



DiscoverEU



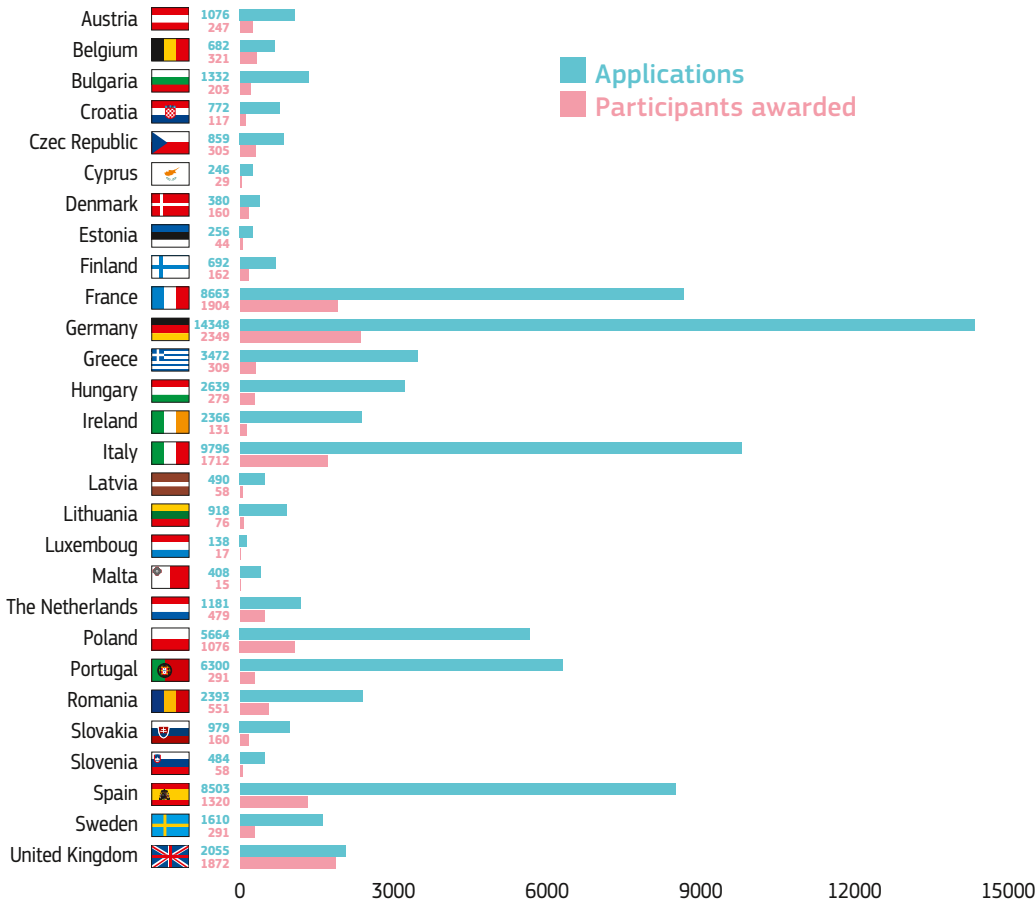
“Turning 18 marks a major step to adulthood. We want to support Europe’s young people in taking this step by giving them the opportunity to discover our continent’s incredible cultural heritage, get to know and learn from other people – and come to recognise that there is more that unites us than divides us.”

Tibor Navracsics, Commissioner for Education, Culture, Youth & Sport – Brussels, 3 May 2018

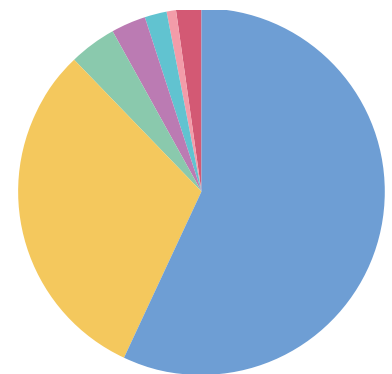
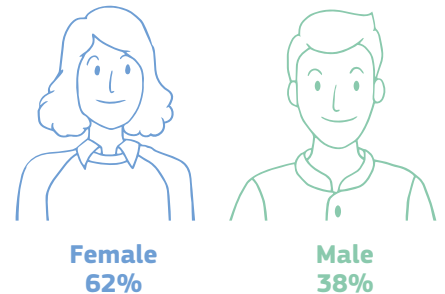
WHAT IS DiscoverEU?

DiscoverEU is a new EU initiative giving 18-year-old young people from all backgrounds the opportunity to travel around Europe (mainly by rail), learn from other cultures, make new friendships with fellow Europeans, and explore their European identity. When DiscoverEU was organised for the first time in June 2018, young people embraced the opportunity with enthusiasm. More than **100,000** young people applied for the **15,000** travel passes available under the first application round. The allocation of the travel passes was based on the share of Member States’ population compared to the overall population of the EU. All country quotas were used. A second application round was organised in November 2018. Almost **80,000** young people applied for around **14,500** travel passes.

NUMBER OF APPLICANTS AND NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS AWARDED UNDER THE SECOND APPLICATION ROUND



APPLICATIONS



- 57% In school or leaving school
- 31% Higher education
- 4% On a gap year
- 3% Vocational training
- 2% Volunteering
- 1% Employed
- 2% Other

TOTAL (second application round):
78,702 applications / 14,536 participants awarded

TRAVEL PERIOD: 15 April to 31 October 2019 for maximum 30 days

The **15,000** young people selected under the first application round travelled between July and October 2018, alone or in groups of up to five people. Their trip could take up to 30 days, and had to include at least one EU Member State other than the one they live in. DiscoverEU was also a great opportunity for them to participate in the many events organised as part of the 2018 European Year of Cultural Heritage. As DiscoverEU is all about connecting and sharing, the young people used social media to share stories, find travel buddies, organise meet-ups or exchange tips and recommendations. Here are some of their stories:



"Most definitely I liked trains and the long-distance journeys, I fell in love with railways and I think that this is the best mean of transport. I enjoyed the opportunity to travel in Europe and I liked visiting places that I did not have the chance to visit before. I also liked my full independence and self-reliance. I liked getting to know other people with whom I'm still in contact today. I was surprised that I fell so much in love in this kind of travel, like visiting several places in 2 weeks or more. I learned how to travel on my own without the help of my parents. For me the best city has definitely been Amsterdam, I liked the atmosphere and the city itself."

Aleksandra B. (Poland):

travelled to Germany, Denmark, Sweden and The Netherlands



"The word I would use to describe my journey is "Union". The thing that really surprised me was the ease with which I and the other DiscoverEU participants became friends, we shared experiences and emotions, without knowing each other at all. The union between the different cultures of this trip has left me speechless, I really never thought of finding such great people who offered me a smile every day. Without any doubt I learned to trust others and I shared everything that I could while travelling. The country that I liked the most were the Netherlands, the people were all very friendly and always helped us."

Marta P. (Italy):

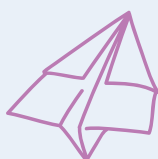
travelled to Hungary, The Czech Republic, Germany and The Netherlands



"From the start, I was eager to participate in the DiscoverEU initiative, and I was extremely happy to be among the selected ones. The European Commission showed an open attitude and was determined to find solutions for my situation. The experience has been very enriching for me and also for society. On the one hand, society was surprised to see me, a boy with great disability helped by a team of assistants to enjoy life abroad. On the other hand, my severe limitations created very positive feelings of empathy and help among people, and ultimately integration."

Javier G. (Spain):

travelled to The Netherlands



The European Parliament has approved the 2019 budget of EUR 16 million for the DiscoverEU preparatory action. The European Commission is planning to launch the next application round in Summer 2019. Specific dates and further information will be announced on the European Youth Portal in due course. Applicants must be 18 years old.

The European Commission intends to develop the initiative further and has therefore included it in its proposal for the next Erasmus programme. If the European Parliament and the Council agree to the proposal, an additional 1.5 million 18-year-olds are expected to travel between 2021 and 2027.