



FINNISH NATIONAL
AGENCY FOR EDUCATION

FIRST+ 20-21

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Interim reporting, 2020 projects

- The current COVID-19 pandemic affects strongly the mobility flows, especially the outgoing mobility and teacher mobility
 - Incoming student exchanges have been possible
- Cooperation has been carried out via Zoom/Teams/Skype, even some good experiences of virtual teacher exchange, interest towards virtual student exchange has been low
- Mobilities are expected to be carried out in spring/summer if the situation with corona allows
 - Some HEIs have already made decisions of not sending any students e.g. outside Europe
- Hopes for prolonging the funding period wide; unfortunately not currently possible

Mobilities cancelled/interrupted by COVID-19

- If a mobility is cancelled due to the corona pandemic costs caused by the cancellation can be covered with FIRST+ funding
 - By filling in a Force majeure form
- If a mobility is interrupted due to the corona pandemic the FIRST+ grant already paid to the participant does not need to be claimed back
 - If a student will complete their exchange/traineeship through distance studies they are entitled to the grant calculated for the whole mobility
 - These cases do not need to be reported through the Force majeure form
- Also available on our [web page](#).

Virtual implementation of student mobilities 1/2

- 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
 - Category 1 maximum grants should be followed in all cases
 - Normal transfer rules apply
 - Networks document and estimate the eligibility of costs themselves. When evaluating the costs, it is important to ensure transparency and equal
 - The network must be able to declare the costs that entitle for grant in the final report.

Virtual implementation of student mobilities 2/2

- 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.
 - E.g. physical exchange in destination 1 month -> grant can be paid using long-term student mobility grants.
 - E.g. physical exchange in destination 2 weeks -> grant can be paid using short-term student mobility grants.
 - **Applies also to incoming mobility, but only if connected to a virtual start!**
 - Category 1 and 2 grants in use normally.

Virtual implementation of intensive courses

- Intensive courses can be implemented also partly or completely virtually and the grant can be used for covering costs due to virtual implementation.
- No need to apply for a separate permission for virtual implementation.
- Costs of the virtual implementation can be for example costs caused by digital learning platforms or virtual learning environments or other costs that result directly from implementation of core functions of the course.
- The funding cannot be used for higher education institution's administrative expenses, entertainment/representation expenses, business gifts or salaries and fees.

Transfer rules

- No transfer possibilities from FI->RU –mobilities to RU->FI –mobilities
- From RU->FI –mobilities it is possible to transfer to FI->RU –mobilities with a justifiable reason and by a request to EDUFI in advance
- Inside FI->RU –mobilities it is possible to make transfers freely and without request:
 - Between long-term and short-term student mobility
- Both inside FI->RU and RU->FI –mobilities (not between directions) it is possible to make transfers:
 - From teacher mobility to student mobility without request
 - with a justifiable reason and by a request to EDUFI in advance from student mobility to teacher mobility



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Thank you! Questions?

If questions arise later please contact first@oph.fi.

