

DiscoverEU: Questions and Answers

What is DiscoverEU?

DiscoverEU is an EU initiative which offers 18-year-olds a travel experience that will enable them to take advantage of the freedom of movement in the European Union, discover the diversity of European regions, enjoy its cultural richness, and connect with people from all over the continent. At the same time, they will have the chance to learn more about themselves, gain self-confidence and improve key competencies such as problem-solving and foreign language skills.

Why don't you offer this opportunity to all 18-year-olds?

The aim is to give as many young people as possible the chance to benefit from DiscoverEU. However, with a current budget of €12 million, it is not possible to offer travel passes to all 18-year-olds in Europe.

Following the huge interest so far and the overwhelmingly positive feedback from participants, the Commission wants to develop DiscoverEU, further strengthening the initiative's outreach to disadvantaged groups and learning dimension in line with the general objectives of the future Erasmus programme. Therefore, the European Commission has proposed to allocate €700 million to the initiative under the future [Erasmus](#) programme (2021-2027). If the European Parliament and the Council agree to the proposal, an additional 1.5 million 18-year-olds will be able to travel between 2021 and 2027.

Is there a quota per country?

A quota of travel passes is set for each Member State based on the share of its population compared to the overall population of the European Union. In case there are fewer applicants in certain countries than their fixed quotas, the remaining travel passes will be distributed among the countries where there are more applicants than their quotas.

Why is the initiative only accessible to young people aged 18?

DiscoverEU is an initiative originally requested by the European Parliament with the objective of providing travel and mobility opportunities for young people turning 18. The programme specifically targets 18-year-olds, as this age marks a major step to adulthood which should go hand in hand with an increased understanding for Europe in all its diversity.

For how many days are participants allowed to travel?

Young people can travel for a minimum of 1 day and up to 1 month. They should visit at least one Member State in the European Union other than their country of residence. For the second round, trips must start between 15 April 2019 (first departure date) and 31 October 2019 (last return date).

What modes of transport can be used?

As a basic rule, participants will travel by rail. Nevertheless, in order to ensure the widest possible access – for instance among young people with special needs, or those living in remote areas – alternative transport modes can be offered, such as buses or ferries, when necessary and taking into account environmental, travel and distance consideration. Travel will be in second class.

Can a participant travel alone or in a group of friends?

The project foresees that participants can travel either individually or in a group of maximum 5 people. In the case of a group, a group leader must be appointed on the group's behalf. The group leader will fill in the application form and respond to the quiz and subsidiary question. S/he will receive a code in the confirmation email when submitting the application and should communicate this code to the group members in order to allow their registration. Based on the code provided by the group leader, the remaining group members will be able to register online and fill in their personal data.

If a group application is successful, will all group members be able to participate?

Yes, a group application will be assessed as one single application.

How are the young people selected?

The selection of applicants took place via an online application tool available on the [European Youth Portal](#). Applicants first had to pass the eligibility criteria check. Then, all applicants needed to complete a quiz. They had to answer 5 multiple choice quiz questions linked to the [2018 European Year of Cultural Heritage](#), other European Union initiatives targeting young people and the upcoming European Parliament elections. Finally, they had to answer an additional question related to the second application round. The correct replies to the quiz and this final question enabled the European Commission to make the selection and to rank the applicants.

What about young people with reduced mobility and/or special needs?

Young people with special needs (such as reduced mobility, visual impairments) may be entitled to receive appropriate additional support. Those costs will be assessed on a case-by-case basis according to their needs and based on appropriate documents, as required under the national law of the Member State of residence. In this respect, costs of special assistance (for example an accompanying person, a dog for visually impaired participants) might be covered. The Commission generally strongly encourages young people with special needs to apply.

Should the selected participants book the travel passes themselves?

No. Selected participants should not book their travel passes themselves, as tickets purchased separately shall not be reimbursed. Travel passes for the selected participants will exclusively be booked, purchased and delivered by

the external contractor designated by the European Commission.

What is the value of the travel passes?

The basic rule is that each participant will be entitled to financing of his or her travel pass of €260. Travel will only be in second or economy class. However, this amount can be higher in specific cases, for instance for people living in remote regions.

Can a relative or friend older than 18 travel with the participant?

Yes, at their own expense. They themselves would have to book and pay for their travel arrangements.

Is the travel pass transferable to another person?

No. Each travel pass will be nominative and cannot be transferred to another person under any circumstance. The name on the travel pass cannot be changed.

What if the participants have to cancel their trip or need to modify it?

Any potential cancellation or modification fees will need to be covered by the participants. There is no extra budget to cover expenditure of this kind, whatever the reason.

Are any of the following expenses included: travel insurance, accommodation, subsistence or any other expenses related to the trip?

No. The initiative does not include any travel insurance. Insurance coverage is the sole responsibility of the participant. Moreover, accommodation, subsistence, travel supplements to be paid during the trip or any other expenses related to the trip shall be covered by the participant.

The participant should acquire appropriate health and travel insurance for the whole duration of the trip. Basic health insurance coverage is usually provided by the participant's national health insurance during his/her stay in another European Union country through the European Health Insurance Card. However, the coverage of the European Health Insurance Card or private health insurance may not include all possible cases, especially if repatriation or specific medical intervention is needed. In that case, complementary private insurance is advisable.

Will the European Commission help participants with booking accommodation?

No. Booking accommodation is the sole responsibility of the participant.

Will the European Commission give preference to specific transport operators?

No. The contractor who will book the trips can select any public transport mode and any operators or lines.

How can participants prepare their trips?

The [European Youth Portal](#) has a website section with practical information

about [travelling in Europe](#), where the participants can find useful tips. Participants must possess their valid travel document/pass during their journey. Anything related to such a document (for instance its validity) is the participant's responsibility. Young people should also have a valid passport or ID card when travelling in the European Union. Anything related to such a document (validity, etc.) is the participant's responsibility.

What is expected from the selected participants?

The European Commission would like to hear back from the young travellers and will encourage them to share their experiences. That is why, once selected, participants become ambassadors for the initiative. They will be encouraged to report back on their travel experiences, for example through social media like Instagram, Facebook and Twitter, or by providing a presentation at their school or local community. Participants are welcome to join the Facebook Group set up for this initiative.

What has the feedback from the participants in the first round been like?

Feedback from participants has been very positive. For many, it was the first time they had travelled without parents or other adults, and the majority indicated that they had become more independent. They also stated that the DiscoverEU experience had given them a better understanding of other cultures and of European history. And they feel it has improved their foreign language skills. Two thirds said that they would not have been able to finance their travel pass without DiscoverEU.

Where can people find more information on the rules of the contest?

The rules of the contest are published on the European Youth Portal.

For more information

[Press release](#)

[European Youth Portal](#)