In this briefing sheet, detail is provided on the goals and objectives for KA2 Strategic Partnerships, confirming field-specific priorities for education and training and providing examples of the different project types.

Strategic Partnerships: Introduction

Strategic Partnerships aim to support the development, transfer and/or implementation of innovative practices as well as the implementation of joint initiatives that centre on cooperation, peer learning and exchanges of experience at European level.

Depending on the objectives and composition of the Strategic Partnership, projects can generally be of two types:

- Strategic Partnerships supporting Innovation: targeting the development of innovative outputs alongside intensive dissemination and exploitation actions associated with new/existing products and innovative ideas; applicants can request dedicated funding for Intellectual Outputs and Multiplier Events, with each tied to the targeted innovation;

- Strategic Partnerships supporting Exchange of Good Practices: targeting those wishing to develop or reinforce networks, to increase their capacity to operate at transnational level, and to share and discuss ideas, practices and methods; such projects might also produce tangible outputs and are equally expected to disseminate the results of their activities - in a manner proportional to the aim and scope of the project - yet without access to funding for Intellectual Outputs and Multiplier Events.

Additionally, there are **two field-specific types** of Strategic Partnership, supporting the Exchange of Good Practices:

- School Exchange Partnerships: only schools can participate in this type of Strategic Partnership, which aims to strengthen the European dimension in the participating schools, through the delivery of pupil and staff mobility, strengthening their capacity for cross-border cooperation and their ability to cope with new challenges. Through transnational collaboration and partnership, *School Exchange Partnerships* also promote the common values of freedom, inclusion, tolerance and non-discrimination.

- Transnational Youth Initiatives: fostering the social commitment and entrepreneurial spirit of young people this action is specific to the field of youth and targets initiatives that are set-up and carried out by young people *[note: activities in the field of Youth are not directly addressed in this, or any, briefing sheet].*

In Table 1, an overview is provided of the different types and formats of Strategic Partnerships that can be proposed aligning these with the different fields of education, training and youth.

In this briefing sheet, detail is provided on the goals and objectives for KA2 Strategic Partnerships, confirming field-specific priorities for education and training and providing examples of the different project types.

Table 1: Overview of the Different Types and Formats of KA2 Strategic Partnership (by field)

Field	Types and Formats of Strategic Partnership that can be Accessed
Adult Education	• Strategic Partnership supporting Innovation • Strategic Partnership support Exchange of Good Practices
Higher Education	• Strategic Partnership supporting Innovation
School Education	• Strategic Partnership supporting Innovation • Strategic Partnership support Exchange of Good Practices • School Exchange Partnerships
Vocational Education and Training	• Strategic Partnership supporting Innovation • Strategic Partnership support Exchange of Good Practices
Youth	• Strategic Partnership supporting Innovation • Strategic Partnership support Exchange of Good Practices • Transnational Youth Initiatives

Except for School Exchange Partnerships, for which participation is limited to schools only, Strategic Partnerships are open to any type of organisation active in any field of education, training and youth or other socio-economic sectors as well as to organisations carrying out activities that are transversal or which extend to more than one field of activity (e.g. local and regional authorities, recognition and validation centres, chambers of commerce, trade organisations, guidance centres, cultural organisations).

Depending on the priority and objectives being addressed, Strategic Partnerships should involve the most appropriate and diverse range of partners in order to benefit from their different experiences, profiles and specific expertise and with a view to producing relevant and high-quality project results. This needs to be considered, however, in line with the rules on participation for different types and formats of Strategic Partnership.

To be funded, Strategic Partnerships must address at least one horizontal or field-specific priority, details of which are provided below.

Horizontal Priorities

For Strategic Partnerships - irrespective of type - the following HORIZONTAL PRIORITIES exist for 2020:

- **Supporting opportunities for all in acquiring and developing key competences, including basic skills:** In order to foster employability, socio-educational and personal development, as well as participation in civic and social life. Priority will be given to projects that support and reinforce the development of key competences for all individuals from early childhood and throughout life. In a fast-changing world, this includes multilingual competences, entrepreneurial mind-set, critical thinking and creativity, cooperation in science, technology, engineering, arts and mathematics (STE(A)M) fields, as well as skills in fields such as climate action, artificial intelligence, but also social and learning-to-learn competences. This would include actions of cooperation with players in the research and innovation sector, civil society as well as in the private and public sector;

- **Social inclusion:** Social inclusion is an overarching priority across all sectors of the programme. Promote - in particular through innovative and integrated approaches - ownership of shared values, equality, social inclusion, diversity and non-discrimination. Priority will be given to projects that support and assess new approaches to reducing disparities in accessing and engaging with formal and non-formal education, as well as projects that tackle discrimination, segregation and racism. The programme will support the integration of people with migrant backgrounds, including gathering and disseminating good practices on the issue. Priority will also be given to projects that encourage the establishment of sustainable links between organisations active in education, training, youth and sport and the society at large, including at local and regional level;

- **Common values, civic engagement and participation:** The Programme will support active citizenship and ethics in lifelong learning; it will foster the development of social and intercultural competences, critical thinking and media literacy. Priority will also be given to projects that offer opportunities for people's participation in democratic life, social and civic engagement through formal or non-formal learning activities. The focus will also be on raising awareness on and understanding the European Union context, notably as regards the common EU values, the principles of unity and diversity, as well as their social, cultural and historical heritage;

Horizontal Priorities (continued)

- **Environmental and climate goals:** the programme aims to support, across all sectors, awareness-raising about environmental and climate-change challenges. Priority will be given to projects aimed at developing competences in various sustainability-relevant sectors, developing green sectorial skills strategies and methodologies, as well as future-oriented curricula that better meet the needs of individuals. The programme will also support the testing of innovative practices to prepare learners, staff and youth workers to become true factors of change (e.g. save resources, reduce energy use and waste, compensate carbon footprint emissions, opt for sustainable food and mobility choices, etc.). Priority will also be given to projects that – through education, training, youth and sport activities - enable behavioural changes for individual preferences, consumption habits, and lifestyles;

- **Innovative practices in a digital era:** The Programme will support the taking up of digital technologies and of innovative and open pedagogies in education, training, youth and sport. Particular attention will be given to promoting gender equality and addressing differences in relation to the access and use by underrepresented groups. The Programme will also support the use of the European frameworks on digital competences of educators, citizens and organisations, including the development and use of open educational resources, open textbooks, and free and open source educational software. Priority will be given to actions that promote innovative methods and tools for teaching, training, learning and assessment as drivers of improvements in lifelong learning;

- **Supporting educators, youth workers, educational leaders and support staff:** Priority will be given to actions that strengthen the recruitment and professional development of educators (e.g. teachers, trainers, professors, tutors, mentors, coaches, staff in early childhood education and care), youth workers, educational leaders (e.g. school heads, rectors, department heads) and support staff (e.g. teaching assistants, career counsellors, human resource specialists in companies). Particular attention will be given to actions that allow to better deal with inclusion and diversity, including cultural and linguistic, through the use of more diverse and more adapted teaching, training and youth work styles;

Horizontal Priorities (continued)

- **Transparency and recognition of skills and qualifications:** Priority will be given to actions that support learning and labour mobility; actions that facilitate transitions between different levels and types of learning, transitions to the world of work as well as transitions between different jobs. The programme will support in particular better services and information or guidance for learners, exploring the potential of digital technologies to facilitate automatic mutual recognition and the validation - at local, regional, national, European or international level - of competences acquired through informal and non-formal learning. The programme will also support the effective launch and implementation of the new Europass framework and the access to tools and services for skills and qualifications;

- **Sustainable investment, quality and efficiency of education, training and youth systems:** Priority will be given to actions that promote sustainable funding models, including exploring innovative approaches, to ensure adequate and sustainable investment in education, training and youth, including performance-based funding and cost-sharing, where appropriate;

- **Social and educational value of European cultural heritage, its contribution to job creation, economic growth and social cohesion:** priority will be given to actions contributing to raising awareness of the importance of Europe's cultural heritage through education, lifelong learning, informal and non-formal learning, youth as well as sport, including actions to support skills development, social inclusion, critical thinking and youth engagement. New participatory and intercultural approaches to heritage, as well as educational initiatives aimed at fostering intercultural dialogue involving teachers and pupils from an early age will be promoted.

Field-specific Priorities: Adult Education

In the field of Adult Education, priority will be given to:

- Improving and extending the supply of high-quality learning opportunities for adults by making available flexible learning offers adapted to their learning needs (e.g. blended learning, digital learning applications), and by the validation of skills acquired through informal and non-formal learning;

- Supporting the setting up of and access to upskilling pathways for adults with a low level of skills, knowledge and competences allowing them to enhance their literacy, numeracy and digital competences, as well as other key competences, and to progress towards higher qualifications, including through skills identification and screening or tailored learning offers;

- Increasing learning demand and take-up through effective outreach, guidance and motivation strategies which support the Upskilling Pathways by encouraging and supporting low-skilled and/or low-qualified adults or through developing guidance as a service to ensure that adults have access to relevant learning throughout life;

- Extending and developing the competences of educators and other personnel who support adult learners, in particular in assessing their prior knowledge and skills and in motivating them to learn; improve teaching methods and tools through effective use of innovative solutions and digital technologies;

- Developing mechanisms to monitor the effectiveness and improve quality assurance of adult learning policies and provision, and to track the progress of adult learners.

Field-specific Priorities: Higher Education

In the field of Higher Education, priority will be given to actions that are key to achieving the objectives of the European Education Area, notably the new European Universities initiative and the European Student card, and to:

- Promoting internationalisation: The programme will aim to strengthen the strategic and structured cooperation between higher education institutions through: a) support for various types of cooperation models, including the most ambitious ones such as the European Universities; b) contributing to removing obstacles to mobility by implementing automatic mutual recognition of qualifications and learning outcomes, and by embedding mobility in curricula; c) support for higher education institutions to implement the Bologna principles and tools to enhance mobility for all and to develop a successful multilingual European Education Area by 2025;

- Tackling skills gaps and mismatches through: a) supporting the development of learning-outcomes-oriented curricula that better meet the learning needs of students, while also being relevant for the labour market and for the wider society; b) implementing trans-disciplinary approaches and innovative pedagogies such as student-centred learning, inverted learning and research-based learning which support the acquisition of transferable forward-looking skills; c) developing, testing and implementing flexible and modular course design (part-time, online or blended) and appropriate forms of assessment; d) increasing attractiveness and reforming curricula for STEM with a STEAM approach including real-world applications, inquiry-based and ICT-enriched learning, collaborative practices, including university-business cooperation;

- Rewarding excellence in learning, teaching and skills development, through a) developing and implementing strategies and quality culture to reward and incentivise excellence in teaching b) training of academics in new and innovative pedagogies, including trans-disciplinary approaches, new curriculum design, delivery and assessment methods linking education with research and innovation where relevant, c) fostering an entrepreneurial, open and innovative higher education sector, by promoting learning and teaching partnerships with commercial and non-commercial organisations in the private sector; e) developing of new practices based on educational research and creativity;

Field-specific Priorities: Higher Education (continued)

- **Building inclusive higher education systems:** The programme will foster inclusive approaches for the mobility and cooperation activities such as a) increased access, participation and completion rates of underrepresented and disadvantaged groups; b) development and implementation of flexible mobility formats (short, virtual and blended); c) active support to incoming mobile participants throughout the process of finding accommodation, including through collaboration with the relevant stakeholders for the provision of appropriate and affordable housing. Particular attention will be given to achieving appropriate gender balance;

- **Fostering civic engagement:** promotion of civic and social responsibility of students, researchers and universities including through extra-curricular activities and recognition of voluntary and community work in academic results where appropriate;

- **Supporting the implementation of the European Student Card initiative:** through secure electronic transfer of students' data between higher education institutions, in full respect of personal data protection and linking where possible with the new Europass. The objective is to enable students to manage online the entire set of administrative steps of their mobility abroad (from selection up to their ECTS credits recognition), while at the same time facilitating an easier access to a wide range of student services - including libraries, catering and accommodation - when on a campus abroad. The main components of the European Student Card initiative are being developed through Erasmus+ projects funded under Key Action 2: Strategic partnerships and Key Action 3: Forward-looking projects;

- **Consolidation and further development of higher education data tools and data sources** to monitor progress towards reaching the objectives of the European Education Area and the renewed EU agenda for higher education;

- **Fostering effective, efficient and sustainable system-level funding and governance models,** rewarding excellent teaching, innovation and community-relevance.

Field-specific Priorities: School Education

In the field of school education, priority will be given to:

- Reinforcing the development of key competences (in line with the Council Recommendation on key competences for lifelong learning) for example by promoting cross-curricular collaboration, creativity and innovative learning approaches and environments, cooperating with stakeholders in local communities and abroad, supporting teachers in delivering competence-based teaching and developing assessment and validation of key competences;

- Strengthening the profile of the teaching professions, including teachers, school leaders and teacher educators, for example by: making careers more attractive and diverse; strengthening selection, recruitment and evaluations (models of staff appraisal, assessment and feedback); enhancing teachers' initial education and continuous professional development and linking its different phases; facilitating and significantly increasing teacher mobility, including by overcoming remaining obstacles; supporting teachers in developing innovative teaching and assessment methods, especially to promote competence-oriented teaching and learning; strengthening leadership in education, including distributed leadership and teacher leadership;

- Promoting a comprehensive approach to language teaching and learning (in line with the Council Recommendation on language teaching and learning), building on the increasing linguistic diversity in schools, for example by: encouraging early language learning and awareness; developing bilingual teaching options, especially for border regions and/or in areas where inhabitants use more than one language; mainstreaming the use of new technologies to support language learning; supporting the integration of the language dimension across the curricula; focusing on reaching adequate competence levels by the end of compulsory education; promoting the creation of language aware schools;

- Increasing the levels of achievement and interest in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM). This priority will include, among others: promoting the development of national STEM strategies; developing partnerships between schools, businesses, higher education institutions, research institutions, and wider society; promoting effective and innovative pedagogies and assessment; promoting the STE(A)M approach to education through interdisciplinary teaching of STEM in cultural, environmental, economic, design and other contexts, with the involvement of all academic disciplines;

Field-specific Priorities: School Education (continued)

- Tackling early school leaving and disadvantage, enabling success for all learners, including children with a migrant background, for example by: strengthening collaboration among all actors within schools, as well as with families, and other external stakeholders; improving transitions between different stages of education; fostering preventive and early intervention approaches; supporting networking of schools which promote collaborative and holistic approaches to teaching and learning; improving evaluation and quality assurance;

- Developing high quality early childhood education and care systems (in line with the ECEC Council Recommendation), for example by: supporting initial and continuing professional development of all staff involved in organising, leading and providing early childhood education and care; creating, testing or implementing strategies and practices to foster participation of all children in early childhood education and care, including children in need of special support (e.g. children with disabilities, or children from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds, children from a migrant background); promoting the implementation of the EU quality framework for quality early childhood education and care;

- Building capacity for promoting and facilitating recognition of learning periods abroad (including follow-up to the Council Recommendation on automatic mutual recognition), including promoting recognition of formal education and transversal competences developed through non-formal and informal learning, for example by building administrative capacity of schools to support participation of pupils in transnational projects and peer exchanges, including by exploring the potential of intermediary bodies pooling the capacity of several schools; establishing sustainable partnerships between organisations setting cross-border learning exchanges in general education; promoting embedded class exchanges or pupil mobility in school programmes; ensuring appropriate safety standards for pupils participating in transnational mobility; developing and disseminating tools and mechanisms for the preparation, monitoring and recognition of periods abroad; and sharing and promoting good practices;

- Developing strong quality assurance systems to achieve high-quality inclusive education and enhance trust among countries in relation to the quality of their respective school education systems, for example by: supporting countries in developing synergies between internal and external evaluations, in engaging stakeholders in quality assurance processes, or in designing their quality assurance strategies in ways to support broad competence development.

Field-specific Priorities: Vocational Education & Training

In the field of Vocational Education and Training, priority will be given to:

- Developing partnerships supporting the setting up and implementation of internationalisation strategies for VET providers, aimed at putting in place the necessary support mechanisms as well as contractual frameworks to promote quality mobility of VET staff and learners, including promoting the automatic mutual recognition of qualifications and learning outcomes; developing student support services to foster VET internationalisation and learner mobility, through actions aimed at informing, motivating, preparing and facilitating the social integration of the VET learner in the host country, while enhancing their intercultural awareness and active citizenship;

- Developing partnerships aimed at promoting work-based learning in all its forms, for both young and/or adults and in particular for the implementation of the Council Recommendation on a European Framework for Quality and Effective Apprenticeships. These partnerships can also aim at developing new training content and joint VET qualifications that integrate periods of work-based learning, opportunities to apply knowledge in practical workplace situations, and embedding international mobility experience whenever possible;

- Increasing the quality in VET through the establishment of feedback loops to adapt VET provision, including by setting-up or testing graduate tracking arrangements as part of quality assurance systems in line with the Council Recommendation on tracking graduates, and the Recommendation on the European Quality Assurance Reference Framework for Vocational Education and Training (EQAVET);

- Enhancing access to training and qualifications for all, with a particular attention to the low-skilled, through continuing VET, notably by increasing quality, supply and accessibility of continuing VET, validation of non-formal and informal learning, promoting work-place learning, providing for efficient and integrated guidance services and flexible and permeable learning pathways; includes developing partnerships between micro, small and medium sized companies and VET providers aimed at promoting joint competences centres, learning networks, support to pooling of resources, and providing initial and/or continuing training to their staff;

Field-specific Priorities: Vocational Education & Training (continued)

- Further strengthening key competences in initial and continuing VET, in particular literacy, numeracy, digital, entrepreneurship, as well as languages, including common methodologies for introducing those competences in curricula, as well as for acquiring, delivering and assessing the learning outcomes of those curricula;

- Supporting the uptake of innovative approaches and digital technologies for teaching and learning, as outlined in the Digital Education Action Plan, including the effective use of the SELFIE self-reflection tool to support a comprehensive approach to innovation, and the use of digital technologies for pedagogical, administrative, technical and organisational change;

- Introducing systematic approaches to, and opportunities for, the initial and continuous professional development of VET teachers, trainers and mentors in both school and work-based settings (including apprenticeships), as well as through the development of effective digital, open and innovative education and pedagogies, as well as practical tools; raising the attractiveness of the professions for VET teachers, trainers, mentors and leaders;

- Developing sustainable partnerships to establish and/or further develop national, regional and sectoral skills competitions organisations, as a form of raising the attractiveness and excellence in VET. These partnerships could also develop and support the practical arrangements for the preparation, training and participation of VET learners and staff in international, national, regional and sectoral skills competitions, while working closely together with businesses, VET providers, chambers and other relevant stakeholders.

Key Action 2: Strategic Partnerships

OBJECTIVES, PRIORITIES AND EXAMPLES

Examples of Strategic Partnerships in the field of Adult Education

[example of a Strategic Partnership supporting Exchange of Good Practices]

Enhancing Retirement Planning [Strategic Partnership supporting Innovation]

Cognisant of the fact that increased life expectancy, in many industrialised countries, will lead to a longer period of retirement, partners from three European countries target improved preparation for those about to enter this "third age". Having confirmed the state-of-play in the participating countries, specifically the expectations of those about to enter retirement, partners will focus their attention towards the development of a series of common guidelines for use by those working to support retirement planning. In this respect, primary target audiences are vast and include employers, unions, professional associations, and local and regional authorities, among others. Developed guidelines will be piloted with end users in each of the partner countries and, ultimately, centre on improving pre-retirement planning and course delivery within and beyond the participating institutions and countries. Project partners are all affiliated with the University of the Third Age (U3A), providing a vehicle for wider dissemination and exploitation.

[example of a Strategic Partnership supporting Innovation]

Professionalising Adult Education *[Strategic Partnership supporting Exchange of Good Practices]*

The ultimate goal of this strategic partnership is the professionalisation and modernisation of adult education. Bringing together partners from five European countries, adult education staff will be encouraged to consider a new philosophy which extends their role to that of adult educator, researcher and learning facilitator. In the first instance, partners will pilot this staff development action with specific cohorts of unemployed women looking to develop basic skills with a view to successfully entering the labour market. In the longer-term, the developed model and approach expects to be able to be used with wider target audiences across the adult education sector.

Key Action 2:
Strategic
Partnerships

OBJECTIVES,
PRIORITIES AND
EXAMPLES

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Example of a Strategic Partnership in the field of Higher Education

[example of a Strategic Partnership supporting Innovation]

Modernising Music Education

Recognising difficulties faced by qualified musicians in accessing relevant employment, and aware of the often-excessive numbers of applicants applying for a limited number of posts in the music industry, partners from four European countries are working together with a view to modernising existing higher education curricula, and related teaching and learning approaches, in the field of music education (Masters-level). Actions centre on creative and collaborative learning, and the use of mentoring and practice-based research. Delivery will additionally involve student and staff mobility and will centre on the hosting of two intensive study programmes and two staff development courses. Participating staff will be further encouraged to contribute to a platform for professional integration, entrepreneurship and collaborative (cross-arts) practice. Student beneficiaries, and future graduates, can expect to benefit from increased employment opportunities, as skilled yet flexible musicians, and from improved leadership and entrepreneurship skills. End project results will take the form of updated curricula to be delivered by participating institutions and wider partners, including internationally.

Example of a Strategic Partnership in the field of Vocational Education & Training

[example of a Strategic Partnership supporting Innovation]

Targeted Learning for Automation, Truck Maintenance and Welding

Partners from seven European countries project come together in a strategic partnership centred on enhancing the quality and attractiveness of VET through promoting the use of ECVET principles in a European (rather than national) classroom setting. Building on past successes, extending these to new countries and new sectors, units of learning outcomes will be developed for automation, truck maintenance and welding programmes. Newly-participating partners will directly involve VET learner cohorts with a view to testing the relevance, usefulness and ease of delivery of the developed units (of learning outcomes) and will seek feedback from learner participants with a view to improving the end project results. In the longer-term, the developed units will facilitate the cross-border delivery of occupationally-relevant learning outcomes and might easily be used in the delivery of future VET mobility programmes for individual learners.

Example of Strategic Partnerships in the field of School Education

[example of a Strategic Partnership supporting Innovation]

Tackling Early School Leaving: Targeting Change for Pupils and Teachers

This larger-scale strategic partnership brings together different organisations working within and beyond the school education sector. Ultimate beneficiaries are pupils with low levels of basic skills and perceived to be at risk of early school leaving. Initial targets for the project are teaching staff in the four participating European countries, working in different learning environments, with activities centred on: the development and delivery of in-service training for the delivery of pupil guidance and retention strategies; the production of guidelines and case studies; and, the creation of a digital open access platform to encourage professional discussion and knowledge sharing among teachers and other educational practitioners. The online platform will additionally support promotion and will be used alongside existing partner networks to market the end project results.

[example of a School Exchange Partnership: a field-specific Strategic Partnership for the Exchange of Good Practices]

School Exchanges based on a Shared Labour Market Challenge

Schools from five different remote communities, in Europe, collaborate with a view to considering how to better prepare their pupils for the needs and expectations of a changing labour market. Each of the five communities will share its own experiences of a labour market affected by industrial change, urbanisation, and worker migration. Pupils will be encouraged to consider what their own region has to offer, in terms of sustainable employment, making career ambitions more relevant to today's labour market. International collaboration will centre on a series of short-term pupil exchanges, one to each of the partner schools, through which students will be able to see how different communities have reacted to similar labour market challenges. Pupils will undertake project-based learning, with their peers in other countries, and will also collaborate with representatives of local industry. Teachers will additionally benefit through participating in round table short-term joint staff training events, in which round-table discussions will be held, with teaching professionals from other schools and countries, with a view to sharing knowledge, experience and good practice.