



What's in there for You(th)?

ENGSO Youth's Position on the
post-2020 EU youth & sport funding



Introduction

For the next long-term EU budget 2021-2027, the European Commission is proposing to double the funding for Erasmus to €30 billion. The future Erasmus programme is part of the «Investing in People» chapter of the EU's new budget proposal, which the Commission presented on 2 May 2018. The Erasmus programme already enables millions of young Europeans to pursue educational opportunities abroad while broadening their experience and awareness of Europe, and increasing their chances on the job market in the future.

For both youth and sport sub-programmes the proposed budget foresees significant increase in the available financial resources and the number of future participants. According to the Commission's plans, **€3.1 billion would be allocated for youth and another €550 million for sport projects in the 2021-2027 financial period.** Although these amounts are less than originally advocated by the European Youth Forum and the European Parliament, they still represent a significant boost to the future opportunities for young people, especially if they are combined with other EU programmes such as the recently launched European Solidarity Corps. Therefore, it is very important that young Europeans are well-aware of these prospective opportunities and funding resources which can make a major contribution to developing the European dimension of sport. The future Erasmus programme should increasingly address the needs of young sportspeople who should benefit from these opportunities just like their peers studying in European higher education institutions.

European Social Fund (ESF) will be succeeded by European Social Fund+ (ESF+), which alongside Erasmus, is set to become the main EU funding programme to implement the European Pillar of Social Rights. ESF+ will support the achievement of EU long-term strategic objectives to promote quality employment, investment in education and skills and to minimise poverty and social exclusion, amongst others. It is the European Youth Forum's standpoint to simplify the objectives of ESF+ to prioritise employment, education and inclusion themes. This position is strongly supported by ENGSO Youth. Under ESF+, **sport practice** should be better recognised **as a tool to gain soft skills**, to advance employability, health and social inclusion of young people in NEET situations.

ENGSO Youth's position on the future Erasmus programme

ENGSO Youth **welcomes** the European Commission's proposal to double the funding of the new Erasmus programme for 2021-2027, demonstrating commitment and continued support of the European institutions investing in education and training of young people. We particularly **welcome** the increase for the Youth and Sport chapters, which will allow more young people, and grassroots sport organisations to benefit from the most successful initiative of the European Union. Nevertheless, **we call for better accessibility** of the new Erasmus programme that should favour the least privileged social groups across Europe and beyond its borders (for instance ethnic minorities, refugees, migrants and people with a disability). We see an urging need to create better incentives to support the participation of disadvantaged young people and more rigorous monitoring mechanisms in order to avoid 'project tourism', especially in case of youth projects. The future Sport programme should strive for greater reach among young Europeans which could be achieved by facilitating the participation of youth organisations in collaborative partnerships.

Youth projects

Working for young people for years, we strongly believe that **non-formal education based youth and sport initiatives** are the best way to involve and empower young people from disadvantaged backgrounds. The increase in funding shall enable those mechanisms that boost the participation of the least privileged youngsters in the new programme. At the same time administrative burdens of the new youth and sport projects should be reduced as these often pose unnecessary obstacles for the participants in these actions and initiatives. Furthermore, we **pleased with** the introduction of Blended Mobility (a combination of physical and virtual mobility) to the new Erasmus programme. This could potentially reach out to a larger target group through the better utilisation of information, communication and technology tools.

Furthermore, ENGSO Youth puts emphasis **on compatibility of a financial support with a general inflation and increase of living costs** by which young Europeans are affected during Erasmus projects. Young people and especially volunteers who are taking part in Erasmus projects are at great risk of covering bigger and bigger living expenditures as the standard of living in Europe is rapidly changing. In the Erasmus Plus period from 2014-2020 Europe has shifted from a general economic crisis to a well recovered economy. We believe that in the following period (2021-2027) the standard of living and prices will continue raising. Therefore, adequate financial support ought

to be assured to Erasmus programme participants, especially to youth and volunteers.

Sport projects

We **warmly welcome** extending “Key Action 1” to the Sport Chapter. Sport based individual mobility should also favour the professional and personal development of young people involved in European sport organisations as staff or volunteers. Youth organisations using sport as a tool for education should be encouraged to take part in individual mobility projects, this way also developing cross-sector synergies and transfer of knowledge between the two fields. The proposed possibility to decentralise some parts of the programme could be beneficial to support the access of grassroots sports to EU funds. Enabling the funding of **small-scale not-for-profit events** could be another feasible way for voluntary-based, youth-led organisations to access EU funds. In order to build bridges through sport and implement the Council’s recommendations in sport diplomacy, organisations from EU partner countries should be able to participate in all key actions. In our views, youth-led grassroots sport projects are the best way to bring closer people from different origins, cultures and beliefs.

Hereby we also call for the better **institutionalisation of youth voice** in sport decision making processes. The role of young people in the European sport movement is unquestionable, therefore their opinion should be taken into account when formulating sport policies. Funding for the biannual organisation of the European Youth Sport Forum should be secured under structured dialogue in the field of sport. The key recommendations of the Forum shall be taken into account when formulating European youth sport policies. The future Sport programme shall promote the creation and development of more institutionalised forms of youth representation in the field of sport, preliminary by supporting networks of young sportspeople, youth committees and councils within European sport decision making bodies.

ENGSO Youth's recommendations for the post-2020 EU youth & sport funding:

- Decreasing the administrative burdens for young people to take part in future Erasmus youth and sport projects, especially in case of individual mobility (Key Action 1);
- Creating new supporting mechanisms for young people from disadvantaged backgrounds in order to be better represented in non-formal education based youth and sport initiatives;
- Supporting the organisation of small-scale not-for-profit sport events that are more accessible for youth-led grassroots sport organisations;
- Opening to the outside world through supporting greater geographical flexibility of the future Erasmus programme: grassroots sport activities are considered to be a great way to build bridges between people of different origins and cultures, therefore more and more of these interventions shall be supported in neighbouring and "third" countries;
- Increasing organisational support in youth projects (especially per day allowances for volunteers) as a response to higher costs of living and inflation;
- Better recognising soft skills gained through sport practice as a contributor for boosting employability of young people, especially those in NEET situations;
- Institutionalising youth representation in the structured dialogue in sport through securing financial support for the biannual organisation of the European Youth Sport Forum;
- Raising awareness on and promoting the European Solidarity Corps among grassroots sport organisations and sport-based NGOs that are utilising the power of sport for social inclusion, education and development purposes.

