

Erasmus+ International Credit Mobility

Guide on Amendments to the Beneficiary Grant Agreement

December 2015



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Disclaimer

This document is only for projects selected under the 2015 Call for Proposals. If your project is financed under a later Call for Proposals, look for an updated version of this document.



Foreword

This guide on amendments is intended for institutions that have received funding for higher education student and staff mobility between Programme and Partner Countries¹ (International Credit Mobility for short) under Key Action 1 of the Erasmus+ programme.

This document will provide you with useful information on the contractual framework for International Credit Mobility and answer the most frequently asked questions regarding amendments to the contract (Grant Agreement) between the Beneficiary of the project and their National Agency.

While this document is primarily addressed to higher education institutions established in Erasmus+ Programme Countries (KA107 beneficiaries), it may also be useful for their partners in the Partner Countries to understand exactly which changes to the Grant Agreement are possible.

1. Contract between Beneficiary and National Agency

1.1) Structure and content of the Grant Agreement

If your International Credit Mobility project has been selected for funding, you will have signed a mono-beneficiary Grant Agreement (or multi-beneficiary, if you are part of a national consortium) with your <u>National Agency</u>.

This Grant Agreement captures the core of the project and is based on the information that you provided in the application form, which was assessed by a team of evaluators who will have selected your project – or parts of it – for funding.

Annexes I and II of your Grant Agreement detail the activities that have been retained for funding and specify the exact breakdown of your grant:

Annex I - Description of the project includes a table entitled "Activity Details" outlining the mobility flows (e.g. incoming student mobility or outgoing staff mobility) selected for funding. The annex also provides the description of the project provided in your application, in your answers to the four quality questions (award criteria). The selected mobility flows must be implemented in accordance with this annex.

Annex II - Estimated Budget provides the budget summary of the entire project, detailing the funds available for travel and individual support for all participants and the funds allocated to organisational support. The funds for travel and individual support with each Partner Country are also presented in separate tables for added clarity.

agreementi	umber: « <u>ProjectCode</u> »											
The benefician										missionID	», bearing	
These mobilit covering the				_		on provid	ed in the '	'Activity de	etails" t	able and	in the field	
Activity I	Details											
					Distance	Duratio n in	Duratio n Extra	Duration In Days Excludin	Trave	Duratio n In Days Incl	No Of Participar	
Activity Type	Flow Directio n	Education Level*	Country of Origin	Destinatio n Country	Band in km	Months	Days	g Travel	I Days	Travel	s	
Staff mobility for Teaching	Directio n Incoming	Level* N/A	Origin Afghanistan	n Country France	km 500 - 1999	Months N/A	N/A	28	5	Travel 33	5	
Staff mobility	Directio n	Level*	Origin	n Country	km	Months				Travel	s	
Staff mobility for Teaching Staff mobility	Directio n Incoming	Level* N/A	Origin Afghanistan	n Country France	km 500 - 1999	Months N/A	N/A	28	5	Travel 33	5	

Budget Summary

Travel

Total

«IndividualSupportTotalG

¹ The 33 Erasmus+ **Programme Countries** are the 28 EU Member States, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Turkey. **Partner Countries** are all the other countries in the world.



1.2) Amendments to the Grant Agreement

Once the Grant Agreement has been signed and your project is underway, you may find that some of the planned activities can no longer be implemented as foreseen.

As mentioned above, the Grant Agreement and its annexes capture the core of the project and provide several details on its content, approved by the evaluators. Therefore, certain changes are possible as long as they respect the core of the project.

The following pages will guide you through which changes are possible without amending the Grant Agreement, which ones require an amendment and the authorisation of your National Agency, and which changes are not possible under any circumstances.

Before we start, let us recall the 6 Golden Rules for amendments:

6 GOLDEN RULES

- (1) Amendments are always done in writing;
- (2) Any change must respect the <u>core of the project</u> as described in Annex I of the Grant Agreement, the rules from the Programme Guide and any <u>secondary criteria</u>* which your National Agency might have set;
- (3) Funds cannot be transferred from one Partner Country to another; in other words, any changes are only possible in mobility flows with the same Partner Country:
- (4) Mobilities can only take place with <u>partner institutions that are part of</u> the contract;
- (5) Funds cannot be transferred between incoming and outgoing mobility;
- (6) The final grant after amendments cannot exceed the grant requested

*For regions of the world where budget is limited, your National Agency may have chosen to limit demand by adding one or more **secondary criteria** on the degree level (e.g. limiting applications to one or two cycles), the activity type (e.g. limiting applications to staff mobility only), or the duration of mobility periods (e.g. limiting student mobility to 6 months). You should check with your National Agency whether any such secondary criteria apply and to which regions.



2. Changes without amendment

According to the articles "Budget transfers without amendment" and "Modifications without amendment" of the Grant Agreement, three changes do not require an amendment. These are the only changes to the Grant Agreement that do not require an amendment.

WITHOUT AMENDMENT

You may:

- \checkmark set the <u>duration</u> of individual mobilities;
- √ organise mobilities for a <u>different number of participants</u> than specified in Annexes I and II of the Grant Agreement;
- transfer up to 50% of the funds allocated for <u>organisational support</u> to individual support and travel for student and/or staff mobility.

These changes are possible as long as the minimum and maximum durations set out in the Erasmus+ <u>Programme Guide</u> (i.e. 3 months or 1 academic term or trimester to 12 months for students; 5 days to 2 months for staff) and any possible secondary criteria set by the National Agency are respected.

Your National Agency will be made aware of these changes through your monthly reporting in Mobility Tool+ and via your interim report(s) and final report. Please contact your National Agency for more information on these reporting procedures.

2.1) Duration of mobilities and number of participants

Annex I of the Grant Agreement does not specify the exact duration of each individual mobility, but rather the total duration for all participants. It is therefore possible to organise:

- \checkmark individual mobilities of the same duration for all participants;
- √ longer and shorter mobilities;
- $\sqrt{\ }$ shorter mobilities than the average duration so that additional mobilities may be organised with the left-over funds.

If you decide to go for the last option and organise more mobilities than initially granted, these will have to be of the same type, i.e. same activity type (student/staff), with the same Partner Country and, in the case of student mobility, for the same study cycle.

Your National Agency may be able to grant additional organisational support for these mobilities if it has funds remaining for cooperation with that Partner Country and only if the final grant amount does not exceed the grant amount requested at application stage for the entire project.

2.2) Transfer of organisational support funds

The funds for organisational support are allocated to the entire mobility project based on the total number of individual mobilities (EUR 350 per participant up to the 100^{th} participant, EUR 200 beyond that). It is a unit cost provided to support the organisation of mobilities and ensure that the Beneficiary and its partner(s) fulfil the commitments and principles established in the Erasmus Charter for Higher Education (ECHE) and the Inter-Institutional Agreement. Any split between participating institutions should be agreed upon by all partners on a mutually acceptable basis and set out in the inter-institutional agreement.

If your institution is able to organise student and staff mobility of a high quality (including linguistic support) at a lower cost, or if it has financial resources in addition to Erasmus+ EU funds, then you have the



possibility to transfer up to 50% of your total organisational support grant to travel and individual support, in order to (a) undertake longer mobilities or (b) carry out new mobilities. In the case of new mobilities, these do not need to be of the same type as those already granted.

Before you transfer organisational support funds, please bear in mind that:

- International Credit Mobility requires extensive preparation and follow-up by the Beneficiary and its partner(s), which is supported by the organisational support grant;
- these additional mobilities do not trigger any additional organisational support per participant.

It is therefore highly recommended that you and your partner(s) carefully think this through before undertaking any such change. This flexibility should only be used when the funds received for organisational support largely exceed your institution's and your partner's needs in terms of preparation and implementation of mobilities.

Frequently Asked Questions

My institution has received funding for 4 student mobilities for a total of 40 months. We have organised mobilities for 4 students for a total of 36 months and now have some funds remaining for individual support. How could we complement the remaining funds to organise additional student mobility with the same institution?

Answer: Given that you have enough funding to cover the individual support of a student for 4 months, you could transfer part of your organisational support funds to individual and travel support for this additional mobility, if you and your partner do not need all of the organisational support to adequately implement the mobilities.

Can I transfer some of my organisational support funds to organise mobilities for a different activity type or study cycle than already granted?

Answer: Mobilities funded by transferring some of the organisational support grant do not have to be of the same kind than those already granted, although they must be organised with the partner institutions in the contract. You are free to choose the activity type and study cycle, as long as you respect the rules set out in the Programme Guide (e.g. outgoing BA and MA mobility is not possible to certain regions) and any possible secondary criteria set by your National Agency (e.g. if your National Agency allows only staff mobility to a certain country, then it is not possible to send students via transfers of organisational support funds).

Can the transferred organisational support funds be used to support incoming mobility although only outgoing mobilities were originally granted?

Answer: Yes, new mobilities can be incoming or outgoing, regardless of what was granted. As in the previous question, you must nonetheless respect the rules set out in the Programme Guide and any possible secondary criteria set by your National Agency.

Can organisational support be used to fund mobilities with any Partner Country?

Answer: Yes, as long as the partner institutions were already mentioned in your Grant Agreement or added through an amendment of the contract (check the section "Amendment of the partner higher education institution").



Frequently Asked Questions





When encoding additional mobilities in Mobility Tool+, the system automatically recalculates the amount of organisational support (OS) and there is now additional OS support for these mobilities. Is this correct?

Answer. Careful! This is correct only if the additional mobilities originate from a change of duration (i.e. when mobilities are shorter than the average duration you applied for and additional mobilities are organised with left-over funds.

However, as explained above, additional mobilities organised with organisational support transfers do not trigger any additional organisational support for new participants. Therefore, you will have to manually deduct from the "calculated OS amount" the equivalent organisational support for all the mobilities organised via OS transfers.

The final result is the "Adjusted OS amount". If you need more information on this particular point, please check the KA107 Data Dictionary for Mobility Tool+ (tab 'Budget'), available on your National Agency's website.

3. Most common changes with amendment

This section covers the most common changes that will always require an amendment. The cases mentioned here are not exhaustive, so do not hesitate to contact your National Agency if you cannot find an answer to your question.

3. 1) Transfer of funds allocated to travel and individual support

The funds for travel and individual support can be transferred:

- √ between all study cycles for incoming student mobility;
- between all study cycles for outgoing student mobility, except for mobility with Partner Countries from development cooperation regions*, where flexibility only applies between first and second study cycles.
- between incoming student and incoming staff mobility;
- √ between <u>outgoing student</u> and <u>outgoing staff mobility</u>, except for mobility with Partner Countries from development cooperation regions*, where flexibility only applies between third cycle outbound doctoral mobility and outbound staff mobility.
- √ between staff teaching and staff training.
 - For a detailed list of countries, please see regions 6, 7, 8, and 10 on page 25 of the Erasmus+ Proaramme Guide

As described above, certain changes to the type of mobility, participants or destinations are possible with the approval of your National Agency (amendment of Annex I of the Grant Agreement). This also includes transfers between the budget categories of travel and individual support.



However, your National Agency will only allow these changes if it considers that:

- they <u>respect the core of your project.</u> For example, you may request a transfer to undertake a type of mobility that was not initially foreseen in your Grant Agreement. Before approving this change, your National Agency may check whether that type of mobility had already been requested at application stage (but rejected due to lack of funds or because it did not pass the quality threshold).
- any <u>secondary criteria</u> it may have set (i.e. limiting the study cycle or the duration of the mobility, privileging only staff or only student mobility).
- they respect the <u>budget rules and restrictions</u> for outgoing student mobility at Bachelor's and Master's level to Countries from development cooperation regions. It is not possible to fund non-eligible mobilities (e.g. sending a BA student to South Africa) by transferring funds from another mobility project. Outgoing student mobility at Bachelor's and Master's level can only be funded if your National Agency has made additional funds available for that purpose. These restrictions do not apply to incoming mobilities.

Finally, the Grant Agreement describes your cooperation arrangements and how responsibilities are divided between you and your partner(s) (e.g. who will prepare and support the participants). Therefore, changes to the direction of the mobility flow are not allowed (i.e. from incoming to outgoing and vice versa).

You may not, under any circumstances:

Not Possible

- transfer funds between incoming and outgoing mobility;
- x transfer funds for mobility with another Partner Country.

3.2) Amendment for additional special needs support

If one of your selected participants (incoming or outgoing) has a physical, mental or health-related situation that would prevent him or her from participating in a mobility activity unless extra financial support is made available, you may apply to your National Agency for additional support for special needs.

If accepted, your National Agency may issue an amendment to the Grant Agreement, provided that there are funds remaining for cooperation with that Partner Country.

3.3) Amendment of the partner higher education institution

In your online application you were asked to state which Partner Country institution(s) you were going to work with. It may be that one of these institutions is no longer able to receive or send participants, or that it has failed to respect the principles laid down in the Inter-Institutional Agreement signed by both parties.

If you need to add a new Partner Country institution or replace one of the Partner Country institutions, you may request to modify your project, explaining why such a change is necessary. Please remember that it is only possible to select a different higher education institution in the <u>same Partner Country</u>.

Bear in mind that this is considered a very important change to your project, as your entire application was based on mobility with that particular institution. Your National Agency will assess whether the core of your project (described in Annex I of the Grant Agreement) is preserved before granting any such amendment.



3.4) Duration of the contract

In your online application you can choose between a project duration of 16 or 24 months (except for projects selected under the second round of applications, which can only last 16 months). Therefore, all projects start on 1 June 2015 (1 February 2016 for second round projects) and they can last until 30 September 2016 or 31 May 2017.

If you would like to change the duration of your project from 16 to 24 months or vice versa, you may make the request to your National Agency.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the difference between changing the number of participants and transferring funds between study cycles/activity types? Why does the first not require an amendment while the second one does?

Answer: When changing the number of participants, there is no need to introduce an amendment as Annex I of the Grant Agreement does not specify the duration of individual mobilities (only the total) and it is not compulsory to set equal durations for all mobilities. When transferring funds between study cycles/activity types, the National Agency must approve the amendment as this implies using funds (for travel and individual support) for different study cycles or activity types than foreseen in your Grant Agreement. Bear in mind that there are certain restrictions (see explanations above).

I have received funding for two incoming Bachelor students and one PhD candidate. Instead, I would like to organise mobilities for three BA students. Should this change be considered as a difference in the number of participants (no amendment) or as a transfer of funds between study cycles (amendment)?

Answer: Whenever there is a change of study cycle, you must introduce an amendment. What's more, in this particular case the volume of the grant would not be high enough to cover more mobilities (of a shorter duration) with the same amount of funds.



Frequently Asked Questions

Can I transfer part of the funds for travel and individual support with Canada to finance mobility in a different study cycle? What if the funds were allocated for cooperation with Paraguay?

Answer: In the case of Canada, incoming and outgoing student mobility are eligible under all study cycles unless your National Agency has set any secondary criteria. Therefore, there would be flexibility both between all study cycles for <u>incoming student</u> mobility and between all study cycles for <u>outgoing student</u> mobility. Remember that you cannot change incoming to outgoing mobility and vice versa, at any study cycle.

However, for Paraguay, it is not possible to organise <u>outgoing student</u> mobility for the first and second study cycle, unless your National Agency has announced that it has made additional funds available for outgoing mobility to Latin America for first and second study cycles.

Therefore, in the case of Paraguay, the flexibility would exist between all study cycles for <u>incoming</u> <u>student</u> mobility. If your National Agency had made additional funds available, it would also be possible to transfer funds between first and second cycle outgoing mobility, but only between these two.

I have received funding for one outgoing and one incoming staff mobility with the same Partner Country. Can I request to change it to organise two incoming staff mobilities?

Answer: There is no flexibility whatsoever regarding transfers between incoming and outgoing mobilities, neither for student nor for staff mobility.

In my application I requested funding for mobilities with a single institution, but my partner can no longer take part in the project. Is it possible to add another institution from the same Partner Country?

Answer: Yes, you may request an amendment to change, increase or reduce the number of partner institutions within the <u>same Partner Country</u>. Your National Agency may accept this change as long as it believes that the core of the project described in the Grant Agreement is preserved.

My project originally included two institutions from a Partner Country, but one of them is having trouble selecting participants for the next academic term. Is it possible to remove this institution or add a new one?

Answer: In principle, this change is possible (see explanation above). However, if your project lasts 24 months, you and your partner could decide to start those mobilities during the following term. If your project lasts only 16 months, you may want to amend it.



4. Zero-grants from Erasmus+ EU funds

As explained in the Erasmus+ <u>Programme Guide</u>, mobilities with a zero-grant from Erasmus+ EU funds are possible under the International Credit Mobility action. This means that additional participants can be sent abroad (or received) under the Erasmus+ brand without additional EU funding. Zero grant mobilities do not require an amendment, unless you wish to receive additional organisational support funds (see green box below).

There are however certain conditions:

- ✓ Zero-grant mobilities are possible if the participant is a zero-grant for the whole duration of the mobility, or
- √ A zero-grant extension is possible if the participant (once on mobility) requests an extension of his/her mobility period (because the exam period is delayed for instance) and you do not have sufficient funds to meet his/her request.
- X It is <u>not possible</u> to plan mobilities combining an Erasmus+ grant with a period of zero-grant before the mobility starts (e.g. sending the participant for twelve months, but paying him/her for only six, effectively reducing the grant by half).

Zero-grant mobilities can only be organised with partner institutions that are already part of your Grant Agreement. However, you are completely free to choose the type of activity, study cycle and flow direction, as long as the minimum and maximum durations set out in the Programme Guide are respected.

In short, zero-grant mobilities can be organised:

- √ for student mobility at all levels and in all directions;
- √ for staff teaching in all directions;
- \checkmark for staff training in all directions.

Any secondary criteria that your National Agency may have set do not apply to zero-grant mobilities as the participants do not receive a grant from Erasmus+ EU funds (they may receive a regional or national grant, or any other type of financial contribution).

In most cases, it will be enough to create these zero-grant mobilities in Mobility Tool+ (or, in case of a non-funded extension, to flag the mobility as such). These additional mobilities do not require an amendment.

The only case where you will need to introduce an amendment is the following:

AMENDMENT FOR OS

As zero-grant mobilities <u>do not automatically trigger organisational support</u>, you will need to request these additional funds from your National Agency. Be aware that:

- your National Agency will only be able to grant this support if it has funds remaining for cooperation with that Partner Country;
- √ you cannot receive more funding than requested in the initial grant application for the entire project;
- $\sqrt{\ }$ you will not receive any organisational support if you organise mobilities that had been rejected during the selection process because the quality threshold was not reached.

If you require additional organisational support for zero-grant mobilities, please check with your National Agency.



Frequently Asked Questions

My institution has received funding for incoming and outgoing mobilities with two institutions in the same Partner Country. Would it be possible to organise zero-grant student and staff mobilities with an institution in the same country that is not part of my Grant Agreement?

Answer: No, it is only possible to organise zero-grant mobilities with an institution already foreseen in your Grant Agreement. The possibility referred to in section 3: Most common changes with Amendment (sub-section: Amendment of the partner higher education institution) applies only to cases where there was funding available for mobilities with a given partner institution, but these mobilities can no longer be implemented as foreseen. If you wish to exchange zero-grant students and staff with a new institution, you should do so outside the framework of the Erasmus+ programme.

Due to insufficient funds my National Agency did not approve the incoming staff mobility originally requested in the application. Outgoing staff mobility with the same institution was accepted. Can we organise this incoming mobility as zero-grant mobility?

Answer: Yes, you may organise this incoming staff mobility as zero-grant mobility. It is in fact possible to organise zero-grant mobilities for any type of activity and flow direction as long as the minimum and maximum durations are respected. However, do not forget that the partner institution must be part of your Grant Agreement.

We would like to receive two Bachelor students from our partner institution, but our mobility project foresees only Master students. Is it possible to report them as zero-grants? If so, do we need to sign an amendment with our National Agency?

Answer: As explained above, it is possible to organise zero-grant mobilities for any type of activity (student mobility, staff teaching or staff training) as long as the minimum and maximum durations are respected, and as long as they are organised with a partner institution that is already part of the Grant Agreement.

There is no need to request an amendment unless you want to receive additional funds for organisational support. This is only possible if it does not go beyond the grant amount requested for the entire project in the initial grant application and your National Agency has funds remaining for cooperation with that specific country. Please check the procedure with the National Agency.



5. Form and timing of amendments

5.1) Form of amendments

Amendments are <u>always done in writing</u> (Article II.11 of your Grant Agreement). It is possible to amend the Grant Agreement through:

- an exchange of letters (or emails, only if accepted by your National Agency) with acknowledgement of receipt;
- an amendment signed by both parties (with paper or electronic signatures, depending on your National Agency).

In both cases, the signed amendments and letters/printed emails are filed together with the original Grant Agreement and become part of it.

Please check the procedure established by your <u>National Agency</u> and whether templates for amendments exist.

5.2) Timing of amendments

As soon as it becomes apparent that your project needs to be implemented differently than originally foreseen in the Grant Agreement and its annexes, you should contact your National Agency to request an amendment.

In order to avoid sending several requests for amendments, you may group similar requests and send them to your National Agency at once. However, you should bear in mind that costs for amended mobilities that were not approved by your National Agency will not be eligible.

Article II.11.3

"Any request for amendment shall be duly justified and shall be sent to the other party in due time before it is due to take effect, and in any case **one month before** the end of the period set out in Article I.2.2, except in cases duly substantiated by the party requesting the amendment and accepted by the other party."



6. Summary table of flexibility

- (1) Modifications are only possible between mobility flows with the same Partner Country.
- (2) Modifications must not change the core of the project (Annex I of the Grant Agreement) and respect any secondary criteria set by the National Agency.
- (3) It is not allowed under any circumstances to transfer funds to mobility with another Partner Country.

		Modifications without amendment						
Regions as defined in Erasmus+ Programme Guide	Incoming student mobility*	Outgoing student mobility*	Incoming student & staff mobility*	Outgoing student & staff mobility*	Change of partner	Transfer up to 50% 0S to fund mobility activities **	Set the duration of mobilities	Organize mobilities for a different nr of participants
1) Western Balkans	Yes, between all cycles	Yes, between all cycles	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
2) Eastern Partnership	Yes, between all cycles	Yes, between all cycles	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
3) South Mediterranean	Yes, between all cycles	Yes, between all cycles	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
4) Russia	Yes, between all cycles	Yes, between all cycles	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
6) Asia	Yes, between all cycles	No***	Yes	Only between PhD & staff***	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
7) Central Asia	Yes, between all cycles	No***	Yes	Only between PhD & staff***	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
8) Latin America	Yes, between all cycles	No***	Yes	Only between PhD & staff***	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
10) South Africa	Yes, between all cycles	No***	Yes	Only between PhD & staff***	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
13) Other Industrialised countries	Yes, between all cycles	Yes, between all cycles	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

^{*} Unless your National Agency has set additional secondary criteria (i.e. limiting study cycle, privileging only staff or only student mobility).

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 $[\]ensuremath{^{**}}$ Either to undertake longer mobilities or to carry out new mobilities.

^{***} Unless additional budget has been made available by your National Agency for outgoing short, first and second cycle student mobility.



7. Useful resources

As the links and documents are frequently updated, some of the references below may be out of date. Please always make sure that you have the latest version of the documents applicable to your call. In other words, please refer to the 2015 Programme Guide for projects selected under the 2015 Call for Proposals, and so on.

Erasmus+ Homepage http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/index en.htm

Erasmus+ Programme Guide

http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/discover/guide/index en.htm

Quick reference guide for selected higher education institutions in Partner Countries

http://ec.europa.eu/education/opportunities/international-cooperation/international-mobility_en.htm

FAQs for Higher Education Institutions

http://ec.europa.eu/education/opportunities/international-cooperation/international-mobility_en.htm

FAOs for Students & Staff

http://ec.europa.eu/education/opportunities/higher-education/study-mobility_en.htm

8. Contact

If you have any questions regarding International Credit Mobility and the management of your grant agreement, please refer to your **National Agency**. You can find the contact for your country at the following link: http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/tools/national-agencies/index_en.htm