

## Strengthening Data-Driven Decision-Making Processes for Inclusive Mobility Design

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## Recommendations for Higher Education Institutions

Ensuring equal access to opportunities is one of the core quality criteria of successful mobility strategies. As part of the internationalization strategies, Higher Education Institutions should adopt an inclusive approach, making student mobility accessible to a wide range of participants and reducing the existing gap and encouraging students to participate in student mobility. A wide range of data and recommendations supports institutions in strategy development, and change management processes.

Addressing the GAP in student participation, institutions, and more specifically HEI leadership and decision makers, rely on correct, complete and up-to-date information and a structured, data-driven needs analysis which can feed into recommended transition and change design, translating into plans of action and resource allocation.

The recommendations address Higher Education Institutions' leadership as well as individual staff involved in student support and mobility management. In two sections, readers will get a general overview of relevant aspects of the Erasmus GAP Project which will impact mobility design and program management. The Key recommendations highlight the core aspects defining the essential steps to initiate and implement data-driven change management.

## Recommendations for institutional transition to foster more inclusive mobility practices

What actionable recommendations can be provided to institutions for change management to foster more inclusive mobility practices?

- ❖ Inclusive mobility as a very general term has to be defined, within the wider framework of the European Programs and the European Policy Frameworks, in



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relation to the specific institutional context. In a multi-layered approach, inclusion, and excluding factors, can be understood and defined from a European- and national level (Macro Level), an institutional perspective (Meso Level), to the concrete individual factors (Micro Level). (see Erasmus GAP Desk Research Report <https://www.erasmusgap.uvsq.fr/research-results>)



Based on our research, we recommend an analysis of factors hindering participation on Macro-, Meso- and Microlevel

- ❖ Institutions have to generate a clear understanding of influencing factors in student mobility. In a second step, it is thus essential to differentiate based on the level of possible impact on the hindering factors by institutional measures. On Macro Level for example, institutions often cannot change or influence, but rather translate existing given structures to the institutional context in the best possible way. On Micro-level, i.e. the individual factors, the institution often can only have an alleviating role. The highest potential for change management and impactful action is on Meso level, which is in the responsibility and influence of institutional measures.



Institutions have to identify, categorize and prioritize the hindering factors in student mobility



Institutions should prioritize and focus their measures in mobility practices furthering inclusive program management on the Meso Level to ensure the highest impact and an action-plan adapted to the specific institutional context.



## Recommendations for data-driven change management and an integrated Student Data Management

What are key steps to implement and apply the data design and web tool broadly, and how can they be adapted to suit different institutional contexts?

How will Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) integrate the Erasmus GAP Inclusivity Toolkit into their standard data evaluation systems and the practical management of data sources for student outreach and support?

- ❖ A data-based analysis of the whole student community, not only the mobile student body, is a pre-requirement to enter an informed discourse on international strategies for student mobility. Relevant data include information on factors which relate to excluding factors, based on the definitions of “fewer opportunities” as applied in the Erasmus+ Program. In addition, a more concrete approach should include the specific national or regional context, and the specific institutional environment.



Institutions should generate a detailed, multi-layered profile of their student community in a structured manner. A reliable data set can support a political discourse, underline a Needs-analysis and feed into the strategy development for inclusive internationalization of the student life cycle.

The Erasmus GAP Inclusivity Toolkit can serve the purpose of the institution twofold:

- ❖ as a Self-Assessment Tool, institutions can use the assembled information on their own institutional context for informed decision-making processes,



addressing issues of a specific or more general manner; in the same manner, it can serve the initiation and offer the initial argument for a strategic change management process on student mobility/internationalization.



Institutions should use the multitude of staff perspectives and expertise to assemble a relevant data set reflecting the relevant information on the student community which can feed into informed decision making

- ❖ Higher Education Institutions do not function in isolation. To ensure a successful infrastructure for inclusive student exchange, a broader understanding of the national and European context is necessary, to support targeted partnership management and foster quality student exchange opportunities. Here, data deriving from institutional and national data sources can support institutional and inter-institutional strategies and management procedures.



As a Benchmarking Tool, the Toolkit can offer a contextualization of the institutional data, and drive political change in the education area on regional-, national or European Level, supporting the institution's narrative on inclusive mobility priorities.

## Closing Remarks

For Higher Education Institutions striving for more inclusive, diverse and equitable opportunities to internationalize the student experience, the Erasmus GAP Inclusivity Toolkit is a core instrument, as it can help create a deeper understanding of the institution and its members and thus inform the design and prioritization of change management on all levels.

Based on reliable student data and a comparability of information on different student groups, institutions can successfully start their journey towards an



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inclusive mobility design. With a specific, differentiated understanding of the student community, decisions can be purposeful, actions focused, and resources distributed in a targeted manner, to ensure a successful transition.



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