

Erasmus+ programme for education, training, youth and sport 2014-2020

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PURPOSE: to present the main objectives of the programme ERASMUS FOR ALL: The EU Programme for Education, Training, Youth and Sport for 2014-2020.

CONTENT: this Communication complements the proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing Erasmus for All: a single Programme for Education, Training, Youth and Sport for the 2014-2020 period. The Programme reflects the priorities of the Europe 2020 strategy and its flagship initiatives. Education and training are now more important than ever for innovation, productivity and growth, especially in the context of the current economic and financial crisis. The role of education and training for employment, also through traineeships, is particularly important for young people who are the hardest hit by the crisis. In addition, there are still many gender inequalities in education: while women have surpassed men in both participation and attainment in higher education, the fields of study remain segregated, with women notably underrepresented in science and engineering; boys perform less well on reading literacy and tend to leave school early more often than girls.

A concerted effort to reach the EU benchmark of less than 15% of low achievers in basic skills by 2020 would lead to long-term aggregated economic gains for the EU. Raising the ratio of people with higher education to 40 % would contribute to increasing GDP per capita in the EU by 4%. Ensuring education and training systems can deliver the skills needed on the labour market will contribute to reaching the Europe 2020 target for employment (75%).

The Programmes European added value will be: to help citizens acquire more and better skills, enhance the quality of teaching in educational institutions both in the EU and beyond, support Member States and non-EU partner countries in modernising their education and training systems and making them more innovative, and promote youth participation in society as well as the construction of a European dimension to grassroots sports.

Past achievements and lessons learnt: the evaluations show that the 2007-2013 EU programmes have already achieved significant systemic impact, far beyond the benefits to individual participants. However, there is a complexity of multiple programmes and actions which must give way to a simpler, streamlined architecture, one which strikes a better balance between harmonisation and flexibility.

For example, the Lifelong Learning Programme has six sub-programmes, more than 50 objectives and over 60 actions. The Youth in Action Programme focuses on the mobility and (non-formal) learning of young people, while approximately 80% of the Lifelong Learning Programme funding also benefits youth.

International cooperation in higher education is also characterised by the fragmentation between different EU instruments implementing similar objectives and actions. The Commission is currently funding five higher education cooperation programmes with different parts of the world.

Erasmus for All will:

- increase coherence and strengthen the lifelong learning approach, by linking support to formal and non-formal learning throughout the education and training spectrum;
- broaden the scope for structured partnerships, both between different sectors of education and with business and other relevant actors;
- provide flexibility and incentives, so that budget allocation between activities, beneficiaries and countries better reflects performance and impact.

Rather than preserve an increasingly complex multiplicity of brand names, the programme will be named Erasmus for All. Public and private bodies within the main education sectors covered by the Programme may use this brand name.

A streamlined architecture: in order to ensure greater coherence, synergy and simplification, and allow for innovative funding mechanisms, the architecture of the proposed Programme will support three types of key action, which are complementary and mutually reinforcing:

1. Learning mobility of individuals: Mobility will represent a significant share of the increased overall budget. This increase, together with a focus on the quality of mobility as well as a concentration of priorities and efforts, should increase the critical mass and impact beyond the individuals and institutions involved.
2. Cooperation for innovation and good practices: There will be a stronger focus on strengthening innovative partnerships between educational institutions and business. For higher education, the emphasis will be on capacity building, concentrating on neighbourhood countries as well as strategic partnerships with developed and emerging economies.
3. Support for policy reform: Policy reform will be targeted at: strengthening the tools and impact of the open methods of coordination in education, training and youth; implementing the Europe 2020 strategy and promoting the policy dialogue with third countries and international organisations.

Budget: the Communication presents the proposed share of funding among the main actions. On the basis of experience and in view of the enhanced emphasis on mobility, around two thirds of the budget will be allocated to learning mobility.

The corresponding indicative allocations for Erasmus for all expressed in percentage of the total budget would be:

- 25% for higher education;
- 17 % for vocational education and training and adult learning (of which 2% for adult learning);
- 7 % for schools;
- 7 % for youth.

The new "Erasmus for All" will promote international mobility by bringing Erasmus to schools, vocational education and training, master level degrees and specific youth areas such as volunteering. The pivotal role of the EU as a catalyst to generate economic dynamism and political

stability can only be ensured if private, public, national and international actors clearly state their unequivocal commitment to build the future on the basis of education and training.