

2.5 Cross-border mobility programmes

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EU programmes

Erasmus + and Youth in Action Erasmus+ is the EU funding programme for education, training, youth and sport. It runs from 2014 till the end of 2020 with a total budget of 14.7 billion euro. Within Erasmus+ there are different sections: one for education and training, one for sport and one for youth projects. The youth section of Erasmus+ is called Youth in Action. It funds projects for and by young people and youth organisations. It has a separate budget and specific project possibilities.

[JINT](#) was founded in 1989 by the Flemish government in consultation with the Flemish Youth organizations. From there, [JINT](#) was given the task of stimulating and supporting the international mobility and cooperation of young people and youth organisations. JINT is structurally financed by the Ministry of the Flemish Community, Departement of Culture, Youth and Media and by the European Commission, Directorate-General for Education and Culture. [JINT vzw](#) is the Flemish coordinating body for international youth work and the National Agency for the European Youth in Action Programme in Flanders. This European volunteer work component involves information and promotion, allocation of funds and evaluation.

Research-based analysis and monitoring of the Youth in Action Programme is addressed to the RAY Network. To this end, JINT vzw works together with the European Commission and Youth in Action National agencies in 29 European countries. A report on the evaluation of the Youth in Action Programme mention that in the period of 2007-2013 there were 1.886 [Youth in Action-projects](#) which have a partner organisation in Flanders. 704 projects took place in Flanders and 1.182 took place abroad.

References:

http://europa.eu/youth/node/39034_nl

<http://www.jint.be/Infotheek/Onderzoeksresultaten/Meerlezen/tabid/200/ArticleId/1429/Go-Strange-cijferonderzoek.aspx>

Other Programmes

There is the [Bel'J programme](#), supported by the three Belgian ministers responsible for youth and implemented by the national agencies, where young people can be supported to do an exchange or volunteering activities in another community of Belgium. Bel' J focuses on young people between the ages of 12 and 30 and gives youngsters of the three communities the opportunity to meet each other. JINT vzw is the coordinating body for the Bel'J programme in Flanders.

Legal framework applying to foreign volunteers

The Act on the Rights of Volunteers (2005) provides the legal framework for voluntary work in Belgium. With regard to foreign volunteers, the Act stipulates that only people from the European Union and people who are married to a Belgian/European citizen can participate in voluntary work. All people with a valid residence permit and certain asylum seekers are allowed to volunteer without any problems.

The High Council of Volunteers has evaluated the law of 3 July 2005 related to the volunteer's rights. This evaluation included two appendices about youth volunteering. The first one addressed foreign young people volunteering in Belgium and the second one focused on Belgian volunteers abroad.

About young Belgian volunteers going abroad, the High Council observed the following issues:

- The upholding of family allowances and unemployment benefit while volunteering abroad.
- The terms used in the law about what can be considered as volunteering are confusing and must be clarified.

Regarding the issue about young volunteers coming from abroad, the High Council of Volunteers discussed the following points:

- Volunteering doesn't confer the right to get a visa according to the law of 15 December 1980 related to the territory access. Volunteering in Belgium for a period longer than 3 months is then compromised regarding the rules to obtain a visa;
- The hosting organisation provides accommodation to the volunteer and is in charge of his/her daily expenses. In specific programmes such as the European Volunteer Programme, the volunteer can also receive a small allowance. Two problems arise in the fields of tax and labour law:
 - If this amount (accommodation, meals) exceeds the yearly maximal sum allowed by the law of 2005, the fees must be justified. This is a tedious process especially when it comes to long-term volunteering.

- The provision in kind can be considered so that it is taxed and the volunteer runs the risk of losing his/her volunteer status. The hosting organisation would then be considered as an employer with all the obligations it involves.
- The law of 2005 must clarify that the provision in kind (accommodation, meals) is included in the volunteering activity and is not compensation.

JINT coordinates all discussing points and prepares policy notes.