



FIRST+ 2020–2021: FINNISH-RUSSIAN STUDENT AND TEACHER MOBILITY PROGRAMME

ADMINISTRATIVE GUIDELINES

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1. DISTANCE CATEGORIES

The level of an individual mobility grant (all types of mobility) will be determined according to two distance categories. The categories are used in all forms of individual mobility in the programme.

CATEGORY 1: North-western Russia

Republic of Karelia
Komi Republic
Arkhangelskaya oblast
Vologodskaya oblast
Kaliningradskaya oblast
Leningradskaya oblast
Murmanskaya oblast
Novgorodskaya oblast
Pskovskaya oblast
Nenetsky autonomous okrug
Saint Petersburg

CATEGORY 2: All the other parts of Russia

2. MOBILITIES CANCELLED/INTERRUPTED BY COVID-19

The FIRST+ programme's funding can be used to cover expenses from interrupted or cancelled exchanges due to corona virus (but not over the granted sum).

If FIRST+ mobility is cancelled due to the corona virus, enquiries about compensation for the costs should always be made through the participant's travel insurance first. After that, it is possible to apply for compensation for the costs of cancelled mobilities through the force majeure procedure. All force majeure applications as well as the eligibility of the expenses caused by cancellations will be assessed case by case and for each case a force majeure form with attachments needs to be sent.

If student exchange or traineeship has interrupted because of corona virus but the student completes his/her exchange through distance studies or remote work to the receiving higher education institution or organization, the student can keep the grant already paid to him/her. If a student will complete their exchange/traineeship through distance studies they are entitled to the grant calculated for the whole exchange. These cases do not need to be reported to EDUFI through force majeure procedure. This applies to both cases when the student has returned to home country or has stayed in the destination country.

3. STUDENT MOBILITY

The following principles should be complied with in the implementation of both long-term and short-term student mobility:

VIRTUAL IMPLEMENTATION OF STUDENT MOBILITIES AND TRAINEESHIPS

Implementation of student mobilities and traineeships completely or partly virtually in the FIRST+ programme is recommended if physical mobility is not possible due to exceptional circumstances.

As a rule, an actual grant is not paid to virtually completed student mobilities/traineeships.



- If participation in virtual mobility causes necessary expenses (excluding devices and hardware), the network can pay grant for part of the virtual implementation period (but always following the category 1 maximum grants).
- Networks document and estimate the eligibility of costs themselves. When evaluating the costs, it is important to ensure transparency and equal treatment. The network must be able to declare the costs that entitle for grant in the final report.

If the student starts the mobility or traineeship virtually and completes the mobility/traineeship physically in the destination, a normal grant can be paid for the period taking place in the destination depending on the length either according to the long or short term mobility's grant rules.

SELECTION OF STUDENTS FOR THE MOBILITY

Sending institution chooses the students participating in mobility. The receiving institution has a right to confirm the final acceptance.

RECOGNITION OF STUDIES AND STUDY FEES

Studies completed during the exchange will be recognized as part of a student's degree. The study plan of each outgoing student is agreed and confirmed in writing by the relevant institutions. After completing the studies, the receiving institution gives the participant a certificate that shows studies completed and grades. The network institutions will not charge any tuition fees from participating students.

GRANT AND CITIZENSHIP

The grant can be given to degree students enrolled in a FIRST+ network institution. Students enrolled in a FIRST+ network institution are eligible to participate in the activities irrespective of nationality. However, as a rule, students may not undertake an exchange in their home country.

- Mobility from Finland to Russia: Students who have Russian citizenship/background must have conducted their comprehensive school and/or general upper secondary education in Finland.

PRACTICAL TRAINING AND JOINT DEGREE PROGRAMMES

Mobility periods may also include practical training, if it is fully recognised as part of the student's degree. The programme also supports mobility in joint educational programmes (e.g. double degrees).

THE LEVEL AND FIELDS OF STUDY

The FIRST+ programme supports both long-term and short-term student mobility at BA, MA and PhD level. The programme is open to all fields of education, including students majoring in Russian language (e.g. philology or translation studies) with the following condition:

- Mobility from Finland to Russia: Students majoring in Russian language (e.g. philology or translation studies) are not allowed to choose their major subject for their studies in a Russian institution.

INSURANCES AND ACCOMMODATION

FIRST+ grants do not include any insurance for residence abroad. The sending institution must ensure that the students take sufficient insurances for their needs. The receiving institution commits to help the incoming students in finding accommodation.

3.1. LONG-TERM STUDENT MOBILITY (OUTGOING AND INCOMING)

The FIRST+ programme supports long-term student mobility both from Finland to Russia as well as from Russia to Finland. The duration of a long-term mobility period is 2-12 months.

The maximum student grants for long-term mobility are:
CATEGORY 1: maximum 560 € / month



CATEGORY 2: maximum 650 € / month

The grant can only be given for full-time studies or traineeship in the destination country.

The amount is the maximum FIRST+ grant that can be paid to one beneficiary each month. The networks can decide on the final grant level. However, the monthly grant paid to outgoing students may not exceed the monthly grant paid to incoming students. Only one long-term student exchange grant can be paid per student.

In the final report stage the final grant will be calculated according to the realised long-term student mobilities in months.

It is also possible to do an exchange or traineeship without a grant or the grant can consist of both EDUFI's grant and the institution's own grant.

3.2. SHORT-TERM STUDENT MOBILITY (OUTGOING ONLY)

The FIRST+ programme supports short-term student mobility at BA, MA and PhD level from Finland to Russia. The short-term mobility can extend from 5 to 59 days of continuous studies/traineeship.

Short-term mobilities must support the students' studies, participation in plain language courses or cultural excursions is not a subject for support. Support can be used for example for intensive study courses in a certain study field or practical training.

The maximum student grants for short-term mobility are:

CATEGORY 1: days 5-7 maximum 50 € / day, days 8-59 maximum 20 € / day.

CATEGORY 2: days 5-7 maximum 70 € / day, days 8-59 maximum 20 € / day.

The grant can only be given for full-time studies or traineeship in the destination country.

The amount is the maximum FIRST+ grant that can be paid to one beneficiary per day. The networks can decide on the final grant level.

In the final report stage the final grant will be calculated according to the realised short-term mobilities in days.

It is also possible to do an exchange or traineeship without a grant or the grant can consist of both EDUFI's grant and the institution's own grant.

4. TEACHER MOBILITY (OUTGOING AND INCOMING)

The FIRST+ programme supports teacher mobility both from Finland to Russia and from Russia to Finland. The minimum duration of a teaching exchange is five teaching hours.

The teaching provided during an exchange must be an integral part of the hosting institution's curriculum. Teaching may be given at any degree level.

Teachers who are part of network institution's staff during the mobility are eligible for teacher grant. Teacher mobility grants can be used to cover travel and subsistence costs.

The maximum teaching grants are:



CATEGORY 1: maximum 100 € / day

CATEGORY 2: maximum 120 € / day

The amount is the maximum FIRST+ grant that can be paid to one teacher per day. The networks can decide on the individual grant level.

In the final report stage the final grant will be calculated according to the realised teacher mobilities in days.

It is also possible to do a teacher exchange without a grant.

Implementation of teacher exchanges completely or partly virtually in the FIRST+ programme is recommended if physical mobility is not possible due to exceptional circumstances. As a rule, an actual grant is not paid to virtually implemented teacher mobilities. If the teacher starts the mobility virtually and completes the mobility physically in the destination, a normal grant can be paid for the period taking place in the destination.

5. INTENSIVE COURSES

Intensive courses are short study periods which provide students and teachers with an opportunity to work together in a Russian-Finnish group. All intensive courses in the FIRST+ programme should take place in Russia as a joint effort of two or more institutions (at least one Finnish and one Russian partner).

The minimum duration is one week (five working days + travel days). There must be an equal number of participating students and teachers from Finland and Russia.

Studies completed on an intensive course must be recognised as part of a student's degree. Intensive courses cannot consist of language studies or research alone.

There are three categories for an intensive course budget: a) travel costs, b) accommodation and subsistence costs and c) organisational costs. It is recommended that the category c) organisational costs do not exceed 20% of the total intensive course budget.

Accepted travel costs are additional costs due to travel such as trips, travel agency costs, visas and insurances. Accepted accommodation and subsistence costs are costs due to accommodation and other subsistence of intensive course participants and possible daily allowances. Organisational costs must be directly due to the organisation of main activities of the intensive course such as facility or material costs.

The funding cannot be used for higher education institution's administrative expenses, entertainment/representation expenses, business gifts or salaries and fees. These and possible other costs must be funded by the higher education institutions' own funding.

Intensive courses can be implemented also partly or completely virtually and the grant can be used for covering costs due to virtual implementation. The costs can be for example costs caused by digital learning bases or virtual learning environments.

FIRST+ teaching grants cannot be used for the expenses of teachers participating in a FIRST+ intensive course.



6. FLEXIBILITY BETWEEN ACTIVITIES

The allocation is categorized by mobility direction as follows:

Direction A: Mobilities from Finland to Russia

Direction B: Mobilities from Russia to Finland

There is no budget flexibility from the Direction A to Direction B, ie. the networks are not allowed to transfer outgoing mobility grants for incoming mobility grants. However, flexibility from the Direction B to Direction A exists but requires a well-justified amendment request in advance to EDUFI by email.

Transfers inside the Direction A are possible between long-term and short-term student mobility without notice. Transfers from teacher mobility to student mobility are possible inside both the Direction A and Direction B. Transfers from student mobility to teacher mobility require a justified amendment request to EDUFI.

All transfers must be reported in the interim report and final report. For Russian incoming mobilities (Direction B) additional funding may be applied in connection to the interim reporting only if the Direction A mobilities are implemented.

7. ACCESSIBILITY GRANT

Students and teachers participating in the FIRST+ programme can apply for accessibility grants. Accessibility grants support the participation of persons with special needs whose participation in the programme – for reasons of physical or mental health – calls for additional financial assistance.

Accessibility grants are applied for on a separate form. There is a rolling deadline for these applications, to be handled by EDUFI on a case-by-case basis. More information and the application form are available on EDUFI's web-pages at <https://beta.oph.fi/fi/ohjelmat/esteettomyystuki-korkeakoulujen-kansainvalisessa-liikkuvuudessa>.

In the application the extra costs of the exchange must be specified as precisely as possible. It must also be specified how the costs are covered in the country of departure. In other words, it is important to justify the need for special grant during the exchange. Grant cannot be applied for expenses that exist also in the country of departure, unless the expenses are higher abroad than in the country of departure (in which case this difference can be compensated). The amount of normal FIRST+ grant and other possible grants that continue also during the exchange need to be specified in the application.

8. GRANT AGREEMENT PERIOD, ADDITIONAL FUNDS AND REPORTING

The funding awarded may be used within the period from 1 June 2020 to 31 August 2021. An interim report must be submitted to EDUFI by 15.11.2020 and final report by 15.10.2021 via the State Aid System. In connection to the interim report the beneficiaries can also apply for additional funding. More specific instructions on reporting will be updated on the website. **All partly or completely virtually completed FIRST+ programme mobilities can be included in the reports.**

The use of the FIRST+ grant must be presented as a separate project in the institution's accounting. The higher education institution must also be able to prove that grants have been paid to students and teachers chosen to the FIRST+ programme.