

European Student Card Initiative – ESCI

The European Commission has decided to digitalise the entire administrative management process of the Erasmus+ programme. This is a major project requiring the implementation of a network as well as various digital tools and modules essential to ensure the proper functioning of this initiative. Here is a closer look at the different components and how they work.

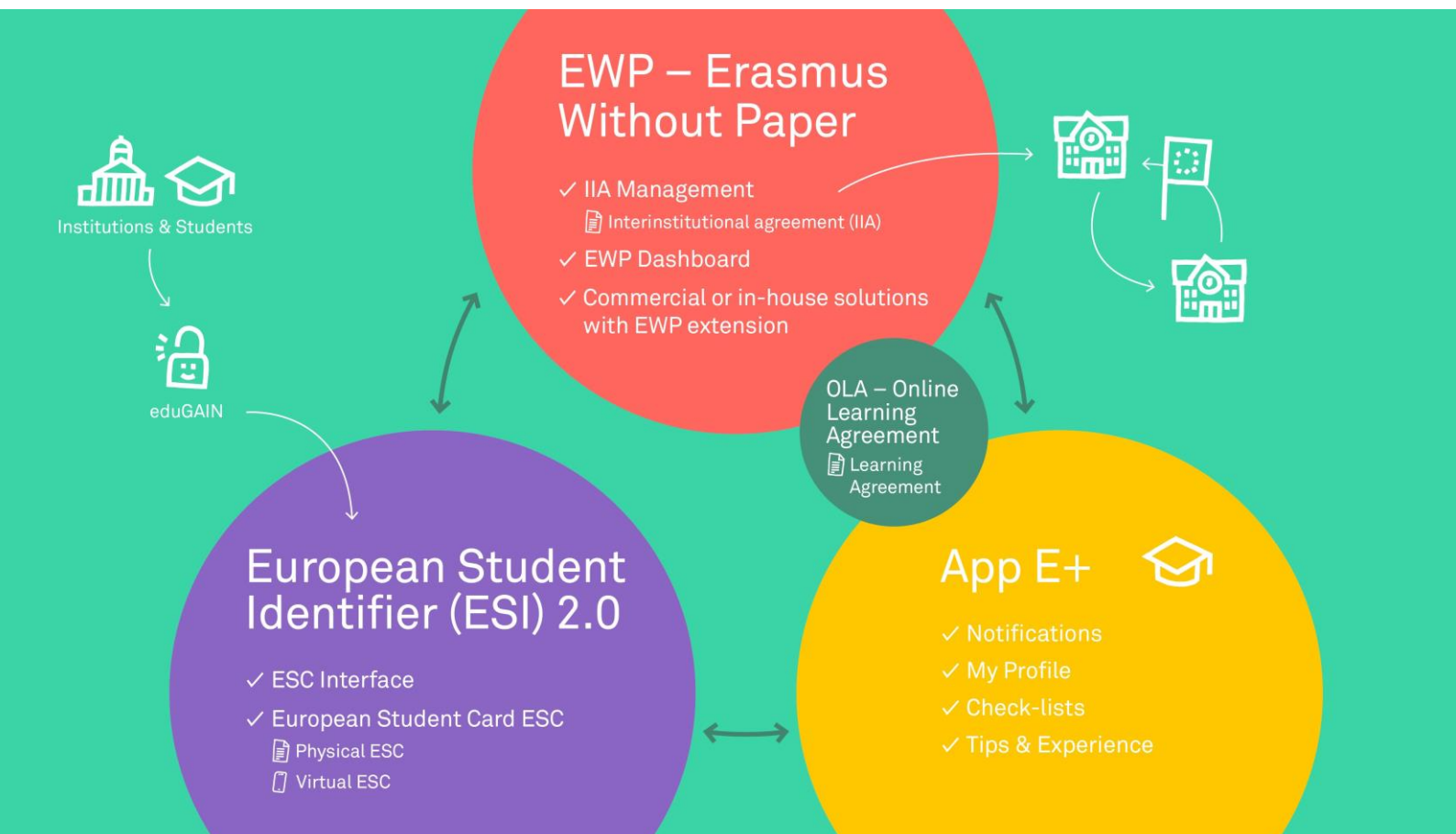
What is it about?

The European Student Card Initiative brings together several European projects, three of which are central:

- Erasmus Without Paper (EWP)
- The European Student Identifier (ESI) from the MyAcademicID project
- The Erasmus+ app

These three projects are interconnected and create an information hub between European students, home and host institutions. The initiative is helping to create a European digital education space. Currently, it only addresses student mobility.

Image – Overview of the European Student Card Initiative



Erasmus Without Paper (EWP)

The aim

- Replace the paper-based process with a digital one;
- Reduce the administrative burden for students and staff;
- Create a free public infrastructure;
- Standardise technical solutions for student mobility.

Tools and modules

EWP Dashboard

The [EWP Dashboard](#) is a tool designed to help higher education institutions manage outgoing and incoming mobility online. It is linked to the Online Learning Agreement (OLA) module to create, sign and revise the Learning Agreement, as well as with the module for exchanging inter-institutional agreements between higher education institutions (IIA Management). The EWP Dashboard allows institutions that do not have commercial or in-house solutions to connect to the EWP for free. In the future it is also foreseen to link the EWP Dashboard to the European Commission's Mobility Tool+, which manages data from all Erasmus+ countries.

Commercial mobility management solutions

The majority of institutions in Switzerland use commercial management software (e.g. MoveOn, MobilityOnline) to manage their mobility. Most of the providers of these solutions have developed their product to connect to the EWP network, allowing the exchange of LA and IIA through APIs¹ built into their systems. The APIs are freely available and can be downloaded from <https://developers.erasmuswithoutpaper.eu>. Institutions which have their own in-house solution can also connect to the network. However, the IT department must be involved in the development. The technical documents for implementation are available [here](#).

Inter-Institutional Agreement Management (IIAM)

The Inter-Institutional Agreement Management (IIAM) is a tool developed within the EWP ecosystem to create, finalise and update online inter-institutional agreements between higher education institutions. More information on the features can be found [here](#).

Online Learning Agreement (OLA)

The OLA is an interface between students and HEIs using the OLA module of the Dashboard. It makes exchanging Learning Agreements by email or post redundant. Students receive OLA notifications on the Erasmus+ App, from where they are then redirected to the platform on which they must use their academic identifiers to log in. The reverse is also possible if students initiate the process first; they can send the document to their home university. More information on the process can be found [here](#).

Provisional Calendar

- 2021** Online Learning Agreement Management
- 2022** Inter-Institutional Agreement Management
- 2023** Exchange of information concerning the designation and acceptance of students and transcripts of records related to student mobility
- 2025** Full deployment of all functionalities

As of March 2021, more than 70% of European institutions were connected to the EWP ecosystem.

¹ API : Application Programming Interface – allows the integration of application software.



Swiss higher education institutions have access to test the dashboard since 2019.

European Student Identifier (ESI) 2.0

The “My Academic ID” project implemented in 2019-2020 aimed to find the best way for European students to identify themselves when applying for a mobility programme abroad. The final product is the MyAcademicID Identity and Access Management Service which allows students on exchange programmes abroad to register and authenticate themselves with higher education institutions, to manage their Erasmus mobility process and to access various student services in Europe.

How it works

Higher education institutions that are connected to the eduGAIN network (operated by GÉANT) can register their students.

To use the identifier, you need:

- Verification that the student's institution is part of the eduGAIN network
- Collaboration with the institution's IT department >> [more technical information](#)
- Generation of a European identifier for students, which will allow them to be recognised as such throughout Europe via the registration form:

<https://router.europeanstudentcard.eu/register>

It is also possible to access this service directly from the EWP Dashboard.

European student card

The European student card is a product of the European Student Card project. It is a student card issued by an institution, supplemented by a European number, a QR code and a hologram. The card is recognised on the campus of the partner institution, allowing access to libraries, payment in the cafeteria and the use of student accommodation services, for example. The card is also available in digital format on the Erasmus+ app. The services available are activated according to the specific European higher education institution.

The card is created on the initiative of the institution following the registration of the institution on the Router.



Swiss institutions are connected to the eduGAIN network via SWITCHaai ([list of connected Swiss institutions](#)). Swiss institutions have to perform a special additional configuration to generate and issue the ESI. According to the current information, this would not be supported by any Swiss institution in the SWITCHaai network. However, the ESI could be created in the institutions without necessarily being added to the SWITCHaai identity federations, which would then allow Swiss institutions that have a PIC Number ([search by institution](#)) to register on the ESC router (mentioned above).

The Erasmus+ app

The [new Erasmus+ App](#) is one of the most integral parts of the new Erasmus+ programme (2021 – 2027). It is based on the original app launched in 2017 but it has been redesigned to be the single entry point for Erasmus+ participants. The goal of the app is to guide participants through the entire journey of an Erasmus+ exchange.

Functionalities

The current version, released in December 2020, has the following features:

- Private profile with detailed information related to the mobility, linked to the European Student Identifier.
- Access to the Online Learning Agreement ([OLA](#)), Online Linguistic Support ([OLS](#)) and [Skills Assessment](#).
- Find out about events, discounts, advice, and stories concerning your destination or tips on how to best prepare for your exchange.

The full multilingual app will go live in September 2021 and will have new features for students and higher education institutions (according to the services provided by the single institutions):

- Student will be able to discover the possible mobility destinations according to their home institution (via the institution's dashboard).
- Student will be able to apply for mobility and receive their nomination (via the institution's dashboard).
- Student will be able to access the Digital Student Card.

Access

Students can access the app in two different ways:

- EU login: for participants in Erasmus Mundus, Vocational Education and Training and Youth Exchanges
- EduGAIN: for participants in Higher Education Study and Traineeship Mobility

International Relation Offices can send all information directly to the app by accessing the EWP Dashboard (OLA, mobility destinations, etc.).

For a visual representation of what the app looks like, please consult the separate Pdf “Zoom on the Erasmus+ App”.



Swiss students can log in to the app with their academic IDs (linked to SWITCHaai). They can then log in to MyAcademicID. Students can use the OLA platform as long as the Swiss institutions have access.

Data protection

Data protection in Switzerland is nationally regulated. In this respect, Swiss institutions are required to comply with the Federal Act on Data Protection (FADP) adopted in June 1992 (revisions planned for 2022). However, the European Union's General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) also applies in Switzerland. The European regulation applies when the personal data processing concerns people established in the European Economic Area.

Current situation for Switzerland

So far, Swiss institutions have been able to connect to EWP and test the tools. However, Movetia cannot guarantee, due to the changeover to the new programme generation 2021-27 (for example with the new Erasmus Charter for higher education), to what extent Swiss institutions will have access to the services or whether it will be (partially) blocked in the future.

Different scenarios and developments to be considered:

- If associated to Erasmus+, Switzerland will have full access to the ESCI tools and services.
- A partial opening of the tools and services for countries not associated to Erasmus+ is planned. When this will be implemented is not yet known and is not considered a priority.
- Status quo: Swiss institutions are granted provisional access to certain areas. However, this access can also be revoked.

As soon as more information is available, Movetia will update this factsheet.

Useful links

European Commission – European Student Card Initiative

https://ec.europa.eu/education/education-in-the-eu/european-student-card-initiative_en

Erasmus Without Paper

<https://www.erasmuswithoutpaper.eu/>

European Student Card

<https://europeanstudentcard.eu/>

European University Foundation EUF – Webinars “New Erasmus goes digital”

<https://uni-foundation.eu/egd-webinars-2021/>

Contacts

If you have any questions, please contact the Movetia agency.

erasmus@movetia.ch

Status as of 28 June 2021