Erasmus+
Enriching lives, opening minds.

Erasmus+: Additional Financial Support for Students

Funding opportunities through top-up grants and real costs funding for students with fewer opportunities

(Version 2, October 2026)

EUROPEAN UNION

NA | DAAD
Nationale Agentur für Erasmus+ Hochschulzusammenarbeit
Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst
German Academic Exchange Service

With funding from the:
Federal Ministry of Research, Technology and Space

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1. General Information

Equal opportunities are a central focus of the Erasmus+ program. Additional financial support is provided to enable more students with fewer opportunities—due to financial and structural barriers—to study abroad through Erasmus+.

In Germany, the following groups are defined as **students with fewer opportunities**:

- **Students with a documented disability**
- **Students with a chronic illness** (this can include both physical and chronic mental health conditions)
- **Students who take their child(ren) with them abroad**
- **First-generation students**
- **Working students** (funding for universities is optional; see 2.2.5)
- **Incoming students under key action KA171 facing financial barriers** (funding for universities optional, see 2.2.6)

If you belong to one of the target groups listed above, you may be eligible to receive additional financial support for your stay abroad in addition to the basic Erasmus+ funding in the form of:

- **a monthly flat-rate top-up grant:** All target groups
- **Reimbursement of additional costs incurred abroad through a real costs application:** Students with a chronic illness/disability and students with a child/children

It makes no difference whether you are studying abroad or completing an internship, nor does it matter which cycle of study you are in (bachelor's/master's/doctoral program, graduate internship).

Important:

Funding opportunities are being gradually expanded. Additionally, there are university-specific requirements. To find out the currently applicable funding conditions, please contact the Erasmus+ coordinators at your university.

2. Additional financial support with a top-up grant

2.1 Type of funding

Students may receive a top-up grant in addition to their regular Erasmus+ grant if they…

- have a documented disability,
- have a chronic illness that results in additional financial needs while abroad,
- are taking their child(ren) abroad with them,
- are first-generation students,
- are employed and must give up their job—which they have held for at least 6 months—in order to carry out their stay abroad.
- Incoming students under key action KA171 who face economic barriers

The top-up amount is €250 per month for a stay abroad lasting several months. Students undertaking "short-term mobility" (5–30 days abroad) receive a one-time payment of €100.00 for physical mobility lasting 5 to 14 days, or a one-time payment of €150.00 for physical mobility lasting between 15 and 30 days.

Important:

- If you are going abroad via Erasmus+ on a "zero-grant mobility" (i.e., without financial support), you are not eligible for the top-up grant.
- The top-up grant can only be awarded once, even if you belong to more than one of the target groups listed above.
- However, the top-up grant can be combined with the top-up grant for internships.
- You must apply for the top-up grant at your university.

2.2 Further information and requirements:

Anyone wishing to apply for a top-up grant must meet the following criteria:

2.2.1 Students with a disability

- If the degree of disability (GdB) is 20 or higher, or
- if you have a documented disability that results in additional financial needs,

you can apply for the top-up grant at your university.

2.2.2 Students with a chronic illness

- If you have additional financial needs while studying abroad due to a chronic illness, you can apply to your university for a top-up grant.
- The definition of serious chronic illnesses provided by the Federal Ministry of Health[1] can be used as a guide:

  "(...) According to this, a person is considered to have a serious chronic illness if they can demonstrate at least one doctor's visit per quarter for the same illness for at least one year and additionally meet one of the following criteria: either a need for care at care level 3, 4, or 5, or a degree of disability or a reduction in earning capacity of at least 60%. In addition, a person is considered to have a serious chronic illness if they require continuous medical care, without which, according to a medical assessment, a life-threatening exacerbation of the illness, a reduction in life expectancy, or a permanent impairment of quality of life due to the health impairment caused by the illness is to be expected. Chronic illnesses requiring long-term treatment may include, for example, diabetes mellitus, asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, or coronary heart disease."
- Universities may recognize other chronic conditions that result in additional financial needs as eligible for funding. Please contact the Erasmus+ coordinators at your university for more information.

[1] Translated from the original German source.

Important:

- Please do not submit medical diagnoses to your university unsolicited.
- There are a variety of chronic conditions that do not, however, result in (significant) additional financial costs abroad. These are **not** eligible for the top-up grant.

2.2.3 Students who take their child(ren) abroad

- If you are taking at least one child with you for the entire duration of your stay, you can apply for the top-up grant at your university.
- The top-up grant can only be granted once—even if you take multiple children with you.

2.2.4 First-generation students

- If neither parent (or the single parent) or primary caregiver holds a university degree or a comparable qualification (such as from a vocational academy), you can apply for the top-up grant at your university.
- You can usually find out whether a degree qualifies as an academic degree on the HRK's Hochschulkompass website and on the website of the German Accreditation Council.
- For foreign degrees, in case of doubt, you must provide proof to your university that they are not considered academic degrees.
- The deciding factor is having grown up in a non-academic household. In special circumstances—even if the parents hold academic degrees (e.g. early death, loss of contact, or parents who are pursuing higher education after their child has already reached adulthood)—the top-up grant may still be awarded. Please contact the Erasmus+ coordinators at your university for more information.

2.2.5 Working students (optional, see note below)

- If you have to quit your job to go abroad—a job you held continuously for at least six months prior to your stay and from which you earned an average monthly net income of between €450 and €850—you can apply to your university for the top-up grant.
- Terminating your employment is not a requirement for receiving the top-up grant; your employment contract may also be put on hold.

Important:

- Providing the top-up grant to working students is optional for universities. This means that universities can decide for themselves whether to offer this support, depending on their available financial resources. You can find out whether your university provides the top-up grant to working students by contacting the Erasmus+ coordinators at your university.
- If your university provides support to working students through the top-up grant, it may exclude self-employed activities and dual/part-time degree programs with a fixed salary from the support. You can find out the exact eligibility criteria from the Erasmus+ coordinators at your university.

2.2.6 Incoming students under key action KA171 facing economic barriers (optional, see note below)

- If your economic background prevents you from participating in a mobility program or makes participation difficult, you can apply for the top-up grant at your host university.
- This applies, for example, if you are required to provide financial proof to obtain a visa and cannot cover these costs from your own funds.

Important:

- Funding for incoming students under the key action KA171 with economic barriers through the supplementary grant is optional for universities. This means that universities can decide for themselves, depending on available financial resources, whether to offer this funding. You can find out from the Erasmus+ coordinators at your university whether your institution provides funding for incoming students under key action KA171 with economic barriers through the top-up grant.

2.3 Supporting Documents

- To receive the top-up grant, you must submit a signed **declaration on honor** to your university. With this, you certify that you meet the eligibility criteria. Most universities

provide pre-formulated declaration on honor for this purpose. Please contact the Erasmus+ coordinators at your university if you are unsure whether you are eligible to receive the top-up grant.

Important:

- Universities are entitled to request additional proof of your eligibility from you in addition to the declaration on honor.

3. Additional financial support via real costs application

3.1 Type of Funding

Through an application for real costs, the additional costs incurred during the stay abroad due to a disability or due to bringing one or more children along (partially) can be financed, provided that the costs are not covered by a third party.

Students may receive additional funding through a real costs application if they…

- have a documented disability that results in additional financial needs abroad,
- have a chronic illness that results in additional financial needs abroad,
- take their child(ren) with them abroad.

Participants with a documented disability or chronic illness can generally receive real cost funding of verified additional expenses of up to a maximum of €15,000 per semester and €30,000 per year.
For students taking children abroad, travel expenses for the children as well as a portion of accommodation and childcare costs may be reimbursed.
Participants with a documented disability or chronic illness may apply for a preparatory trip to assess local conditions in preparation for an already approved Erasmus+ study abroad stay.

3.2 Real-World Examples of Eligible Cost Items

With real costs funding, students with a disability or chronic illness can apply for a wide variety of cost items depending on their individual needs. These include, for example:

- Travel expenses: Increased travel costs for extra legroom on the plane; local taxi costs for those with muscle weakness or lung disease; return trips for necessary doctor's visits and to obtain medication

- Housing: Accessible housing for those with limited mobility; a private apartment instead of a shared apartment for those with autism, Tourette syndrome, or cystic fibrosis; a multi-room apartment to accommodate personal assistants
- Accompanying person to help with settling in locally
- Assistance services
- Other: Guide dog; wheelchair-accessible easel; nursing bed; patient lift, mattress, and pillows for beneficiaries with scoliosis; screen reader; cooler bag for transporting medication; fees for certificates when transporting controlled substances (medications subject to the Narcotics Act); shipping costs for transporting medical supplies

3.3 Application for real costs funding

It is important that you discuss the eligibility requirements for receiving funding and the necessary supporting documents with the Erasmus+ coordinators at your university well in advance. To apply for real costs funding, fill out the application form together with your university before the start of your stay abroad (you can obtain this from the Erasmus+ coordinators at your university). Your university submits the application to the Erasmus+ National Agency Higher Education, which decides on funding based on an eligibility review and the availability of funds.

Important:

- You must provide your university with supporting documents to prove your eligibility. In the case of a disability or chronic illness, this may include, for example, a medical certificate, a notice from the state social welfare office, a disability ID card, or other documentation that credibly demonstrates the impairment (such as a confirmation from a licensed therapist). If you are bringing one or more children with you, you should be able to present their birth certificates and, if necessary, proof that the child(ren) regularly live with you in your household.
- For all cost items included in the application, calculations or documentation of the estimated amount, as well as explanations or documentation of the necessity of the requested costs, must be submitted along with the application.
- For cost items covered in Germany by third parties (e.g., for assistance services, medical services), partial approvals or rejection notices from the relevant cost-bearing entities (e.g., state social welfare offices, health insurance companies) must generally be

submitted with the application. Allow sufficient time for inquiries to the relevant cost-bearing entities.

The final application must be submitted by your university to the Erasmus+ National Agency Higher Education no later than 2 months before the start of your stay abroad. Please note that there are often follow-up requests for additional documents or explanations after applying. Therefore, you should plan for additional time needed to gather those documents in time for the 2-month deadline and start the application process as early as possible.

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The DAAD is an association of German universities and their student bodies. It is institutionally funded by the German Federal Foreign Office.

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2nd edition, October 2026
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This publication was funded by the European Commission and the Federal Ministry of Research, Technology and Space (BMFTR).

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With funding from the:
Federal Ministry of Research, Technology and Space