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Safeguarding, Health and Safety, and Participant Protection Framework

This document sets out EUPA's approach to safeguarding, participant protection, health and safety within Erasmus+, the European Solidarity Corps and other activities under its remit.

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Introduction

EUPA is committed to ensuring the safety, wellbeing, dignity and protection of all individuals participating in activities supported through Erasmus+, the European Solidarity Corps and other initiatives falling within its remit.

This Safeguarding Policy has been developed in line with the principles and requirements established by the Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps Programme Guides, relevant European Union and Maltese legislation, and guidance issued by the European Commission concerning participant health, safety and protection. In particular, the policy draws upon the Commission's guidance on health and safety considerations in decentralised funds management, as well as related recommendations concerning safeguarding, risk management, emergency preparedness, participant protection and incident response.

The policy further supports EUPA's commitment to maintaining appropriate safeguarding and emergency response mechanisms, including the designation of emergency contact points, participant information measures, procedures for managing serious incidents, and arrangements to ensure that participants receive appropriate support before, during and after programme activities.

This policy reflects EUPA's commitment to providing a safe, inclusive and supportive environment for participants, staff, volunteers and partner organisations. It establishes a framework for preventing harm, responding effectively to concerns and incidents, promoting accountability, and ensuring that appropriate safeguarding measures are integrated throughout the planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of activities.

This policy should be read in conjunction with EUPA's operational procedures relating to safeguarding, health and safety, risk management and incident response, as well as any additional requirements established by the European Commission, the Erasmus+ Programme Guide and the European Solidarity Corps Programme Guide.

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Participant Protection and Safeguarding Policy for Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps Activities

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1. Purpose

This policy outlines EUPA's commitment to ensuring the safety, wellbeing and protection of all participants involved in Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps activities, particularly during mobility and international activities.

2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- All participants (including minors and adults at risk)
- Group leaders, trainers, mentors and accompanying persons
- Sending and host organisations
- Activities conducted in Malta and abroad

3. Principles

Safeguarding is a shared responsibility between the sending organisation, host organisation, group leaders and participants, each playing a role in ensuring a safe environment.

EUPA monitors that beneficiaries:

- Ensure safe and inclusive participation
- Promotes dignity, respect and equality
- Apply a zero-tolerance approach to abuse and PSEAH
- Ensure rapid and appropriate response to concerns

4. Roles and Responsibilities

- A Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO) within the partnership in approved projects shall oversee safeguarding during Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps activities.
- Group leaders and accompanying persons are responsible for:
 - participant supervision
 - immediate response to concerns
- Partner organisations must comply with safeguarding standards



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5. Risk Assessment and Duty of Care

- Risk assessments must be conducted for all activities by partners within an approved project.
- Risks related to:
 - travel
 - accommodation
 - safeguardingmust be identified and mitigated

EUPA shall ensure that safeguarding is integrated into approved projects:

- Project planning and design
- Selection and preparation of participants
- Assessment of partner organisations' safeguarding capacity
- Pre-departure briefings and participant awareness

6. Participant Protection Measures

EUPA shall monitor the beneficiaries' provision of:

- Safe accommodation and environments
- Adequate supervision of participants
- Clear communication of rules and expectations
- Access to support during activities

7. Code of Conduct

All participants and staff involved in approved projects must:

- Treat others with respect and dignity
- Refrain from any form of harassment, abuse or discrimination
- Avoid inappropriate relationships or behaviour
- Follow instructions from leaders
- Respect cultural differences

8. Insurance and Health

Beneficiary organisation are expected to make sure that participants involved in Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps activities are informed of the insurance



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requirements applicable to their participation and, where required by the relevant Programme Guide, shall be covered by appropriate insurance arrangements.

- Insurance coverage should include, as applicable: Travel insurance; including loss or damage to luggage;
- Medical and health insurance;
- Accident and serious illness coverage, including temporary or permanent incapacity;
- Third-party liability insurance;
- Death and repatriation coverage;
- Any additional insurance required by a specific action or activity.

Participants taking part in transnational activities are strongly encouraged to obtain and carry a valid European Health Insurance Card (EHIC), where applicable, to facilitate access to medically necessary healthcare during their stay abroad. Participants shall be informed, prior to departure, of:

- the insurance arrangements applicable to the activity;
- any limitations or exclusions in coverage;
- procedures for seeking medical assistance;
- emergency contact procedures and available support mechanisms.

Where activities involve minors, adults at risk, volunteering activities, traineeships or other activities subject to specific programme requirements, beneficiary organisations shall ensure compliance with the insurance provisions established in the relevant Erasmus+ or European Solidarity Corps Programme Guide.

9. Parental/Guardian Consent

- Written consent is required for all participants under 18
- Parents/guardians must be informed of risks and arrangements

10. Reporting Safeguarding Concerns

All concerns must be reported immediately.

Participants may:

- Contact emergency services
- Report to group leaders or the DSO within the project partners

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- Contact the DSO at the National Agency
- Contact the Maltese Embassy/Consulate (abroad)
- Report suspected criminal acts to the local police and request documentation

Serious cases may be referred to authorities.

Participants may also report concerns confidentially and anonymously where possible.

11. Protection Against Retaliation

Beneficiaries need to assure that:

- Individuals reporting concerns in good faith shall not face retaliation
- Any victimisation will result in disciplinary action

12. Data Protection and Confidentiality

Beneficiaries need to assure that:

- Information shall be stored securely
- Shared only when necessary for safety

13. Emergency Contact Point

Beneficiary organisations shall designate an Emergency Contact Point for participant health, safety and safeguarding matters. Unless otherwise designated by the partners involved in an approved project, the Designated Safeguarding Officer shall act as the Emergency Contact Point.

The contact details shall be communicated to participants before the start of activities.

The Emergency Contact Point shall:

- receive emergency notifications;
- coordinate with partner organisations and authorities;
- support participants and their families;
- coordinate follow-up and communication with participants, families, partner organisations and relevant authorities until the incident is resolved
- maintain records of serious incidents and actions taken.



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14. Emergency Procedures

Participants shall receive emergency contact information before departure, including:

- The partnership's DSO contact details;
- EUPA DSO contact details;
- the European emergency number 112;
- relevant local emergency services;
- embassy or consular contact details where applicable.

Procedures shall be in place to ensure timely communication with participants, families, partner organisations and relevant authorities during emergencies or serious incidents.

Clear procedures must exist between project partners for:

- medical emergencies
- safeguarding incidents
- repatriation

15. Monitoring and Review

Following publication of the updated safeguarding and emergency contact information on EUPA's website, EUPA shall issue a circular to all current Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps beneficiaries explaining the reporting routes and directing them to the published contact directory. The directory shall be checked periodically and whenever contact details change.

- Feedback from participants shall inform improvements for necessary action to be followed by beneficiaries in successive implementation of projects.

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Annex 1

Resources for Beneficiaries of the Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps

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Mobility Safeguarding Checklist

Before Mobility

- Verify partner safeguarding measures
- Conduct risk assessment (country-specific)
- Confirm insurance coverage
- Assign safeguarding contact (DSO)
- Collect parental consent (if minors)

During Mobility

- Ensure supervision of participants
- Daily informal check-ins
- Clear communication channels available

Emergency Preparedness

- Emergency contacts shared
- Embassy details provided
- Incident escalation plan in place
- EUPA Emergency Contact Point/DSO communicated to participants
- Participants informed of emergency reporting procedures
- Local emergency numbers verified

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Participant Safeguarding Briefing

Key Principles

Respect, dignity, zero tolerance to abuse

Follow Code of Conduct

If You Feel Unsafe

Contact leader or DSO designated within the project partners

Contact Emergency Contact Point /DSO at EUPA

Call emergency services

Contact embassy if abroad

Important Contacts

For immediate emergencies in Malta: 112. For safeguarding and welfare support: Supportline 179 (24/7). See the Maltese Safeguarding and Support Contacts directory below. EUPA contacts must be confirmed before publication.

European Emergency Number: 112

EUPA Emergency Contact Point

Designated Safeguarding Officer

Host Organisation Emergency Contact

Local Police

Local Medical Services

Embassy/Consulate (where applicable)

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Safeguarding Incident Report Form

Basic Information

Date:

Location:

Person reporting:

Details of Incident

Describe what happened:

Who was involved:

Actions Taken

Immediate response:

Who was informed:

Follow-up

Next steps:

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Partner Safeguarding Compliance Checklist

Partner Information

Organisation Name:

Country:

Safeguarding Contact Person:

Policy and Procedures

Does the partner have a safeguarding policy?

Does the partner have a designated safeguarding officer?

Does the partner have emergency response procedures?

Is an emergency contact person available during activities?

Are participants informed of necessary emergency services?

Risk and Environment

Is accommodation safe?

Are supervision arrangements adequate?

Are local risks identified?

Agreement

Partner agrees to comply with safeguarding standards:

Signature:

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Mobility Safeguarding Risk Assessment Template

Activity Details

Project Name:

Location:

Dates:

Risk Identification

Travel risks:

Accommodation risks:

Safeguarding risks:

Mitigation Measures

Preventive actions:

Supervision arrangements:

Emergency Planning

Emergency contacts:

Evacuation/repatriation plan:

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Annex II

Maltese Safeguarding and Support Contacts

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Important

In situations involving immediate danger or threats to life, participants should contact 112 before contacting EUPA or any other support organisation.

For activities taking place outside Malta, beneficiaries must ensure that participants are provided with the emergency numbers, relevant safeguarding authorities, medical services and embassy or consular contacts applicable to the host country before departure. The Maltese contacts listed in this annex do not replace the competent authorities in the country where the activity takes place.

The organisations in the following table have different mandates; not all are emergency first responders.

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Organisation	Contact	Website	Relevant role
Commission for the Rights of Persons with Disability (CRPD)	+356 2226 7600	crpd.org.mt	Disability rights, complaints and advice.
Commission on Gender-Based Violence and Domestic Violence	+356 2276 8301	stopviolence.gov.mt	Policy and coordination; for urgent domestic violence concerns use 112 or 179.
Emergency Services / Malta Police Force	112 (24/7)	pulizija.gov.mt	Immediate danger, crime, urgent police, ambulance or fire response.
FSWS / Aġenzija Appoġġ	+356 2295 9000	fsws.gov.mt/appogg	Family support, domestic violence and social welfare services.
FSWS – Child Protection Directorate	+356 2149 2348	Child Protection Directorate	Child protection referrals and assessment.
FSWS – Supportline 179	179 (24/7)	Supportline 179	Safeguarding and welfare concerns; crisis support and referral.
Human Rights Directorate	+356 2226 3210	humanrights.gov.mt	Human rights and equality policy and information.
Identità – Expatriates Unit	+356 2590 4800	Identità	Residence documentation and permits for foreign nationals, including ESC volunteers. Not an emergency service.
Information and Data Protection Commissioner (IDPC)	+356 2328 7100	idpc.org.mt	Personal-data protection and complaints.

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Mental Health Helpline	1579 (24/7)	Mental Health Helpline	Emotional support, guidance and assistance for people experiencing psychological distress or mental health difficulties.
Ministry for Foreign and European Affairs – Consular Services	+356 2124 2191	Consular Assistance	Consular assistance for Maltese nationals experiencing emergencies abroad.
Office of the Commissioner for Children	+356 2148 5180	Commissioner for Children	Children's rights, advocacy and oversight; not an emergency service.
Safeguarding Commission (Archdiocese of Malta)	+356 2247 0950	safeguarding.mt	Church-related safeguarding and advisory support; not a statutory first responder.
Victim Support Agency (government)	116 006	victimsupportagency.com	Support, information and guidance for victims of crime.
Victim Support Malta (NGO)	+356 2122 8333	victimsupport.org.mt	Independent support to victims of crime and trauma.

EUPA Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO)

Raphael Scerri

National Coordinator

Office: +356 25552340 | Mobile: 79000490 | E-mail: raphael.scerri@gov.mt

These contacts are for notification and coordination with EUPA.

For immediate danger or urgent medical, police or fire assistance in Malta, call 112.



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