participating countries during the five-year period from 2018 to 2022. This period spans a crucial transition from the 2014-2020 funding cycle to the current 2021-2027 cycle, which introduced new criteria for mobility applications. The data for 2021 and 2022 includes mobilities financed under both the old and new funding regimes, reflecting this transitional phase.

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic is clearly visible in the data, with a sharp drop in mobility activities in 2020. As travel and in-person exchanges were severely restricted, the number of implemented mobilities fell dramatically, from a pre-pandemic high of 3,721 in 2019 to just 1,252 in 2020. However, recovery began in 2021, with mobilities increasing steadily as pandemic restrictions eased. By 2022, the number of implemented mobilities reached an unprecedented 7,329—doubling the 2019 figures. This surge can largely be attributed to the postponed implementation of mobilities planned for 2020, as well as extensions granted to projects funded under the previous financial cycle. However, within the main tendency outlined above, countries can show diverse patterns influenced by individual circumstances, like measures and impacts related to COVID-19 and the annual fund allocations in the context of shifts in funding cycles. To illustrate this variety of trends, we can compare pre- and post-COVID mobility data for 2019 and 2022. While Germany and Hungary practically remained at the same level, the figure doubled in Lithuania and multiplied in the other countries, in some cases 4-6 times. The increase is particularly numerous in France, where the number of implemented mobilities was 535 in 2018 and 1293 in 2019, and after the COVID-19 drop, it increased to 3307 in 2022 (while in Germany, the same figures show a relatively constant picture, 1016, 1474, 1480). This shows how different the dynamics of the countries are in implementing mobilities.

These trends reveal the challenges National Agencies (NAs) faced in adapting their capacities and promotional efforts to maintain momentum in a shifting landscape. The dynamic changes required flexibility, not only in responding to pandemic-related restrictions but also in managing a backlog of projects and capitalizing on the renewed opportunities for mobility as travel resumed.

However, absolute mobility figures do not reveal the full picture of the country's performance. To gain a clearer understanding of how effectively countries are utilizing Erasmus+ KA1 opportunities, we have adjusted the mobility data by considering the size of the active adult population (aged 15-64) in each country. This adjustment offers a more realistic view of the relative performance of each country, as shown in **Table 2**<sup>1</sup>.

#### Number of implemented mobilities by population

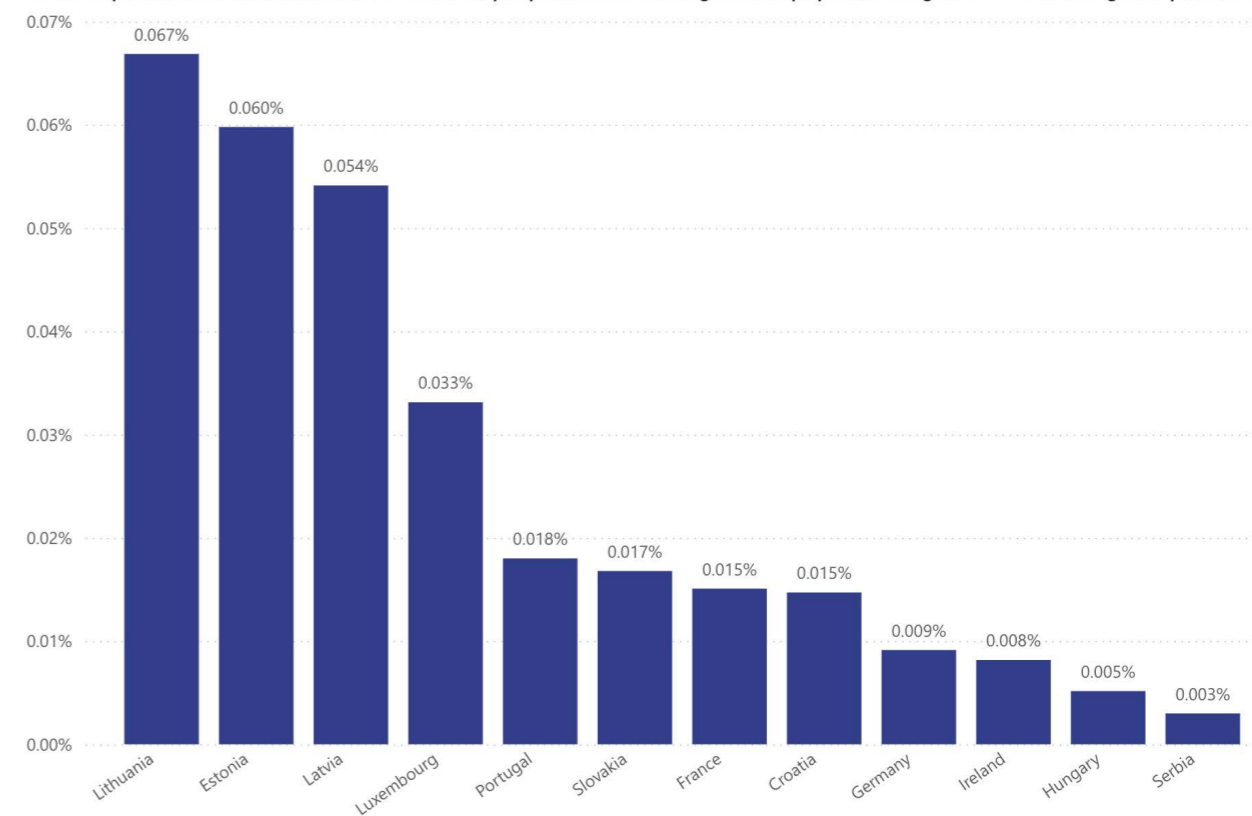
Country	Average of Population ages 15-64 total	Sum of Number of Implemented mobilities	Implemented mobilities/Population
Lithuania	1,809,700	1210	0.067%
Estonia	844,619	505	0.060%
Latvia	1,199,084	649	0.054%
Luxembourg	283,775	94	0.033%
Portugal	6,632,341	1194	0.018%
Slovakia	3,681,988	618	0.017%
France	41,536,388	6262	0.015%
Croatia	2,563,876	377	0.015%
Germany	53,512,718	4887	0.009%
Ireland	3,257,372	266	0.008%
Hungary	6,384,347	329	0.005%
Serbia	4,479,348	134	0.003%

2. Table: Number of implemented mobilities (2018-2022) by average population in the period of 2018-2022

<sup>1</sup> The average population size (ages 15-64) in 2018-2022 is derived from Eurostat data and used throughout the study for population size adjustments. However, it is important to note that the minimum age for adult learners, as defined by national legislation, can vary between 15 and 18 across countries. Additionally, mobility programs are not age-restricted, meaning some participants were over 64 years old. Despite these variations, this figure provides a realistic adjustment to the data based on each country's population size.

When comparing countries using this method, the disparities become evident. The highest-performing countries, such as Lithuania (LT), Estonia (EE), and Latvia (LV), achieve mobility rates 10-12 times higher than the lowest-performing countries, such as Serbia (RS), Hungary (HU), Ireland (IE) and Germany (DE). These performance differences are visualised in **Figure 1** below.

Total implemented mobilities 2018-2022 in proportion to average adult population aged 15-64 in the given period (%)



4.1. Figure: Total implemented mobilities per country (2018-2022), adjusted for population size.

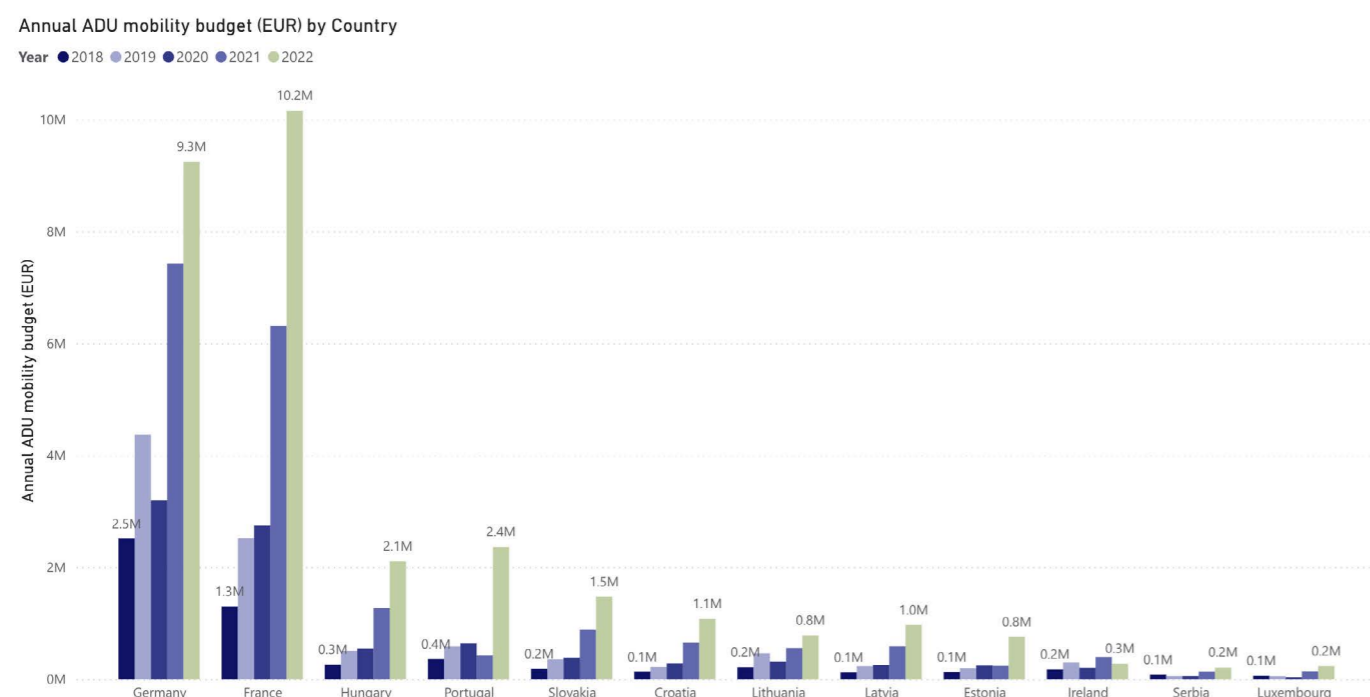
The figure outlines three major clusters of countries. There is a cluster of high-performing countries with outstanding figures for LT, EE, and LV. The next group of countries are significantly lagging behind with one-fourth of the proportionately implemented mobilities, PT, SK, FR, and HR. They can be called as the 'moderate performers'. Luxembourg falls between the two distinct groups with still a rather good performance figure but as a single country with a very small population compared to the others. And finally, there is a diverse group of 'underperformers', including DE, IE, HU and RS. It's important to note that Serbia, as a non-EU country, has only recently begun integrating Erasmus+ mobilities into its adult education system, resulting in a shorter timeframe for engagement compared to EU member states. This context is essential when interpreting the results.

#### Financial Allocations for KA1 Mobilities

Within the seven-year financial period of Erasmus+, the annual work programmes and corresponding financial allocations play a crucial role in defining the operational framework for National Agencies (NAs). These allocations are set forth in the European Commission's work programme documents, such as the "the Union Programme for

Education, Training, Youth and Sport”<sup>2</sup> which is updated annually. These documents guide the financial allocations for participating countries and prioritize different actions within the Erasmus+ programme, including Key Action 1 (KA1) mobilities when allocations are decided.

The annual financial allocations for each country reflect a balance between the overall prioritization of specific Erasmus+ actions, such as learning mobilities, and the unique needs of individual countries. At the same time, these allocations set the ambition for each country by determining the budgetary frame within which they can operate. The level of financial support provided to each country is based on a combination of factors, including population size, demand for mobility opportunities, and performance in implementing previous cycles of Erasmus+. **Figure 2** demonstrates the evolution of annual allocations for the countries participating in this study survey for the period from 2018 to 2022.



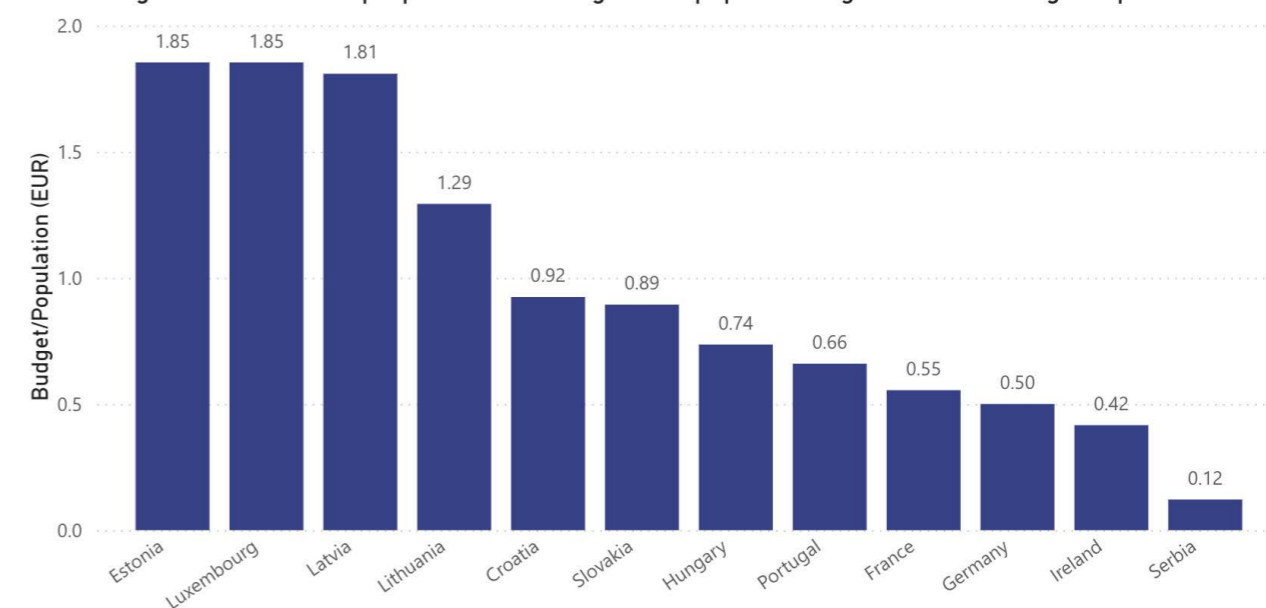
4.2. Figure Annual budget by country

The figure shows a general increase in financial allocations in between 2018-2022. However, the pace of increase varies significantly across countries. In some cases, **such as Croatia, Latvia, Estonia, France, Slovakia, and Hungary, the financial allocations have increased by 7 to 10 times** compared to the baseline of 2018. On the other hand, countries like **Ireland and Luxembourg** have seen more modest increases, with their allocations rising by only **1.5 to 2 times**. Covid-19 impact varies in the different countries looking at the annual figures for 2020 and 2021.

On the one hand, the absorption of this increase in funding puts pressure on the Erasmus+ National Agencies, as they have to adjust their promotion activities and efforts to mobilise applicant organisations from relevant sectors. On the other hand, it also requires time for the targeted organisations and individuals to adapt to these new opportunities.

2. Erasmus+ Annual work programmes <https://erasmus-plus.ec.europa.eu/resources-and-tools/documents-and-guidelines>. Work programmes for the 2018-2022 periods can be filtered and retrieved from the document library under "work programmes".

Total budget 20018-2022 in proportion to average adult population aged 15-64 in the given period (EUR)



4.3. Figure Budget per population by country (2018-2022)

From a fund absorption point of view, the size of financial allocations represents different scales of challenges to countries, as allocations are not exclusively based on proportionality. **Figure 3** quantifies the scale of these challenges by distributing the total allocated budget for the period 2018-2022 in proportion to the 15-64 adult population of each country.

The results show that countries with smaller populations, such as Estonia (EE), Luxembourg (LU), Latvia (LV), and Lithuania (LT), had a significantly higher budget allocation per capita compared to countries with larger populations like Germany (DE) and France (FR). In fact, the available budget for smaller countries was approximately three times higher on a per capita basis. Exceptions to this pattern include Ireland and Serbia, which show different trends.

This implies that from an absorption perspective, countries with significantly higher per capita allocations face a greater challenge in effectively utilizing the funds. However, as **Table 2** demonstrated, 'high performing' countries like Lithuania (LT), Estonia (EE), Latvia (LV), and we can also include Luxembourg (LU) have shown some of the most outstanding performance levels in terms of mobility implementation despite these higher challenges. Unfortunately, these countries could not be included in the in-depth case study analyses due to the limited capacity of the national agencies (NAs) during the research period.

#### Committing available funds: grant contracts

From a fund absorption perspective, one of the key performance indicators is the proportion of awarded and contracted grants compared to the financial allocations. This essentially reflects the extent to which the allocated financial resources were contracted to beneficiary organisations via the application process by each country. Accumulating these figures over the five-year period provides a solid basis for comparison and offers insights into the success of countries in committing their available funds as it is shown in **Table 3**.

### Budget and contracted amount (2018-2022)

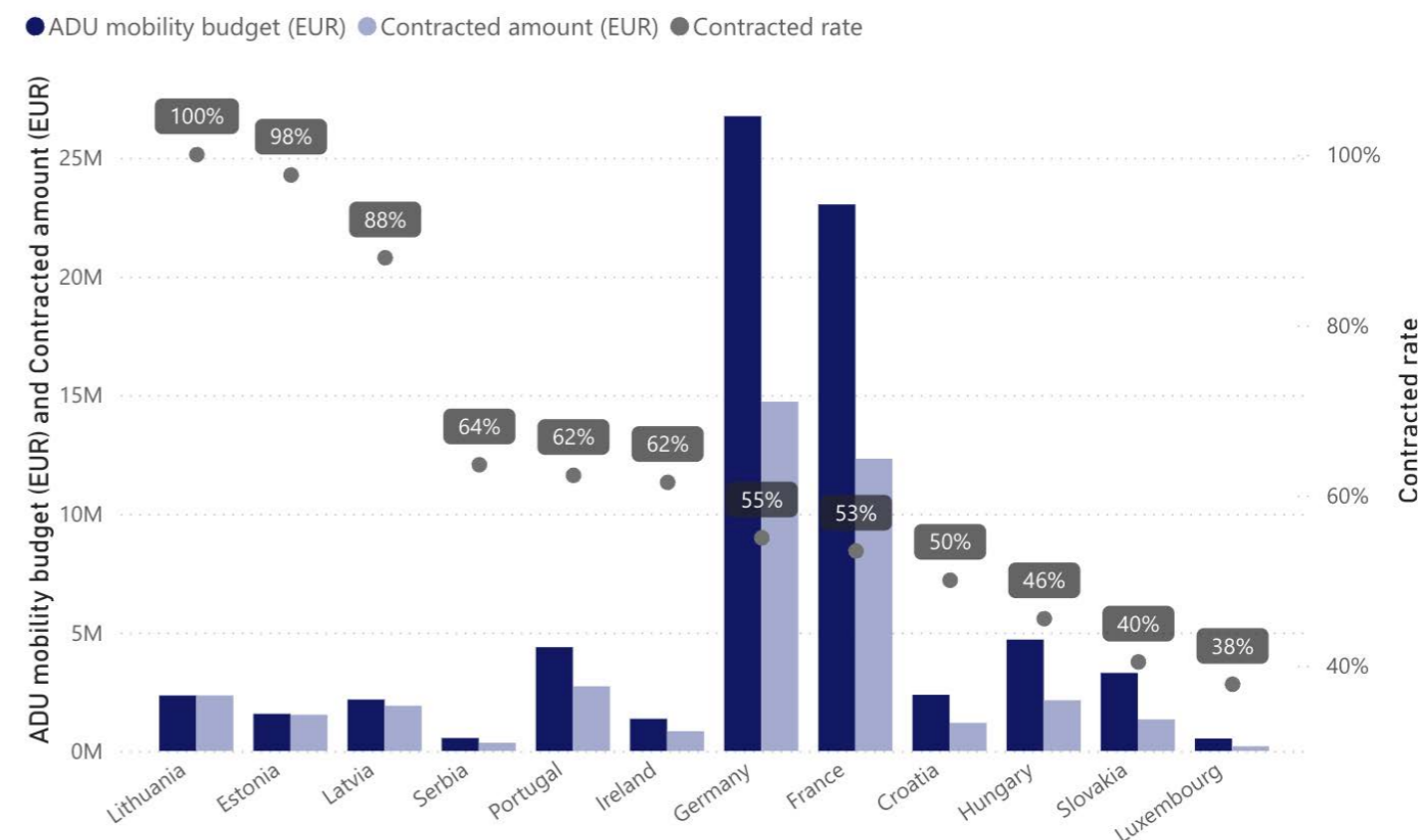
Country	Total budget (EUR)	Total contracted (EUR)	Contracted rate (%)
Lithuania	2,339,434	2,339,876	100%
Estonia	1,565,204	1,527,940	98%
Latvia	2,168,372	1,906,080	88%
Serbia	544,264	346,162	64%
Portugal	4,374,802	2,728,210	62%
Ireland	1,355,325	834,079	62%
Germany	26,755,238	14,721,575	55%
France	23,036,410	12,318,527	53%
Croatia	2,368,363	1,185,320	50%
Hungary	4,695,536	2,137,998	46%
Slovakia	3,290,420	1,330,990	40%
Luxembourg	525,874	198,953	38%

3. Table: Budget and contracted amount by country (2018-2022)

The data reveals that the Baltic countries—Lithuania (100%), Estonia (98%), and Latvia (88%)—were the top performers in successfully committing their allocated funds to beneficiaries too. Their high success rate in fund commitment is closely tied to the number of eligible and high-quality applications submitted. This is an outstanding achievement, especially if one considers that the challenge of committing their funds is higher for them due to the higher allocation of funds per capita mentioned above.

In contrast, countries like Luxembourg (38%), Slovakia (40%), Hungary (46%), and Croatia (50%) managed to commit less than half of their available funding during the same period. This indicates that these countries faced greater challenges in fully exploiting the resources made available to them, likely due to lower numbers of quality applications or other capacity-related constraints. **Figure 4** presents the correlations between the budget allocations and the ratio of commitments per country.

### ADU mobility budget, Contracted amount and Contracted rate 2018-2022

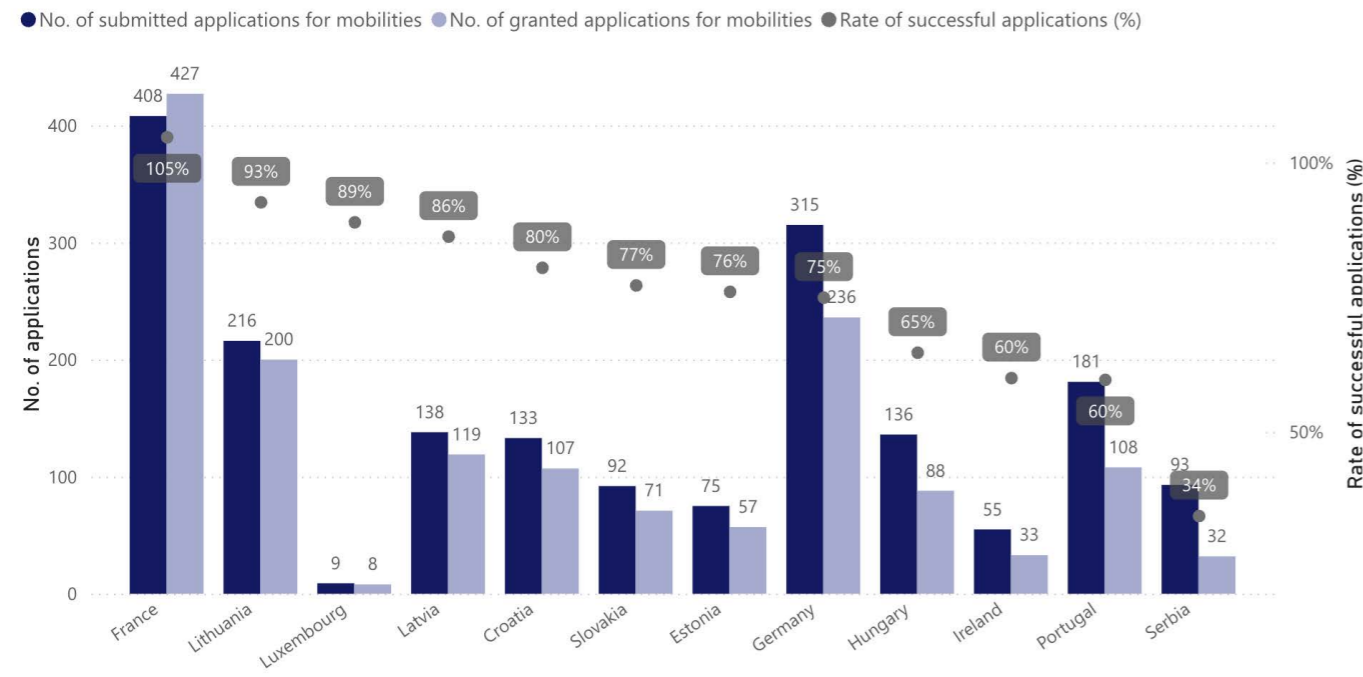


4. Figure Contracted rate by country (2018-2022)

Beside Lithuania and Estonia, most of the participating countries in the survey are challenged by the insufficient number of quality applications. According to this, there is significant potential for most countries, but especially for Luxembourg, Slovakia, Hungary, Croatia, France, and Germany, to increase commitments to funding. **Figure 5** illustrates the rate of successful applications. In some countries, such as France (105%) and Luxembourg (89%), the rate of successful applications is high; however, the total number of applications remains too low to commit the majority of the available resources. For these countries, the primary challenge lies in expanding the absolute number of applicants and reaching out to new groups of potential beneficiaries.

In contrast, other countries are grappling not only with low numbers but also with the eligibility and quality of applications. Countries like Serbia (34%), Portugal, and Ireland (60%), as well as Hungary (65%), demonstrate lower success rates in securing high-quality, eligible applications. In these cases, efforts to increase the quality of applications, in addition to boosting the number of submissions, could significantly enhance the effectiveness of fund absorption.

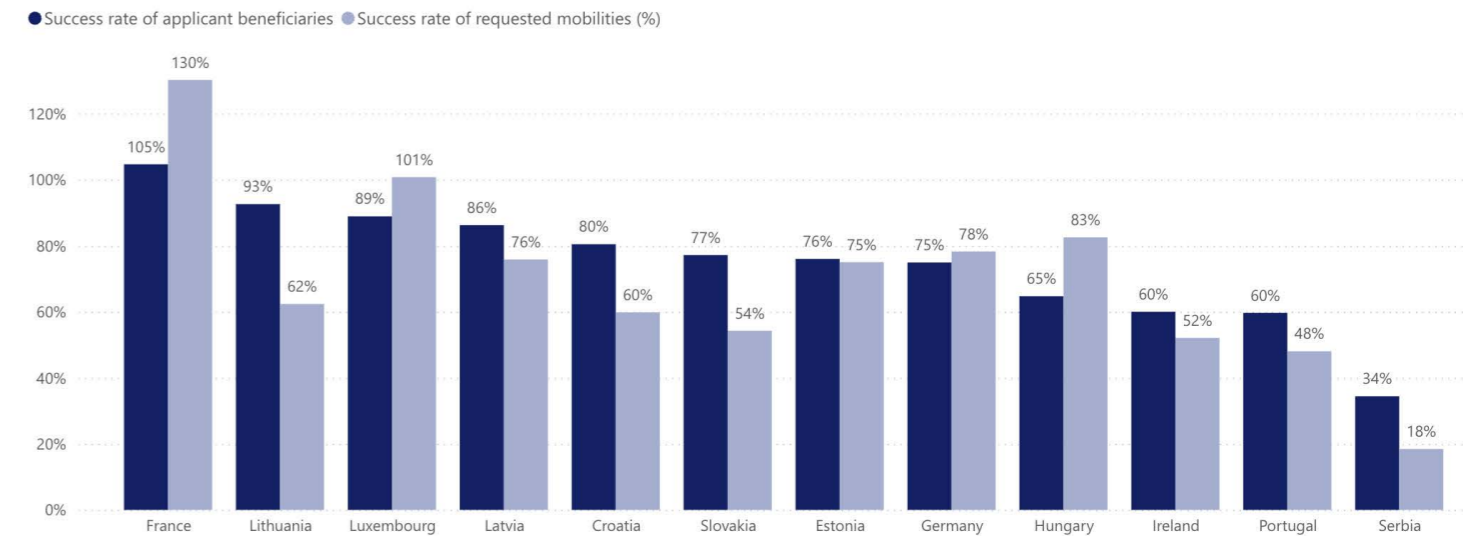
#### Rate of successful applications 2018-2022



4.5. Figure Rate of successful applications (2018-2022)

When comparing the success rate of applications to the rate of granted mobilities, as shown in **Figure 6**, it can be concluded that in France, Luxembourg and Hungary, where the ratio of granted mobility is higher than the ratio of granted applicants, the applicants who were rejected requested fewer mobilities than the average. France is a peculiar example, with its data rising above 100%, the result of a redistribution of funds (2018-2019) that granted applications placed on reserve lists. In the case of Hungary and Luxembourg, this difference means that organisations with higher mobility demand (typically larger, more established organisations with a higher number of staff involved) are more successful than the ones with lower mobility requests. It also implies that a highlighted focus on supporting the potentially small organisations that applied (for proportionally fewer mobilities than the rest of the applicants) could increase the success rate of applications. When the proportion is reversed, in Lithuania, Croatia and Slovakia, the awarded number of mobilities are lower than the number of requests, which could be due to budget constraints, for example, in Lithuania, where 100% of the allocated funds were utilised, or in other cases it can be explained that demands of mobilities applied for were considered unjustified.

#### Comparison of success rates for beneficiaries and mobilities (2018-2022)



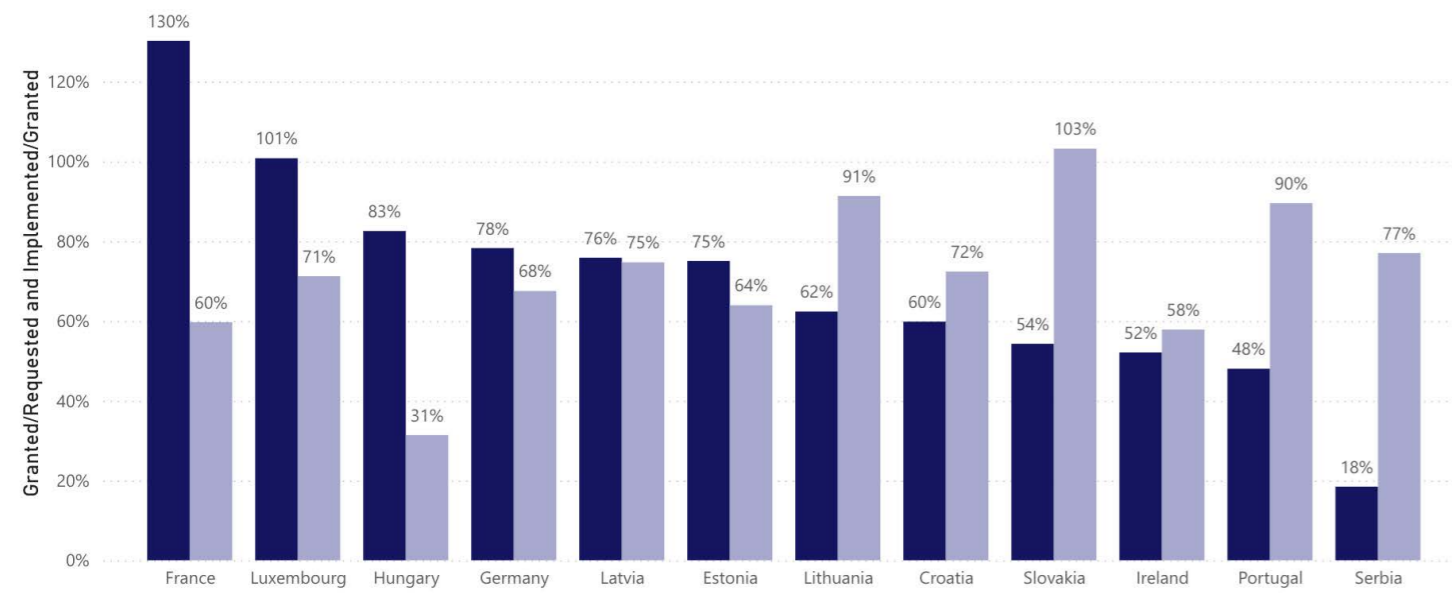
4.6. Figure Comparison of success rates for beneficiaries and mobilities (2018-2022)

#### Utilisation of Granted mobilities

When examining the rate of granted mobilities versus requested mobilities, the highest ratio achieved by countries like France (130%), Luxembourg (101%) and Hungary (83%), closely followed by the trio of Germany (78%), Latvia (76%) and Estonia (75%). However, the utilisation of granted mobilities shows a completely different picture as apparent from **Figure 7**. For most of the countries, the utilisation rate ranges between 58% and 77%, which might not seem very solid, but it must be taken into consideration that the allocated budgets started growing in 2021, but organisations have multiple years to complete the mobilities they were granted, so for this type of analysis it would be important to perform the analysis again once more data is available about the current financial period. An extreme case is Hungary, where only 31% of mobilities are implemented. This means that the reasons behind eligible applicants failing to implement more than two-thirds of the opportunities they were granted need to be further analysed. The positive extremities include Slovakia, Lithuania and Portugal, where the implementation rate is over 90%. These countries should be looked at as positive benchmarks.

Requested mobilities, Granted mobilities and Implemented mobilities by Country (2018-2022)

● Granted/Requested ● Implemented/Granted



4.7. Figure Rate of Granted to Requested mobilities, and Implemented to Granted mobilities

As the majority of both granted and implemented mobilities are for staff, they are the main driver for the cumulated ratio. Zooming in on the implementation rate of mobilities for Learners and Other Activities, Table 4 shows that in most countries where it existed, it was either close to 100% or surpassing it by far, due to some kind of restructuring. The exception to this trend is Germany and Hungary, where the implementation rate is below 25% for Learner mobilities. But when we assess these figures, we have to emphasise that the figures correspond to the introductory phase of this new type of mobility, and the very low number of cases, as well as the low numerical value of figures, can easily generate high differences when calculating the percentage of granted/implemented mobilities per countries.

Ratio of Implemented, Granted and Requested mobilities

Country	Requested mobilities	Granted mobilities	Implemented mobilities	Granted/Requested	Implemented/Granted
<b>Slovakia</b>	<b>1104</b>	<b>599</b>	<b>618</b>	<b>54%</b>	<b>103%</b>
Learner	29	2	8	7%	400%
Staff	1075	597	610	56%	102%
<b>Lithuania</b>	<b>2125</b>	<b>1325</b>	<b>1210</b>	<b>62%</b>	<b>91%</b>
Learner	140	84	84	60%	100%
Other Activity	11	11	11	100%	100%
Staff	1974	1230	1115	62%	91%
<b>Portugal</b>	<b>2778</b>	<b>1334</b>	<b>1194</b>	<b>48%</b>	<b>90%</b>
Staff	2651	1240	1122	47%	90%
Learner	127	94	72	74%	77%
<b>Serbia</b>	<b>943</b>	<b>174</b>	<b>134</b>	<b>18%</b>	<b>77%</b>
Learner	13	0	0	0%	NaN
Staff	930	174	134	19%	77%
<b>Latvia</b>	<b>1146</b>	<b>869</b>	<b>649</b>	<b>76%</b>	<b>75%</b>
Other Activity	3	3	3	100%	100%
Learner	111	88	74	79%	84%
Staff	1032	778	572	75%	74%
<b>Croatia</b>	<b>871</b>	<b>521</b>	<b>377</b>	<b>60%</b>	<b>72%</b>
Learner	48	8	15	17%	188%
Staff	823	513	362	62%	71%
<b>Luxembourg</b>	<b>131</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>101%</b>	<b>71%</b>
Staff	131	132	94	101%	71%
<b>Germany</b>	<b>9251</b>	<b>7239</b>	<b>4887</b>	<b>78%</b>	<b>68%</b>
Other Activity	30	30	30	100%	100%
Staff	8524	6953	4792	82%	69%
Learner	697	256	65	37%	25%
<b>Estonia</b>	<b>1053</b>	<b>790</b>	<b>505</b>	<b>75%</b>	<b>64%</b>
Learner	78	22	23	28%	105%
Other Activity	2	2	2	100%	100%
Staff	973	766	480	79%	63%
<b>France</b>	<b>8059</b>	<b>10492</b>	<b>6262</b>	<b>130%</b>	<b>60%</b>
Learner	999	567	447	57%	79%
Staff	7060	9925	5815	141%	59%
<b>Ireland</b>	<b>883</b>	<b>460</b>	<b>266</b>	<b>52%</b>	<b>58%</b>
Staff	827	445	266	54%	60%
Learner	56	15	0	27%	0%
<b>Hungary</b>	<b>1270</b>	<b>1048</b>	<b>329</b>	<b>83%</b>	<b>31%</b>
Staff	1248	1034	327	83%	32%
Learner	22	14	2	64%	14%
<b>Total</b>	<b>29614</b>	<b>24983</b>	<b>16525</b>	<b>84%</b>	<b>66%</b>

4. Table: Ratio of Implemented, Granted and requested mobilities (2018-2022)

Complex view on key performance indicators: requested mobilities, granted mobilities, implemented mobilities versus the available budget

**Contracted rate of the budget:** this shows the extent to which funds were committed to awarded organizations as a percentage of the available budget.

**Requested mobilities:** the number of requested mobilities and corresponding funding demand reflect an overall interest in mobility within a country. When the requested mobilities fall below the available budget, this indicates sub-optimal application volume and restricts budget utilisation. This gap suggests a need to engage potential new applicant organizations and encourage them to submit applications.

**Granted mobilities:** granted mobilities represent approved applications and the mobilities awarded within them. The ratio of granted to requested mobilities can reveal two potential issues: either the demand for funding exceeds availability, or a significant portion of applications lacks quality. This latter situation highlights the need to offer additional support for application preparation, particularly for certain applicant groups.

**Implemented mobilities:** the implemented-to-granted mobilities ratio indicates the success rate of awarded mobilities being carried through to completion. A rate of 100% is ideal, though external factors (e.g., the COVID-19 pandemic) and internal organizational challenges can hinder implementation. When implementation rates are low, uncommitted funds remain at risk of being forfeited. Regular monitoring and customized support can help maximize mobility completion rates and prevent unused mobilities.

This set of indicators offers a refined view of a country's performance, going beyond budget utilization alone. It enables a deeper understanding of constraints impacting successful outreach to potential applicants, the quality of applications received, and the completion of awarded mobilities. It also helps to identify areas of targeted interventions.

Countries performing best typically achieve high budget utilization while maintaining strong granted and implemented mobility rates. Table 5 compares these metrics across countries. Lithuania stands out, with over 90% in all three metrics. Estonia and Latvia also maintain high performance across these indicators. Some countries, like France and Luxembourg, excel in applicant success rates, while Portugal and Slovakia demonstrate high implementation rates of granted mobilities. In contrast, countries with notably lower ratios can identify focus areas for improvement. For instance, Luxembourg and Slovakia might focus on budget utilization, Serbia could support applicants in the application process, and Hungary might address factors limiting the implementation of granted mobilities.

#### Overview of key indicators (2018-2022)

Country	Contracted rate of budget (%)	Share of successful applicant beneficiaries (%)	Share of implemented mobilities to granted (5)
Lithuania	100%	93%	91%
Estonia	98%	76%	64%
Latvia	88%	86%	75%
Serbia	64%	34%	77%
Portugal	62%	60%	90%
Ireland	62%	60%	58%
Germany	55%	75%	68%
France	53%	105%	60%
Croatia	50%	80%	72%
Hungary	46%	65%	31%
Slovakia	40%	77%	103%
Luxembourg	38%	89%	71%
<b>Total</b>	<b>57%</b>	<b>80%</b>	<b>66%</b>

5. Table: Overview of key indicators (2018-2022)

**Change of funding arrangements by introducing accreditation:** Since 2021, funding arrangements for staff and learner mobility in adult education have included the possibility of applying for accreditation, which has introduced new dynamics to the allocation and utilization of funds. The calculation of granted mobility budgets may differ across countries based on national priorities. In France, for instance, a deliberate decision was made to provide stronger support for mobility in adult education, leading to a positive difference between the number of mobility grants requested and those ultimately allocated. National priorities can influence mobility performance and enhance budget utilization.

#### Types of organisations implementing mobilities

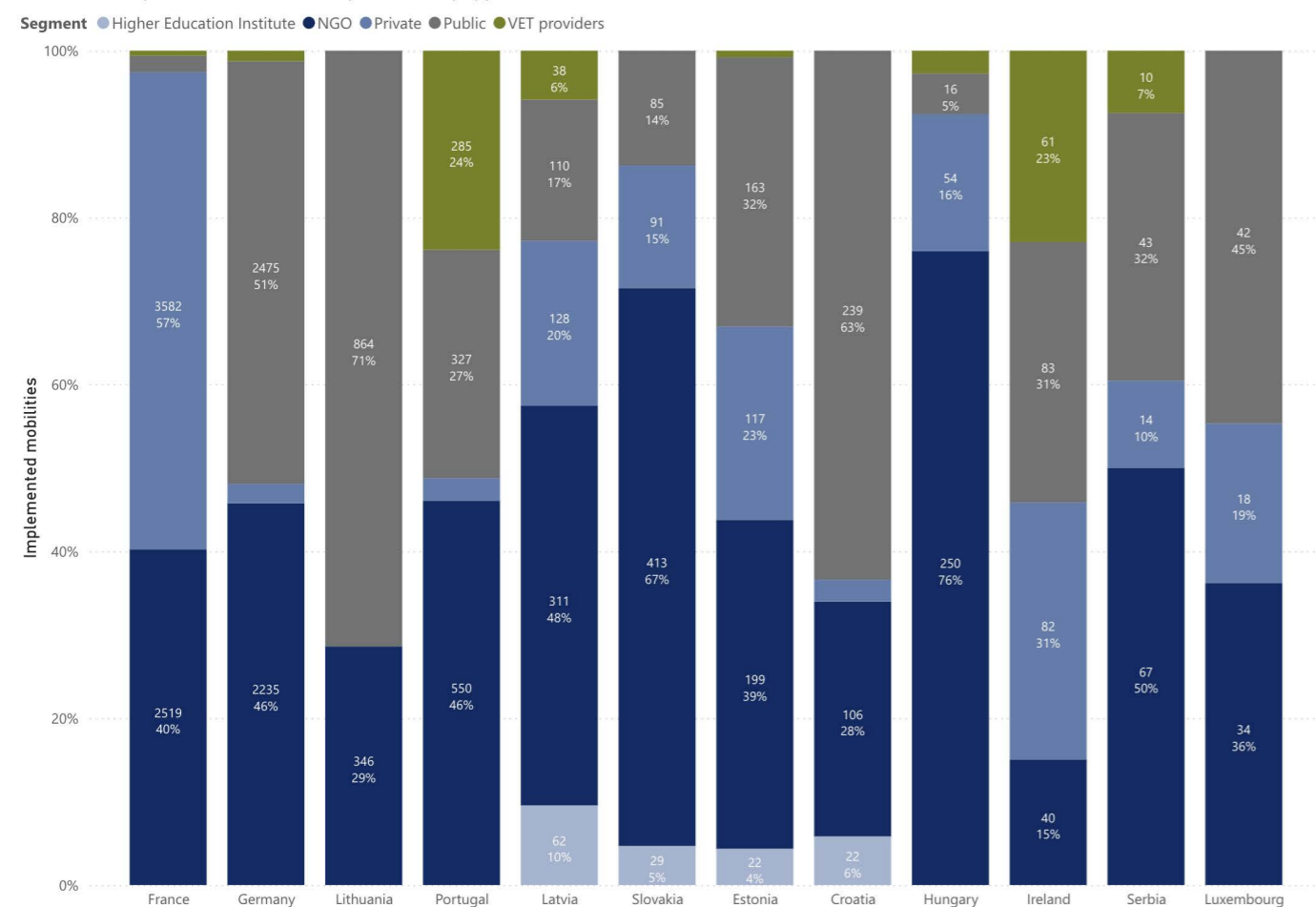
**Figure 8** reveals a highly diverse structure in the types of organisations implementing mobilities across countries, with certain universal trends. NGOs play a significant role in all countries, consistently contributing to mobility implementation. Public and private organisations also make up a substantial share of mobilities, showing a relatively balanced distribution in Latvia, Slovakia, and Ireland. In most other countries, public organisations take the lead, except in France (where 57% are private and only 2% are public) and Hungary (where private organisations account for 16% and public ones for 5%).

Higher Education Institutes and VET providers are generally underrepresented compared to NGOs and public and private organisations. VET providers only surpass 20% of mobilities in Portugal and Ireland, while in other countries, they remain marginal or nonexistent. This underrepresentation is partly due to eligibility distinctions in each country. In several cases, VET providers and Higher Education Institutes are not eligible to apply for mobility as adult education organisations. In countries where VET and Higher Education providers also deliver general adult education, excluding them from applications limits potential program utilisation.

The number of organisations implementing mobilities is also very diverse, with an overall lead in France of 6262 organisations. It is a pretty high number compared to other countries. However, Lithuania, with its 1210 participating organisations, is outstanding compared to many other countries with significantly more numerous populations.

In some countries, such as France, the distribution of mobility beneficiaries aligns with the overall structure of non-formal training providers. However, in others, there is no clear pattern. Countries should identify underrepresented organisation types in their national context, factoring in application eligibility rules and provider structures. Targeting these segments may offer a valuable opportunity to increase engagement and broaden program take-in.

Number of implemented mobilities by beneficiary types (2018-2022)



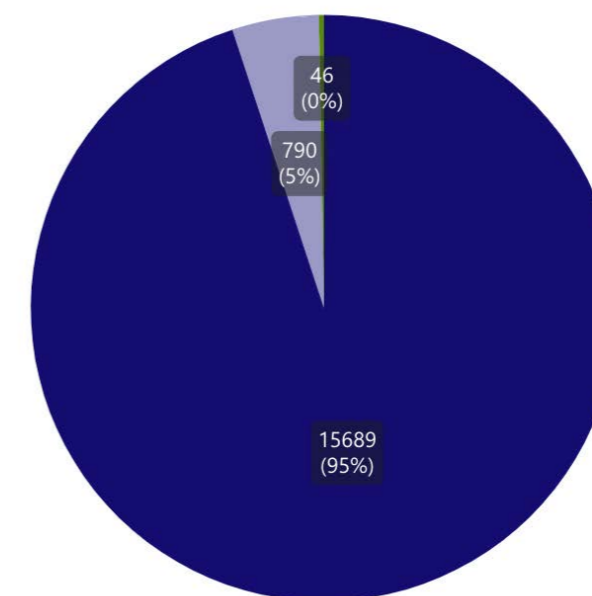
48. Figure Share and Number of implemented mobilities by beneficiary types (2018-2022)

### Types of implemented mobilities

As the majority (95%) of mobilities are for staff in the period according to **Figure 9**, it is not surprising that the picture for the beneficiary type ratios for staff is highly similar to what we see in the overall results. (See **Figure 10**).

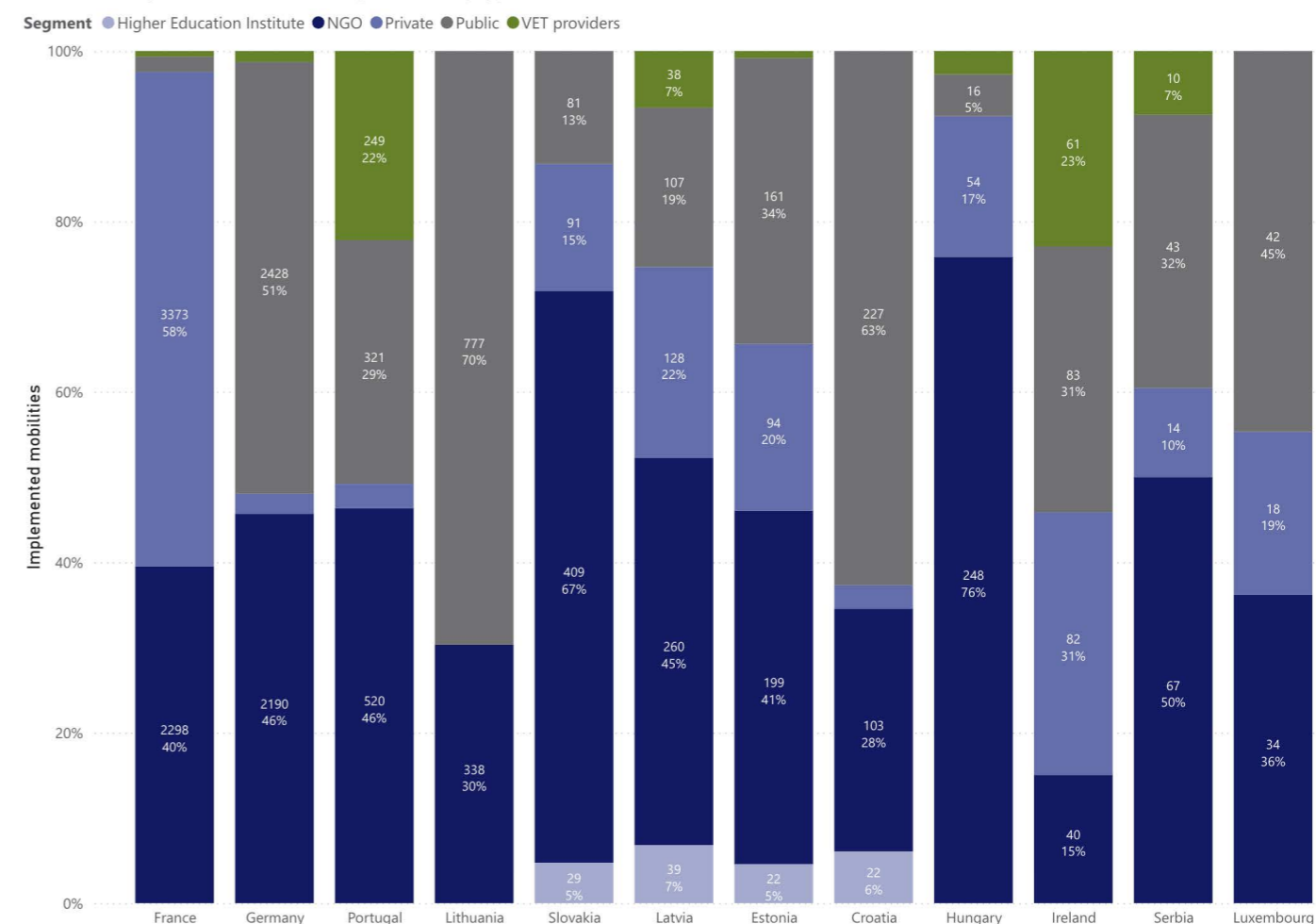
Share of implemented mobilities by types (2018-2022)

Country ● Staff ● Learner ● Other Activity



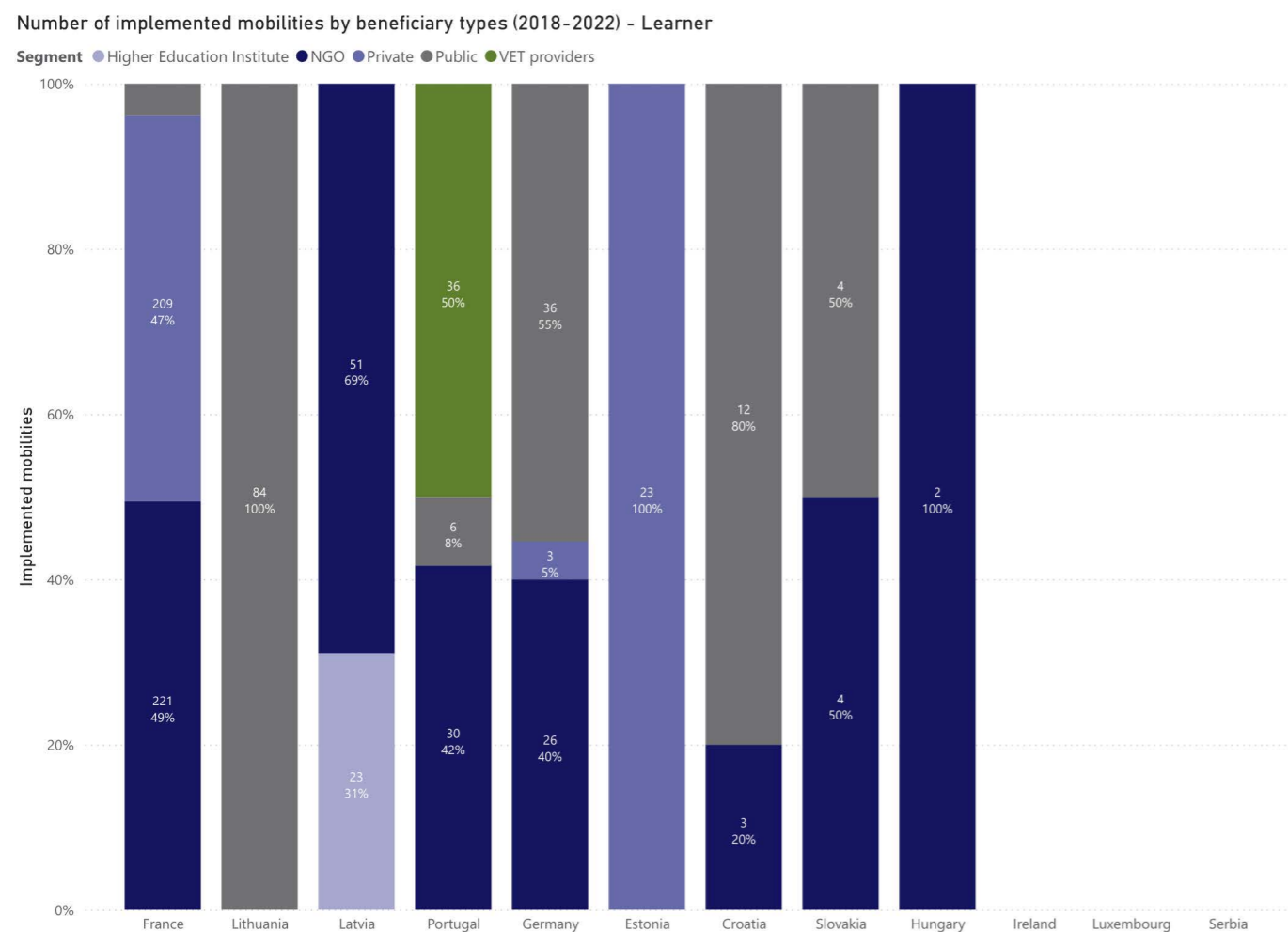
49. Figure Share of implemented mobilities by types

Number of implemented mobilities by beneficiary types (2018-2022) - Staff



410. Figure : Share and Number of implemented mobilities by beneficiary types (2018-2022) – Staff

With 'learner mobility' introduced in the current funding cycle, it remains in an early, introductory phase where stakeholders in the adult learning sector are still familiarizing themselves with these new opportunities. It is interesting to observe the types of organizations that have been active in implementing learner mobilities during this initial period. As shown in **Figure 11**, the majority of learner mobilities—similar to the overall mobility figures—are implemented by NGOs.

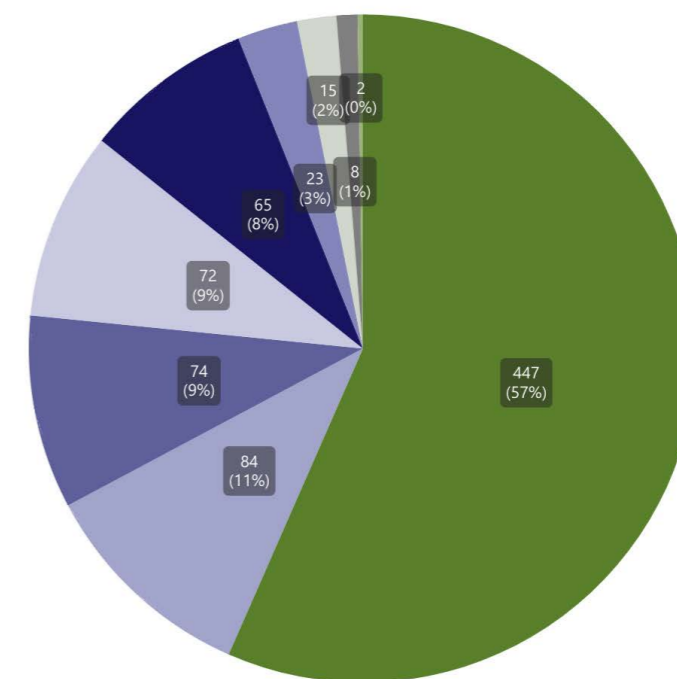


4 11. Figure Share and Number of implemented mobilities by beneficiary types (2018-2022) – Learners

France stands out, having implemented 57% of learner mobilities in the period 2021-22 (**Figure 12**). This high level of engagement by private organizations in France shifts the overall distribution towards the private sector, in contrast to the public sector's predominance in other countries where learner mobility numbers are notably lower.

Share of implemented learner mobilities by country (2021-2022)

Country: France, Lithuania, Latvia, Portugal, Germany, Estonia, Croatia, Slovakia, Hungary, Ireland, Luxembourg, Serbia



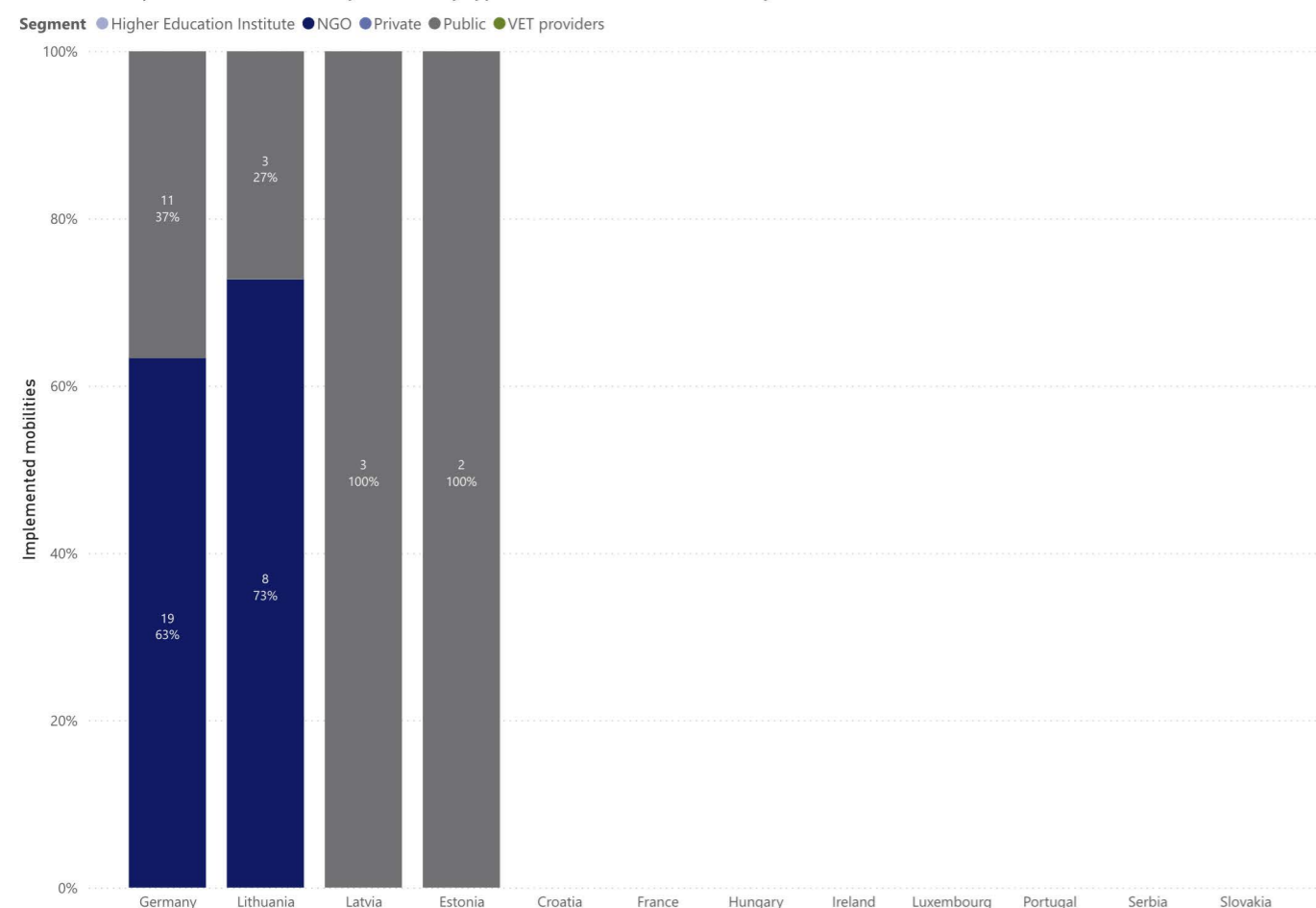
4 12. Figure Share of implemented learner mobilities by country (2021-2022)

These insights into organizational involvement highlight which types of organizations are more motivated to apply for and implement learner mobility in different national contexts. This information can help National Agencies (NAs) refine their outreach and promotional strategies, tailoring efforts to engage specific organization types more effectively.

Mobilities categorized as 'Other Activities' (such as 'invited experts' and 'hosting teachers and educators in training') offer valuable alternative avenues for professional development and learning exchanges. These opportunities are particularly useful for enabling large groups of staff within organisations to engage in professional growth without the challenges of extended travel. Additionally, such mobilities are also advantageous when adult educators face constraints like teaching responsibilities or commitments to other employers, which make longer absences difficult.

Currently, only beneficiaries from four countries have implemented programs under 'Other Activities' (**Figure 13**). Germany leads with the highest number of these mobilities (30), followed by the Baltic states with a combined total of 16. This limited uptake suggests that adaptation to this category is still in an early phase. For organisations facing significant barriers to extended international travel, focusing on 'Other Activities' could be a promising strategy to enhance professionalisation efforts. Greater awareness of the professional development and mutual exchange benefits offered by 'Other Activities' is needed across countries to help potential beneficiaries fully explore these opportunities, which can be taken into consideration by NA's strategies.

Number of implemented mobilities by beneficiary types (2018-2022) - Other Activity



4 13. Figure: Share and Number of implemented mobilities by beneficiary types (2018-2022) - Other Activities

### Destinations and Languages

**Table 6** shows the top five destination countries for each national agency, with Spain and Italy leading the list. Mediterranean countries, including others from the region, dominate as preferred destinations, representing over half of the selected locations for mobility programs.

Top 5 destinations (2022)

Country	1	2	3	4	5
Croatia	Italy	Spain	Slovenia	Finland	Greece
Estonia	Finland	Germany	Poland	Netherlands	Sweden
France	Spain	Belgium	Italy	Portugal	Denmark
Germany	Spain	Austria	Italy	Ireland	France
Hungary	Spain	United Kingdom	Austria	Italy	Malta
Ireland	Spain	Italy	United Kingdom	Germany	Croatia
Latvia	Spain	Italy	Estonia	Portugal	Cyprus
Lithuania	Italy	Poland	Spain	Croatia	Greece
Luxembourg	France	Italy	Spain	Sweden	Austria
Portugal	Spain	Italy	Finland	Greece	Croatia
Serbia	Cyprus	Ireland	Italy	Slovenia	Spain
Slovakia	Croatia	Czech Republic	Latvia	Spain	Italy

6. Table: Top 5 destinations by country (2022)

Despite these preferred destinations, the language choices for mobilities shade the picture. English is overwhelmingly the most used language, regardless of the destination country or the nationality of the beneficiaries. German and Spanish rank next, while other smaller languages reflect interactions with national minorities in certain regions, as shown in **Table 7**.

Top 5 languages (2022)

Country	1	2	3	4	5
Croatia	English	Italian	Croatian	German	Spanish
Estonia	English	German	Polish	Estonian	Finnish
France	English	French	Spanish	Italian	Ido
Germany	English	German	French	Spanish	Italian
Hungary	English	Hungarian	Spanish	German	Italian
Ireland	English				
Latvia	English	Russian	German		
Lithuania	English	Russian	German		
Luxembourg	English	German	French		
Portugal	English	Spanish	Portuguese	Italian	French
Serbia	English	Spanish	Serbian	Croatian	
Slovakia	English	Czech	Slovak	Esperanto	German

7. Table: Top 5 languages by country (2022)

Since most mobilities involve participation in courses and training, this information on destinations and language use provides additional insights. It indicates that many of these courses are conducted in Mediterranean countries and are primarily offered in English by organizations specializing in adult educator training for mobility participants. At the same time, this pattern suggests an opportunity for countries to explore more diverse mobility options in regions with strong traditions and expertise in non-formal adult learning. Identifying specific incentives to encourage mobility and partnership building to other countries could foster a broader range of learning experiences for participants.

### Summary of Findings on Erasmus+ KA1 Mobility Performance

This chapter summarizes key findings on KA1 mobility performance across 12 Erasmus+ participating countries, drawing from data in the quantitative survey to highlight trends and performance indicators for 2018-2022, which reflect how effectively countries are utilising mobility funding in adult education.

### Key Findings

#### 1. Recovery and post-COVID-19 growth:

The period is characterised by the shift from the 2013-2020 financial cycle to 2021-2027, with increasing opportunities provided by significant growth in financial allocations and the introduction of new types of mobility. COVID-19 caused a major shock and fallback in mobility implementations in all countries. Mobility activities significantly rebounded after the COVID-19 restrictions, with numbers in 2022 reaching over twice the pre-pandemic figures. However, recovery was uneven across countries, with some, like Lithuania and France, experiencing substantial increases, while others, like Germany and Hungary, maintained stable mobility activity at relatively low levels.

## 2. Budget utilization and fund absorption:

Budget absorption varied widely, with high-performing countries like Lithuania, Estonia, and Latvia successfully committing nearly all their allocated funds. Conversely, countries like Luxembourg and Slovakia faced challenges in fully utilizing their budgets, often due to insufficient or lower-quality applications.

## 3. Application quality and support needs:

Success in mobilities is often correlated with the quality and number of applications received. Countries like France showed high success rates in approved applications but struggled with a low overall number of applicants. Meanwhile, Serbia, Portugal, and Hungary would benefit from enhanced support in application preparation to increase both quantity and quality.

## 4. Types of implementing organizations:

Organisation representation in mobility schemes does not always reflect the national picture in the non-formal adult learning provision. NGOs played a significant role in implementing mobilities across all countries, with public and private organizations contributing as well. However, VET providers and Higher Education Institutes were underrepresented in most countries sometimes due to eligibility restrictions; however, many of those also engaged in general adult education and non-formal adult learning. This suggests a possible need to review the clarity of rules and eligibility criteria, an area for potential expansion in engagement and program reach.

## 5. Implementation rates of granted mobilities:

For most countries, the rate of implemented-to-granted mobilities ranged between 58% and 77%, with the highest implementation rates observed in Slovakia, Lithuania, and Portugal (over 90%). Low implementation rates, such as Hungary's 31%, suggest a need for further examinations and potentially tailored support to help beneficiaries complete their approved mobilities.

## 6. Popular destinations and languages:

Spain and Italy emerged as the most popular destinations, with English as the dominant language for mobilities, regardless of destination. This trend highlights an opportunity to diversify destination choices, broadening the range of cultural and educational exchanges by enhancing opportunities for partnership-making and overview on course offers.

Overall, the key findings reveal a scattered pattern of mobility performance across countries, suggesting that each country could benefit from a targeted review to identify specific areas for intervention. While high-performing countries provide models of effective utilization, the diversity in performance underscores the need for tailored approaches. The qualitative analyses in the following chapter will further deepen these insights, offering a better understanding of the mobility landscape and guiding more precise measures for countries seeking to enhance their Erasmus+ KA1 mobility performance.

# 5. KEY FACTORS ENABLING AND HINDERING KA1 MOBILITY PERFORMANCE

## 5.1 Factors influencing participation of adult education institutes and training providers

Adult education institutes and training providers are the eligible entities applying for KA1 Mobility programs to offer unique learning opportunities for their staff and learners. Their strategies, motivations, understanding of their own needs and constraints, and assessment of their capacities, combined with how they value the opportunities offered by the KA1 Mobility scheme, play a crucial role in determining their attitude and readiness to apply and, ultimately, the overall mobility performance within a country. It was a highlighted focus of the research to identify conditions and support mechanisms which encourage training providers and effectively enable them to submit applications and successfully implement mobility programs. At the same time, it was also important to learn more about what conditions hampering them in submitting applications and creating barriers for them.

Drawing on insights from an online survey and national case studies conducted in Croatia (CR), France (FR), Hungary (HU), Portugal (PT), and Slovakia (SK), the following sections summarize the key enabling and hindering factors influencing the participation of adult educators and training providers in Erasmus+ KA1 mobility programs.

### 5.1.1 Enabling factors for adult education institutes and training providers in Erasmus+ KA1 mobility programs

#### Culture of Lifelong Learning (LLL) and participation in adult learning

The cultural context of lifelong learning (LLL) plays an influencing role in shaping the success of Erasmus+ KA1 mobilities. Case studies and Eurostat data highlight the positive influence of a well-established LLL tradition, as seen in countries with high adult learning participation rates. These nations often display a stronger recognition of the benefits of continuous learning, creating a favourable environment for KA1 mobilities.

Countries like France, Estonia, Luxembourg, and Portugal have consistently reported adult learning participation rates above the EU average. This strong culture of lifelong learning fosters societal and institutional support for mobilities. For instance, France's extensive LLL culture creates a supportive context where continuous education is widely recognised and valued, encouraging organisations to actively engage in mobility programs. In Luxembourg and Estonia, high participation rates reflect a policy environment that values learning.

However, the Eurostat data reveals variation within this trend as shown in Table 9. While France, Estonia, Luxembourg have maintained rates above the EU average, others like Portugal and Ireland hover around this benchmark, and several countries, including Croatia and Serbia, have shown lower rates overall. For instance, Croatia and Serbia reported the lowest participation rates among the countries studied, though both saw gradual increases over the period. Slovakia showed a particularly notable rise, from 4.0% in 2018 to 12.8% in 2022.

### Participation in adult learning (2018-2023)

Country	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018
Croatia	6.4	4.4	5.1	3.2	3.5	2.9
Estonia	23.2	21.1	18.4	16.6	19.6	19.3
<b>EU – 27 countries (from 2020)</b>	<b>12.8</b>	<b>11.8</b>	<b>10.8</b>	<b>9.1</b>	<b>10.8</b>	<b>10.7</b>
France	14.9	13.3	11.0	13.0	19.5	18.6
Germany	8.3	8.1	7.7	7.7	8.2	8.2
Hungary	9.6	7.9	5.9	5.1	5.8	6.0
Ireland	12.3	11.8	13.6	11.0	12.6	12.5
Latvia	10.7	9.7	8.6	6.6	7.4	6.7
Lithuania	10.7	8.5	8.5	7.2	7.0	6.6
Luxembourg	16.2	18.1	17.9	16.3	19.1	18.0
Portugal	13.4	13.3	12.3	9.8	10.5	10.3
Serbia	6.1	5.2	4.8	3.7	4.3	4.1
Slovakia	10.5	12.8	4.8	2.8	3.6	4.0

8 Table: Participation in education and training Adult learning\*2024. Source: Eurostat

Interestingly, among high-performing mobility countries identified in Chapter 4, Luxembourg and Estonia maintain high participation rates, while Lithuania and Latvia fall below the EU average but exhibit steady growth. These findings suggest that while a strong LLL culture is beneficial, other factors can also drive mobility success, offering insights into where targeted support or policy shifts may further enhance mobility engagement.

#### National policies and legal frameworks as enabling factors for Erasmus+ Mobility

Case studies illustrate how the organization and structure of adult education within each country can shape institutions' and individuals' engagement with Erasmus+ KA1 mobility opportunities. National policies that support lifelong learning (LLL), professional development, and international cooperation often enhance readiness for KA1 mobility participation.

Countries with a high commitment to long-term strategic planning in adult education tend to create more favourable environments for non-formal learning providers. By defining the roles of these providers and establishing consistent funding schemes, these frameworks support the growth and sustainability of non-formal learning organizations. Such frameworks enable providers to adapt to evolving needs, while dedicated funding promotes continuity and capacity building.

- Portugal and France:** Both countries have long-standing adult learning policies that prioritize inclusion and professional development, especially within nonprofit and social sectors. Since the turn of the century, Portugal's Qualifica program has significantly advanced adult education, particularly through the recognition of prior learning and customized learning pathways for low-educated adults. In France, the Labour Code defines lifelong learning as a national obligation, encompassing not only vocational skills but also cultural, artistic, intellectual, and social development. This policy framework supports a strong tradition of lifelong learning, aligning well with the goals of KA1 mobility programs that benefits the Erasmus+ "vocational education and training" sector more than that of "adult education", a vocabulary that is little used in French and therefore poorly understood. It nevertheless fosters relatively high rates of staff participation from the Erasmus+ adult education sector.
- Croatia:** Although Croatia has a long history in LLL in adult education, it has made notable advancements in adult education as part of LLL during the EU accession process after 2000, aligning its strategies with European policy recommendations. National initiatives have strengthened competency development within NGOs and public institutions, while Croatia is pioneering the introduction of individual learning accounts to raise participation. The National Plan for the Development of the Education System until 2027 prioritises adult education, with a focus on internationalisation and Erasmus+ mobility. These efforts have led to substantial increases in adult learning participation rates, from 2.9% in 2018 to 6.4% in 2023, along with a rise in mobilities from 36 in 2018 to 197 by 2022. While these figures are still below the EU average, the dynamic of change is notable.

Government policies that promote innovation and internationalisation in the adult learning sector further support participation in KA1 mobility programs. These policies create an enabling environment that encourages the adoption of new teaching methods, fosters creativity, and facilitates global engagement. The internationalisation of adult education is not only a goal in its own right but also a vehicle for introducing best practices and innovative solutions from other countries, enhancing the overall quality and relevance of adult learning.

#### Potentials of cohesive policies and coordinated approaches

Cohesive, well-coordinated policies are particularly effective in addressing complex, multifaceted challenges, such as promoting social inclusion, building upskilling pathways for low-educated adults, or facilitating the digital transformation and developing digital competencies of citizens. When adult learning policies are aligned with other domains—such as social inclusion, labour market integration, health and wellbeing, innovation, digitalization, climate action, and sustainability—they open pathways for a broad range of providers to engage with Erasmus+ mobility. This alignment strengthens innovation and competence development across these fields through international knowledge exchange.

High coordination among governing bodies and social partners creates a more strategic approach to mobilities, enabling LLL providers like NGOs, cultural and other institutions, and labor-market-focused organizations to explore and utilize mobility opportunities more effectively. To leverage this potential, National Agencies (NAs) should collaborate with governing bodies responsible for specific policy areas, adjusting awareness campaigns to reach stakeholders across sectors and emphasizing the benefits of international exchange for meeting specific policy objectives. France provides a compelling example by using KA1 mobilities to address global challenges like climate change and social inclusion, where international networking is essential. Similarly, focusing on organizations in the arts and creative industries, aligned with sectoral development policies, has helped France leverage the benefits of international cooperation.

#### Capacity building and skill development:

All case studies confirmed that Erasmus+ KA1 mobility programs are viewed as essential for professional development, organizational capacity building, and access to innovation and best practices across all countries, particularly for organisations lacking alternative funding sources.

The pressure on organizations to invest in capacity building varies by country, depending on legislative requirements, quality frameworks, and market expectations. In more competitive environments or sectors with high-quality expectations, there are stronger incentives for organizations to engage in international exchange to improve their services and diversify methodologies. Conversely, in centralized systems with fewer incentives for development, organizations may struggle to implement capacity-building measures that integrate new knowledge into service delivery.

Organizational attitudes toward mobility may also be influenced by country size and resource availability. Larger countries like France and Germany offer extensive in-country development opportunities, often within well-developed CPD systems for adult educators. By contrast, smaller countries, such as Estonia, Lithuania, and Latvia, rely heavily on international cooperation to meet the diversity of professional development needs, which may contribute to their outstanding mobility performance in mobility activity.

#### International cooperation and networking

Providers across all case study countries emphasize the role of Erasmus+ KA1 mobility in fostering international cooperation and establishing sustainable networks. This networking is especially valued in Portugal, where training providers align KA1 participation with their international growth strategies. Similarly, French organizations use international cooperation to address global challenges, such as sustainable development and social solidarity.

However, sustainable cooperation requires mutual benefits, which can be challenging when there are large disparities in experience levels between partners. Combining learner and staff mobilities, trying to create synergies and engaging in both KA1 and KA2 projects, or establishing partnerships with E+ accreditation can help ensure mutual learning and sustained interest among all parties. This can be highlighted in future promotion strategies.

#### Inclusivity and support for vulnerable groups

Learner mobility experiences are still relatively limited, yet the program shows potential for supporting vulnerable groups. For example:

- In Croatia, KA1 mobilities help people with disabilities develop transversal skills and foster inclusion.
- Slovakia's University of the Third Age uses mobilities to engage seniors, providing meaningful learning opportunities that promote social inclusion.

Providers working with vulnerable populations can leverage KA1 mobility to support these groups effectively, helping them build skills and boost motivation.

#### Easier application through accreditation

Erasmus+ accreditation facilitates a smoother application process, particularly benefiting experienced providers in countries like Croatia and Slovakia. In Portugal, consortium participation allows less experienced organizations to manage their first KA1 mobilities in partnership with more experienced providers. Accreditation encourages organizations to invest in creating long-term internationalisation strategies that integrate KA1 mobilities as valuable opportunities for both staff development and learner enrichment. Despite of the highly positive feedback regarding accreditations, the promotion and utilisation of this opportunity are diverse in countries<sup>3</sup>.

#### Sector-specific alignment

Some sectors naturally align with Erasmus+ mobilities due to their inherent focus on international collaboration. In France, the arts and creative industries benefit from KA1 mobilities as cross-border collaboration is fundamental to their professional practice. NA strategy helped to recognise and exploit this potential for the sector. To better exploit this approach in the future, based on this experience, interested beneficiary organisations could generate specialised international networks in these sectors to reduce mobility organisation time and risk, building long-term partnerships that support relevant sector-specific learning and innovation.

### 5.1.2 Hindering Factors for Adult Educators and Training Providers in Erasmus+ KA1 Mobility Programs

The hindering factors for adult educators and training providers in Erasmus+ KA1 Mobility Programs were assessed by 10 responsible colleagues National Agency (NA) based on their experience working directly with applicants and beneficiaries. The NA representatives evaluated six predefined factors in a survey, with the option to supplement their responses with additional challenges not originally included. In addition to the survey, national case studies summarized the enabling and hindering factors in five countries, drawing on interviews conducted with training providers to provide a more in-depth perspective on the challenges encountered in these settings.

<sup>3</sup> No data was collected for this report, therefore accurate information are not available

## Hindering factors for Applicant organisations

Country	Administrative burden and capacity shortage for writing applications, planning and organising mobility projects	Lack of awareness of mobility schemes	Lack of capacity to support learners (especially those with low levels of skills)	Lack of information about partnership opportunities, difficulties in finding matching host organisations	Lack of interest or lack of opportunities matching the interests	Lack of means to compensate for temporary capacity loss	Lack of recognition of benefits	Low return on investment	Previous negative experience with mobility programs
Croatia	5	3	6	4	5	6	2	4	1
Estonia	5	2	2	4	2	4	2	5	1
France	6	6	4	4	1	6	3	2	1
Germany	6	6	6	4	2	6	4	3	1
Hungary	5	3	2	5	2	3	2	3	1
Latvia	5	5	2	5	5	2	2	3	2
Lithuania	4	2	3	2	1	2	1	2	1
Luxembourg	3	2	5	1	3	3	2	2	2
Serbia	3	2	2	4	1	1	2	1	1
Slovakia	5	6	4	5	2	3	2	2	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>13</b>

5.1. Figure: Hindering factors for Applicant organisations

The survey revealed a clear consensus on the most significant hindering factors among the predefined barriers.

### Hindering factors by national agency representatives

The overwhelming barrier reported by all NA representatives was the administrative burden and capacity shortage for writing applications and organising mobilities. All respondents ranked this factor as highly obstructive. The complexity of the application process and the amount of administrative work involved were seen as particularly daunting for organisations with limited staff and resources, making it difficult to participate in the program.

Other less outstanding but still strong influential factors are:

#### Lack of information about potential partners and hosts

Many respondents indicated that the absence of clear and accessible channels for identifying partners and hosts in other countries hampered participation. Without well-established networks, training providers struggled to establish the necessary collaborations for mobility projects.

#### Lack of awareness of mobility schemes

Despite efforts to promote Erasmus+ KA1, some organisations were still unaware of the available opportunities. This lack of awareness, particularly in underrepresented sectors, was cited as a moderate barrier to participation.

#### Lack of capacity to support staff and learners

Even when organisations were aware of the program, they often lacked the internal capacity—both in terms of human resources and infrastructure—to support staff and learners effectively throughout the mobility process.

**Lack of means to compensate for temporary capacity loss:** Many providers pointed to the difficulty of compensating for the loss of staff capacity during mobilities. With limited resources, it was challenging to manage the absence of key personnel while ensuring that regular operations continued smoothly.

Besides the perceptions of NA colleagues, case studies conveyed direct feedback from representatives of training providers. The most important finding of the comparative analyses is the following:

### Summary of case study findings

The case studies revealed a wide range of structural, cultural, and operational hindering factors that limit the engagement of organisations in Erasmus+ KA1 mobility programs. These challenges reflect both the organizational limitations within countries and broader contextual factors affecting the feasibility of mobility programs.

#### 1. Structural and cultural factors hindering mobility

- **Fragmented governance and priorities in educational policies:**

In many countries, the governance of adult education is fragmented, and several sectors and policy domains are engaged parallel. Lifelong learning policies can create an overarching framework for coordinated efforts and enhance the efficiency of interventions, but some countries lack distinct policy and coordinating bodies. Some governments put a strong focus on vocational education and training (VET) and higher education, with priorities on formal qualifications. This sectoral prioritization leaves general adult and informal learning with fewer resources and limited policy support, which can even lead to operational instability for especially NGOs in the non-formal learning sector and reducing the likelihood of institutions engaging in mobility programs.

- In Hungary, adult training is highly centralized, characterized by larger national EU funded programs and prioritizing formal education and VET over lifelong learning opportunities. This restricts the growth of non-formal education, particularly in rural areas, where access to learning resources is limited. Smaller organizations often lack the institutional capacity to apply for and manage KA1 programs, contributing to Hungary's low learner mobility rates.

- Slovakia faces similar structural limitations. Adult education policies are not fully aligned with Erasmus+ goals, especially regarding the participation of VET and higher education institutions. Despite these obstacles, NGOs have demonstrated greater involvement, motivated by an independent commitment to professional development and international collaboration.

- A similar situation exists in Croatia, where national policies are mostly focused on vocational education and training for adults, with less emphasis on non-formal and non-vocational education.

- **Cultural attitudes towards lifelong learning and mobility**

As pointed out earlier, the cultural perception of lifelong learning varies across countries and influences the willingness of individuals and institutions to engage in KA1 mobilities. In some nations, lifelong learning is less valued or primarily focused on formal qualifications in the domestic settings, limiting the interest for international learning experiences.

- In Slovakia, there is a long-standing preference for formal education over non-formal and adult learning, making it more challenging to engage adults in mobility programs. This is particularly evident in rural areas, where opportunities for professional development are limited and international mobility is less accessible.
- In Hungary, cultural attitudes toward learning are mixed. Although there is interest in upskilling within NGOs, especially those supporting vulnerable groups. Rural areas are generally less open to mobility opportunities, contrasting with higher interest in urban regions.

- **Geographic and demographic disparities**

A significant urban-rural divide affects KA1 mobility participation across the studied countries. Urban areas generally have better infrastructure and access to adult education, making them more likely to engage in mobility programs.

- In Portugal and France, KA1 participation is notably higher in urban centers, such as the northern and central regions of Portugal and major cities with a strong presence of nonprofits in France. In contrast, rural and peripheral regions, including the Azores, Madeira, and some areas of southern Portugal, report lower engagement.
- Slovakia and Hungary face similar challenges, with urban areas such as Bratislava and Budapest and some of the larger towns showing significantly higher participation rates than rural regions, where adult learning infrastructure is limited.
- In Croatia, KA1 mobilities are concentrated in major cities like Zagreb, with minimal participation from smaller or more remote areas.

## 2. Operational barriers to participation

- **Limited capacity for organizing mobilities**

Many smaller organizations lack the internal capacity—both in human resources and funding—to organize and implement KA1 mobility programs effectively. This lack of capacity is especially problematic for first-time applicants, who may find the process overwhelming without experience or support.

- In Croatia and Hungary, smaller providers struggle with limited resources, making it difficult to engage in mobility programs. These organizations often lack the personnel needed to manage project preparation and coordination, which further discourages participation. These organisational conditions including high level of uncertainties might be factor that contributed to the low level of implementation of granted mobilities in Hungary as presented in Chapter 4.

- **Complex application process**

The Erasmus+ application process is complex and time-consuming, which presents a significant hurdle for less experienced organizations. Requirements for technical language and extensive documentation can be prohibitive.

- In Hungary, less experienced organizations find the application process challenging, particularly due to specific language requirements. Portugal and France also report barriers related to the repetitive nature of application forms, which demand extensive administrative support that smaller providers may lack.

- **Difficulty in partner search**

Establishing partnerships for KA1 mobility projects can be challenging. Although tools like EPALE exist to facilitate connections, providers often find them difficult to navigate.

- In France and Slovakia participants particularly reported challenges in finding suitable partners for mobility projects. Organizations highlighted difficulty in identifying learning opportunities that align with their specific needs due to limited information and user-unfriendly tools.

- **Financial constraints and rising costs**

The increasing costs of travel and accommodation are major obstacles, particularly for smaller organizations who are not in the position to extend resource base from their own. This often forces providers to prioritise affordability over the quality of learning experiences. Available grants defined in terms of unit costs are often not sufficient to cover real costs. Interviewees claimed, there is no justification why unit price for covering learners' cost by the Erasmus + program are lower than unit price for staff (both are adults and pay the same amount for travelling and subsistence). Some costs incurred by the organising organisations in terms of manpower input (especially in case of designing and organising learners mobilities) are not sufficiently recognised by the programme. The time and manpower input demanded from the hosts organisations are not comparable with the compensation they can receive.

- Croatia, Hungary, and Slovakia report that high costs are a limiting factor, causing organizations to choose mobilities based on budget rather than learning quality. In Portugal, cash flow issues restrict smaller organizations' ability to advance funds for mobility projects.

- **Administrative burdens**

Technical complexities and administrative requirements add to the barriers, particularly in navigating online platforms used for Erasmus+ project management.

- Providers in France, Hungary, and Slovakia cite challenges with the technical language and online tools required for managing KA1 mobilities. These administrative demands are particularly daunting for smaller organisations with limited staff.

### 3. Specific challenges of learner and staff involvement for providers

#### **Work, family, and language constraints**

Work and family commitments create significant barriers for adult learners and educators, who often lack flexibility in their schedules. Language proficiency further complicates mobility for learners which creates extra challenge for the mobility organiser.

- In Portugal and Hungary, language barriers and logistical constraints prevent many adult learners from participating. Family and work commitments are also a major factor, particularly for individuals in rural areas who may have limited support.
- Slovakia, the eligibility criteria for adult learners in KA1 mobility are seen as too restrictive, excluding the typical target groups (e.g., young adults, disadvantaged individuals). Most learner mobilities involved seniors (e.g., University of the Third Age), limiting broader engagement.

#### **Specific barriers to learners' mobilities**

Due to logistical and financial limitations, providers tend to prioritise staff mobilities, finding it easier to arrange and fund these over learner mobilities. In some countries, non-formal providers exclusively engaged with learners of short-cycle programs, which makes it difficult to include mobility in the period they are formally in connections. There is a lack of motivation on the side of training providers if they cannot deliver mobility programmes as part of the inclusion support they are given to learners.

- In Portugal, Hungary, and Croatia, organizations focus more on sending staff than learners, especially for learners with special needs and limitations. Learner mobilities demands more extensive capacities and resources that especially smaller organisations don't possess.

#### **Inconsistent quality of mobility programs**

The quality of Erasmus+ courses and mobility programs is inconsistent, with reports of overcrowded courses and trainers lacking adequate expertise. Organisations reported limitations of course offers and finding difficulties in matching their needs with the offers.

- Providers in Croatia and France expressed concerns over the variable quality of Erasmus+ courses. They highlighted issues with large class sizes and substandard training quality that diminish the value of mobility experiences.

#### **Low commitment to dissemination and outcome sharing**

Post-mobility reporting and knowledge dissemination are underemphasized by some participants, which limits the broader organizational impact.

- In Portugal and Hungary, participants often lack commitment to sharing their experiences, partly due to complex reporting requirements. This reduces the broader value of the mobility experience for their organizations.

Variability in course quality and low engagement in post-mobility sharing hinder the full potential impact of mobilities. Simplifying reporting requirements and ensuring course quality could improve outcomes and participant satisfaction.

he findings highlight that structural, cultural, and operational factors collectively create barriers to KA1 mobility participation. Addressing these factors through policy alignment, targeted outreach, simplified processes, and quality control could significantly enhance participation and effectiveness in KA1 mobilities across diverse adult education providers and learners.

### 5.1.3 Summary of enabling and hindering factors for adult learning providers

Chapters 5.1.1 and 5.1.2 examine both contextual and operational factors that influence adult learning providers' participation in Erasmus+ KA1 mobility programs. Key enabling factors include an established culture of lifelong learning (LLL) and cohesive national policies that link adult learning with other sectors such as social inclusion, digitalization, and labour market integration. In countries like France, Portugal, and Estonia, a high societal commitment to lifelong learning and strategic policy alignment creates a favourable environment that values continuous education, helping providers and staff recognize the benefits of mobility for both personal and professional development. Additionally, clear national policies that support professional development and allocate targeted funding to non-formal education sectors encourage sustainable engagement with KA1 mobility.

Operationally, effective enabling factors include dedicated support structures and simplified processes, particularly where national agencies (NAs) facilitate the application process and provide individualized guidance. Examples include the use of Erasmus+ accreditation, consortium participation for less experienced providers, and workshops or mentoring for potential applicants. Such measures streamline participation and help organizations, especially those with limited experience, to engage with Erasmus+ KA1 mobilities more effectively.

On the other hand, multiple hindering factors constrain both contextual and operational aspects. Contextually, fragmented governance, preference for VET and higher education over adult learning, and cultural attitudes that prioritize local over international learning opportunities create systemic challenges, particularly for smaller and rural providers. Countries like Hungary and Slovakia exemplify these challenges, where centralized systems and limited structural support make it difficult for adult learning providers to participate in mobility schemes.

The urban-rural divide is a consistent barrier across countries, with urban regions seeing higher participation due to better resources and access. This suggests a need for targeted policies to increase mobility engagement in rural and less developed areas.

Limited capacity, financial constraints, and the complexity of the application process are widespread issues, with smaller organizations particularly disadvantaged. Simplifying these operational aspects could facilitate broader participation in KA1 mobility programs.

Practical barriers to the engagement of staff and learners such as work and family commitments, combined with language and eligibility restrictions, limit learner participation. Providers often prioritize staff mobilities due to fewer logistical challenges.

Operationally, significant barriers include the complexity of the Erasmus+ application process, which is often time-intensive and demands specialized knowledge. Smaller providers with limited administrative capacity find it challenging to navigate the lengthy forms and strict requirements, impacting their ability to engage.

In some countries VET provider organisations are not eligible for application, although they are also delivering general adult learning programs.

Additional operational barriers include financial constraints, such as the inadequacy of mobility grants to cover rising costs of travel and accommodation, and challenges in managing cash flow for program-related expenses. Finding suitable international partners is another common obstacle, as existing platforms for partner search (e.g., EPALE) are often considered user-unfriendly, adding difficulty for providers seeking relevant learning opportunities for their staff and learners.

Lastly, providers also face administrative burdens in managing project reporting and using online tools like the Mobility Tool. Many find these platforms complex, which can hinder effective project management, and in some cases, reduce the impact of mobilities due to inadequate dissemination and follow-up.

In summary, while a supportive LLL culture, cohesive policies, and NA-driven support structures enable greater participation, a range of systemic and operational barriers continue to limit broad and equitable engagement in Erasmus+ KA1 mobilities. Addressing these challenges with streamlined application processes, enhanced funding flexibility, and targeted support for underrepresented providers can foster a more inclusive and effective environment for KA1 participation across diverse adult learning contexts.

## 5.2 Factors influencing participation of staff and learners

This section delves into the diverse factors influencing the participation of staff and learners in Erasmus+ KA1 mobility programs, drawing from data collected through a survey across 12 Erasmus+ participating countries and supplemented by in-depth interviews. In the participating five countries, interviews were conducted with managerial representatives of training providers and focus groups comprising both staff and learners. This mixed-methods approach allowed a deeper exploration of the motivators and barriers affecting participation, offering a comprehensive view of the conditions shaping engagement in mobility opportunities across various adult education contexts.

In assessing the success and participation rates in Erasmus+ KA1 mobility programs, it is crucial to examine the structural conditions that influence both educators and learners. These conditions shape their ability and willingness to engage in mobility activities, directly impacting the overall effectiveness of the program. The dominant status of the educators and their formal relationship with training providers in terms of employment, as well as the existence or non-existence of a national framework for Continuous Professional Development (CPD) may impose limitations or offer opportunities for synergies.

### Characteristics of the relationship between training providers and educators

In many countries, adult educators and trainers who are employed as full-time employees by training providers are in the minority, especially in the non-formal sector. Instead, it is common for them to work as part-timers or freelancers. NGOs with limited resources often involve trainers on a volunteer basis. This structure presents several challenges for their participation in international mobility programs. Since these educators often have obligations toward other employers, their availability for mobility opportunities is limited, making it difficult for training providers to integrate mobility into their operational frameworks. This fragmented employment model reduces the flexibility and capacity of educators to engage in mobility schemes, which require a significant time commitment.

National CPD Frameworks may impose regular obligations on trainers to take part in qualified further training programs. This may reduce the flexibility of trainers in taking part in additional professional development opportunities like Erasmus+ mobilities unless it can be recognised in the CPD system.

### Characteristics of the relationship between training providers and learners

Similarly, on the learner side, many countries report that short-cycle training programs dominate the non-formal adult education provision (HU, SK). These shorter programs, often designed for quick upskilling or reskilling, create practical obstacles to including international mobilities as part of the training experience. Learners enrolled in such short programs may find it difficult to pause their training for extended periods, further limiting their opportunities to participate in mobility activities.

This tendency towards shorter, more intensive courses presents a significant challenge for aligning mobility with the educational goals of both learners and providers. Preparing and organising learner mobility takes a period of time, which might be difficult to implement as part of the adult learner's learning program within the study period. After completion of the study program and terminating formal relations, it is not always possible to justify why providers and learners should keep a commitment to implement mobility, especially if life situations, including the employment status of the learner, changed in the meantime.

## Impact on mobility integration

These structural characteristics of adult education—part-time educators with multiple commitments and learners enrolled in short-cycle training—define the overall framework for integrating mobility into adult learning in some countries like Hungary. National Agency (NA) staff, who work closely with these stakeholders, provided valuable input on the hindering factors affecting educators and learners, which are critical to understanding and improving participation in Erasmus+ KA1 mobility programs.

### 5.2.1 Hindering factors for participation for educators and adult learners

#### Summary of survey findings:

National Agency (NA) staff, who work closely with applicants and beneficiaries, provided critical insights into these barriers. The staff assessed a range of predefined hindering factors based on their experiences working with adult educators and learners, and they ranked the severity of each factor.

Figure 5-2. and 5-3. offers an overview of the assessment of the NA staff regarding most important hindering factors:

#### Hindering factors for STAFF

Country	Barriers to recognition of learning mobility periods abroad	Due to work and/or family obligations, there is a perception of a lack of independence to go abroad for a longer period	Insufficient financial support	Insufficient foreign language skills	Lack of external incentives	Lack of information about opportunities and benefits	Lack of interest or lack of opportunities matching the interests	The available mobility types are not fit for the needs	Uncertainty of compensation, health and social security conditions and legal status during mobility
Croatia	2	6	2	4	4	3	6	2	2
Estonia	1	3	2	2	4	2	1	1	1
France	3	4	3	6	5	6	1	1	1
Germany	2	5	4	2	4	5	2	2	3
Hungary	2	5	2	5	2	3	4	1	4
Latvia	1	3	2	4	2	2	5	1	1
Lithuania	2	5	2	6	3	4	3	1	1
Luxembourg	1	5	1	2	3	5	4	1	2
Serbia	4	3	1	4	3	1	1	1	1
Slovakia	1	1	2	4	5	5	5	2	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>18</b>

5.2. Figure: Hindering factors for Staff

#### Hindering factors for Learners

Country	Barriers to recognition of learning mobility periods abroad	Due to work and/or family obligations, there is a perception of a lack of independence to go abroad for a longer period	Insufficient financial support	Insufficient foreign language skills	Lack of embedment of the opportunity for mobility in education and training programmes	Lack of external incentives	Lack of information about opportunities and benefits	Lack of interest or lack of opportunities matching the interests	Lack of support for disadvantaged learners	The available mobility types are not fit for the needs	Uncertainty of compensation, health and social security conditions and legal status during mobility (in case of traineeships)
Croatia	3	6	3	4	5	5	4	3	2	5	2
Estonia	1	6	2	4	3	5	2	3	2	1	1
France	3	5	3	6	4	6	6	1	1	1	2
Germany	1	4	5	5	5	6	6	3	4	5	2
Hungary	1	6	2	6	2	3	4	5	2	3	4
Latvia	1	4	2	5	2	2	2	5	2	2	1
Lithuania	1	5	2	5	2	4	2	3	1	1	1
Luxembourg	1	5	2	4	2	3	5	2	1	2	4
Serbia	2	2	1	5	2	2	2	2	1	1	1
Slovakia	1	1	2	5	2	6	6	2	1	2	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>20</b>

5.3. Figure: Hindering factors for Learners

The most important hindering factors for educators and staff

1. Lack of independence (40)
2. Insufficient foreign language skills (39)
3. Lack of information about opportunities (36)
4. Lack of external incentives (35)
5. Lack of opportunities matching interest (32)

The most important hindering factors for learners

1. Insufficient foreign language skills (49)
2. Lack of independence due to family and work obligations (44)
3. Lack of external incentives (42)
4. Lack of information about opportunities (39)

For both educators and learners, NA staff consistently identified the top four factors as the most significant barriers to participation: insufficient foreign language skills, lack of independence due to other obligations, lack of external incentives, and limited information about available opportunities. This consensus highlights a shared understanding across countries of the primary challenges and underscores the importance of addressing these areas through targeted interventions.

#### Summary of case study findings

The case studies reinforce the survey findings on primary barriers—namely, balancing work and family obligations and language challenges—while also adding depth and new perspectives. Those interviewed who had already participated in mobility highlighted financial constraints and administrative burdens.

#### Work and family commitments

Lack of independence due to work and family obligations is consistently highlighted as a major mobility barrier for both educators and learners. These responsibilities are particularly burdensome for those with caregiving roles, such as single parents or women balancing work and household duties. Educators, especially with multiple work commitments, face challenges coordinating workloads, with limited support or replacements during their absence. Learners from Hungary adapted their work schedules to participate in mobility and worked in the early mornings and late evenings to accommodate mobility participation. Most of the time, learners and volunteers must get their employer's approval and use parts of their personal annual leave to participate in mobility.

#### Language barriers

Language proficiency issues impact engagement for both educators and learners, causing frustration and fatigue, especially where language support is limited. In Hungary, language barriers for educators and learners are sometimes addressed with interpreters, yet initial language concerns remain significant, especially for learners in Portugal who feel discouraged by these challenges. Support for language learning before mobility is claimed to be too short and insufficient.

### **Financial constraints and rising costs**

Financial challenges, including rising travel and accommodation costs, are significant, particularly for smaller organisations or learners from disadvantaged backgrounds. Mobility grants often fall short of covering full expenses, especially in high-cost destinations such as Norway and Iceland. Educators from overseas territories, like those in France, incur additional travel costs. Educators and learners in Hungary face tight budget management in smaller organizations, and in Portugal, rising costs in travel and lodging present similar challenges despite some financial support.

### **Time constraints for educators**

Educators highlighted the time-intensive nature of mobility, including preparation, post-mobility reporting, and dissemination activities. These tasks, particularly burdensome for educators in smaller organisations, are challenging but not prohibitive (France, Portugal, and Hungary).

### **Additional challenges identified**

#### **Special needs: age and health considerations (specific to learners)**

Older learners encounter unique challenges related to health, age, and endurance in focus. In Croatia, older learners benefit from less intense mobility schedules with informal interactions, while seniors in Slovakia, particularly those from the University of the Third Age, prefer structured experiences that respect their physical and cognitive capacities.

#### **Socio-economic barriers (specific to learners)**

Learners from marginalised socio-economic backgrounds face additional hurdles, including financial limitations and logistical challenges. In Portugal, disadvantaged learners often require additional financial support to cover travel and other basic expenses. In Slovakia, marginalised groups, such as those from underrepresented communities, face cultural and economic barriers, necessitating flexible and tailored mobility opportunities to support participation. Due to the fact that the subsistence and travel costs of adult learners are the same as those of educators, no distinction can be justified.

The case studies highlight the need for tailored solutions to address these barriers, especially for learners from disadvantaged backgrounds or specific demographic groups like seniors. The additional insights from the case studies help refine targeted interventions, aiming to improve accessibility and participation across diverse adult learner groups.

### **5.2.2 Enabling factors for participation of staff and learners – learnings from the case studies**

#### **Professional development and skill enhancement (staff & educators)**

Erasmus+ KA1 mobilities are highly valued across all countries as platforms for professional growth and skill enhancement. Educators consistently appreciate the chance to acquire new teaching methods, expand their competencies, and gain international perspectives that enrich their work.

- Educators are particularly motivated by the opportunity to learn innovative approaches tailored to specific target groups, such as the elderly or migrants, and to engage in knowledge exchange with colleagues from other countries (Croatia).
- Mobility programs allow educators to develop practical skills, explore cutting-edge practices, and strengthen their sense of European citizenship through cultural interactions (France).
- Educators with limited travel experience find international networking especially motivating, as it opens access to best practices and broader perspectives on education (Hungary).
- Job shadowing and immersive learning experiences are widely appreciated, providing educators with practical, real-world insights as they interact with international peers in diverse teaching contexts (Portugal).
- Participating in specialized workshops (e.g., genealogy, art therapy) and engaging in job shadowing are seen as invaluable for enhancing professional development and creativity (Slovakia).

#### **Personal Growth and Cultural Exchange (Educators and Learners)**

The opportunity for personal growth and cultural exploration is a major motivator for both educators and learners, fostering a sense of adventure, self-confidence, and intercultural awareness.

- For educators, mobility programs not only expand professional horizons but also enrich their personal lives, offering new experiences and fostering self-assurance (France).
- Both educators and learners value cultural exposure as a unique benefit, with learners in Hungary particularly excited by the chance to experience life in new countries and explore different cultures.
- Adult learners see mobility as an avenue for personal development, gaining new skills, and experiencing life in foreign cultures, which enhances their overall learning experience (Portugal).
- Seniors, in particular, highlight the importance of travel and personal growth, viewing mobility programs as fulfilling both educational and cultural aspirations (Slovakia).

#### **Institutional and employer support (educators and learners)**

Effective institutional support is crucial for facilitating participation in mobility programs, helping educators and learners to navigate logistical and administrative challenges. Strong backing from employers often plays a decisive role in motivating participation.

- Educators benefit when organizations align mobility participation with professional development goals or ongoing R&D projects, making the experience more meaningful (France).
- Larger organizations, which can provide better support for coverage during mobility absences, enable smoother participation for educators (Hungary).
- Public employers and some private organisations, such as NGOs or associations, offer logistical support, which educators and learners see as a strong incentive to participate in mobility programs (Portugal).
- Universities integrate mobility into their internationalization agendas, while NGOs and private employers see mobility as a key aspect of staff development, thereby fostering a supportive institutional culture (Slovakia).

This enhanced summary aligns the enabling factors with specific country insights, highlighting shared motivators across different contexts while acknowledging distinct benefits in each.

### 5.2.3 Conclusion: key enabling and hindering factors for staff and learners

The participation of staff and learners in Erasmus+ KA1 mobility programs is influenced by a combination of enabling and hindering factors that vary across contextual and operational dimensions.

#### Key hindering factors

Survey results and case study findings consistently identify top hindrances for both educators and learners, including insufficient foreign language skills, limited independence due to family or work obligations, lack of external incentives, and limited information on mobility opportunities. These challenges underscore the need for targeted interventions to improve language support, address informational gaps, and provide flexible support to meet diverse participant needs.

The case studies further elaborate on these barriers:

- **Work and family commitments:** Both educators and learners, especially those with caregiving roles, face significant challenges balancing mobility participation with personal and work responsibilities. In some cases, learners and volunteers need employer approval or personal leave to participate, highlighting the burden on those with substantial domestic or professional obligations.
- **Language barriers:** Language proficiency challenges continue to hinder engagement, often causing frustration and discouragement. Although some support is provided, it is frequently perceived as inadequate, particularly among learners who are discouraged by the intensity of language demands in international settings.
- **Financial constraints:** Rising travel and accommodation costs, especially in higher-cost destinations, place a strain on smaller organizations and participants from disadvantaged backgrounds. The current financial provisions often fall short of covering full expenses, forcing participants to manage tight budgets.
- **Operational barriers for educators:** Preparation, reporting, and dissemination activities related to mobility require significant time, posing an additional challenge for educators, particularly those from smaller organizations where administrative support is limited.

Additional challenges specific to learners include:

- **Health and age considerations:** Older learners face unique physical and cognitive challenges that necessitate adjustments in mobility schedules and formats.
- **Socio-Economic barriers:** Learners from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds require additional financial and logistical support to participate effectively, emphasizing the need for flexibility and tailored solutions.

#### Key Enabling Factors

Despite these barriers, several enabling factors motivate staff and learners to engage in KA1 mobility:

- **Professional development and skill enhancement:** Erasmus+ KA1 mobility programs are highly valued for their role in professional growth. Educators are motivated by opportunities to acquire new skills, engage in job shadowing, and learn innovative methods tailored to specific groups. International networking provides fresh perspectives, especially for those with limited travel experience, enhancing professional competencies and cultural awareness.
- **Personal growth and cultural exchange:** Both educators and learners are drawn to the opportunity for personal development and cultural immersion. Mobility programs foster intercultural awareness, self-confidence, and a sense of adventure, which are seen as valuable both personally and professionally.
- **Institutional and employer support:** Strong institutional support is essential in overcoming logistical challenges. Employers who align mobility participation with professional development goals and organizational strategies contribute significantly to the success of KA1 mobilities. Larger organizations that can accommodate absences facilitate smoother participation, while universities and NGOs view mobility as integral to staff development, promoting a supportive culture.

In summary, effective strategies to increase engagement must address language and financial constraints, offer robust institutional support, and consider targeted interventions that accommodate specific needs, such as those of older learners or socio-economically disadvantaged participants.

### 5.3 The role and influence of National Agencies

Creativity and innovation in the approach and initiatives of the National Agencies are crucial to breaking through the challenges of low participation. NA-s are responsible for the information and promotion activities as well as effectively supporting applicants and beneficiaries in their efforts to support applications and implement their mobility projects successfully. NA colleagues hold enormous knowledge about the applicants (training providers), their barriers and needs for support, and the effectiveness of different tools that have been tried out. In the following paragraph, we collected different tools and practices which work well in specific contexts according to the NA colleagues.

#### 5.3.1 Overview of the employed communication, promotion and support tools

Based on the online survey responses, National Agencies (NAs) across various countries employ a variety of communication channels to raise awareness of Erasmus+ KA1 mobility schemes. These channels include face-to-face meetings, digital platforms, social media, and targeted information seminars. While there are common practices shared by most NAs, certain countries employ unique tools to engage their audiences more effectively.

## Commonly used communication channels and campaign tools

- **Info seminars (Online and Face-to-Face):**

Info seminars are one of the most frequently employed communication tools across countries, with a mix of online and face-to-face formats. These seminars provide key information about Erasmus+ programs, rules, application processes, and opportunities. They are often followed by workshops that delve deeper into the specifics of applying for mobility schemes. The Serbian NA organizes video recordings of info days, which are uploaded to YouTube for continuous accessibility, ensuring potential applicants can view them throughout the year.

- **Personal communication and direct consultations:**

Personal communication with potential beneficiaries remains a key method for NAs to engage with organizations. Some countries emphasize personal, direct consultations as highly effective in building trust and understanding of the Erasmus+ mobility schemes (SK, DE, HR). Informal meetings, in particular, allow for more flexible discussions. In Slovakia personal meetings with a focus on exploring opportunities (rather than strict rules) have proven to be effective in engaging new participants.

- **Social media platforms:**

Social media is a vital tool for spreading information quickly and engaging a broader audience for all NAs. Social platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn are widely used to share updates, event information, and promote Erasmus+ opportunities. Croatia particularly focuses on targeted campaigns via Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn to increase event participation, especially for specific groups like adult education providers.

- **Newsletters and e-mail marketing:**

Newsletters and email marketing are common tools for keeping potential applicants informed about upcoming events, deadlines, and program changes. Monthly newsletters and email campaigns keep subscribers updated with the latest news and opportunities (particularly mentioned by EE, RS, LU, HU). The NA in Estonia tailors information packs specific to different organizations within the education and training sectors, ensuring the relevance of the information shared.

- **Workshops and webinars:**

Webinars and workshops complement info seminars by providing more in-depth guidance on specific aspects of the application and project management process. NA-s organizes workshops on project writing, webinars on application procedures, and regional face-to-face sessions that allow for tailored support for adult education providers (particularly mentioned by RS, EE, LV, HR, HU). Showcasing real-life success stories from previous beneficiaries that are shared during info seminars or workshops, provide practical examples of how organizations can benefit from Erasmus+ programs.

- **#ErasmusDays Campaign**

The #ErasmusDays is a dynamic, Europe-wide initiative aimed at celebrating the impact and opportunities of Erasmus+ programs. Held annually, it serves as a platform for sharing success stories, promoting international collaboration, and encouraging broader participation in mobility schemes and coordinated by the National Agencies. Through diverse activities such as workshops, webinars, exhibitions, and social media campaigns, ErasmusDays effectively raises awareness of Erasmus+ programs among a wide range of stakeholders,

including educational institutions, learners, educators, and the general public. By showcasing real-life experiences and achievements, the campaign inspires new participants and fosters a deeper understanding of the benefits of international mobility.

## Unique communication tools by specific countries

- **YouTube and recorded info sessions (RS):**

Serbia utilizes YouTube as a unique way to extend the reach of their info days. By recording and uploading sessions, potential applicants can access information on-demand throughout the year, allowing for flexible engagement with the content.

- **Social Media Campaigns on TikTok and Instagram (HU):**

Hungary has embraced modern social media platforms such as TikTok and Instagram, targeting younger audiences and creating engaging content that resonates with newer generations.

- **Regional in-person discussions and informal events (SK, HR):**

Slovakia and Croatia place significant emphasis on regional events and informal discussions with potential beneficiaries. These events are designed to demystify mobility programs by focusing on opportunities and showcasing real-life examples from previous successful applicants.

- **Targeted campaigns for specific adult education providers (HR, FR):**

Croatia runs highly targeted campaigns focusing on underrepresented adult education providers, including libraries, cultural institutions, and organizations for learners with fewer opportunities. Their campaigns are designed to attract specific groups to info events, which are followed by more technical webinars. France has launched a targeted campaign focused on social sector organizations, including tailored communication efforts at the policy level.

- **Precise mailings and tailored communication (LU):**

Luxembourg uses direct, precise mailings to targeted organizations, ensuring that the communication is highly relevant and specific to the recipients' needs. This approach helps to maintain commitment and interest and establish closer relationships with potential applicants.

- **Digital marketing and custom apps (EE) and dedicated podcasts (DE):**

Estonia uses digital marketing techniques and has created a map application showcasing all Erasmus+ results, award-winning projects, and good practices. The interactive, bilingual app aims to inspire potential applicants and make it easier for foreign institutions to find partners in Estonia. Another approach was applied in Germany to create dedicated podcasts for adult learners to make them familiar with the new mobility opportunities.

- **Digital campaigns to reach out to new audience (HR):**

Croatia runs digital campaigns via Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn that introduce Erasmus+ to newcomers by presenting "real-life" stories from successful beneficiaries, helping new organisations visualise the benefits of participation. These campaigns were specifically aimed at organisations of special interest to the adult education sector, such as libraries, cultural institutions, and public open universities.

- **TCA (Transnational Cooperation Activities) and speed dates (LU, DE, HU, FR):**

Luxembourg and Germany focus on TCA as a key promotional and partner search activity, using it to

encourage collaboration between organisations from different countries. TCA events are paired with info days and direct communication to raise awareness of mobility schemes. Hungary co-organises with other NAs online speed dates where future applicants can meet each other.

The French and Slovenian Erasmus+ National Agencies have jointly developed the TCA cycle Optim-AL: Optimising Mobility for Adult Learners. This initiative aims to enhance the quality and impact of KA1 mobility projects in the adult education sector by fostering collaboration among stakeholders, sharing best practices, and addressing specific challenges related to adult learner participation. The cycle includes workshops, partner search forums, and thematic discussions designed to support the strategic alignment of mobility projects with organizational goals, while also ensuring tailored approaches to meet the unique needs of adult learners.

- **Erasmus+ open day (HU):**

Hungary introduced the Erasmus+ Open Day during ErasmusDays 2023, attracting 72 participants to Tempus Public Foundation. This event provided a platform for organizations to engage with the Erasmus+ program through presentations, networking, and hands-on workshops.

- **Monitoring seminars and network building (RS):**

Serbia organizes monitoring seminars and builds networks among adult education institutions as part of their promotional activities. These efforts help maintain ongoing engagement and provide direct support to organizations throughout the application process and during project implementation.

- **Erasmus+ excellence awards (HU):**

The Erasmus+ Excellence Awards celebrate the best projects of the year, with award ceremonies linked to the Erasmus+ dissemination conference. Short videos of winning projects are showcased, followed by workshops where the awarded organizations share their experiences. The projects are further promoted through interviews, articles, videos, and social media campaigns, helping inspire new participants.

## Conclusion

Most National Agencies rely on a combination of info seminars, personal consultations, social media, newsletters, and workshops to promote Erasmus+ KA1 mobility schemes. Unique approaches like recorded info days on YouTube (RS), social media engagement via TikTok (HU), targeted campaigns for adult education providers (HR), and custom apps (EE) highlight creative strategies tailored to specific national contexts.

### 5.3.2 NA strategies to enhance exploitation of KA1 mobility scheme

The national case studies ensured the possibility of gaining some insights into the strategies of NA-s. The strategies employed by the National Agencies (NAs) in Croatia (CR), France (FR), Hungary (HU), Portugal (PT), and Slovakia (SK) to address low participation in Erasmus+ KA1 Mobility schemes share several common activities and approaches. However, each agency also implements unique initiatives and innovative approaches to cater to their specific national contexts, making some strategies more effective based on local needs and sectoral characteristics. This comparative analysis highlights the commonalities and key differences among these strategies, focusing on their effectiveness and user satisfaction.

## Common strategies and approaches across countries

- **Comprehensive communication campaigns**

All five National Agencies employ wide-ranging communication campaigns to promote Erasmus+ KA1 programs, using a combination of traditional and digital channels.

Social media and websites: Each NA uses its own dedicated Erasmus+ websites, social media platforms, newsletters, and email campaigns to disseminate information to target groups (CR, FR, HU, PT, SK).

Participation in sectoral events: The NAs actively participate in national and regional sector-specific conferences, workshops, and events to directly engage potential applicants (CR, HU, PT, SK). This strategy ensures they can reach diverse stakeholders, including non-formal and informal adult education providers.

- **Tailored support programs**

A common approach is providing comprehensive support for applicants throughout the project lifecycle.

Pre-Application webinars and workshops: Each country offers workshops, webinars, or tailored information sessions to guide potential applicants through the Erasmus+ application process (FR, HU, PT, SK).

One-on-One mentoring: Many NAs, such as in France, Croatia and Hungary, offer individualized mentoring and counselling support, ensuring that organizations with less experience or smaller capacities can navigate the process more effectively (FR, HR, HU).

Project launch meetings and regular monitoring: Post-selection, agencies support organizations through regular monitoring meetings, onsite visits, and project launch meetings to ensure smooth project implementation (PT, SK).

- **Showcasing success stories and best practices**

Sharing examples of successful projects to motivate and inspire new applicants is a shared practice.

Best practice awards: Countries like Hungary and Portugal recognize outstanding projects through awards and public dissemination events, which boost the morale of participating organizations and demonstrate the tangible benefits of Erasmus+ mobility (HU, PT).

Use of beneficiary testimonials: France and Slovakia frequently promote success stories through media campaigns, podcasts, and regional seminars, using real-life experiences to showcase the benefits of mobility programs (FR, SK).

- **Targeting underrepresented groups**

The NAs share a commitment to reaching underrepresented groups and regions with historically low participation.

Specific outreach for marginalized groups: All countries make efforts to target disadvantaged or underrepresented groups, such as organizations working with people with disabilities (HR), pensioners and the homeless (HU, PT), and geographically isolated regions (SK). This includes both direct outreach and financial or administrative support mechanisms tailored to these groups.

- **Language support**

Addressing language barriers is a common challenge, particularly for first-time applicants and adult learners with lower levels of schooling.

Online Language Support (OLS): This tool is available in most countries to support participants in improving

language proficiency before and during mobility. However, there is a consensus that OLS alone is often insufficient, and more comprehensive language preparation activities are needed (PT, SK).

#### Unique initiatives and innovative approaches

- **Erasmus+ ambassadors (Croatia)**

Croatia's Erasmus+ Ambassadors are a unique initiative where experienced beneficiaries act as program promoters and provide direct support to new applicants, particularly in underrepresented sectors and for marginalized groups. The ambassadors for inclusivity have been particularly effective in engaging organizations working with people with disabilities. This hands-on, personal outreach has contributed to increased participation (HR).

- **Dedicated adult education unit (France)**

The creation of a Training and Integration of Adults Unit within the French National Agency is a distinctive strategy that ensures coordinated efforts and enhanced capacities directed to support the adult education sector. This unit integrates the EPALE and EAAL platforms to better promote mobility for adult learners and provide sector-specific support. This initiative reflects a focused approach to addressing the complexities of France's diverse adult education sector (FR).

- **Erasmus Tours and local support teams (Portugal)**

Portugal's Erasmus Tours—a series of regional visits to education providers—allow the NA to promote Erasmus+ directly at the local level and share best practices in person. The local support teams, which will be introduced in different regions, are another innovative approach aimed at providing localized, tailored support to smaller organizations that lack the capacity to manage international mobility projects on their own (PT).

- **Regional in-person discussions (Slovakia)**

Slovakia's new initiative of regional in-person discussions on the theme "Why send colleagues abroad?" is a novel approach that directly addresses misconceptions about mobility programs. By organizing focused discussions with local stakeholders, the NA has seen a significant increase in interest and applications for KA1 ADU mobility schemes (SK).

#### Proven practices and evidence of effectiveness

- **Promoting Erasmus+ accreditation (Croatia)**

The E+ accreditation system simplifies the application process for recurring applicants, which has been praised by users for increasing their likelihood of continuing participation. The specific promotion and implementation of the accreditation by the Croatian NA has proven effective in maintaining engagement and boosting user satisfaction (HR).

- **Recognition of best projects (Hungary, Portugal)**

The award and recognition of the best Erasmus+ projects have been effective in motivating organizations to apply and reapply for mobility programs. The public recognition, combined with dissemination campaigns, serves as a strong incentive for organizations to improve the quality of their applications (HU, PT).

- **Sector-specific guidance and tailored support (France, Hungary)**

Tailored guidance offered through workshops, webinars, and one-on-one mentoring has received positive feedback, particularly in France and Hungary, where users reported feeling well-supported throughout the application and implementation process (FR, HU).

- **Impact of regional discussions (Slovakia)**

Slovakia's new regional discussion initiative has already contributed to a notable increase in applications for adult education mobilities. This indicates the effectiveness of engaging stakeholders through direct, focused conversations that address sector-specific concerns (SK).

#### 5.3.3 Conclusion: key features and tools of NA strategies

The role of National Agencies (NAs) in enhancing Erasmus+ KA1 mobility participation is marked by complex marketing, promotion and support strategies tailored to address country-specific challenges and organisational needs. Strategies like personalised outreach, regional engagement, targeted support for underrepresented groups, and showcasing success stories have demonstrated strong potential in expanding access and improving program outcomes. Moreover, tools such as workshops, ambassadors, and sector-specific communication play a key role in adapting Erasmus+ opportunities to local contexts. So far, NA efforts have dominantly concentrated on reaching out to and communicating with potential beneficiary organisations. However, the latest social media campaigns on Facebook, Instagram and TikTok also incorporated elements of direct communication to adult educators and learners, raising their awareness and interest by presenting success stories and cases highlighting the benefits of learning via international mobilities. Table 9 summarises the primary elements of NA strategies and the tools applied to achieve these objectives. These initiatives provide insights into how National Agencies can adapt their strategy to improve the reach and impact of Erasmus+ KA1 mobility schemes.

Key elements of NA strategies	Applied tools and innovative features
Customized approaches for targeted outreach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- targeted events to underrepresented provider groups</li> <li>- regional in-person events and discussions</li> <li>- sector-specific targeting and ambassadors</li> <li>- Erasmus Tours and local support teams</li> </ul>
Personalized communication and direct engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- one-on-one mentoring and consultations</li> <li>- webinars and workshops focused on practical guidance - "Erasmus+ Open Days" and informal networking sessions</li> </ul>
Outreach and support for underrepresented and marginalized groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- campaigns for second-chance schools and NGOs supporting disadvantaged groups</li> <li>- Erasmus+ Ambassadors promoting inclusivity</li> </ul>
Promotion of success stories and best practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- recognition and awards for top projects</li> <li>- testimonials and real-life stories shared in info sessions and via media</li> <li>- award ceremonies during Erasmus+ dissemination conferences</li> </ul>
Digital and media innovations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- social media campaigns targeting specific platforms like Instagram and TikTok (outreach to staff and learners)</li> <li>- YouTube info sessions (live streaming and records)</li> <li>- dedicated Erasmus+ podcasts and custom map applications showcasing projects</li> <li>- integrating AI tools in customisation of digital content and communication to specific target groups</li> </ul>
Sector-specific support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- dedicated Adult Education Unit by teaming up with EPALE and EAAL colleagues for concentrated and coordinated promotion and support</li> <li>- direct mailings for focused outreach to AE providers</li> <li>- promotion of accreditation to streamline recurring applicants</li> </ul>
Partnership and networking support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- speed dating events and TCA collaboration events for partnerships</li> <li>- mapping tools for connecting with partners</li> <li>- open info seminars with real-life showcases</li> </ul>
Enhanced language support for mobility participants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Online Language Support (OLS)</li> <li>- On-demand language support materials for pre-mobility training</li> </ul>

9 Table: Overview of key NA strategies and applied tools for enhancing Erasmus+ KA1 mobility participation

## 6. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### 6.1 Introduction

The Erasmus+ Key Action 1 (KA1) mobility program has gained growing importance in recent years, particularly as a tool for promoting lifelong learning and enhancing the professional development of adult educators and learners. As the scope of KA1 has expanded to include adult learners, its role in addressing critical societal challenges—such as skills gaps, social inclusion, climate change, digitalisation and democratic citizenship—has become increasingly vital. With the expansion of the program, national financial allocations have significantly increased. However, these growing budgets present new challenges for many countries. Ensuring that the allocated funds are fully utilised requires addressing a range of barriers that hinder the participation of both staff and learners. The complexity of administrative processes, limited organisational capacity, and a lack of awareness or access to information about mobility opportunities are common issues across many national contexts.

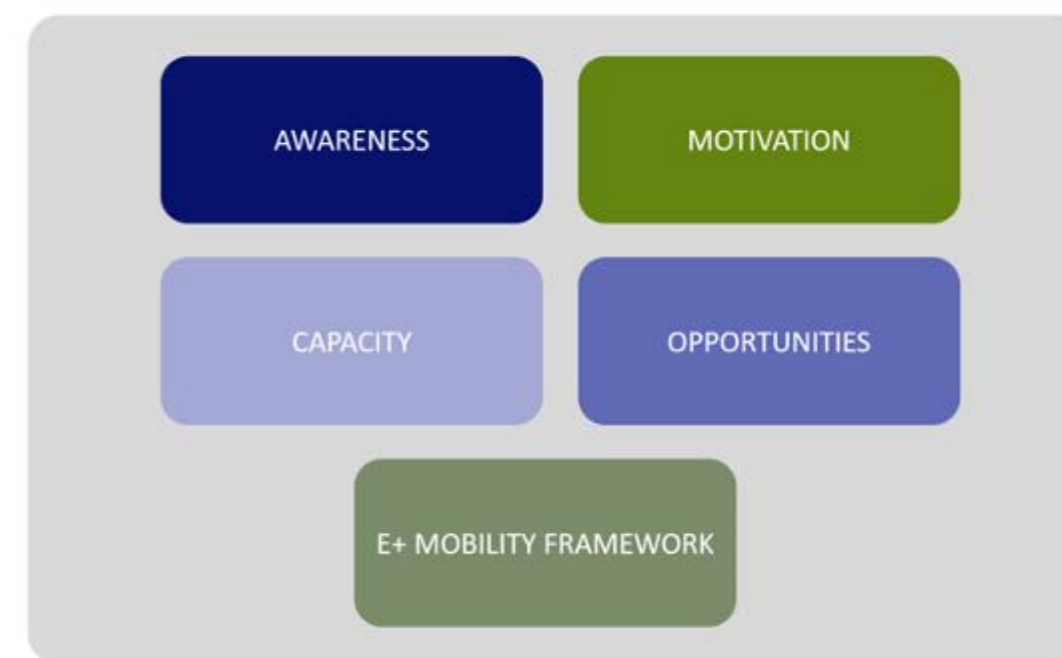
This chapter addresses the original research question: identifying measures to enhance the exploitation of Erasmus+ KA1 Mobility for learners and staff in adult education. The recommendations draw on data from a qualitative survey of 12 countries and in-depth case studies in five countries. Although a broader inclusion of countries, especially those with high KA1 performance, might have provided additional insights into influential factors, the findings nonetheless offer a foundation for effective strategies.

Based on the preceding analysis, this chapter presents key challenges and targeted recommendations to increase Erasmus+ KA1 Mobility utilization. The recommendations primarily serve National Agencies (NAs) aiming to improve their country's performance in Erasmus+ KA1 Mobility, either independently or through collaborative efforts. Each recommendation should be critically assessed to ensure its relevance within the specific challenges and context of the individual countries, as well as its adaptability to the adult learning culture and existing use of Erasmus+ funding.

The identified influencing factors are grouped into five key areas of program operation, forming a structured approach for addressing bottlenecks and enabling factors. This structure could serve as an enabling framework for developing national action plans tailored to the needs and contexts of individual countries. The five areas include:

- 1. AWARENESS:** Raising awareness of Erasmus KA1 Mobility
- 2. MOTIVATION:** Boosting motivation of organisations, staff and learners
- 3. CAPACITY:** Handling capacity challenges
- 4. OPPORTUNITIES:** Expanding quality learning opportunities and improving their accessibility
- 5. E+ MOBILITY FRAMEWORK:** Increasing the effectiveness of the Erasmus+ KA1 mobility framework

Enabling Framework for better utilisation of Erasmus+ KA1 mobility scheme



6 1 Figure: Enabling framework for better utilisation of Erasmus+ KA1 mobility scheme

This enabling framework provides a step-by-step approach to identify and implement actions relevant to each country, focusing on:

- Expanding awareness among new potential applicants, particularly non-formal education providers in specialized areas, as well as reaching directly to staff and learners.
- Enhancing motivation by connecting the benefits of learning mobilities with participants' practical realities, making KA1 opportunities relatable and beneficial.
- Addressing capacity challenges at both organizational and individual levels with a holistic view of support measures.
- Ensuring transparency and quality in available mobility opportunities to meet participant needs and expectations.
- Contributing to the evolution of the Erasmus+ program framework by providing NAs' feedback to inform program adjustments.

Through this structured approach, countries can design comprehensive strategies to improve KA1 Mobility performance and budget utilization. The goal is to develop actionable measures that boost program awareness, strengthen motivational tools for organizations and individuals, provide clearer incentives for staff, and address operational capacity needs. This framework thus aims to promote an extended reach and effective engagement with Erasmus+ KA1 Mobility, supporting the professional and personal growth of adult learners and educators.

## 6.2 Raising awareness of Erasmus KA1 Mobility

Maximising the reach and impact of Erasmus+ KA1 Mobility hinges on ensuring that majority of eligible organisations are aware of the program and its benefits. To expand participation, it is essential to address barriers related to limited awareness and misperceptions, particularly in the adult education and training sector, which comprises a diverse and often fragmented array of providers.

### Challenges

- Unfamiliarity with KA1 opportunities: Case studies highlighted that limited awareness of Erasmus+ KA1 opportunities is a major barrier to participation, particularly as the adult learning sector is characterised by fragmented, diverse provision compared to other education sectors.
- Underrepresentation in some segments: In certain countries, certain segments of adult education provision are not well represented among KA1 applicants and beneficiaries, resulting in missed opportunities for expanding participation.
- Limited awareness and misperception at leadership levels: limited awareness at the management levels can hinder engagement, often due to misconceptions or negative perceptions from experiences with other national EU-funded programs. This can especially be a problematic issue in larger organisations, where direct contact and information with higher levels of management is often difficult.

- Complex language and program rationale: The language and concepts in Erasmus+ materials can be challenging for organisations with limited international experience or those unaccustomed to EU programs.
- Lack of awareness of staff and learners: Many staff and learners are unaware of the program and its benefits or are not closely connected to training providers, limiting knowledge about how mobilities could support their personal or professional growth. Raising their interest and motivation could facilitate the outreach to non-participating organisations.

### Aims

To broaden participation in KA1 Mobility, it is crucial to enlarge the baseline of potential applicants and improve outreach efforts so that a critical mass of relevant organisations are not only aware of the program but have an accurate understanding of its offerings and potential benefits. This goal involves refining communication strategies and strengthening outreach efforts to ensure diverse provider segments are represented among program beneficiaries.

### Recommendations for ACTIONS

- Enhance representation among beneficiaries: strive for a better reflection of the national adult education landscape within KA1 beneficiaries to include a wider variety of organisations, including local and regional public authorities, coordination bodies, and professional organisations.
- Develop targeted outreach strategies: identify and engage underrepresented organization types or regions, such as smaller towns, underserved areas, and specific thematic sectors (e.g., museums, libraries, organizations focused on health literacy etc.). Special attention should be given to organisations serving disadvantaged groups (e.g., persons with disabilities, Roma communities, and the elderly).
- Identify sectors with a focus on creativity and innovation: Target sectors with high development dynamics and innovation needs, where creativity and new ideas are highly valued, such as the arts and creative industries and environment and circular economy, where international learning and professional exchanges are particularly valued.
- Direct outreach to staff and learners: it is advised to use dedicated channels (beside EPALE), such as professional associations and teacher training providers, or specific social media channels (LinkedIn, relevant Facebook groups, TikTok) to ensure that information reaches individual staff and learners in addition to the organisational leadership.
- Form alliances with sectoral organisations: National Agencies (NAs) should consider exploring new ways of collaboration with professional associations, umbrella organisations, and other representative bodies, such as social partners and sectoral business associations, to leverage their networks and channels for program promotion.
- Customized communication for targeted beneficiaries: Tailor communication efforts to address the specific needs and interests of each identified beneficiary segment distinctly.
- It is proposed to use clear and accessible language: use straightforward language and transparent messages to make Erasmus+ more approachable and ensure potential beneficiaries understand its value.
- Leverage ambassadors: Deploy ambassadors to positively influence perceptions of Erasmus+ KA1 and to address any prevailing misconceptions within the sector.

## Monitoring progress

- Set and track key indicators: Establish measurable indicators to assess progress in raising awareness and recognize areas of improvement.

## Effective practices for reference

- Customized Communication Tools (e.g., Luxembourg): Consider effective national practices where tailored communication approaches have successfully engaged diverse adult education segments. Adult education is fragmented, with diverse providers, many of whom remain unaware of the opportunities Erasmus+ KA1 offers. Larger organisations and key management are often unfamiliar with the program, and misconceptions exist due to negative experiences from other EU-funded initiatives. In some cases, the Erasmus+ language can be difficult to understand, especially for organisations with limited international experience.

It is advised to review the communication tools and practices presented in Chapter 5.3. and identify novel approaches and tools which could be adequate in the national context.

## 6.3 Boosting motivations of organisations, staff and learners

Motivating adult education organizations, staff, and learners to participate in Erasmus+ KA1 Mobility programs requires addressing both awareness and alignment with organizational and individual goals. Recognising the value of international mobility can lead to meaningful engagement with broader impacts on professional development, innovation, and capacity building.

## Challenges

- Lack of awareness of real benefits and values of mobility: Many organizations, staff, and learners are unaware of how KA1 Mobility programs can benefit them personally or professionally.
- Limited internationalization strategy: Few adult education organizations have developed strategies for internationalization or considered how mobility could support their long-term goals.
- Leadership support: Leadership often lacks conviction in how KA1 Mobilities can align with their organizational strategies for professional development, innovation, and capacity building.
- Lack of interconnections with national and regional policies: In many cases, Erasmus+ KA1 Mobilities are implemented independently of national or regional policies, with few synergies or alignments with broader strategic goals.
- Limited staff and learner motivation: Staff and learners may not perceive direct benefits from participating in mobilities and are, therefore, less motivated to engage.

## Aims

Organisations are committed and motivated to use international mobilities if they can integrate it into their own development strategy and can find links to reinforcing national or regional policies. These recognised links can

ensure the long-term utilisation of mobility learning outcomes. Organisations sometimes need help with how these links between organisational interest and strategic aims, national policies as well as mobility opportunities can be made.

Staff and learners need practical examples of how learning mobilities could support professional advancements or learners' upskilling and career paths.

## Recommendations for ACTIONS

### 1. Strengthen policy alignment and incentives

- Making connections between E+ KA1 aims and key policy areas in the national contexts: National policies supporting internationalisation and innovation, such as those in social inclusion, health promotion, digitalisation, greening, and cultural exchange, can significantly boost engagement. Including adult learning mobility elements in these policies increases the visibility and appreciation of Erasmus+ and its benefits for professional development.
- Advocacy and policy alignment: National Agencies (NAs), ambassadors, and long-term beneficiaries should advocate incorporating Erasmus+ KA1 Mobility into strategic policy documents during their development and public debates. This advocacy can align mobility programs with recognised national and regional priorities, enhancing relevance and motivation for participants.
- Alignment with the national implementation of Council Recommendations, including ILA: It is also recommended to examine the current national processes for introducing individual learning accounts (ILA) and Microcredentials based on the corresponding European Council Recommendations and how synergies can be made with combination and alignment of these national initiatives. While individual learning accounts aim to raise participation in adult learning by offering learning opportunities and funding for individual learners, the range of learning opportunities can be extended by the learning providers with international mobility via Erasmus applications to obtain a more immersive learning experience. Erasmus+ Mobility (to access it outside of ILA). Potential synergy with E+ Mobility possibilities should be carefully analysed in each national context, as ILA can and how it can be communicated towards targeted organisations and individuals.
- Microcredentials can be considered for the recognition of transversal skills and individual competencies obtained by mobility programs, too.

### 2. Provide support for internationalization

- Direct support for strategic planning: Offer beneficiaries guidance on understanding the organizational requirements of internationalization, such as the necessary skills, capacities, and processes, as well as the strategic benefits. This support can demystify mobility, making it more approachable and aligned with organizational objectives.
- Sector-specific mobility promotion: Identify sectors where international mobility provides significant added value, such as the arts, creative industries, social economy, community development, and health. Align support measures, tailored initiatives, and services to enhance uptake in these high-potential sectors.

### 3. Visualize and recognize learning outcomes

- Enhance Motivation of Adult Learners Through Recognition of Engagement. To increase the motivation of adult learners, specific incentives should be introduced that recognize and validate their engagement and active learning attitude post-mobility. These recognition tools can take various forms, such as Europass certificates, micro-credentials, or credit systems, tailored to the national context and local practices.
- To ensure the effectiveness and relevance of these incentives, national agencies (NAs) should collaborate with local and regional public authorities, coordination bodies, professional organizations, employers, and unions. This collective effort can help design recognition systems that align with national education and labor market strategies while providing learners with tangible value that enhances their employability and personal development.

### 4. Encourage participative practices and learner involvement

- Involve learners in mobility planning: NA support for participative practices can improve learner motivation by involving them in the planning and design of mobility activities. Participative planning helps learners see their role in the process, which can improve engagement and success rates.
- Promote group mobilities: Group mobilities can offer unique advantages for both learners and sending organizations. Highlighting the benefits of group participation, such as team-building, mutual support, and shared learning, can enhance motivation among participants.
- Inclusive family literacy and inter-generational programs: promote family literacy and intergenerational programs to enhance social inclusion and foster a supportive environment for diverse age groups of learners. It can also help in addressing some of the challenges of learner involvement like language barriers.
- Pre-departure language preparation: Language barriers were a recurring issue, implementing pre-testing for foreign language skills to enhance participant readiness. Standardising language support could improve overall experience .

#### Effective practices for reference

- Policy alignment in Croatia: Croatia incorporates Erasmus+ adult education into strategic plans for education development and equality, demonstrating how strategic alignment with national goals can boost motivation and participation.
- TCA Activities: Tailoring Transnational Cooperation Activities (TCA) to support specific sectors with capacity-building and partner search activities can help align mobility with organisational and sectoral needs.

### 6.4 Handling capacity challenges

Effective participation in the Erasmus+ KA1 Mobility program requires robust capacity at both the organisational and individual levels. For beneficiary organisations, capacity encompasses human resources, including skilled staff and supportive management, who are essential for understanding program requirements, aligning them with organisational goals, and successfully working through all stages of application, preparation, and implementation.

This involves designing and submitting applications, organising logistics for staff and learner mobilities, preparing participants through language and cultural training, and ensuring smooth execution, reporting, and financial administration.

At the individual level, capacity entails the time and effort that staff and learners invest in the mobility experience. They contribute by creating personal development plans, engaging fully in mobility activities, and completing reflection reports to solidify and share their learning.

Capacity could also be a bottleneck in the hosting organisations. Preparing for mobility, agreeing on learning outcomes, preparing and delivering of the local learning program are often barriers which they cannot overcome.

#### Challenges

Organisational capacity limitations are a primary barrier to participation, particularly for smaller organisations with fewer resources. Many providers underestimate the time, effort, and skills required for a high-quality application, partner selection, and effective mobility organisation. Additionally, preparing and supporting staff and learners for successful participation requires significant resources. At the individual level, the capacity to participate is constrained by family and work obligations as well as language barriers.

#### Aim

To mitigate capacity-related barriers at both organisational and individual levels, enabling broader participation in Erasmus+ KA1 mobility.

#### Recommendations for ACTIONS

##### 1. Strengthening organizational capacity

- Promote accreditation for simplified engagement: Strengthen the promotion of accreditation to help organisations streamline administrative processes, thus reducing barriers to entry. Support NAs in guiding organisations to align their long-term goals with Erasmus+ accreditation, enhancing strategic engagement.
- Realistic capacity need assessment: National Agencies (NAs) should support interesting organisations with providing a transparent picture of the time, skills, and resources needed for mobility projects in their communication and outreach activities. This can help organizations make informed decisions about participation.
- Substitution and support solutions: Develop guidance on practical approaches to managing staff substitutions and workload distribution during mobilities, showcasing best practices like mutual trainer support or flexible leadership arrangements.
- Reducing administrative burdens: NAs should continue their efforts to simplify administrative processes and provide user-friendly digital tools and templates. Streamlining application and reporting processes will make it easier for small organizations to engage in KA1 mobility.
- Comprehensive preparation for mobility: Encourage beneficiary organizations to offer pre-mobility preparation, including language learning and intercultural training. For group mobilities, fostering peer

support and building a positive group environment can improve participants' experiences and outcomes.

- Institutional knowledge integration: Organizations should be supported in developing strategies to integrate knowledge and innovative practices gained through Erasmus+ KA1 mobilities into their institutional frameworks, benefiting staff, learners, and the organization as a whole. This can increase the long-term impact of mobility experiences.
- Exploring synergies with other Key Actions (KAs): Encourage beneficiaries to leverage synergies with other Erasmus+ Key Actions, such as KA2 partnerships, to enhance capacity-building efforts, broaden learning experiences, and foster innovation. Multiple cooperation perspectives could be more attractive and beneficial for partner organisations and could increase willingness to host Mobilities, especially by organisations operating under high-performance pressures and time constraints.

## 2. Supporting staff and learner participation

- Flexible employment arrangements: Staff members, particularly educators who may work across multiple organizations, often need flexibility to participate in mobility. Encourage collaborative agreements among local providers to facilitate staff sharing and substitutions where possible.
- Building learner support networks: For learners facing family, work, and language barriers, provide additional support mechanisms, including flexible scheduling, personalized learning plans, and local support networks to facilitate participation.
- Encouraging peer support: For learner mobilities, promoting group activities can foster peer support, helping to alleviate individual concerns and build confidence. Establishing a group ethos can enhance learners' sense of security and engagement, especially for those with limited mobility experience.

### Effective practices for reference

- Customized support models: Certain NAs, like those in Luxembourg, have developed customized tools to guide organizations through the preparation and application phases, helping to streamline the process and reduce workload.
- Synergies with other programs: Beneficiaries that have successfully integrated Erasmus+ KA1 experiences into broader institutional strategies often draw on multiple KAs, highlighting the value of coordinated participation in Erasmus+ to strengthen organisational capacity.

## 6.5 Expanding quality learning opportunities and improving their accessibility

A recurring challenge for many organisations and staff interested in Erasmus+ KA1 mobilities is the difficulty in finding high-quality learning opportunities that align with their specific needs. Many implemented mobilities are concentrated in a limited number of countries and offer standardised course options, which do not always meet the quality or relevance expectations of participants. To foster meaningful engagement, Erasmus+ needs to support the diversification of learning opportunities and promote new providers to offer courses or host job shadowing and other mobility formats.

### Challenges

- Ensuring the supply of relevant learning opportunities: High-quality mobilities require carefully matched partnerships that align with the learning needs of specific organisations, staff, or learners. Finding suitable partners, however, is often a time-intensive process that does not always yield successful matches.
- Limited partner search support: Current tools, like the EPAL platform and matchmaking seminars, are valuable but not sufficient for the range of needs applicants have. Additional or alternative partner-finding resources could help fill this gap.
- Course quality and accessibility: Many courses and training opportunities do not fully align with participants' needs and are either oversubscribed or lack sufficient quality to meet expectations.
- Job shadowing challenges: This highly customised form of learning requires significant preparation, trust-building, and support from host organisations, making it less accessible to participants who need structured guidance.

### Aim

The goal is to enhance NA collaboration to use the expanded KA1 Mobility budget effectively, increase the supply and visibility of quality learning opportunities, and incentivise new and diverse learning providers.

### Recommendations for ACTIONS

#### 1. Targeted support for different mobility types

Certain types of mobilities are still underutilised. Tailor support based on the specific type of mobility, such as job shadowing, courses, teaching assignments, or inviting guest trainers could facilitate the exploitation of specific types of mobilities. Clear guidance can help applicants select the best mobility format to match their learning goals.

#### 2. Pre-application support for clarification of learning needs

Available support to applicants can help in defining their learning goals and exploring the full range of mobility options. This could help organisations make more targeted decisions that align with their professional and strategic needs.

#### 3. Cross-Country mobility networks in thematic areas (TCA Activities)

Encourage NA-facilitated networks across countries in specific areas, such as basic skills development or arts and creativity, to make partner-finding more efficient and ensure access to expertise that supports meaningful exchange. These standing networks can permanently foster inter-organisational collaborations.

#### 4. NA Cooperation for enhanced learning opportunities (TCA Activities)

NAs are recommended to initiate collaborative TCA activities to explore strategies for expanding quality learning opportunities. This may include developing innovative partner search solutions, incentives and measures to promote quality learning offers and exploring alternative learning options.

## 5. Centralised course database and rating system for course offers

As part of the collaborations proposed above, it is also recommended that the potential benefits of a searchable platform where available courses can be registered will be examined. This platform would allow applicants to search by criteria such as topic/ learning outcomes, location, and participant feedback. This would facilitate better-informed choices and enhance transparency around course quality. If there is a consensus on the need of such a tool, a proposal can be developed for EACEA.

## 6.6 E+ Program Framework Efficiency

The Erasmus+ KA1 mobility framework is continuously evolving, integrating new political priorities and responding to implementation feedback and changing user needs. New technologies and data-driven approaches offer opportunities to streamline administrative and monitoring processes, while rising travel and accommodation costs call for financial adjustments to sustain program efficiency. This section identifies key challenges and proposes targeted recommendations for National Agencies (NAs) and the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA) to enhance the effectiveness of the Erasmus+ framework and its accessibility.

### Challenges

- **Rising mobility costs:** The real costs of mobility, particularly travel and accommodation, have increased post-COVID-19, and available grants often do not fully cover these expenses. Job shadowing, for example, incurs costs for hosting organisations that are not always covered, which limits interest in such activities.
- **Inconsistent grant levels for staff and learners:** Current funding allocations do not adequately reflect the similar expense levels involved for staff and learners. Additionally, mobility involving learners from vulnerable groups, such as individuals with disabilities, incurs higher costs that are insufficiently covered under current provisions.
- **Administrative complexity:** Despite constant simplifications and efforts to ease of administrative burdens, the program's complexity remains a barrier for many organisations. Gaining proficiency with the Erasmus+ framework, submitting quality applications, and managing reporting requirements still demand considerable time and resources.
- **Support for quality learning opportunities:** The framework could provide better mechanisms for quality assurance and partner matchmaking, as discussed in section 6.4. Ensuring robust systems for quality partner engagement and learning outcomes remains a significant challenge.

### Aim

Ensure the Erasmus+ program framework supports accessible, effective participation for a wide range of adult learning providers by addressing financial, administrative, and operational barriers.

## Recommendations for consideration in reviewing the Erasmus+ program framework

To enhance the effectiveness of the Erasmus+ KA1 Mobility framework, it is recommended that National Agencies (NAs) and the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA) consider the following suggestions when reviewing program operations and structure.

1. **Conduct a comprehensive evaluation of financial provisions**  
Suggestion: NAs and the RIA-NETWORK could work together to initiate a study on the adequacy of KA1 grant scheme. This would examine the financial provisions' impact on program uptake and identify improvements for aligning budgetary allocations with evolving participation needs.
2. **Adjust unit costs to reflect actual expenses**  
Suggestion: Review and potentially adjust unit costs for travel and accommodation to reflect post COVID-19 pricing. Increased budget provisions for staff mobilities would ensure equitable support across participant types and align financial support with real-world expenses.
3. **Provide targeted support for participants with family obligations**  
Suggestion: Explore provisions that support participants with caregiving responsibilities, such as flexible mobility schedules or additional resources for family needs, thereby expanding access for adult learners and educators who balance family obligations.
4. **Introduce innovative linguistic support mechanisms**  
Suggestion: Consider expanding linguistic support options, such as digital language courses, mobile-based language assistance, and peer language exchange programs, to reduce language barriers for participants with limited foreign language skills.
5. **Encourage cross-program and cross-mobility models**  
Suggestion: Foster the combination of mobility types (e.g., combining learner and staff mobility) and cross-program initiatives (e.g., linking KA1 and KA2 activities) to allow for more versatile and mutually beneficial exchange programs, enhancing sustainable collaboration and learning across projects.
6. **Clarify and simplify Erasmus+ communication**  
Suggestion: Standardise and simplify Erasmus+ terminology to improve program accessibility. Providing clear, straightforward information would aid organisations and individuals with limited experience in international programs in understanding the benefits and processes involved in Erasmus+ KA1 mobilities.
7. **Support holistic assistance from planning to reporting**  
Suggestion: Establish a structured support pathway that assists applicants from idea generation through to reporting. Guidance in planning, partner search, application support, and i.e standardised templates for final reporting would strengthen the program implementation across various organisations.

#### 8. Advocate for enhanced support for disadvantaged participants

Suggestion: Formalise advocacy efforts to provide increased support and accessibility for disadvantaged groups. Options may include additional co-financing or rights-based assistance, ensuring equal participation opportunities for individuals with fewer opportunities and resources.

#### 9. Enhance recognition and validation of learning outcomes

Suggestion: Implement and promote accessible systems for validating learning outcomes gained through mobility, including micro-credentials and European learning portfolios, to document competencies, soft skills, and practical knowledge gained.

Moreover, post-mobility implementation should be emphasized, encouraging organizations and individuals to apply their newly acquired knowledge and skills within their professional and educational contexts. This approach would ensure that the benefits of mobility are fully realized and contribute to the development of both the participants and their organizations. National Agencies should advocate for structured post-mobility processes, including sharing best practices and follow-up activities, to enhance the impact and sustainability of mobility programs.

#### 10. Prioritise quality assurance in learning mobility

Suggestion: Emphasise quality in mobility experiences by encouraging preparation, ongoing support, and post-mobility integration of learning. This comprehensive approach would ensure that all stages of the learning process are optimised to enhance participants' personal and professional development.

#### 11. Advocate for the Concept of "Training Leave" as an eligible cost under Erasmus+ financial

To address capacity and financial challenges and support the participation of both staff and learners in mobility programs, the introduction or reinforcement of "training leave" policies should be considered. This concept would allow staff, educators, and adult learners from various sectors to take dedicated time off for professional development and learning through mobility programs which can be covered by the Erasmus+ mobility grant.

These recommendations provide a basis for further discussions for Na-s as well as for elaboration of joint recommendations to EACEA to consider when refining the Erasmus+ framework to support diverse participant better needs and enhance the overall impact of KA1 Mobility in adult education.

#### Closing remarks

This chapter has sought to consolidate the main findings of the research and translate them into a structured set of actionable recommendations. It also aimed to establish an enabling framework based on these findings, providing National Agencies (NAs) with a tool to systematically assess current challenges and practices. This framework supports NAs in identifying tailored strategies to maximise the potential of KA1 Mobility allocations for adult education.

The recommendations presented here incorporate insights from country experts involved in the case studies and contributions from NA staff. While these recommendations offer a catalogue of potential actions, they are intended as a source of inspiration for each NA to design a context-specific action plan addressing its unique challenges and opportunities. Moreover, several suggestions open pathways for enhanced collaboration among NAs, encouraging joint initiatives through Transnational Cooperation Activities (TCAs) and promoting further exploration of critical areas through partnerships within the RIA-AE Network. This collaborative approach can help deepen the collective knowledge on optimising Erasmus+ KA1 Mobility for adult education, fostering a shared commitment to ongoing improvement across Europe.

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