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

2011/0371(COD) - 10/12/2012 - Committee report tabled for plenary, 1st reading/single reading

The Committee on Culture and Education adopted the report by Doris PACK (EPP, DE) on the proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing "ERASMUS FOR ALL" - The Union Programme for Education, Training, Youth and Sport.

The committee recommended that the European Parliament's position adopted in first reading, following the ordinary legislative procedure, should amend the Commission proposal as follows:

**Name of the programme**: Members consider that the present title should be changed to '***YES Europe***' - The Union Programme for Youth, Education and training and Sport. The widespread recognition among the general public of the brand names Comenius, Erasmus, Leonardo da Vinci and Grundtvig as synonymous with Union learning mobility and cooperation is such that the use of these brand names should be continued for the new Programme also.

**Structure of the programme**: Members have clarified the presentation and structure of the programme to enhance the **youth** theme: the Programme shall cover the following fields:

1. **education and training at all levels**, in a lifelong learning perspective, including school education, higher education, vocational education and training (VET) and adult learning;
2. **youth**, in particular in the context of non-formal and informal learning, active citizenship, social inclusion and volunteering;
3. sport, in particular **grassroots sport**.

The report states that the Programme includes an **international dimension** aimed at supporting the Union's external action, including its **development objectives**, through cooperation between the Union and third countries. As regards actions for which the funding is derived from the DCI or the EDF, all actions must be in conformity with the objectives and principles of the DCI regulation and the ACP-EU partnership agreement respectively.

**Definitions**: a certain number of definitions have been clarified such as "**non-formal education**", " **informal learning**", "**volunteering**" in terms of the programme (formal, non-formal and informal activities, volunteering meaning an activity undertaken of a person's free will and is of a non-profit nature. "**Grassroots sport"** shall mean organised sport practised at local level by amateur sportspeople and sport for all.

**General objectives of the programme**: these have been revised to include the following:

- the objectives of the Europe 2020 strategy, in particular the headline education target of reducing early school leaving under 10% and increasing the number of 30–34 year-olds having completed tertiary or equivalent education to at least 40%;
- the objectives of the strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training (ET 2020), including the corresponding benchmarks;
- to contribute to the objectives of the Europe 2020 strategy and of the Education and Training strategic framework 2020 (ET2020);

- the objective of sustainable development of third countries, particularly in the fields of education, training, youth and skills development the objectives of the renewed Copenhagen Process (2010-2020);
- the objectives of the renewed European Agenda for Adult Learning;
- the overall objectives of the renewed framework for European cooperation in the youth field (2010–2018); and
- the objective of developing the European dimension in sport, in particular grassroots sport.

**Specific objectives**: the specific objectives have also been revised so as to:

- improve the level of key competences and skills, **including soft skills** and promote social cohesion and inclusion of **vulnerable groups** at risk of educational disadvantage and to safeguard young people coming from a **socially disadvantage background** so that they can benefit from the Programme;
- foster quality improvements, innovation excellence, social inclusiveness and access as well as internationalisation both at the level of education and training institutions;
- promote the emergence of a European lifelong learning area and **alleviate administrative burdens**;
- enhance the international dimension of education and training, notably through cooperation between Union and third country institutions in the fields of VET and higher education by increasing the attractiveness of the Union higher education and research institutions, as a complement to the **Marie Skodowska-Curie programme**;
- support the Union external action, including its development objectives, through the promotion of mobility and cooperation between higher education institutions in the Union and in **third countries**, and through targeted capacity building in third countries, where relevant in accordance with the objectives specified in the external financing instruments from which the funding for the actions is derived;
- improve the teaching and learning of languages and to promote intercultural awareness and the vast linguistic diversity in the Union;
- increase access to grassroots sport by supporting non-profit organisations providing sporting activities and those organising non-commercial sporting events;
- promote cooperation among different sectors involved in education, training and youth.

It should be noted that the key indicators to evaluate the implementation of these objectives are included in a new annex to the programme.

The Programme shall put special emphasis on providing equal access to inclusive and quality education at all levels for learners with health problems or disabilities, and for those coming from a socially disadvantaged background, such as the **Roma**.

**Chapter II: Education and training**: this strand of the programme has also been revised. The Programme shall support both sectoral and horizontal activities in the following sectors associated with specific brand names: *Comenius, Erasmus, Erasmus Mundus, Leonardo, and Grundtvig.* For each of these sectors, Members improve, clarify or strengthen the objectives to be reached.

For the sake of transparency, Members considered it important to identify specific objectives in each sector of the programme.

- **Learning mobility of individuals**: particular attention shall be devoted to **civil society organisation and social partners**. Strategic partnerships may include joint learning projects for pupils and their teachers in the form of class and **individual exchanges**, including long-term mobility, aimed at reinforcing linguistic skills, active citizenship and intercultural awareness or

developing and disseminating educational best practices. Strategic partnerships for higher education may include intensive programmes to promote multidisciplinary cooperation and knowledge exchange among students and teachers.

- **Cooperation for innovation and good practices**: Members suggest the creation of partnerships between regional and local authorities responsible for any aspect of education with a view to fostering inter-regional cooperation, including cross-border regional cooperation;
- **Support for policy reform**: Members stress that policy dialogue with relevant European stakeholders and structured dialogue with young people is important. The financial allocation for the Programme shall also cover **specific and sustainable administrative grants** (including operating grants) to European organisations active in the field of education, training and youth.
- **As regards the Jean Monnet activities**: Members have added the European Institute of Public Administration (EIPA); Maastricht the Academy of European Law, Trier; the European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education, Odense; the International Centre for European Training (CIFE), Nice to the list of European institutions receiving support.

**Chapter IIa: Youth**: for the sake of transparency, visibility and continuity, Members consider it crucial to insert a separate Chapter on Youth in the text. This Chapter includes a series of **specific objectives** and **well-defined and structured activities** including:

- learning mobility of individuals: **Youth Moves**;
- cooperation for innovation and good practices: **Youth Cooperates**;
- support for policy reform: **Youth Decides**.

**Chapter III: Sport**: this section has also been revised in order to better define its scope. Members insist on the role of projects in fighting intolerance and discrimination, on the promotion of volunteering and equality in sport and on promoting awareness of the importance of physical activity at all levels of education.

Support for the organisation of a **European Sports Day or Week** that promotes the social and cultural role of amateur and professional sport is also envisaged.

**Opening of the programme**: Members provide for the opening of the programme to countries covered by the Neighbourhood Policy that have concluded agreements with the Union. They have, however, withdrawn Russia's access to a part of the programme (youth).

**Overseas Countries or Territories (OCTs)**: the actions of the Programme shall be implemented in ways that provide for adaptation of the financial rules to address the constraints created by the remoteness of the outermost regions and overseas countries and territories, and to fund area-specific mobility projects linking the Union's outermost regions and overseas countries and territories with neighbouring third countries.

**Coherence and complementarity**: Members stipulate that all the actions must seek to strengthen the synergies with the Union's other programmes, in particular Horizon 2020, Creative Europe and the European Social Fund, in order to attain the goals of the Europe 2020 strategy in a coherent and coordinated way.

**Reduction in the administrative burden**: Members stress the importance of reducing the administrative burden that comes with managing EU projects. The new Programme should focus on reducing barriers to accessing funding and on streamlining administrative schemes throughout the structure. A sustained focus on reducing administrative expenditure and simplifying the organisation and management of the Programme are vital to its success.

Member States should endeavour to adopt all appropriate measures to remove legal and administrative obstacles to the proper functioning of the Programme and facilitate the **obtaining of visas**, for example.

**National agencies**: Members stress the importance of improved management by national agencies responsible for the implementation of the programme. In particular, they call for greater flexibility in the organisation and a clarification of their tasks. The Commission is called upon to publish on its website all the information concerning the national agencies designated by the Member States, the content of the contract concluded by the Commission with each of them, as well as the funding made available to them annually, in the form of grants.

**Financial allocation**: Members recall that the allocation for the programme is only indicative. However, they propose the distribution of the allocation on the following lines:

- 83.4% for actions in the field of education and training. From this amount, the following indicative minimum allocations shall be earmarked for the main educational sectors:

  - 40% to higher education
  - 22% to vocational education and training;
  - 15% to school education;
  - 6% to adult learning.

- 8% for actions in the field of youth;

- 5% for either funding projects spanning the fields of education, training and youth or to increase the budget of any of these sectors while respecting the overall balance between them;

- 1.8% for the Jean Monnet activities;

- 1.8% but at least EUR 238 827 000 for the sport activities.

These indicative percentages can be modified by the legislative authority for the second half of the programming period following the evaluation report by the Commission.

In addition to the financial envelope and in order to **promote the international dimension of higher education**, an indicative amount of 2% from the total amount allocated to the participating instruments (Development Cooperation Instrument, European Neighbourhood Instrument, Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance, Partnership Instrument and the European Development Fund) shall be provided for.

Members recall that the financial allocation for the Programme also covers specific and sustainable administrative grants to European organisations active in the field of education, training and youth.

**European Student Loan Guarantee Facility**: the programme allocation provides for the financing of a **European Student Loan Facility** to provide partial guarantees for loans on favourable conditions to mobile master students. This additional and innovative tool for learning mobility at the level of a Master's degree shall be complementary to the grant systems supporting student mobility at local, national and Union level and shall not replace these systems. The Facility shall be open to any student maintaining residency in a participating country and wishing to study for a full Master's degree in another participating country. The length of the study period shall be between one and two years. The management of the Facility at the European level shall be delegated to an Entrusted Entity.

The guarantee shall cover new eligible student loans of up to a maximum of **EUR 12 000 for a one-year Master's programme and up to EUR 18 000 for a two year Master's programme**.

**Report**: the Commission shall include in its annual report on the implementation of the DCI Regulation a list of all "YES Europe" actions for which the funding is derived from the DCI.

Member States shall submit to the Commission, by 30 September 2017, a report on the implementation and the impact of the Programme.

A final evaluation of the Programme shall be submitted by the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council no later than 30 June 2022.

**Programme Committee**: the committee established by virtue of the proposal should deal with both horizontal and sectoral issues. It is for the Member States to ensure that they send the relevant representatives in the committee in accordance with the topics on the agenda, and it is for the committee chair to ensure that meeting agendas clearly indicate the sector or sectors involved and the topics, according to each sector, to be discussed at each meeting. Where appropriate, the social partners should be invited to participate in the meetings as observers.

**Annexes**: for the internal coherence of the text, a new annex incorporates all **evaluation indicators** in relation to each specific objective as set out in body of the text. Provision is also made for a new annex providing technical information concerning the European Student Loan Guarantee Facility.