



Circular no 4 / 2026

1st June 2026

National Criteria on Acceptable Working Relationships for Staff Mobility in the VET, Schools, and Adult Education sectors.

(Malta – Erasmus+ & European Solidarity Corps)

1. Purpose and Legal Basis

In accordance with the Erasmus+ Programme Guide 2026, National Agencies are required to establish a **transparent and consistent practice on what constitutes acceptable working relationships and supporting documentation in their national context**, particularly for staff participating in mobility activities.

These national criteria are established to:

- Ensure **eligibility, transparency and equal treatment** of participants;
- Prevent **artificial or ad-hoc arrangements** created solely to enable participation;
- Facilitate **verifiability during audits and on-the-spot checks**;
- Reflect the **real operational reality of organisations in Malta**.

This practice is based primarily on the provisions concerning staff eligibility, which state that participants must be *“working in the sending organisation, or regularly working with the sending organisation to help implement its core activities”* and that *“the tasks which link the participant to the sending organisation must be documented”* (Erasmus+ Programme Guide 2026).

2. General Principle

For the purpose of these criteria, the term "working relationship" is interpreted broadly and includes employment, structured volunteering, governance functions, membership-based engagement, and other documented forms of active and ongoing involvement in the organisation's core activities.

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A **working relationship** is considered acceptable where it is:

1. **Genuine and active** at the time of application and implementation;
2. **Linked to the core activities** of the sending organisation (not exclusively to Erasmus+);
3. **Formally documented** and verifiable;
4. **Established prior to the mobility decision** (not retroactively);

Compliant with Maltese law and the organisation's internal governance structures.

3. Categories of Acceptable Working Relationships

The following working relationships are considered acceptable **provided that the required supporting documentation is submitted**.

3.1 Employment Relationship

Description

Individuals employed by the sending organisation on a full-time or part-time basis.

Acceptable roles include

- Teachers, trainers, educators
- School leaders, directors
- Administrative or non-teaching staff
- Youth workers, project officers, coordinators

Minimum supporting documentation

- Signed employment contract **or** official letter of appointment
- One recent payslip **or** equivalent payroll confirmation
- Job description indicating relevance to the organisation's activities

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3.2 Regular External Collaboration

Description

Individuals who are **not employees**, but who work **regularly and structurally** with the organisation.

Examples

- External trainers or experts delivering recurrent activities
- In-company trainers linked to VET providers
- Youth workers collaborating on a continuous basis
- Consultants involved in educational delivery or organisational development

Conditions

- Collaboration must **not be ad-hoc or one-off**
- Collaboration must exist **beyond a single Erasmus+ project**

Minimum supporting documentation

- Signed service agreement, consultancy contract or framework agreement
- Clear task description linked to core activities
- Evidence of continuity (e.g. past invoices, schedules, activity reports)

3.3 Volunteering Relationship

Description

Individuals offering services on a **formal and continuous volunteer basis**, common in NGOs, youth organisations and community-based bodies.

Conditions

- Volunteering must be **structured and ongoing**
- Informal or sporadic volunteering is **not sufficient**

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Minimum supporting documentation

- Signed volunteering agreement
- Role description and duration
- Evidence of active involvement (e.g. attendance lists, reports, minutes)

3.4 Governance or Statutory Roles

Description

Individuals holding official governance roles relevant to the organisation's educational or youth activities.

Examples

- Board members
- Council or committee members
- School or NGO governors

Conditions

- Role must be **active** during the project period
- Duties must be **relevant to the activity**

Minimum supporting documentation

- Appointment letter or statute extract
- Board minutes confirming appointment
- Description of responsibilities

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3.5 Membership

Description

Individuals who are documented members of the organisation

Examples

- Band club members
- NGO/ Club members

Conditions

- Membership must be **active** during the project period
- The member must demonstrate ongoing participation in the organisation's activities.

Minimum supporting documentation

- Members may be eligible where they can demonstrate active and ongoing involvement in the organisation's activities, supported by appropriate documentation such as: Evidence of active participation (e.g. attendance records, activity reports, volunteer schedules, committee appointments, or similar organisational records).
- Membership cards
- Receipt of membership payment



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4. Unacceptable Working Relationships

The following situations are **not acceptable**:

- Contracts or agreements **created solely for Erasmus+ participation**
- Retroactive contracts issued after project approval
- Informal arrangements with **no written evidence**
- Historical or inactive links
- Purely personal or symbolic affiliations
- Remote workers participating from the **country where they are working from abroad**, as explicitly excluded by the Programme Guide

5. Documentation Rules

- All documentation must be **dated, signed (where applicable) and traceable**
- Documents must clearly show:
 - the **nature of the relationship**;
 - its **duration**;
 - its **relevance to the organisation's core activities**
- National Agency may request:
 - additional evidence;
 - clarifications;
 - confirmation from the legal representative

Failure to provide adequate documentation may lead to:

- ineligibility of the participant;
- rejection or recovery of related grant amounts.

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6. Consistency, Audit and Equal Treatment

These criteria are applied:

- uniformly across **all sectors and Key Actions**;
- independently of organisation size or funding history;
- in line with **EU financial, audit and anti-fraud principles**.

Each case is assessed individually, but **within the same national interpretative framework**, ensuring equality of treatment and legal certainty.

Kind regards,

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National Coordinator

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