



Erasmus+











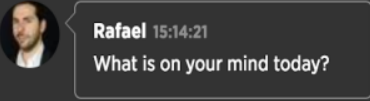

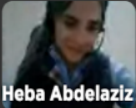
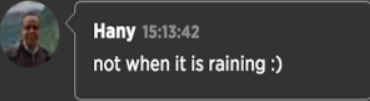

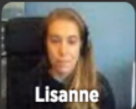




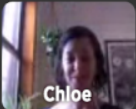

Virtual Exchange



INTERCULTURAL LEARNING EXPERIENCES

What is Virtual Exchange?

“Technology-enabled people-to-people dialogues sustained over a period of time”.

- Use of new media platforms to enable deep, interactive social learning
- Developed over 30 years from experience in the field of educational exchange and study abroad
- Making it possible for every young person to have meaningful, transnational and intercultural experiences.
- Prepares, deepens, and extends physical exchanges, and fuels new demand for physical exchange.



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-  Participants
-  Breakout Room Manager
-  Room Settings
-  Screenshare
-  Manage Polls
-  Whiteboard
-  Presentation Layout

What is Erasmus+ Virtual Exchange?

- Erasmus+ Virtual Exchange is a groundbreaking pilot project established by the European Commission in 2018.
- Erasmus+ Virtual Exchange aims to expand the reach and scope of the Erasmus+ programme through virtual exchanges.
- This project will complement the traditional physical mobility programme.
- An accessible, innovative way for young people in Europe and the Southern Mediterranean to engage in meaningful intercultural experiences online, as part of their formal or non-formal education.

What is Erasmus+ Virtual Exchange?

- During the pilot phase, Erasmus+ Virtual Exchange will reach at least 8,000 young people.
- Aim to expand the project to reach 17,000 more people by end 2019.
- Established under a contract with the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency, financed by the European Union's budget.
- Implemented by a consortium composed of Search for Common Ground, Anna Lindh Foundation, UNIMED, Sharing Perspectives Foundation, Soliya, UNICollaboration, Kiron Open Higher Education, and Migration Matters.

Target Audiences

Open to any young person aged 18-30 residing in Erasmus+ programme countries and the Southern Mediterranean.

- Young people (aged 18 to 30 years)
- Youth workers
- Students
- Higher education professors
- University managers/administrators
- Educators



Objectives

INTERCULTURAL LEARNING EXPERIENCES

Objectives

Impact

- Encourage intercultural dialogue and increase tolerance through online people-to-people interactions.
- Promote various types of Virtual Exchange as a complement to Erasmus+ physical mobility, allowing more young people to benefit from intercultural and international experience.

Skill Building

- Enhance critical thinking and media literacy, and the use of Internet and social media.
- Foster soft skills development of participants, including the practice of foreign languages and teamwork, notably to enhance employability.

Objectives

EU Policy Framework

- Support the objectives of the 2015 Paris declaration to promote citizenship and the common values of freedom, tolerance and non-discrimination through education.
- Strengthen the youth dimension of the EU neighbouring policy with Southern Mediterranean countries.



Activities

INTERCULTURAL LEARNING EXPERIENCES

ONLINE FACILITATED DIALOGUE

Virtual Exchange programmes connecting young people in non-formal discussions from various countries to each other for exposure to diverse views and cultures, language exchange and practice, and employability skills.



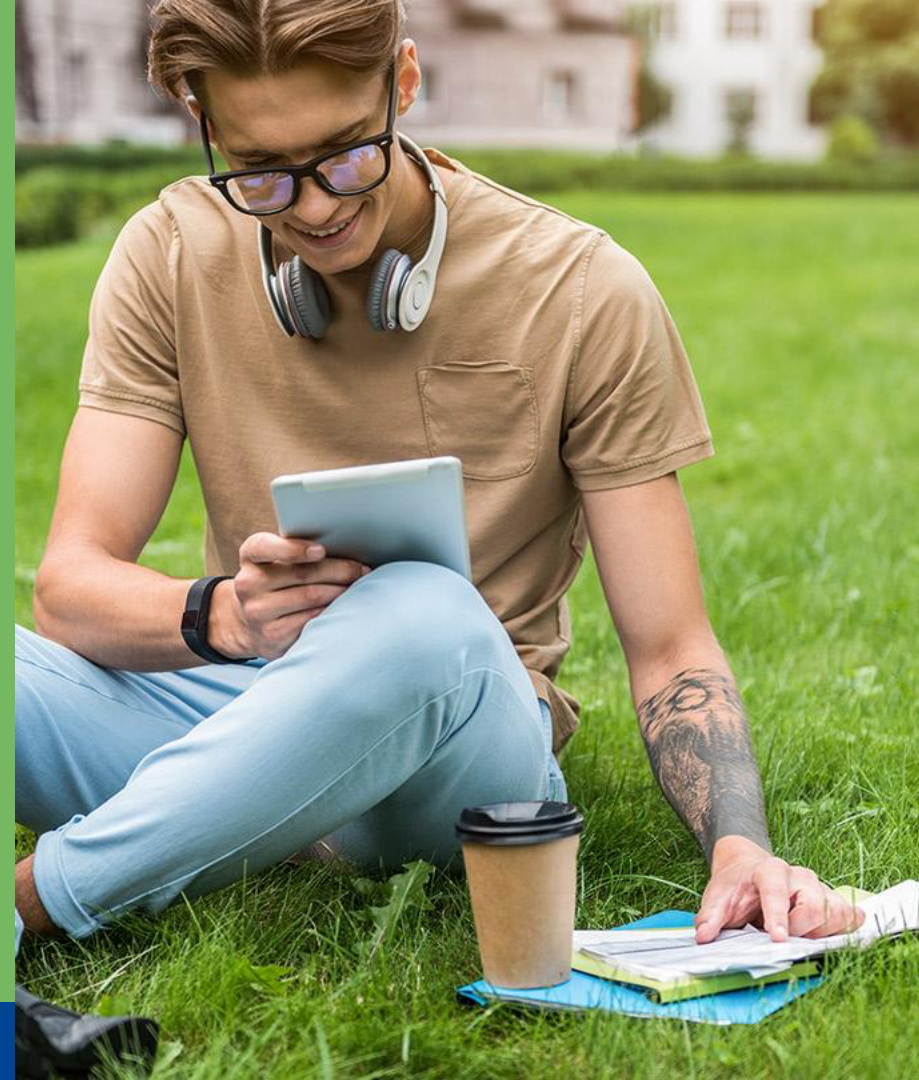
Example – “Somaya offers online dialogues to her students”

- Somaya teaches business administration at a university in Sebha, Libya. Sebha is an isolated city, so students don't get much exposure to the outside world. Somaya is looking for a way to use technology to help her students connect with others around the world, gain new perspectives and develop global skills.
- Somaya would like all of her students to have the opportunity to build meaningful cross-cultural relationships with peers from different backgrounds and cultures.
- Somaya can sign up for the Online Facilitated Dialogue activity, to have her students join the Connect Programme. This programme uses a curriculum for cross cultural learning, that can be easily integrated into a course syllabus or project activity.
- Participants will connect online using the Exchange Portal, a state of the art video conferencing technology especially designed for face to face conversations.
- All that Somaya needs to do is select a course where students can speak intermediate level English, and then incorporate the Connect Programme into that course. She will need to locate a computer lab that can be available for her students.

- Once the programme begins, each of Somaya's students will be placed in a small group with about ten students from around the world. These small groups meet once a week for 2 hours for the duration of the programme, and will engage in thought provoking dialogue around important social, global issues with their peers.
- Each group is led by a trained facilitator who will guide the students through the experience.
- Somaya will receive weekly updates and end of semester reports on how her students perform in the dialogue sessions. She will also receive a report on the impact of the programme on her students.
- Through the Connect Programme's network, Somaya finds that her students experienced cross-cultural dialogue first hand, they built confidence, critical thinking, and an ability to communicate effectively and collaborate with others around the world.
- They also gained new insights and friendships that can last a lifetime.
- Students who successfully completed the programme, will receive Erasmus+ Virtual Exchange badges that officially recognize their participation and learning.

TRAINING TO DEVELOP VIRTUAL EXCHANGE PROJECTS

Professional development for youth workers and university educators to learn how to develop a Transnational Erasmus+ Virtual Exchange Project (TEP) in order to enrich and expand existing programmes.



Example: “Dolores and Mayssa develop a joint project”

- Dolores teaches gender and media at a university in Spain. She would like to add an international component to her course and innovate her teaching, so that ALL her students can regularly interact with other students living and studying in different contexts.
- She wants them to engage with new perspectives on their academic subject and learn to communicate effectively in online, international contexts.
- First of all she signs up for Training in Transnational EVE projects, TEPs.
- The 10-hour online basic training offers an overview of what virtual exchange is, intercultural dialogue and facilitated synchronous discussions.

- Here she meets Mayssa, who teaches English as a foreign language in Egypt. Mayssa also took the basic training because she thinks virtual exchange will be a great way to have her students interact in English, in an authentic context, with peers in another country.
- Mayssa and Dolores decide to partner to jointly develop an Erasmus+ Virtual Exchange Project.
- Together, they start their advanced training, where they are supported in the design of shared learning outcomes for their courses. They also learn how to develop collaborative activities for their students to engage in next semester.
- Mayssa and Dolores are now set to go and have their students engage in the transnational project they have designed.
- When they have implemented their course, they will be awarded an Erasmus+ Virtual Exchange badge for professional development.
- Which recognises their experience of designing and implementing of an innovative Erasmus+ Virtual Exchange.

ADVOCACY TRAINING

Bringing young people from different backgrounds together to develop parliamentary debate skills with the support of a network of trained debate facilitators, fostering listening and understanding through advocacy training.



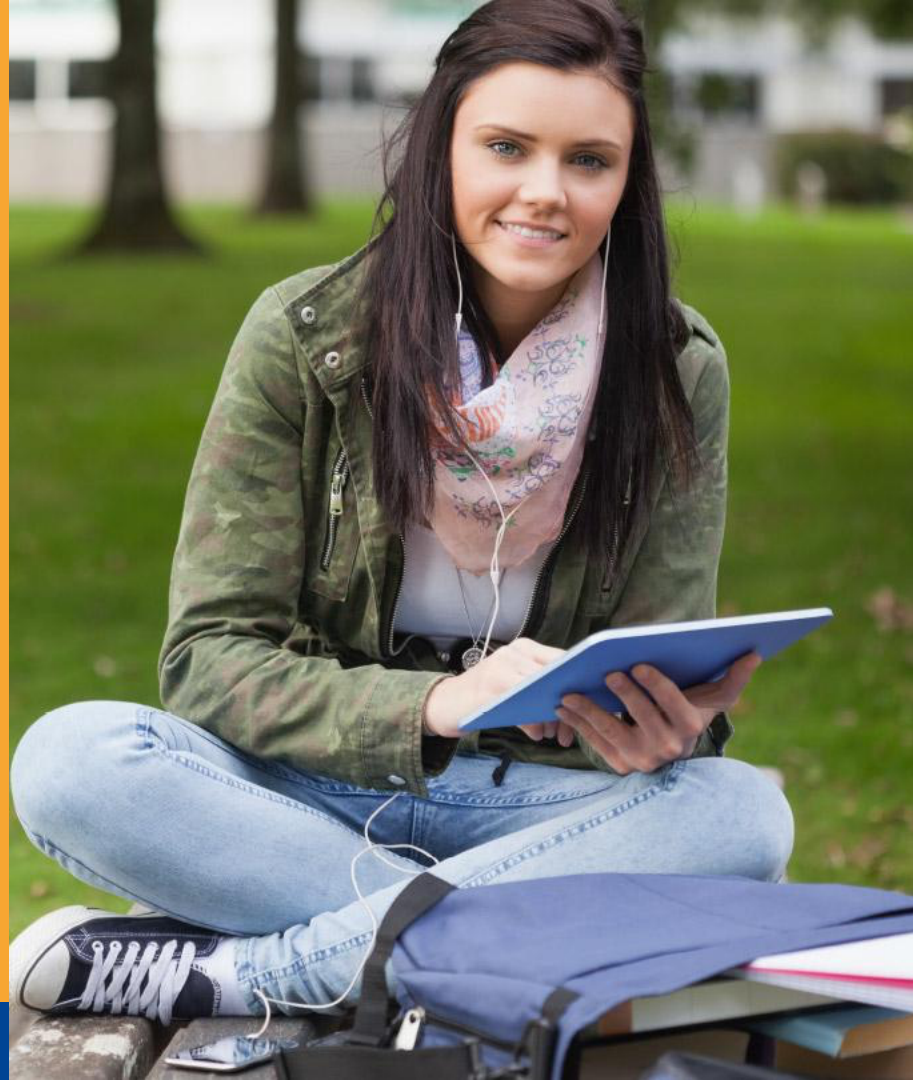
Example: “Reda creates a debate club”

- Reda is eager to interact with people from other countries and to learn the basics of debating and communication. She is willing and enthusiastic about creating a debate club in her home city Casablanca.
- Through the online debate, Reda’s debate club members will get exposed to youth from other countries, researching and debating on specific topics. They will learn the art of debating, critical thinking and communication. This will help understanding of other cultures and give them the opportunity to speak-up about their own ideas.
- Once she has expressed her interest through the online form, Reda will be explained how to start a debate club and she will participate in the debate facilitators training.
- Reda then can start recruiting youth in her city to join the debate club.

- She will then introduce her debate club members to the essentials of debating and the format of the online platform.
- Together with her team members, they schedule the online debate, and she ensures team members are well prepared for the debate.
- She oversees the online debate and plans for the coming ones with other members.
- Reda and her team members are now trained debaters and she is a trained facilitator, with a debate club ready to implement activities in their own country and have new connections with youth in other countries with similar interests.
- Reda will receive a badge which recognizes her experience as trained debate facilitator, while her club members will also receive a badge for their participation in the online debate.

INTERACTIVE OPEN ONLINE COURSES

Access open online courses across cultural contexts and national boundaries to learn with peers from diverse backgrounds using bite-sized video lectures, supported by skill building activities and facilitated intercultural discussions.



Example: “Simon brings virtual exchanges into his MOOC”

- Simon teaches Intercultural communication at a university in the U.K. He has a series of MOOCs on Intercultural communication and would like to enhance these MOOCs with interactive activities so that his students actually engage in intercultural communication while learning about it. The European Commission’s Virtual Exchange project supports educators like Simon in adding virtual exchange activities to their MOOCs.
- Simon needs to express his interest through the Erasmus+ Virtual Exchange hub. The team will contact Simon and liaise with him to make sure the activities are in line with his learning objectives.
- The interactive activity is an optional activity that the MOOC students can chose to take.
- Through the facilitated interaction with fellow students from different backgrounds, the students experience first hand what intercultural communication means. They develop 21st century skills such as critical thinking, self-esteem, curiosity and tolerance of ambiguity, skills are increasingly desired by employers across the world.

- The workload for Simon is kept as low as possible. Simon does not need to run the activities himself or change anything about his existing MOOC.
- After agreeing on the design and implementation timeframe, the MOOC will be promoted as an Erasmus+ Virtual Exchange enhanced MOOC on the Erasmus+ Virtual Exchange Hub and students can sign up for the MOOC and the virtual exchange activities.
- Students will interact with one another through asynchronous and synchronous online exchanges. They meet face to face in a video conference platform to discuss the topics of the MOOC under the guidance of facilitators.
- Simon's MOOC is now enhanced with virtual exchange interactive activities. His students have engaged in meaningful exchanges, deepened their understanding on each other, as well as their own viewpoints on the theme of the MOOC.
- When the students successfully finalise the programme, they receive an Erasmus+ Virtual Exchange badge as recognition of their achievement.

Facilitation Training

Training in facilitation tools such as active listening, summarizing and reframing, making observations, and addressing diverse group dynamics.

Hands-on facilitation practice with other trainees and extensive, individualized feedback from trainers.

Extensive individualised coaching as member of the Erasmus+ Virtual Exchange Facilitator Community.



Example – “Sofia becomes a facilitator”

- Sofia is a youth worker in Italy and she has a passion for intercultural dialogue, and conflict transformation. She sees a lot of the conflicts and clashes around her are rooted in misunderstanding and fear of the other. And she wishes there were more safe spaces for dialogue within and between communities for people to engage and learn from new perspectives.
- Sofia would like to be part of an initiative that brings young people together from across cultures and boundaries, to promote understanding and mutual respect. She would also develop her professional and personal interests and gain new skills in cross-cultural work.
- The European Commission’s Erasmus+ Virtual Exchange initiative works with professionals like Sofia to build their skills and prepare them to become virtual dialogue facilitators by offering a Facilitation Training Program.
- Sofia can sign up for the Facilitation Training Program, where she will be assessed for either an Introductory level facilitation training or an Advanced level facilitation training

- During the training, Sofia is placed in a group with 8-10 peers. Everyone is logging on from a different location in the world and come from a variety of professional backgrounds. In this highly interactive training, Sofia and her peers learn various concepts and techniques of dialogue facilitation. They also discover by using the online platform the benefits and challenges of conducting virtual dialogue. Sofia will also complete facilitation practices and receive individualised feedback.
- Sofia completes the training component and awaits confirmation from her trainer that she is ready to facilitate. She received the news that she has passed the training and will be connected to The Erasmus+ Virtual Exchange various dialogue programs in order to put her newly acquired skills into practice.
- She is assigned a co-facilitator, Nada, from Jordan. Nada has been facilitating online dialogue programs for a couple of years now, and she is happy to share her experience with Sofia.
- Sofia and Nada meet their group each week for 2 hours in live online video conferencing sessions. Their discussions are supported by a rich curriculum with readings, activities, and discussion guidelines. The program team also supports them in any challenges they face along the way.

- After successfully completing the Advanced Facilitation training and one round of facilitation with one of Erasmus+ Virtual Exchange dialogue programs, Sara will receive a UN endorsed Advanced Facilitation Training Certificate, as well as an Erasmus+ Virtual Exchange facilitator badge.
- Sofia also remains to be part of an active international community of dialogue facilitators. She can continue to facilitate online with these programs as well as connect with her peers to collaborate.
- Continued professional development and specialized facilitation trainings are also offered to her as a part of her ongoing engagement in virtual exchange facilitation.

Testimonials

IOOC Participant

“I have always cared to learn about how other people think and live, but the types of exchange programs that I am interested in haven't been an option for me. While sitting in my living room, I met people that I would never have the chance to meet in my real life and talked about important topics and issues that affect all of us. Who knew that you could have civil and respectful conversations online, especially with people who disagree with you, and become friends in the process!”

Online Facilitated Dialogue Participant

“As we're counting sessions down, I feel like I am building strong relationships and widening my knowledge about a lot of things that I used to think about as ‘simple,’ but it turned out that they are very deep. I am loving this program.”

“The whole experience was great I loved all of it. The most important thing I learned is that even though on paper like we are all so different, we had nothing in common and yet we all loved, heard and respected each other and found a lot of common ground and that helped break the stereotypes and it was just eye opening”.

Facilitation Trainee

“I learned a lot about managing group dynamics and how to handle conflict within a group. I have already used some of these strategies in my professional life. I am more mindful of my communication, more tuned in to the things that trigger me, more aware of how my voice can influence others within a debate or conversation. These are great life-skills”

Recognition Open Badges

- Recognition of participation in Erasmus+ Virtual Exchange activities works through a system of Open Badges
- There are badges for each of the different activities and also for trainers and facilitators



How to get involved?

Erasmus+ Virtual Exchange HUB

https://europa.eu/youth/erasmusvirtual_en

- Main gateway for participation
- Explanation on project activities and information on upcoming activities
- Expression of interest forms available for each activity



Questions?

INTERCULTURAL LEARNING EXPERIENCES