

The Erasmus Plus Virtual Exchange initiative provides opportunities for the development of a range of skills and competences associated with collaborative online activities across time zones and geographical distance. These activities are available to young people between the ages of 18-30 residing in Europe and the Southern Mediterranean region, as well as practitioners working in higher education institutions and youth organisations.

Open Badges have been developed to recognise young people, educators and youth workers' engagement in the Erasmus+ Virtual Exchange initiative and the development of their competences. The Erasmus+ Virtual Exchange badge ecosystem includes a number of badges which can be earned, divided into six types:

1. Participant (student who took part in a VE)
2. Trainee
3. Faciliator
4. Trainer
5. Coordinator
6. Ambassador

These badges are awarded upon successful completion of activities and meeting the set criteria. Growth pathways and milestone badges can be achieved within the badge types.

Each badge is associated with the development of certain competencies, which are understood as encompassing a combination of skills, attitudes and knowledge developed through engagement with the respective activities and roles. A number of overarching competencies as well as a subset of related "micro-competencies" have been identified as most relevant in the context of Erasmus+ Virtual Exchange badges, listed and defined in the table below. These are referenced in the badge descriptions.

The levels at which all of those competencies are advanced are defined as follows:

A - developed in the context of the activity only

B - evidence of ability to transfer acquired competence to new contexts

C - evidence of ability to apply acquired competence autonomously and to critically evaluate its application

(1) The activities operate at the interface of three broad competencies as identified in the executive summary of The OECD Program Definition and Selection of Competencies (DeSeCo): use tools interactively, interact in heterogeneous groups, act autonomously.

COMPETENCE	SUBSETS OF COMPETENCE	DEFINITION
<b>Digital competence</b>		Digital Competence is the set of knowledge, skills, attitudes \that are required when using ICT and digital media to perform tasks; solve problems; communicate; manage information; collaborate; create and share content; and build knowledge effectively, efficiently, appropriately, critically, creatively, autonomously, flexibly, ethically, reflectively for work, leisure, participation, learning, socialising, consuming, and empowerment. Source: JRC (2012). Digital Competence in Practice: An Analysis of Frameworks. Most recent reference: DigComp 2.0

<p><b>Intercultural competence</b></p>		<p>The capacity to examine local, global and intercultural issues, to understand and appreciate the perspectives and worldviews of others, and to engage in open, appropriate and effective interactions with people from different cultures. It includes recognising power dynamics and the ability to address conflict.</p> <p>Source: OECD (2018). OECD PISA Global Competence Framework</p>
	<p>Openness to cultural otherness and to other beliefs, world views and practices</p>	<p>Openness is an attitude towards people who are perceived to have different cultural affiliations from oneself or towards beliefs, world views and practices which differ from one's own. It involves sensitivity towards, curiosity about and willingness to engage with other people and other perspectives on the world.</p> <p>Source: Council of Europe (2018). Competences for Democratic Culture.</p>
	<p>Plurilingualism</p>	<p>The expansion of an individual person's experience of language in its cultural contexts expands from the language of the home to that of society at large and then to the languages of other peoples (whether learnt at school or college, or by direct experience) and which leads to building up a communicative competence to which all knowledge and experience of language contributes and in which languages interrelate and interact. Source: Council of Europe - European Language Portfolio</p>

<p><b>Transversal skills</b></p>		<p>Transversal knowledge, skills and competences are relevant to a broad range of occupations and economic sectors. They are often referred to as core skills, basic skills or soft skills, the cornerstone for the personal development of a person.</p> <p>Source: European Skills/Competencies Qualifications and Occupations website (ESCO).</p>
	<p>Cooperation skills</p>	<p>The skills required to participate successfully with others in shared activities, tasks and ventures and to encourage others to cooperate so that group goals may be achieved.</p> <p>Source: Council of Europe (2018). Competences for Democratic Culture.</p>
	<p>Empathy</p>	<p>Empathy is the set of skills required to understand and relate to other people's thoughts, beliefs and feelings, and to see the world from other people's perspectives.</p> <p>Source: Council of Europe (2018). Competences for Democratic Culture</p>

	<p>Knowledge and critical understanding of the self</p>	<p>Knowledge and critical understanding of the self has many different aspects, including:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. knowledge and understanding of one's own cultural affiliations;</li><li>2. knowledge and understanding of one's perspective on the world and of its cognitive, emotional and motivational aspects and biases;</li><li>3. knowledge and understanding of the assumptions and preconceptions which underlie one's perspective on the world;</li><li>4. understanding how one's perspective on the world, and one's assumptions and preconceptions, are contingent and dependent upon one's cultural affiliations and experiences, and in turn affect one's perceptions, judgments and reactions to other people;</li><li>5. awareness of one's own emotions, feelings and motivations, especially in contexts involving communication and co-operation with other people;</li><li>6. knowledge and understanding of the limits of one's own competence and expertise.</li></ol>
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		Source: Council of Europe (2018). Competences for Democratic Culture
	Self-efficacy	<p>Self-efficacy is an attitude towards the self. It involves a positive belief in one's own ability to undertake the actions which are required to achieve particular goals. This belief commonly entails the further beliefs that one can understand what is required, can make appropriate judgments, can select appropriate methods for accomplishing tasks, can navigate obstacles successfully, can influence what happens, and can make a difference to the events that affect one's own and other people's lives.</p> <p>Thus, self-efficacy is associated with feelings of self-confidence in one's own abilities. Source: Council of Europe (2018). Competences for Democratic Culture.</p>
	Tolerance of ambiguity	<p>Tolerance of ambiguity is an attitude towards situations which are uncertain and subject to multiple conflicting interpretations. It involves evaluating these kinds of situations positively and dealing with them constructively.</p> <p>Source: Council of Europe (2018). Competences for Democratic Culture.</p>

<p><b>Leadership skills</b></p>		<p>Ability to effectively direct, guide and inspire others to accomplish a common goal</p> <p>Source: World Economic Forum - New Vision for Education)</p>
	<p>Virtual Exchange Design skills</p>	<p>The complex blend of organisational, intercultural, pedagogical, digital and interpersonal competencies, attitudes and understanding necessary to design and co-create an appropriate sequence of activities online which foster effective interaction for positive intercultural experiences for learners. The learning design will intentionally take account of the importance of IP, accessibility and inclusivity of the learning environment.</p> <p>Source: own definition</p>
	<p>Virtual Exchange Implementation skills</p>	<p>The complex blend of organisational, intercultural, pedagogical, digital and interpersonal competencies, attitudes and understanding necessary to collaborate effectively with co-teachers and learners in order to sustain effective interaction for positive intercultural experiences for learners. The learning implementation will intentionally take into account the management of online presence and the security of personal data.</p> <p>Source: own definition</p>

	<p>Conflict Transformation skills</p>	<p>The ability to engage in dispute resolution, principled negotiation and mediation in a way that results in a marked, positive change in the nature of the conflict.</p> <p>Source: own definition</p>
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