

Executive summary

The Swiss education institutions have manifold internationalisation strategies and corresponding objectives. How to pursue and realise those objectives varies from one education sector to another as well as from institution to institution. However, what all institutions have in common is the access to a specific range of funding opportunities (instruments) offered by the new European Union's programme for Education, Training, Youth and Sport 'Erasmus+', which started on 1 January 2014 and will last until 2020. Each institution should therefore make sure it optimises the use of these funding opportunities to support its international objectives. This report gives answers on how to do so, by providing **recommendations for three distinct sectors**: higher education, vocational education and training, and secondary school education.

An institution can choose to engage internationally at different scales of intensity. There are of course nuances between the three education sectors examined in this report, but the following **generic observations** on the strategic use of Erasmus+ were extracted from the conclusions and recommendations in this report.

A first option is to use Erasmus+ on an *ad-hoc* basis and not as a coordinated approach. This entails the possible engaging in mobility and cooperation projects. Already existing cooperation is continued and, if not yet funded with European money, could be turned into an Erasmus+ project. This rather bottom-up approach is often chosen if the institution does not have a centralised internationalisation strategy and objectives. Looking at our internationalisation model, it means that an institution has no clear answer on objectives pursued in any of the four dimensions, i.e. core missions, recruitment, mobility, cooperation. Nevertheless, it can very well be that an institution is active in one or the other dimension, but without having any underlying overall vision of internationalisation.

A second option is to institutionalise internationalisation at the institution expressed in the form of a clear set of international objectives. The use of Erasmus+ then feeds directly into achieving those objectives. As the report shows, one instrument of Erasmus+ can serve several objectives. For example, Erasmus+ is used to enhance the international reputation of an institution or offering an attractive and international learning and working environment. In terms of our internationalisation model, an institution is able to give clear answers on objectives pursued in the four dimensions. The answers still vary from sector to sector, i.e. mobility is explicit in higher education, but not necessarily in vocational education and training. International cooperation is anyhow a priority in one or the other way. For that purpose, Strategic Partnerships, which are a very flexible cooperation instrument of Erasmus+, can be used to work with partners sharing similar interest and goals or bringing a complementary approach to a common issue. In all sectors, Erasmus+ is used to support the international objectives pursued by the institution in a coordinated manner, i.e. with a top-down support from the level of direction.

A third option builds up on the second approach, but in addition makes internationalisation an integrated aspect in an institution's overall strategy. Internationalisation then is not a goal in itself, but directly contributes to the realisation of the goals and objectives of the overall institutional strategy: the participation in Erasmus+ is a strategic mean to reach objectives also in other areas. In the light of our internationalisation model, an institution has clear answers as to what its objectives in the four dimensions are and which dimension are used to serve which objectives. Any instrument in Erasmus+ is thus used strategically. One crucial aspect of this approach is to select a number of partner institutions abroad to cooperate with on a stronger, strategic level and in more than just one area of an

institution. The question of with whom and why an institution engages with partners abroad and the ideas of complementarity and clear coordination move into the spotlight in this approach. For example, in higher education, Joint Master degrees can offer an institution the possibility to exploit complementarities with other institutions abroad: uniting resources in areas of studies where the number of students is limited allows to create a pool of talented students, thus feeding into the long-term goal of attracting and retaining talents for doctoral education and early-stage research. The Knowledge Alliances, aimed at cooperation amongst higher education institutions and businesses, are used to support the promotion of innovation and entrepreneurship, and developing the skills that are relevant for the institution and its students. The same can be said for the Sector Skills Alliances in Vocational Education and Training. These three types of instruments in Erasmus+ have a strategic aspect, where the goal is to reach long-term sustainable international engagement. For this last option even more than for the second one, the involvement and activeness of an institution's direction is highly important in order to promote internationalisation in such an integrated way.

Recommendations

In this final section we provide recommendations per sector, crossing the challenges and opportunities mentioned in section 3.2, the conclusions drawn up in the section above and our table 'How Erasmus+ can support international objectives' (section 2.4). We therewith present to you our **recipe to international success using Erasmus+**. We list our recommendations along three levels:

1. instrument level:

- **practical:** containing recommendations for specific instruments in Erasmus+, i.e. what instrument should be used to serve what objective;
 - **strategic:** containing organisational and strategic recommendations related to making the most efficient use of Erasmus+ instruments and enhancing the success rate of your projects;
 - **project examples and ideas:** containing examples of existing projects and proposals for possible projects that could be realised using specific Erasmus+ instruments.
2. **institutional level:** containing recommendations on how institutions can best internally organise themselves to ensure a meaningful participation in Erasmus+;
3. **framework conditions level:** containing considerations on how the different Swiss stakeholders may best interact to support the implementation of Erasmus+.

Where relevant and in line with the interim solution for 2014 adopted by the Federal Council (Swiss Federal Council, 2014), we added comments linked to the current status of 'partner country' of Switzerland in Erasmus+.

1.1.1 HE

instrument level – practical recommendations

- ☞ Mobility is essential for Swiss HEI. Therefore, the Erasmus+ instrument 'mobility of staff and students for HE' should be fully exploited:
 - ☞ Student **mobility for studies** has established itself; ensure the growing number for mobility for studies.
 - ☞ **Mobility for traineeships faces a growing demand** amongst students and can result in enhanced employability after graduation. Under Erasmus+, traineeship mobility is now possible with a minimum duration of two months, hence not causing the students

to lose too much study time. You can also offer your students the possibility for traineeship mobility in the context of a Knowledge Alliance or a Strategic Partnership.

- ☞ **Staff mobility** should be promoted on a stronger basis to both academic and non-academic staff. We come back to this point under the 'strategic recommendations'.

Comment indirect participation: Swiss HEI are not eligible for this action anymore under Erasmus+. However, the **interim solution gives priority to mobility activities** and adheres as far as possible to the Erasmus+ requirements applicable for all programme countries.

- ☞ Our report also highlights that Swiss HEI already engage in extra-European mobility projects and therefore welcome the Erasmus+ instrument '**international mobility of staff and students**'. However, as you can see in the corresponding factsheet, the financial resources available for this instrument are limited compared to the other mobility instruments in Erasmus+. You should therefore **use it focusing on some countries** outside Europe that are key for your HEI.

Comment indirect participation: **Swiss HEI cannot use this action anymore to fund mobility to 'partner countries'** (since Switzerland is itself considered a partner country). Swiss HEI **cannot use the action neither as coming from a partner country**, because it is limited to those partner countries listed in the four following external instruments: Development Cooperation Instrument (DCI), European Neighbourhood Instrument (ENI), Partnership Instrument for cooperation with third countries (PI) and Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance (IPA). Switzerland is not listed in any of them.

- ☞ Our report shows that international Joint Master degrees or similar programmes already exist at Swiss HEI, but to a rather limited extent. The Erasmus+ instrument 'Joint Master degrees' offers the possibility to support such projects, but you should take into account the following points:

- ☞ The aim of an Erasmus+ Joint Master degree is **mainly to attract non-European students**. If your already existing project answers to this objective, it is up to you to decide whether or not to turn it into an Erasmus+ Joint Master degree. If this is not the case, you can think of adding such a dimension as a parallel component to your existing cooperation.
- ☞ Remember that Erasmus+ Joint Master degrees do not necessarily have to provide for a single degree certificate, but may also lead to the delivery of separate degrees. However, evaluators tend to appreciate programmes leading to a real joint degree.
- ☞ Also bear in mind that **only around 10 projects will be selected** in the 2014 call for proposals, because ongoing Joint Masters selected under the former Erasmus Mundus programme will continue to be funded with Erasmus+ money. In the course of the programme, the number of projects to be funded should increase to reach about 40 projects per year.

Comment indirect participation: **Swiss HEI can still participate in this action as 'full partner'** (getting funding from Erasmus+) on top of the minimum number of organisations from programme countries required. They do not have to prove that they bring an 'essential added value to the project'. Of course, there are restrictions in the sense that the study period must take place in at least two of the programme countries represented in the consortium, but additional study periods can take place in other participating organisations from programme or partner countries. **Alternatively, Swiss HEI can also participate as 'associated partner'** (without getting any funding from Erasmus+). In that case, they have the possibility to request money from the Swiss side, but the funding allocated to KA2 and KA3 in the interim solution is much lower than in the case of a direct participation to Erasmus+ and priority is given to Strategic Partnerships. Switzerland has set its own criteria regarding the projects to be funded. The Federal Council awards funding only to excellent projects, which meet the education policy objectives set by the Confederation and the cantons.

- 📄 Our report outlines that **summer schools** are a successful means of international cooperation. To fund any such project you can now use the Erasmus+ instrument 'Strategic Partnerships for HE'. You should keep in mind that your project will have to consist of further cooperation than just a summer school.
- 📄 Our report underlines that cooperation projects in general are eminent for Swiss HEI. To that end, these are the opportunities under Erasmus+ that you should grasp:
 - 📄 **Strategic Partnerships** allow for a broad range of projects and activities. They are the right instrument to include partners from other education sectors to work on a common topic. Cooperation with actors from other socio-economic sectors (e.g. world of work, public bodies) is also possible and even encouraged.
 - 📄 If you however want to concentrate on **cooperation specifically with businesses** and establish an intensive relationship, we would strongly recommend you to engage in a Knowledge Alliance.
 - 📄 If your aim is to support the modernisation of HE in non-European countries, you can apply for **capacity building projects**.

Comment indirect participation: even with the status of partner country, Swiss organisations can participate in Strategic Partnerships, Knowledge Alliances and Capacity Building Projects under certain conditions.

- For Strategic Partnerships and Knowledge Alliances, they can participate as **'full partner'** (getting funding from Erasmus+) on top of the minimum number of organisations from Programme Countries required, under the condition that the project proposal proves that the **Swiss organisation brings an essential added value to the project**, otherwise the whole project is rejected. Alternatively, Swiss HEI can also participate as **'associated partner'** (without getting any funding from Erasmus+). In that case, they have the possibility to request money from the Swiss side, but the funding allocated to KA2 and KA3 in the interim solution is much lower than in the case of a direct participation to Erasmus+ and priority is given to Strategic Partnerships. Switzerland has set its own criteria regarding the projects to be funded. The Federal Council awards funding only to excellent projects, which meet the education policy objectives set by the Confederation and the cantons.
- As for Capacity Building Projects, their focus is on the partner countries. However, like for extra-European mobility, **Switzerland is not a partner country listed in the four following external instruments:** DCI, ENI, PI and IPA. Therefore, the only way is to participate as 'associated partner' (without getting funding from Erasmus+).

- 📄 **Recruiting foreign talented students and staff** is a priority for Swiss HEI, especially for research universities. There is no instrument in Erasmus+ that directly supports the recruitment of foreign staff. Of course one could argue that the incoming mobility of staff could be a first step towards it. For what concerns the recruitment of foreign students, the Student Loan Guarantee Facility can directly support it.

Comment indirect participation: Swiss financial intermediaries are not eligible anymore for this action under Erasmus+. The interim solution will not replace this scheme.

instrument level – strategic recommendations

- 📄 Mobility of students for studies or internships is a priority. Not only should the quantity of outgoing students increase, but also the **quality** of the periods abroad, i.e. the recognition of study points. Swiss HEI should therefore make sure they stick to the goals set out in the EHEA Mobility strategy (Bologna Education Ministers, 2012b) and **work with select partners abroad in the framework of quality agreements**.
- 📄 Staff mobility has also become a priority for Swiss HEI. However, staff (especially non-academic) is not necessarily aware of the possibilities as is the case for most students.
 - 📄 In order to increase the number of **staff mobility** we advise you to **take a more coordinated approach**. Inform your staff about the possibilities or even carry out an

- annual planning where everyone (academic and non-academic staff) wishing to do an exchange can express his or her wishes (destination, duration, purpose, what time of year).
- ☞ Also consider basing your staff exchange on **reciprocity**, especially when it comes to long-term mobility, in order to fill the vacant position at your institution.
 - ☞ **Graduate mobility** is not a priority for Swiss HEI as it is not easy for students to interrupt their studies to do a traineeship abroad. Therefore, having the possibility to complete a traineeship abroad after having completed studies is of high interest and is even supported by 'mobility for staff and students for HE' (up to one year after graduation). So when applying for mobility projects, also think of your graduates and inform them properly about this possibility.
 - ☞ We listed above the technicalities to bear in mind for the realisation of Erasmus+ Joint Master degrees. Let us now look at strategic aspects:
 - ☞ Be reminded that Erasmus+ Joint Master degrees will still enjoy the **reputation of the former branding name Erasmus Mundus**, which is a prestigious label outside also Europe. Therefore, if you want to profile your institution or your existing or new cooperation internationally, then an Erasmus+ Joint Master degree is a good opportunity for you to do so.
 - ☞ You should consider using Joint Master degrees in specific areas of study where the number of students is limited. By pooling the resources, you can create a **pool of talented students** enrolled in the programme, which you can then possibly recruit for a **PhD at your institution**. This is a good mechanism to attract and retain talent.
 - ☞ Swiss HEI have so far not coordinated a lot of cooperation projects under the LLP. Thus, the question whether to engage as partner or coordinator in cooperation projects is controversial, but you should use any existing experience gained under the LLP or the former indirect participation to **coordinate projects** in Erasmus+. Moreover, the lead in such projects enhances the reputation of your staff and institution.

Comment indirect participation: Swiss organisations cannot act as coordinators anymore. They should therefore participate as partners (full partners or associated partners) as much as they can for now, in order to reinforce their experience in European projects and be able to coordinate in the perspective of a future association to Erasmus+.

- ☞ **Partnering with key institutions is a reoccurring theme.** Knowledge Alliances provide for support to strengthening ties with select partners to form strategic alliances (see table 'How Erasmus+ can support international objectives' in section 2.4).
- ☞ Swiss HEI participate widely in European networks. We strongly recommend that you continue **actively participating in networks** such as the EUA, which prove to be useful for finding partners for European projects.

Comment indirect participation: the new status of Switzerland has also led to the exclusion of Swiss representatives from several EU working groups. It is therefore now more important than ever to actively participate in European networks.

instrument level – project examples and ideas

- ☞ If your institutions has an institute of **European studies** or offers a Bachelor or Master in European-related studies, then you might want to think about applying for a **Jean Monnet module or chair** (see Jean Monnet factsheets in Annex II).

Comment indirect participation: **all Jean Monnet activities are open to 'any country in the world'. It is therefore a sub-programme, which should be fully exploited by Swiss HEI.**

- ☞ A good example for an existing project which could be successful as a project in Erasmus+, is that of the University of Teacher Education of the Canton of *Vaud* (HEP *Vaud*) named '*projets d'étudiants et d'enseignants-chercheurs en réseaux sociaux*' (PEERS) mentioned in section 3.3 It aims at offering students and professors the possibility of working together

with their counterparts from an institution abroad on a common topic, hence fitting perfectly into a Strategic Partnership or a mobility project.

institutional level

- ☞ **Support from the Rectorate** is essential for strategic cooperation with key partners. The International Office can play a bridging role between the faculty members initiating cooperation projects and the Rectorate. This bridging role means enhancing the visibility and transparency of such projects within the HEI and especially towards the Rectorate.
- ☞ A **lack of overview of existing or potential projects** at the institution seems to exist at several institutions – thus making it hard for the International Office to promote and support cooperation projects – as well as a **lack of overview of all funding opportunities**. We give you the following considerations for improving this situation:
 - ☞ **Redistribute tasks** amongst the various bodies dealing with international projects throughout the institution and ensure a better exchange of information between those bodies.
 - ☞ An **additional post at an HEI** within the International Office to manage European cooperation projects (Key Action 2 of Erasmus+) might help as International Offices often are mostly busy with mobility and there is often a lack of resources to actively promote cooperation opportunities, like the Euresearch Regional Offices do for research.
 - ☞ Feeding into the previous point, you might consider to have one person in charge of managing and promoting cooperation projects **per HEI, per group of HEI** (e.g. University of Lausanne, HEP Vaud, EPFL, Lausanne-based HES-SO schools) or **per canton**.
- ☞ The **cooperation among institutions and cantons in Switzerland** can and should also be encouraged, like e.g. the BENEFRI network also serving as a starting point to European or global cooperation.

framework conditions level

- ☞ It is not definitively defined what role swissuniversities will play with regards to Erasmus+. However, its responsibilities in the area of international collaboration as well as in the promotion of the international mobility of students, teachers and researchers of all universities will keep growing, as indicated in chapter 3.1.3. We therefore hope that the recommendations provided above will prove useful to swissuniversities.
- ☞ All Swiss HEI consider the administrative effort involved in European projects as problematic. But Erasmus+ already responds to this problem by e.g. basing funding largely on unit costs (instead of real costs). This will diminish the effort. Nevertheless the **support of the ch Foundation** is crucial when aiding and advising HEI, **especially for the new actions of Erasmus+**.

Comment indirect participation: in the current situation, consistent advice to Swiss institutions is more important than ever.

- ☞ Joint Master degrees delivering a single certificate are appreciated in Erasmus+. Moreover, the Bucharest *Communiqué* of the Bologna Process states that national rules and practices relating to joint programmes and degrees should be changed to **dismantle existing obstacles** (Bologna Education Ministers, 2012a). As Swiss law does not contain clear regulations on the issuing on such degrees a clarification of this matter is desirable.

1.1.2 VET

instrument level – practical recommendations

- ☞ **Mobility in VET** is not a primary objective for all stakeholder, but still desirable. In order to enable mobility for **staff** (of enterprises, OdA or schools), **apprentices or VET**

graduates, VET providers and OdA should use the Erasmus+ instrument 'Mobility of VET staff and apprentices'.

Comment indirect participation: Swiss VET institutions are not eligible for this action anymore under Erasmus+. However, the **interim solution gives priority to mobility activities** and adheres as far as possible to the Erasmus+ requirements applicable for all programme countries.

🗑 Erasmus+ focuses strongly on **skills development and labour market responsiveness**. This is where the Swiss VET sector with its proximity to the labour market can provide an added value and profit from a lot of opportunities in Erasmus+. Therefore, you should take following points into consideration:

- 🗑 If you are looking to **establish new innovative ways of teaching and training**, then make use of the Erasmus+ instrument 'Strategic Partnerships for VET', which allow for the realisation of practically any project. They are the right instrument to include partners from other education sectors to work on a common topic. Cooperation with actors from other socio-economic sectors (e.g. public bodies) is also possible and encouraged.
- 🗑 If you are looking for more **intense and strategic cooperation and for the development of new curricula**, you can use the Sector Skills Alliances (SSA). Their goal is to enhance the labour market responsiveness of VET and address skills-mismatches in specific sectors. For now, those sectors are, as indicated in the factsheets, textile/clothing/leather, commerce, advanced manufacturing, ICT, eco-innovation, or cultural and creative industries.

Comment indirect participation: Swiss organisations can participate in Strategic Partnerships and SSA as '**full partner**' (getting funding from Erasmus+) on top of the minimum number of organisations from programme countries required, under the condition that the project proposal proves that the **Swiss organisation brings an essential added value to the project**, otherwise the whole project is rejected. Alternatively, Swiss HEI can also participate as '**associated partner**' (without getting any funding from Erasmus+). In that case, they have the possibility to request money from the Swiss side, but the funding allocated to KA2 and KA3 in the interim solution is much lower than in the case of a direct participation to Erasmus+ and priority is given to Strategic Partnerships. Switzerland has set its own criteria regarding the projects to be funded. The Federal Council awards funding only to excellent projects, which meet the education policy objectives set by the Confederation and the Cantons.

🗑 Recruiting foreign staff can be essential for some sectors. **No instrument in Erasmus+ answers directly to that**, of course staff mobility or the exchanges via cooperation projects could indirectly lead to the recruitment of foreign staff.

instrument level – strategic recommendations

- 🗑 Staff mobility is easier to achieve and **apprentice mobility more difficult**. This is especially the case for small and medium-sized enterprises, which cannot afford to do without their apprentices (sometimes) even for the minimum duration of two weeks allowed by the instrument 'Mobility of VET staff and apprentices'. One solution to that could be to **base the whole process of exchanging apprentices on reciprocity**, meaning that for every apprentice going out there is one coming in from another country. Thus, no firm would have to be afraid of capacity shortages, but could still provide their apprentices with a valuable experience abroad. This of course requires the **branch organisations** in different countries to **work together in a coordinated effort** to make this possible.
- 🗑 VET apprentices have high chances of finding a job once graduated, be it in the enterprise they completed their training or somewhere else. It does not mean that a mobility period abroad after graduation has no added value for their employability. Especially in sectors

with strong international ties where e.g. speaking another language is an asset, **using the slot between graduation and the start of a job (or military service) is ideal.**

☞ As the goal of a SSA is to enhance the labour market responsiveness of VET and address skills-mismatches in a specific sector, take the following strategic recommendations into account:

- ☞ A SSA project should be sustainable, meaning that the cooperation should go beyond the duration of the project; so **choosing partners strategically** is important. In the Swiss case, it might be advisable to work with countries, which have a dual VET system.
- ☞ With regards to objectives and goals of a SSA project, we strongly advise you not to reinvent the wheel, but to take into account **existing European transparency tools** such as the European Qualification Framework (EQF), the European Classification of Skills/Competences, Qualifications and Occupations (ESCO), the European Quality Assurance in VET (EQAVET) or the European Credit System for VET (ECVET).

Comment indirect participation: there are possibilities to engage in SSA as an organisation from a partner country. As the Federal Council will award funding only to excellent projects, which meet the education policy objectives set by the Confederation and the Cantons, Swiss organisations should make sure they engage in projects that match the priorities of Switzerland in terms of VET European transparency tools.

instrument level – project examples and ideas

☞ The **transparency of skills and qualifications** across the European VET-landscape is still an issue for Swiss VET stakeholders. Therefore, getting involved in cooperation projects dealing with this issue is recommended:

- ☞ A Strategic Partnership or a SSA fostering the creation and **promotion of sector-specific qualification frameworks** is an effective way to increase the transparency of qualifications at European level.
- ☞ Another opportunity is to establish a Strategic Partnership or a SSA **testing the applicability of European transparency tools** (e.g. EQF, ESCO, EQAVET, ECVET). A project like this has a real added value for the participating institutions.

institutional level

☞ In order to tackle the problem of the lack of information on (European and Swiss) funding opportunities, we would suggest the creation of **one contact point for every branch organisation** which helps its members to apply for and organise projects. We are aware that sufficient resources are not always available in every economic sector, but branch organisations with a high demand for European projects will benefit from in the long run.

☞ We strongly recommend Swiss VET branch organisations to **cooperate with their European counterparts** in order to exchange knowledge and find potential partners for projects. The best way to do it is being **part of European sector-specific associations.**

Comment indirect participation: the new status of Switzerland has also led to the exclusion of Swiss representatives from several EU working groups. It is therefore now more important than ever to actively participate in European networks.

framework conditions level

☞ One objective of the Swiss Confederation is to strengthen VET at global level via an increased international recognition of diploma, enhanced mobility and international competences of individuals, transfer of VET-specific expertise to interested partners and quality assurance measures. The recommendation at instrument level clearly shows that Erasmus+ contributes to increasing mobility and international competences of individuals and serves for the transfer of VET specific expertise. **SERI should therefore make sure**

that there is a bridge between their political objectives and the use of Erasmus+ VET instruments.

1.1.3 School

instrument level – practical recommendations

☞ **Mobility of staff or pupils in the school sector** is not a priority, but still happens on an *ad hoc* basis. For pupils, it occurs above all in the framework of the bilingual *maturité*. Erasmus+ explicitly encourages mobility at school level and we therefore **strongly encourage you to use the funding available:**

- ☞ If your aim is to have **outgoing staff**, then you should typically use the Erasmus+ instrument 'Mobility of school staff'. If you want to **receive incoming staff**, the sending school will have to apply for funding (via the same instrument) at their NA.
- ☞ If you want to focus on **pupil mobility**, then this has to be done via the Erasmus+ instrument 'Strategic Partnerships for school education'. You will thus need to build up a project where pupil mobility serves the general objectives of the project.

Comment indirect participation: Swiss schools are not eligible for the action 'staff mobility' anymore under Erasmus+. However, the **interim solution gives priority to mobility activities** and adheres as far as possible to the Erasmus+ requirements applicable for all programme countries. When it comes to pupil mobility, it is funded via Strategic Partnerships (see below for comment linked to indirect participation).

instrument level – strategic recommendations

- ☞ Staff and pupil mobility already exists at a number of schools. However, when looking at the statistics from chapter 3.2 we can say that the **mobility instruments of the former Comenius programme under the LLP were not extensively used** to that end. Therefore, if you already have existing mobility projects with schools located in one or the other Erasmus+ eligible programme country, you should really try to get them funded by Erasmus+.
- ☞ The same can be said for **existing cooperation projects**, where Comenius funding has not been exploited. Under Erasmus+, the 'Strategic Partnerships for schools' allow for the realisation of practically any project and are the right instrument to include partners from other education sectors to work on a common topic. Cooperation with actors from other socio-economic sectors (e.g. world of work or public bodies) is also possible and encouraged.

Comment indirect participation: Swiss schools can participate in Strategic Partnerships as '**full partner**' (getting funding from Erasmus+) on top of the minimum number of organisations from programme countries required, under the condition that the project proposal proves that the **Swiss organisation brings an essential added value to the project**, otherwise the whole project is rejected. Alternatively, Swiss HEI can also participate as '**associated partner**' (without getting any funding from Erasmus+). In that case, they have the possibility to request money from the Swiss side. The funding allocated to KA2 and KA3 in the interim solution is much lower than in the case of a direct participation to Erasmus+, but priority is given to Strategic Partnerships. Switzerland has set its own criteria regarding the projects to be funded. The Federal Council awards funding only to excellent projects, which meet the education policy objectives set by the Confederation and the Cantons.

instrument level – project examples and ideas

- ☞ An idea to fund the mobility of **pupils doing a bilingual *maturité*** is to build up a Strategic Partnership with one or more partner schools in countries where the relevant languages are spoken, i.e. the German-speaking countries, the French-speaking countries, the English-

speaking countries and Italy. Pupils would do an exchange in the framework of that Strategic Partnerships and would **work on a commonly agreed topic for their *travail de maturité***.

- 👉 Engage in Strategic Partnerships for topics where a European cooperation will provide an added value, i.e. for **common identified challenges** such as the **use of technology in classrooms**.
- 👉 For Strategic Partnerships, also think of topics ,which can be **common to schools and other institutions from other education sectors**. For example, working on a project with a HEI to tackle the issue of the **lack of interest amongst pupil to engage in studies in the field of mathematics, science and technology**.

institutional level

- 👉 The European funding available for the school sector has so far not extensively been used. Schools run projects, which could be fit for European funding, but do not necessarily use the available funding opportunities. Therefore, we advise schools to hold an **information session on Erasmus+ at the beginning of every school year** to make sure that all projects responding to the eligibility criteria of the instruments 'Mobility of school staff' and 'Strategic Partnerships for school' try to get funding from Erasmus+. Of course, the **support of ch Foundation is essential to that end**.
- 👉 On top of the external support of ch Foundation, two elements seem essential within a school:
 - 👉 On the one hand, there must be a **top-down support from the school leader** as internationalisation is not the core mission of a school and since establishing a general international dimension at schools is desirable. Since it is not part of the daily business of teachers, the need for the **direction to give impulses and support** is all the more important.
 - 👉 **One teacher per school as a contact point** for European projects and a relay to ch Foundation can be a good solution. It can prove a useful support for teachers applying for European funding and hence reduce the administrative efforts that European projects entail. This solution seems to be preferred as opposed to a more 'centralised' solution, where the *Kantonale/r Austauschverantwortliche/r* (person in charge of exchanges in every canton) takes over the role of this contact point.

framework conditions level

- 👉 There is a clear **need for a better information** within schools about the available European funding opportunities and how to use them. As shown in the report, one solution would be to **include a module about European education policy and programmes in the curriculum of in-training teachers**. It could either be the initiative of one or several universities of teacher education or it could in the future be handled on a more systemic level.
- 👉 Since there are differences between cantons in terms of **possibilities for cantonal funding** for international projects and pupil/staff exchange, EDK might consider **concentrating their promotion efforts** on those cantons, which do not provide such funding.