

## EU funding programmes 2021-2027 in culture, media, education, youth and sports: first lessons, challenges and future perspectives : Erasmus+



[See the full study](#)

Erasmus+: the Union programme for education and training, youth and sport 2021-2027 integrates actions on all learning contexts, whether formal, non-formal or informal at all life stages.

### The study

provides an overview of the implementation to date of the 2021-2027 Erasmus+ programme. It analyses the early programme implementation and provides a description of barriers identified.

The current programme is based on the same approach as the previous programme of clustering activities under Key Actions (KA):

- KA1:** Learning Mobility of Individuals,
- KA2:** Cooperation among organisations and institutions,
- KA3:** Support to policy development and cooperation plus Jean Monnet Actions.

The KA approach now applies to sport as well, unlike the previous programme.

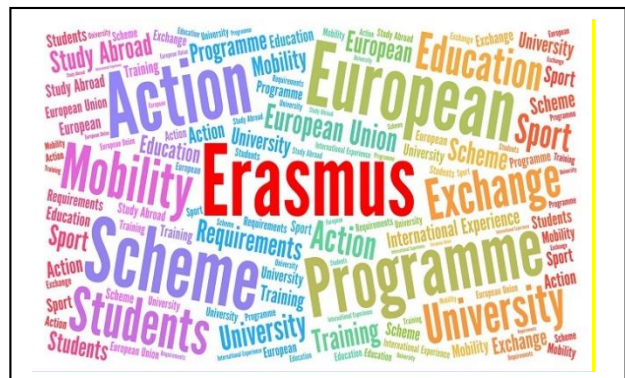
**The priorities for 2021-2023** are Inclusive Erasmus+, Green Erasmus+ and Digital Erasmus+, which are mainstreamed across the programme.

### Main observations

The findings of the study are based on desk research, surveys of national agencies and a wider group of stakeholders (organisations receiving Erasmus+ funding or potential recipients of Erasmus+ funding), and interviews.

The main finding is that the programme implementation is progressing well overall, although improvements can be made to the 'Youth' part of the funding programme. Administrative shortcomings could also be addressed.

**The strengths** of Erasmus+ 2021-2027 include its overarching position as a programme which has stood the test of time (more than 35 years) and become a recognised brand, particularly among students.



**The weaknesses** of Erasmus+ 2021-2027 often relate to measures that are appreciated but are felt not to go far enough, in particular the amount of funding for youth and sport.

### Conclusions and policy recommendations

#### Recommendation 1: Strengthen coordination to ensure a common understanding of Erasmus+ rules

More coordination across the National Agencies (NAs) driven by and monitored by the European Commission would lead to more consistent interpretation of the rules across the NAs, while standardising the quality of evaluations across participating countries.

#### Recommendation 2: Pursue further simplification

Simplification measures under the current programme have been welcomed, but there is further scope for



simplification, including the proposal form, and more straightforward guidance in plain language.

### Recommendation 3: Address IT issues

Issues with the new platform should be addressed as a matter of urgency as there is a risk of potential applicants being deterred from applying. Detailed research is needed into the extent of the problem of 'bugs' in the new system and the intrinsic difficulties in using the platform interface. Stakeholders believe that the interface needs simplifying. The Commission should also investigate why NAs have a more negative view of the IT systems than other stakeholders.

### Recommendation 4: Incentive inclusion in Erasmus+

Stakeholders consulted for this study emphasised the importance of fully accomplishing the inclusion ambitions outlined in project proposals and highlighting them in final reports. To this end, the European Commission could consider establishing European targets, accompanied by impact indicators, and a wider incentive system to guide and incentivise countries' contributions towards achieving inclusion within Erasmus+.

### Recommendation 5: Address timeliness

More certainty is needed on when decisions are taken and payments are made. Stakeholders not only feel that it takes too long for award decisions to be taken but highlight uncertainties or delays in the timing of contracting and payments to beneficiaries. This adds to their administrative burden and complicates financial planning, which is particularly detrimental to small organisations and newcomers, thus undermining inclusion and diversity ambitions.

### Recommendation 6: Improve communication on little known platform features

Stakeholders appear to have a low awareness of the Quality Label and Project Management Modules. This should be addressed at national and EU levels.

### Recommendation 7: Improve transparency of the proposal evaluation process

Applicants should be given more detailed feedback on the strengths, weaknesses and areas for improvement of their applications. Time devoted to this would bear fruit in the form of better-quality applications in the future. Information sessions on reporting requirements should be scheduled at the beginning of the project rather than waiting some months.

### Recommendation 8: Improve transparency of the portfolio of the projects funded

The European Commission could consider increasing the transparency and searchability of the Erasmus+ portal and funding and tender opportunities portal to allow stakeholders and external parties to download and analyse comprehensive project data. Currently, very limited analysis can be carried out at the project and country levels, which limits the transparency of allocated funding.

### Recommendation 9: Reduce financial risk

Develop a comprehensive manual or guidance document containing clarification of the requirements and best practices for financial reporting to remove current uncertainty and perceived ambiguity about expectations. This should also cover financial risk management to mitigate the risk of projects failing because of financial problems.

### Erasmus+ main priorities 2021-2023

Year	Priorities			
2021	Inclusive Erasmus+	Green Erasmus+	Digital Erasmus+	
2022	Inclusive Erasmus+	Green Erasmus+	Digital Erasmus+	
2023	Inclusive Erasmus+ including the integration of refugees	Green Erasmus+ (climate and biodiversity mainstreaming)	Digital Erasmus+	Participation in democratic life, common values and civic engagement

Source: Erasmus+ work programmes 2021, 2022, 2023

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