

Erasmus+ photography guide for beneficiaries

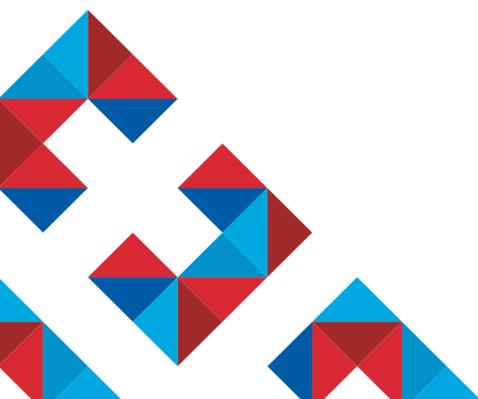
New to photography? Being responsible for capturing photos of your project's activities can seem overwhelming at first.

But don't worry - our step-by-step guide is here to help, with useful tips and essential information to give you the confidence to start snapping away.

Why should you take photographs?

Taking photographs throughout your project is key to your Erasmus+ experience. Photos help to:

- keep a visual diary of the project's activities and participants' involvement;
- add valuable content to final reports;
- enhance the project's dissemination of results;
- encourage people to engage with your organisation on social media; and
- contribute to your organisation's print and digital publications, such as brochures and leaflets, as well as sharing with the local press.



How to prepare for your photos

Identify why you are taking photos - Think about what you are trying to capture and convey with your photos and why, as well as the photographic style you want. This will give you an idea of what equipment and techniques are required.

In an interview with Erasmus+, digital media expert Jennifer Jones highlighted the need to capture your journey: “By capturing the planning, key moments, behind-the-scenes activities, etc. of our projects, we are able to build up an ongoing picture of what is happening whilst it is happening.”

Planning - It's good to have some sort of plan before you begin photographing. Think about when would be best to schedule in a shoot, where and what you would like to photograph. For example, are you filming outside when there is sunlight? Ensure there are no shadows darkening the subject or distorting the image. If you are indoors or filming when there is no natural light available, take a few photos with and without flash enabled on your camera to see what setting is better.

Planning in advance and being prepared for what to expect will save time and effort as well as help you capture a good standard of images. Good timing is critical to capturing project activities, while the setting and people can really make an impact on portrait-type pictures.

Top Tip! - It's always better to take extra pictures if there is no cost in doing so.

Consent - Before taking pictures of your participants or others involved in your project, ensure they have written consent in order to comply with the latest General Data Protection Regulations. Download [our consent form template](#) (284 KB).

Choosing your equipment

Once you know what you want to achieve with your images, you can then decide what type of equipment will best deliver your aims.

Using a smartphone camera is the go-to choice nowadays; it's easy to use, carry and usually has built-in tools and features, as well as the option to download editing apps to enhance your pictures. Alternatively, you can always invest in professional photographic equipment if you want that extra professional finish to your pictures.

If you are new to photography, we recommend starting with your phone. It is an accessible and user-friendly option for capturing spontaneous moments during your projects and events.

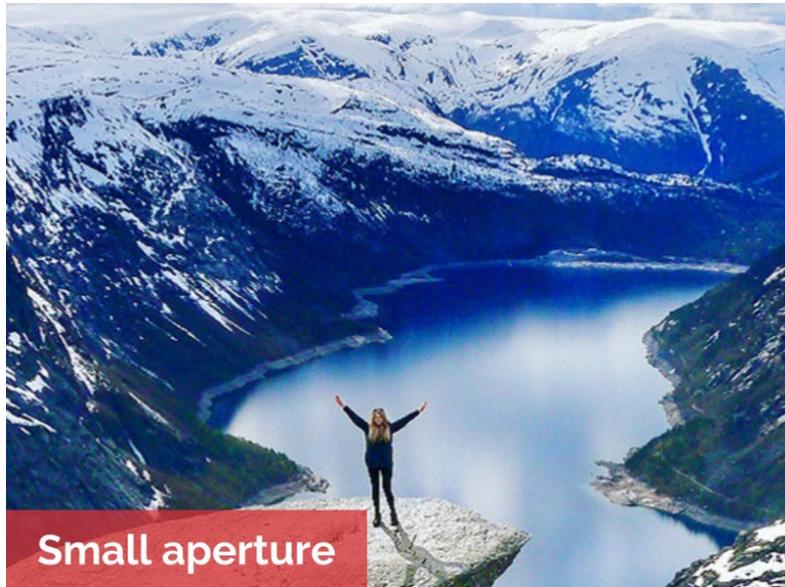
Top tip! - Use a tripod to keep your images stable and level.

Once you know what you want your photographs to capture and have got your equipment, now is a good time to play around with your device and take some test shots to familiarise yourself with how the camera works. Then if you are in a position where you have to take photos quickly, you'll know exactly what to do.

Finding your focus

When it comes to taking a photo, there are a few things you need to consider before pressing the shutter. One of these is what it is you want to focus on – is it the whole scene or something happening in the foreground? Changing your camera's aperture settings will help with this.

In photography, aperture is the setting that helps to adjust the depth and light of your pictures. A small aperture can increase the depth of field to get the whole scene in focus. It's great for scenic shots.



A large aperture is perfect for focusing on your subject, separating it from the background, which is helpful when you'd like to draw people's attention to something specific in the photo.



Top Tip! - Avoid having the subject in front of the light source. The camera will overexpose the background and darken the subject.

Compose your images

Now that you're up to speed on how to focus on a subject using aperture, it's time to think about how you would like to compose the shot.

The rule of thirds - By breaking your shot into thirds, using two horizontal and two vertical lines, you get four indications of the points of interest.



You should place the main subjects or the focus points in your scene at the intersection of these four axes. Most digital cameras and smartphones have the option to display this grid onscreen.

Balance and symmetry - Arrange your visual elements according to their 'weight'. Weight depends on the size, intensity of colour or complexity of details shown by each element in the shot. A symmetrically balanced picture could show two individuals or teams taking part in your projects opposite each other. You can also place the subject at the centre of your image and have equal amounts of background on each side.



Set the scene

Whether you are taking photos of a busy activity or one of a participant standing and smiling, you need to pick a type of shot that will best reflect what is happening at that moment in order to capture the scene effectively.

Long shots – These are ideal for capturing busy moments from activities and events. They reveal the scale and establish the context.



Medium shots – Use these for portraying your participants during events or interviews. It gives a good balance between the person, their body language and the setting.

Close-up shots – These are ideal for sharing a personal story or details of a project output from a project. Close-ups establish a connection with the audience and better captures emotive expressions.

Selfies - While the usual format is portrait, selfies can be taken in landscape to capture a larger group.



Editing Photographs

Using editing features or tools is a great and easy way to enhance or tweak your photos. If your organisation uses Instagram and Facebook, you can use their in-built features for editing. Otherwise, there are multiple free phone applications, online platforms and paid professional software to use. [This article](#) lists what software would be best for you depending on your skills and needs.

Promotion

Promotion and dissemination is a key aspect of managing your Erasmus+ grant.

If your organisation has a website, why not write a blog post or news article describing an event or perhaps a participants' experience? Use your photos to illustrate the text and add colour and flair to your post. Photos are also a great way to show everyone your project's activities on social media.

With our tips and tricks in mind, it's time to get out there and start photographing!

We love to see and share the moments that you capture on our social media, so make sure you mention us on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) and use the hashtag #epluspeople.