



Catalonia working with Europe

Supporting the active participation of Catalan institutions and citizens in European cooperation

#CATALONIA WORKING WITH EUROPE COMMENT#

DG EAC, WE NEED DAMAGE CONTROL

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“No, we should not submit in my country...”

“Perhaps it would be better to submit in your country, because they seem to like...!”

“Many we should change the coordinator, because it that country we know that... Etc.

Approaching the second round of Erasmus+ strategic partnership applications, words like these are spoken and heard all over Europe.

The focus is not on the quality of the innovation and on what Europe needs, but on tactical manoeuvres in the European application game.

How did we end up here?

Because it was decided to hand over the assessment of strategic partnerships to the National Agencies.

Strategic partnerships are not the major funding mechanism in the Commission's palette, but they are very important as they come close to very many and very many different citizens in Europe, thus also promoting the European Project.

Many of us warned against this. We warned against chaotic assessment, lack of respect for people's application work and the resulting devaluation of strategic partnerships.

We are now receiving reports from across Europe presenting a long line of strange NA behaviours, adding up to an overall impression of the stochastic of assessment procedures, evaluator mentality and national agency peculiarities.

The decision to hand over the assessment to the NA's is based on putting the emphasis on the “coordinator” and not on the “partnership”.

The national identity of the coordinator decides in which NA the application will be assessed.

But why? A coordinator is after all just a coordinator; the important thing is the European partnership and the project mission.

The decision ensures that the total funding will be distributed across all member states.

Yes, and so what? Even if no “Hungarian applications” would be granted in a centralized assessment round, many of the projects would most likely still include Hungarian partners.

Now, a 72 scoring application will be granted in one country, while an 86 scoring application is not granted in another. And why? Because the coordinator is located in a certain country - a coordinator representing 1 out of perhaps 8 partners and countries participating in the project.

DG EAC, we need damage control and we need to restore the credibility of Erasmus+ and its assessments, to counter the malicious nationalistic idea of “equal” distribution of the funding and to reinstall a fair trial and “may the best project win”, no matter if the coordinator is Turkish or Irish.

We need to re-focus on PARTNERSHIP, INNOVATION and FAIR TREATMENT OF APPLICATIONS AND PEOPLE.

If some countries are not satisfied with their European participation, their NA's should work to build capacity among their institutions to participate.