



СДРУЖЕНИЕ СИНОВА – Сдружение за образование, инклузия, нови умения, възможности и активност в селските райони

ASSOCIATION SINOVA – Association for Education, Inclusion, New Skills, Opportunities and Rural Development

SINOVA – Strategy for Internationalisation (2025–2030)

Adopted by the General Assembly of SINOVA on 12 June 2025, in Bansko

Based on Articles 5, 6, 13 and 19 of the Statute of SINOVA (2023)

1. Introduction

SINOVA – Association for Education, Inclusion, Skills and Rural Development, based in Bansko, Bulgaria, is committed to opening opportunities for learners, educators and communities through international cooperation. In line with Article 13(2) of the Statute, this Internationalisation Strategy was adopted by the General Assembly on 12 June 2025.

The strategy defines our international orientation for **2025–2030** and provides a framework for connecting local needs with European and global opportunities. In accordance with principles of transparency and adaptability, the strategy will be **reviewed and, if needed, revised every two years** by the General Assembly.

2. Guiding Principles

1. **Inclusion and equity** – enabling disadvantaged groups (unemployed, older adults, minorities, LGBTQ+, rural residents) to benefit from internationalisation.
2. **Quality and sustainability** – ensuring international activities produce lasting improvements in education, employability and community capacity.
3. **Reciprocity and mutual learning** – partnerships as two-way exchanges, where SINOVA contributes rural insights and gains advanced knowledge from others.
4. **Diversity of instruments** – using Erasmus+ as a backbone, but also engaging with other EU programmes, regional cooperation and local-global synergies.
5. **European values** – promoting democracy, intercultural dialogue, sustainability and digital transformation.

3. Rationale

- **European context:** Erasmus+ Programme Guide 2025, European Skills Agenda, European Green Deal and the Digital Education Action Plan all prioritise inclusion, green and digital transitions.
- **Other EU opportunities:** Horizon Europe (digital inclusion, social innovation), CERV (human rights, participation, LGBTQ+), European Solidarity Corps (volunteering), EEA/Norway Grants (regional development).
- **National context:** Bulgarian Lifelong Learning Strategy highlights rural outreach, adult upskilling and regional partnerships.

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- **Local context:** Bansko is a rural municipality with high unemployment and low digital skills, but also a unique hub for digital nomads and tourism, creating opportunities for international networking.

4. Strategic Objectives (2025–2030)

1. **Access for disadvantaged adults** – create mobility and exchange pathways for unemployed, older, rural and minority learners.
2. **Capacity building for educators and mentors** – provide international CPD for our 17 educators/mentors and strengthen volunteer retention.
3. **Digital transformation** – raise digital skills for learners (especially 50+) and integrate local digital nomads as trainers and multipliers.
4. **Sustainability and Green Erasmus** – reduce paper use, encourage eco-friendly travel, and include green civic actions in all projects.
5. **Partnership diversification** – by 2030 establish at least 8 long-term partnerships, not only through Erasmus+, but also Horizon Europe, CERV and regional cooperation networks.

5. Key Activities

- **Erasmus+:** implement KA120-ADU accreditation and annual KA122-ADU projects, gradually expanding staff and learner mobilities.
- **Digital Erasmus tools:**
 - **EPALE** for publishing outputs and networking with adult education professionals.
 - **SALTO Digital & Inclusion** to access methodologies, training opportunities and digital youth/adult work resources.
 - **Erasmus Without Paper (EWP)** for managing Learning Agreements and mobility administration.
 - **Online Language Support (OLS)** to provide participants with free language preparation before mobilities.
 - **Erasmus+ Virtual Exchange** for learners with fewer opportunities who cannot always travel.
- **Beyond Erasmus+:** pilot one Horizon Europe proposal (digital/social innovation), one CERV action (civic participation), and explore EEA/Norway grants for rural development.
- **Regional cooperation:** engage in Balkan and cross-border projects with partners from Greece, North Macedonia, Serbia and Romania.
- **Local-international bridges:** use Bansko's coworking hubs and tourism networks as venues for multiplier events, pilot trainings and international guest lecturers.

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- **Outputs:** create an Inclusion & Digital Toolkit, a Mobility Handbook, and blended learning modules for rural adults.
- **Recognition:** certify learning with Europass, Youthpass and digital badges.

6. Implementation & Monitoring

- **General Assembly (Art. 13):** approves and revises the strategy every two years.
- **Management Board (Art. 19):** authorises participation in Erasmus+, Horizon Europe, CERV and other programmes.
- **Coordinator:** leads operational management and international communication.
- **Quality Officer:** checks compliance with Erasmus+ and EU quality standards (inclusion, sustainability, digitalisation).
- **Finance Officer:** ensures transparency in fund use.

Targets by 2030:

- 60 staff mobilities, 80 learner mobilities.
- 70% of learners improve digital competences.
- 50% of participants from disadvantaged groups.
- 8 active long-term partnerships (Erasmus+, Horizon, CERV, CBC).
- At least 5 local–international initiatives co-delivered with Bansko hubs.
- **100% of participants** use OLS for language preparation and EPALE for follow-up reflection.

7. Regional and Local Internationalisation

SINOVA will not limit internationalisation to formal EU programmes. The association will:

- Cooperate with NGOs and adult centres in neighbouring countries through exchanges and study visits.
- Host international experts in Bansko's coworking hubs for short trainings.
- Promote rural voices and best practices through **EPALE, SALTO and Erasmus+ Virtual Exchange**, ensuring digital as well as physical participation.

8. SWOT Analysis (summary)

- **Strengths:** motivated educators, unique mix of rural learners + digital nomads, Statute mandate, early adoption of Erasmus+ digital tools (EPALE, SALTO, EWP, OLS).
- **Weaknesses:** young NGO, volunteer dependence, limited resources.
- **Opportunities:** multiple EU programmes, local hubs, Erasmus+ digitalisation agenda, EU priorities on green and digital transitions.
- **Threats:** volunteer burnout, low awareness of adult learning, competition from larger NGOs.

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9. Conclusion

This Internationalisation Strategy (2025–2030) positions SINOVA as a rural NGO with a European and global outlook. While Erasmus+ will be the backbone, we will also reach out to Horizon Europe, CERV, regional cooperation and local-global synergies. By embedding official **Erasmus+ digital tools (EPALE, SALTO, EWP, OLS, Virtual Exchange)** into our daily practice, we ensure that our learners, educators and community are connected, supported and visible across Europe. The strategy will be **reviewed biennially by the General Assembly** to ensure it remains realistic and aligned with both European trends and the needs of our community.

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