

Motion

# The future is Erasmus: more funding for Erasmus+

signed by: Erasmus Student Network (ESN)

co-signed by: Alliance of European Voluntary Service Organisations (Alliance), Belarusian National Youth Council (RADA), European Educational Exchanges - Youth for Understanding (EEE-YFU), European Federation for Intercultural Learning (EFIL), European Students' Union (ESU), Portuguese National Youth Council (CNJ), Rural Youth Europe (RYE), Spanish Youth Council (CJE), The Association of Service Civil International (SCI), Youth and Environment Europe (YEE)

The Erasmus Student Network (ESN) is committed to advocating for the future of the Erasmus+ Programme, ensuring its sustainability, accessibility, and impact for the next generation. With the upcoming discussions on the Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) and the European Parliament elections that reshaped EU policy priorities, youth organisations, student bodies, and policymakers must unite to protect and expand Erasmus+ funding.

The Future Is Erasmus<sup>1</sup> initiative seeks to advocate for a substantial increase in Erasmus+ funding in the 2028–2034 programming period to support inclusive and accessible learning mobility opportunities across Europe.

## Introduction

The mid-term review of the current Erasmus+ Programme (2021-2027) set to be published in July 2025, provides a critical opportunity to reflect on the programme's successes and challenges while preparing for the next phase. Given the vital role that Erasmus+ plays in fostering intercultural exchange, skills development and European integration, it is crucial to ensure the programme remains well funded and adapted to emerging societal needs.

In light of this, the European Youth Forum and its members must actively campaign for a significantly increased budget for Erasmus+ under the next MFF, especially in line with the YFJ campaign: "More Erasmus = More Europe", ensuring that financial constraints do not hinder access to learning mobility opportunities.

## Preliminary Discussions on the Erasmus+ Budget

**Proposed budget for 2025:** The Council of the European Union sent out a proposal to reduce the budget of the Erasmus+ programme by almost €295 million, which placed the programme in very uncertain territory. However, thanks to collective advocacy efforts, the Council and the European Parliament have finally reached an agreement on

the 2025 EU budget, which amounts to €4.95 billion, reversing the potential cuts and adding €600 million to the 2024 budget.

Advocating for a fivefold increase in Erasmus+ funding is essential. Equally important is having a clear proposal and defined goals to ensure that the European Union's ambitious plans are realistically achievable. A fivefold budgetary increase would allow us to maintain the projected number of mobilities set for 2027, strengthen Key Action 1 (KA1), and secure financial support for the European University Alliances. It would also provide potential funding should the European Degree be approved.

**In addition, the 2024 European Parliament elections** and the new division of the **education and youth portfolio in the European Commission** are having an impact on the future of the programme; that is why we must work hard to advocate for the improvement and enlargement of the Erasmus+ Programme.

With insights from young people and youth organisations across Europe, **we believe that a series of proposals should be enforced to ensure that civic engagement and learning mobility become even more impactful and accessible in the 2028–2034 Erasmus+ Programme.**

## Key Concerns

### 1. Threats to Erasmus+ Funding

- The Council proposed a reduction of the Erasmus+ budget in comparison to the European Commission's original proposal.
- Despite efforts to reverse these potential cuts, further budgetary constraints remain challenging for the upcoming negotiations.

### 2. The Need for Increased and Sustainable Investment

- Advocate for a fivefold increase in the Erasmus+ budget to meet growing demand, improve accessibility, and enhance programme impact.

<sup>1</sup> <https://esn.org/future-erasmus#:~:text=Through%20this%20initiative%2C%20ESN%20is,international%20education%20and%20cultural%20exchange.b>

- Financial barriers remain a major obstacle for youth from disadvantaged backgrounds. Increased funding should target inclusion and equity measures.
- Rising inflation and cost-of-living challenges necessitate higher grants and financial support mechanisms for participants.
- Simplify application and administrative processes to make Erasmus+ more accessible.
- Facilitate long-term mobility to maximise the impact of the experiences.

### 3. Policy Implications and European Elections

- The 2024 European Parliament elections and the appointment of a new European Commissioner with an education portfolio separated from the youth portfolio are shaping the future of Erasmus+ funding.
- Strengthening alliances within the education sector and youth organisations will be essential to influence decision-making.

## Call to Action

We call upon the European Parliament, the European Commission and the Council of the EU to take the following actions to ensure that the next Erasmus+ programme is financially supported and delivers for all young people:

#### 1. Increase fivefold the Erasmus+ Funding in the 2028–2034 MFF

- Commit to a substantial increase in the Erasmus+ budget to ensure that all young people, regardless of background, can benefit from Erasmus+.
- Ensure financial support mechanisms addressing inflation and the real cost of mobility, including accommodation, travel, and living expenses.
- Encourage transparency and accountability in budget allocation to maximise impact.

#### 2. Make Policy Reforms for Greater Inclusivity

- Enhance support for young people with fewer opportunities through dedicated financial support in addition to existing project budgets.

## Conclusions

Together, young people and youth organisations across Europe stand united to demonstrate that More Erasmus equals More Europe.

Young people and youth organisations across Europe stand united in advocating for an Erasmus where every young person has the opportunity to learn, grow, and contribute to a diverse and cohesive Europe.

The European Youth Forum and its member organisations are committed to aligning their advocacy effort in the field to the More Erasmus = More Europe campaign and to the Future is Erasmus initiative to secure a well-funded Erasmus+ Programme for 2028–2034. By ensuring a strong budgetary commitment, we can guarantee that Erasmus+ continues to be a beacon of international exchange, inclusion, and civic engagement.



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