

TCA / NET, a plea to adjust the format to the challenges

Joint letter by the Education & Training and Youth sectors

Considering the guide for National Agencies:

Explaining the objective of the TCA and NET as tools **for improving the implementation of the Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps programmes in qualitative terms** and to make them **more strategic by building closer links with relevant elements of policy development**.

And their specific objectives:

- Supporting activities aiming **at enhancing links to European policy cooperation in the fields of education, training and youth** as well as to activities aiming at influencing national practices in the concerned fields, and vice-versa;
- Supporting activities aiming **at increasing the quality of implementation of the Programmes**, notably the participation and accessibility of the Programmes, as well as community-building and networking between organisations.

Considering the challenges encountered by the National Agencies to:

- 1) Develop the participation and accessibility of the programmes
- 2) Link better European policy cooperation in the fields of education, training, and youth as well as national practices in the concerned fields
- 3) Address the priorities of the programmes, which reflect new learning (both formal and nonformal) needs and respond to major societal & environmental challenges.
- 4) The budget increase of the Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps programmes and the need therefore to widen the participation in the programmes.

Considering that European networking between participants is **a key element for developing new projects, especially for newcomers in the programmes** as well as addressing persons with less opportunities.

Considering that the TCA and NET activities can **lead to building and networking amongst organisation towards better and more relevant education & training schemes**.

Considering that we are still in Covid-19 pandemic and its devastating impact on international learning mobility, which means even more support needs to be provided to applicants and beneficiaries.

Considering the chronic low uptake of the budget dedicated to these activities in significant number of NAs. In Education and Training sectors, from 2021 information from EC - TCA of the meeting in April 2021-, in their 2021 WP NAs asked only for 19% of global available KA3 budget. 20 million euros were available but only 3,8 million euros total budget were forecast due to the difficulties of implementation. 8 NAs have committed less than 10% of the allocated budget. 28 have committed less than 50%. In the Youth sector, according to preliminary discussions during the business meeting in Prague, up to 70% of NAs expect not

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be able to use all the WP 2021 TCA budget, a similar number (62%) applies also to 2021 NET budgets.

The following changes may significantly improve the situation:

① To authorize recruitment of staff under KA3 and NET budget

- Current rules are counterproductive and jeopardize full use of TCAs and NETs to support the programmes
 - NAs are forced to choose between allocating staff to manage KA1/KA2 (Solidarity projects and Volunteering respectively) or allocating staff to management of TCAs and NET => the only solution is to share activities between many NA staff that have several responsibilities (i.e., KA1 school coordinator and TCA officer; Solidarity projects and NET officer etc.) which is not efficient.
 - TCA/LTA/NET activities cover a variety of activities that require more than one person (promotion & communication staff, finance administration and support staff, strategy & policy staff, event staff, public procurement staff and many more).
 - Coordination of LTAs requires full time professional project managers and supporting staff.
 - As a comparison: for example, Erasmus+ VET Team of experts => staff costs is allowed.

② To remove the rule on restriction to finance only one NA Staff to take part in LTA/ TCA/NET national, transnational events.

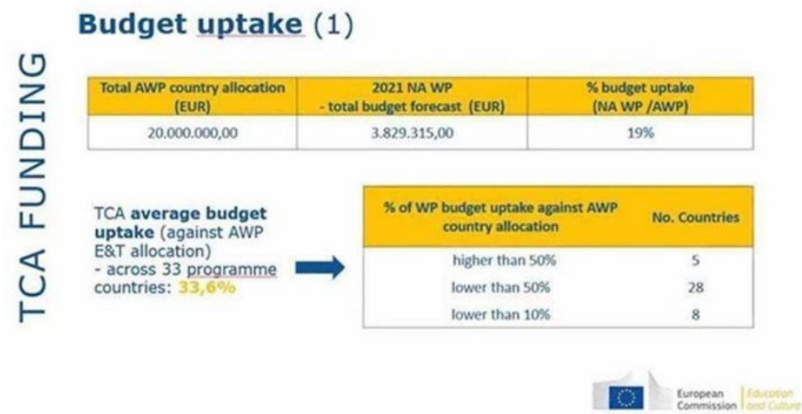
- Usually more than one NA Staff is needed as trainers / facilitators in the events.
- Project meetings are needed in LTAs projects and more than one NA staff is involved in LTAs in each NA in accordance with the topic.
- NA staff from KA1/KA2/Volunteering/Solidarity Projects units, is needed in TCA/LTA/NET activities dealing with improving E+ and ESC projects management, and more than one NA Staff can be needed to attend events
- TCA/LTA/NET officer meeting: participation should be eligible under TCA and NET budget.
- TCA/LTA/NET officer working group: costs of participation to the group meeting should be eligible.

③ To open TCA opportunities to strengthen international dimension of the Erasmus+ Education and Training.

- allowing the invitation of participants from non-Eu countries to TCAs dealing with supporting international dimension of E+ VET and HE (How can we promote international dimension, which is new for VET, if we cannot support VET organization to get in touch with non-EU organizations?)
- allowing the organization (at least by Programme countries) and participation of TCA events gathering EU and non-EU participants.

Youth support addition of these opportunities as a proven good practice

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Source : Extract of the EC presentation during TCA officers 'meeting, 2021