ERASMUS BLENDED INTENSIVE PROGRAMMES

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KEY & USEFUL DOCUMENTS

- Erasmus+ Programme Guide

- Higher Education Mobility KA131 Handbook

- Blended mobility implementation guide for Erasmus+ higher education mobility KA131 (1)

- Blended Intensive Programmes and blended mobility within Erasmus+ KA131 higher education mobility action Frequently asked questions

ERASMUS+ PROGRAMME GUIDE

Blended mobility (p. 46)
Any study period or traineeship abroad of any duration, including doctoral mobility, may be carried out as a **blended mobility**.

Blended mobility is a combination of physical mobility with a virtual component facilitating a collaborative online learning exchange and teamwork.
Any student can also undertake blended mobility by participating in a **blended intensive programme** according to the specific eligibility criteria for blended intensive

Blended intensive programmes (p.47)
short, intensive programmes that use innovative ways of learning and teaching, including the use of online cooperation.

BIPs

❑ have added value compared to existing courses or trainings offered by the participating higher education institutions and can be multiannual.

❑aim at reaching all types of students from all backgrounds, study fields and cycles.

❑can be open to student and staff from higher education institutions outside the partnership.

▪Higher Education Mobility KA131 Handbook

BLENDED MOBILITY: Definitions and concepts

Blended mobility is **combination of a physical mobility and a virtual activity** (or component) before, during or after the physical mobility

The objective is to *facilitate* collaborative online learning exchange and teamwork. For example, the virtual component can bring learners from different countries and study fields together online to follow online courses or work collectively and simultaneously on assignments that are recognised as part of their degree.

- Higher Education Mobility KA131 Handbook

Blended Intensive Programmes: some good practices

BIPs should have an **added value** compared to existing programmes or courses:
- ❑ consisting of specialised content not taught somewhere else,
- ❑ not taught/delivered in this way somewhere else
- ❑ enable the students or staff to gain new perspectives on the topic being studied.

They should encourage **transdisciplinary** and **multinational** teaching and training and benefit from special learning and teaching conditions not available in a single institution.

They may include **challenge-based** learning where transnational and transdisciplinary teams work together (transdisciplinarity: linking more than one subject / study area).

The **ratio** of teaching/training staff to students/learners should guarantee active classroom participation.

Participating institutions should plan to send a sufficient number of participants in order to ensure reaching the minimum requirement, even with cancellations/drop outs.

BLENDED INTENSIVE PROGRAMMES: ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Eligible participating organization

A blended intensive programme has to be developed and implemented by at least 3 higher education institutions (HEIs) awarded with an ECHE coming from at least 3 Programme Countries.

Duration

Physical component between 5 and 30 days.
No eligibility criteria is set for the duration of the virtual component but the combined virtual and physical components must award a minimum of 3 ECTS credits for students.

Venue

The physical activity can take place at the receiving HEI or at any other venue in the country of the receiving HEI.

BLENDED INTENSIVE PROGRAMMES: ELIGIBILITY OF PARTICIPANTS

PARTICIPANTS IN A BLENDED INTENSIVE PROGRAMME FALL UNDER TWO CATEGORIES:

1. Participants attending the BIP can be any:

❑ Higher education students (EQF levels 5 to 8);
❑ Higher education staff (teaching or administrative staff).

2. Participants (involved in) delivering the BIP can be:

❑ Teachers and trainers from the receiving HEI;
❑ Teachers and trainers who are incoming staff from other HEIs;
❑ Trainers who are "invited staff" from non-HEI organisations such as enterprises, associations or research institutes).

BLENDED INTENSIVE PROGRAMMES: MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS

Minimum numbers of participants

Maximum numbers of participants

The minimum number of participants in a BIP is 15 (not including teaching/training staff involved in the delivery of the programme)

Additional students: can join from any Programme Countries or could come from the coordinating (if in the same country as the receiving HEI) or receiving HEI.

The local students from the receiving institution are not eligible for an Erasmus+ grant, as they do not take part in a physical mobility abroad and are therefore not counted towards the minimum of 15 participants.

Additional participants could also come from HEIs in Partner Countries but as they will not be funded through Erasmus+ they do not count towards the minimum of 15 participants. .

HEI are encouraged to plan BIPs with more than 15 learner participants to be sure that the programmes remain eligible for BIP-OS funding even if some participants drop out.

BLENDED INTENSIVE PROGRAMMES: MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS

Virtual component

The virtual component must bring the learners together online to work collectively and simultaneously on specific assignments that are integrated in the blended intensive programme and count towards the overall learning outcomes.

Students & Staff

The group of participants can be composed of students and staff (learners) in the same BIP.

Workload

In a BIP the combined virtual and physical components must award a minimum of 3 ECTS credits for students.

BLENDED INTENSIVE PROGRAMMES: ROLES

Coordinating higher education
Institution

Only **one HEI** awarded with an ECHEcoordinating the whole of the BIP.
IT:
❑ coordinates the organization
❑ receives and manages the organisational support
❑ by default is the receiving HEI (host) for the student and staff
   mobility, unless otherwise decided by the partnership.

Two approaches:
❑ coordinating HEI applies as an individual institution = it is applicant for Erasmus+ KA131 funding and becomes the
   grant beneficiary.
❑ the coordinating HEI is a coordinator or a member of a mobility consortium= the consortium coordinator applies for
   KA131 funding on their behalf and the consortium becomes the grant beneficiary. The mobility consortium
   coordinator can be any type of organisation. The coordinating HEI can be any HEI in the consortium.

BLENDED INTENSIVE PROGRAMMES: ROLES

Receiving higher education institution

IT:
- ❑ receives the BIP participants either at its premises or at a different venue/hosting organisation in the same country in which it is located.
- ❑ has to be part of the BIP partnership
- ❑ by default the receiving HEI (host) for the student and staff mobility, unless otherwise decided by the partnership.
- ❑ The receiving HEI can also be part of the same mobility consortium as the coordinating HEI, if relevant.

Sending higher education institution /organisation:

IT is:
- ❑ awarded with the ECHE
- ❑ any HEI from the BIP partnership or outside it.
- ❑ It can be expected that the majority of participants come from sending HEIs which are part of the partnership.

Co-hosting organisation:

IT can be an HEI, an enterprise, association or public body (in the same country) hosting participants for practical training as part of the programme.

BLENDED INTENSIVE PROGRAMMES: FINANCIAL SUPPORT

Which kind of financial support?

Erasmus+ funding for blended intensive programmes consists of organisational support and mobility support.

Who and how to apply for financial support?

Funding is requested by the HEIs according to the role through the KA131 grant application:

Coordinating higher education Institution

applies for **organisational support** for each BIP as part of its overall grant application

Sending higher education institution /organisation:

apply for mobility grants for their students and staff as part of the overall grant application

Receiving higher education institution

applies for mobility grants for invited teaching/training staff from enterprises/organisations as part of its overall grant application

BLENDED INTENSIVE PROGRAMMES: USE OF ORGANIZATIONAL SUPPORT

❌ Course fees

The coordinating HEI receives the Erasmus+ funds for organising the programme. Participants must not pay tuition/course fees.
Fees can be charged for extra-curricular activities (eg. cultural visits, not directly related or relevant to the topic of the programme

❌ Mobility costs & top-up

BIP-OS is not to be used to fund incoming Erasmus+ mobilities to the BIP (for instance a zerogrant mobility). The BIP OS is not to be used as a top-up to the individual support.

❌ Transfer unused BIP-OS funds to other budget categories

It is not possible to transfer unused BIP OS to the Mobility OS category. It is not possible to increase the organisational support for mobility without an amendment.

not organising BIPs while funding was awarded in the mobility project will be negatively reflected in the calculations of the past performance in future KA131 grant allocations by the National Agencies

BLENDED INTENSIVE PROGRAMMES: USE OF ORGANIZATIONAL SUPPORT

✓ What can the BIP organisational support be used for?

It is intended to cover costs related to the preparation, design, development, implementation and follow-up of the programme and delivery of virtual/remote activities as well as the overall management and coordination.

Costs may include: production of documents or educational material, rental of rooms, rental of equipment, field trips, excursions, communication activities, translation and interpretation, preparatory visits, lecturers' fees and administrative tasks.

There are no explicit restrictions on what the BIP OS can be used for, but beneficiaries must be careful that there is no double funding.

✓ Transfer unused BIP-OS funds to other budget categories

HEIs are allowed to transfer 100% of the allocated BIP OS funds to other budget categories.

✓ What happens if a BIPs does not have 15 learner participants? Can the partnership keep the BIP-OS?

the 10% flexibility rule for mobility OS also applies for BIP OS. Beneficiaries must justify in the final report why they did not reach 15.

BLENDED INTENSIVE PROGRAMMES: USE OF ORGANIZATIONAL SUPPORT

What documentation is needed to prove how the BIP OS was used?

The European Commission and the NAs do not require any proof of the use of funds. The beneficiary can describe some of the use in the final report, but no details or documentation is required.

This is the same approach to the use of the traditional mobility organisation support.

The only supporting documents needed: *"In the case of blended intensive programmes, proof of attendance specifying the participants' name (learners) and their start and end date of the activity."*

How can beneficiaries get BIP OS for more participants in a single BIP or for more BIPs than planned within a project?

❑ budget transfer from one BIP to another in the same project
❑ request more funding from the NA at the interim stage/reallocation.
❑ a grant agreement amendment when moving BIP OS from one BIP to another.

BLENDED INTENSIVE PROGRAMMES: USE OF MOBILITY FUNDS

How do funded travel days work with BIPs?

The same rule for funded travel days applies to mobilities to BIPs as to any other short-term mobilities.

❑ Students opting for green travel can receive up to 4 days of additional individual support to cover travel days. students on short-term mobility opt for green travel they could therefore receive up to 6 days of additional individual support, if duly justified.

❑ students on short-term mobility can receive standard travel days (one before one following the activity.

How should HEIs report on local participants in the BIP in BM, both learners and teachers?

The local learner or teacher participants are not encoded specifically in the KA131 project's BIP data fields in BM but the number and type of local participants can be indicated in BM in the BIP field called "objectives and description".

BLENDED INTENSIVE PROGRAMMES: SOME OPERATIVE QUESTIONS

Do HEIs have to create new inter-institutional agreements (IIAs) for BIPs

- ❑ All student mobilities for studies and staff mobilities for teaching to BIPs need to be underpinned by an IIA.
- ❑ HEIs can decide amongst themselves if they do a new agreement specifically for the BIP participation, but this is not a requirement.
- ❑ HEIs can also decide to do a multilateral IIA. This would be done outside EWP as this feature is not yet available in EWP.

Do HEIs have to have a IIA for the BIP participation if the only learners are staff on staff mobility for training?

No. When a BIP has only staff mobility for training (STT) learners then an IIA is not needed. This is the same rule as for any other STT mobilities.