

European Parliament evaluation of Erasmus+ implementation

Erasmus+ was launched in 2014 as a single programme in the field of education, training, youth and sport under the multiannual financial framework (MFF) package for 2014-2020. It brings together previous programmes and introduces sport as a new area of activity. A single programme has made it possible to organise activities under three key actions – mobility of individuals, cooperation for innovation and the exchange of best practice and support for policy reform.

Issues raised

Two years into the programme, the Commission published an indicative [roadmap](#) for the mid-term evaluation. In the meantime, the implementation of [Erasmus+](#) has been followed closely by Members of the European Parliament. A [conference](#) and a [hearing](#) hosted in 2015 by the two largest political groups gave stakeholders the opportunity to express support for the new programme, but also to point out a loss of visibility for school and adult education-related actions, as well as incongruities in the way rules were applied by different National Agencies. Individual Members have also sent the Commission several written questions on Erasmus+. These cover questions such as how Erasmus+ can be linked to [apprenticeships](#), the widening of participation in [partner countries](#), accessibility for [deaf people](#) and the possibility to [maintain UK participation](#) in the programme following the British referendum on EU membership. Recent European Parliament resolutions, reports and draft reports discuss Erasmus+ in relation to [Vocational Education and Training \(VET\) mobility](#), the EU [youth strategy](#), 'learning [EU at school](#)', [youth entrepreneurship](#) through education and training, and [skills policies](#) for fighting unemployment.

EP evaluation work

The European Parliament's Committee on Culture and Education (CULT) decided to undertake an implementation report on the Erasmus+ Programme, for which Milan Zver (EPP, Slovenia) was appointed rapporteur in September 2015. In support of this parliamentary work, the European Parliamentary Research Service undertook a [European Implementation Assessment](#), looking at both centralised and decentralised implementation, while an EP Policy Department [study](#) focused specifically on decentralised implementation. Both studies, which were published in July 2016, note that the programme is balanced in its objectives but that the implementation still needs fine-tuning. On the other hand, the lack of funding and the low rate of success could have a negative influence on future interest in the programme.

Mixed reactions were expressed regarding the harmonisation and streamlining of procedures. Some youth and sectorial organisations feel that the process has gone too far, whereas others, such as education and training National Agencies, would like to see even more streamlining. Application procedures are still cumbersome and could be improved with clearer role definition and guidelines. Work is also needed to improve IT tools for the processing of applications and the language-learning tool.

The reorganisation of Erasmus+ allows for the adoption of big projects, but this new focus seems to come at a cost for small projects, especially in the fields of adult education and youth. The preference for big projects has eased work for the Commission and National Agencies but it has also added a degree of distance between the European institutions and citizens. Schools, for instance, must now go through their legal owners, such as local authorities, to present their projects, and young people wanting to do cross-border volunteering must access the programme through an institution. On a different level, the success of Erasmus+ may be closing doors to students who want to undertake mobility on their own, as higher education institutions also seem to prefer to promote student mobility through the programme.

