1,2,3 of Policy

Linking your Erasmus+ Youth Project to National and European Policy
What is policy?

Policy is the set of values and objectives that guide the work of organisations and bodies. This includes, for example, the Irish Government and the European Union.

Why is policy important?

Policy is important because it tells us what certain organisations and bodies plan to achieve and how they will be guided in their work.

Take Government policy for example: Government policy tells us what the Government’s priorities are and what it plans to accomplish. It sets out the commitments it is making on a range of different issues.

For example: education and training, employment, mental health, the rights of people with disabilities, migration and so forth.
National Youth Policy

Our Government has a number of important policy documents that set out what it plans to do for young people in Ireland. Some of the main policy documents are:

Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures: The National Policy Framework for Children & Young People (2014-2020) is the framework that sets out the Government’s agenda and priorities regarding children and young people under the age of 25 and provides for the development and implementation of policies and services with the aim of achieving the following outcomes:

ACTIVE AND HEALTHY, PHYSICAL AND MENTAL WELL-BEING (includes healthy lifestyle, taking part in youth work, arts, sports)

ACHIEVING FULL POTENTIAL IN ALL AREAS OF LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT (includes enhancing skills, competencies and attributes through formal and non-formal education)

SAFE AND PROTECTED FROM HARM (particularly vulnerable and marginalised young people)

ECONOMIC SECURITY AND OPPORTUNITY (including participating in the labour market, enhancing employability skills, training, entrepreneurship, social inclusion and combatting poverty)

CONNECTED, RESPECTED AND CONTRIBUTING TO THE WORLD (including active citizenship, political, social and civic engagement)

National Youth Strategy (2015-2020) aims to enable all young people to realise their maximum potential with regard to the outcomes set out in Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures. For example: enhancing employability skills; social inclusion; and active citizenship. It looks to do this by respecting young people’s rights and hearing their voices, while protecting and supporting them as they transition from childhood to adulthood.
National Strategy on Children and Young People’s Participation in Decision-Making (2015-2020) aims to ensure that children and young people have a voice in decisions made about them as individuals or their collective lives in their communities, in education, on their health, well-being and the other outcomes listed in Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures. The strategy aims to mainstream the participation of children and young people in the development of policy, legislation and research. It is guided by the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

LGBTI+ National Youth Strategy (2018-2020) is the first of its kind. It adopts a cross-governmental approach to serving the needs of LGBTI+ people aged 10-24. The strategy draws on Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures and includes three main goals:

- Create a safe, supportive and inclusive environment for LGBTI+ young people
- Improve the physical, mental and sexual health of LGBTI+ young people
- Develop the research and data to better understand the lives of LGBTI+ young people.
How does your Erasmus+ project link to national policy?

The projects and activities that take place as part of Erasmus+ can help to achieve national youth policy objectives. For example:

- Erasmus+ supports projects that promote active citizenship of young people (Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures; National Youth Strategy)
- Erasmus+ projects can connect young people and decision makers to ensure that young people have a voice in decision-making that affects their lives (National Strategy on Children and Young People’s Participation in Decision-Making)
- Erasmus+ prioritises projects focused on inclusion (Better Outcomes Brighter Futures; LGBTI+ National Youth Strategy 2018-2020)
- Erasmus+ projects can focus on entrepreneurship, employability and training of young people (Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures).
European Youth Policy

New EU Youth Strategy 2019-2027 plans to bring the EU closer to young people and help address issues of concern to them. The new EU Youth Strategy will focus on three main things:

**ENGAGE:** Encouraging young people to take part in civic and democratic life

**CONNECT:** Connecting young people across the EU and beyond to promote volunteering, opportunities to learn abroad, solidarity and intercultural understanding

**EMPOWER:** Supporting young people’s empowerment through innovation, quality and recognition of youth work.

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Europe 2020 is the EU’s plan to promote smart, sustainable and inclusive economic growth. It sets targets for employment, research and development, climate/energy, education, social inclusion, and poverty reduction.

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Education and Training 2020 is the EU’s plan on education and training. It aims to achieve various objectives including: making lifelong learning and mobility a reality; improving the quality and efficiency of education and training; promoting equity, social cohesion and active citizenship; enhancing creativity and innovation, including entrepreneurship, at all levels of education and training.

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How does your Erasmus+ project link to European policy?

The projects and activities that take place as part of Erasmus+ are an important way of helping to achieve the aims and objectives of the EU policies listed above. Just some examples:

- Erasmus+ prioritises projects that address the issue of inclusion (Europe 2020)
- Erasmus+ supports people to spend time abroad to volunteer, train and upskill (Education and Training 2020)
- Erasmus+ funds projects that support young people to have their voices heard and to take part in policy discussions with decision makers on issues that affect their lives (EU Youth Strategy).
Connections between national and European policy

We can see that our own Government and the EU want to realise similar things for young people. For example:

- Active citizenship
- Social inclusion
- Enhancing employability and other skills
- Equality of opportunity for young people
- Reducing poverty.

Your Erasmus+ project can develop new and innovative ways to achieve the priorities that are set out in national or EU policy, helping to make positive changes for young people, be that at a local, national or international level.

Get in touch

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