Comparative analysis: Erasmus+ 2021-2027 vs Proposal 2028-2034

(update August 10, 2025)

Transformation of the programme architecture

The proposal for the period 2028-2034 changes the structure of the current programme. The current structure based on three Key Actions (KA1 Mobility for learning purposes, KA2 Cooperation between organisations and institutions, KA3 Support for policy development) is replaced by two cross-cutting pillars defined in Article 3(3): "Learning opportunities for all" and "Support for capacity development". Chapter II of the proposal removes the traditional division into sectors (Education/Training, Youth, Sport) and replaces it with what is presented as an "integrated approach".

The European Solidarity Corps ceases to exist as a stand-alone programme. Article 1 of the proposal establishes that the new regulation "sets up the European Voluntary Humanitarian Aid Corps", while Article 4(2)(b) provides for support for "European Solidarity Corps volunteering, including the European Voluntary Humanitarian Aid Corps". Recital 7 (page 21) identifies the "common areas of action and objectives between the 2021-2027 European Solidarity Corps and Erasmus+ programmes".

New actions and their organisation

In the field of education and training, the proposal introduces "Erasmus+ scholarships in strategic educational fields" (Article 5(a)). The explanatory section (page 23) specifies that these scholarships aim to "address the skills needs for the labour market, including for sectors suffering severe staff shortages". Erasmus Mundus scholarships are integrated into Article 5(b) under the heading "Talent and excellence development opportunities".

For the education sector, Article 6(b) introduces "European School Alliances". In the sports sector, Article 4(3) provides for "learning mobility of athletes and people active in grassroots sport", extending support beyond the sports staff covered by the current programme.

The youth sector includes volunteering opportunities through Article 4, paragraph 2. Recital 21 (pages 22-23) specifies that the European Voluntary Humanitarian Aid Corps responds to the need to "develop solidarity of Member States and third countries associated to the programme with third countries not associated affected by disasters".

Specifically, Article 4 (general article on "Learning mobility for all") provides, with regard to the youth sector:

Learning mobility and volunteering opportunities ...

...2. In the field of youth, the Programme shall support:

(a) Learning mobility of young people, including DiscoverEU, activities supporting youth participation and learning mobility of youth workers;

(b) 'European Solidarity Corps' volunteering, including the European Voluntary Humanitarian Aid Corps.

Changes to the inclusive approach

The proposal devotes the entire Chapter III to 'Inclusion and diversity', modifying the current structure of Articles 15-16 of the Regulation. Article 8(1) stipulates that 'the Commission, Member States and third countries associated to the Programme shall ensure an inclusive approach across all activities'.

Article 8(3) stipulates that the Commission "shall ensure the provision of measures to facilitate the participation of people with fewer opportunities, including financial support mechanisms". The explanatory section (page 15) specifies: "accessible learning formats, housing support, preparatory activities and support for participants with fewer opportunities before, during and after their participation".

Article 8(6) introduces the obligation for national agencies to develop 'national inclusion and diversity action plans', which must form 'an integral part of the national agencies' planning documents'. Article 8(5) stipulates that 'the costs of measures to facilitate or support the participation of people with fewer opportunities shall not justify the rejection of an application'.

Management and simplification

The proposal maintains the combination of direct and indirect management (Article 12(1)).

The explanatory section (page 13) indicates that some actions will move from direct to indirect management, specifying "current Jean Monnet actions in other fields than higher education or cooperation partnerships for sport".

The accreditation system is confirmed in the explanatory section (page 16): 'The use of accreditation systems will continue to provide organisations with a structured framework for continuous improvement and simplified access to funding, ultimately facilitating long-term planning, increasing the quality of activities and enhancing transnational collaboration'.

However, there is no reference to accreditation in the regulatory part.

Article 12(5) establishes the priority use of 'simplified cost options' and 'financing not linked to costs'. The explanatory section (page 16) introduces 'very low value grant partnerships with a strongly reduced administrative burden for applicants'.

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Structural grants

The proposal does not explicitly provide for structural grants for youth organisations.

Article 7 outlines “Support to policy development”, including support for networks and organisations, but with specific reference only to a few large European entities (including Eurodesk, the European Youth Forum and a few others).

Management at national level

Article 18(2) maintains the prohibition on designating a ministry as a national agency and stipulates that the agency must be “organisationally separate from the national authority”. Recital 49 (page 27) introduces: “Measures should be taken to streamline the management of the Programme and achieve economies of scale including by limiting and reducing the number of national agencies”.

Article 19(2) extends the obligations of national agencies to include “information, communication and dissemination activities”. Article 18(16) adds the obligation for the national authority to “promote and facilitate effective synergies and complementarities with other Union, national or regional funds or programmes”.

International Dimension

Article 9, paragraph 2, provides that "an additional financial contribution shall be made available from Regulation (EU) [XXX] [Global Europe] to support actions implemented and managed in accordance with this Regulation." Recital 15 (page 22) specifies that this dimension aims to "offer opportunities for learning mobility, cooperation, and policy dialogue with third countries not associated with the Programme."

Article 13 maintains the categories of third countries that may associate with the Programme. Article 14, paragraph 4, introduces: "Award procedures affecting security or public order, in particular concerning strategic assets and interests of the Union or its Member States, shall be restricted."

Financial Aspects

Article 9 establishes the financial envelope at €40,827 million in current prices for the period 2028-2034, compared to €24,574 million for 2021-2027. Article 12, paragraph 2, maintains the allocation criteria based on "population and cost of living in the Member State concerned," "distance between capitals of Member States," and "performance."

An estimate made by the European Youth Forum to compare the current financial allocation (approximately €27 million between E+ and ESC) with the future one estimates the real increase at

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around 15%, well below the announced 50%. The Youth Forum's calculation takes inflation into account.

Article 10 provides that "Member States, Union institutions, bodies and agencies, third countries, international organizations, international financial institutions, or other third parties may make additional financial or non-financial contributions to the Programme."

Monitoring and Control

Article 16, paragraph 3, establishes that information and communication activities "shall be implemented in accordance with Regulation (EU) [XXX] [Performance]." The explanatory section (page 10) specifies that "the Commission shall publish an implementation report for the future Erasmus+ programme no later than four years after the start of its implementation."

Article 22 maintains the Commission's responsibility for supervisory controls and the national agencies for primary controls over beneficiaries. Article 21 maintains the requirements for the independent audit body.

Transition and Continuity

Article 23 establishes that Regulations (EU) 2021/817 and (EU) 2021/888 are repealed with effect from 1 January 2028. Article 24 provides that the new regulation "shall not affect the continuation or modification of the actions concerned, until their closure" under the previous regulations.

Article 25 establishes that it will enter into force on 1 January 2028. Article 24, paragraph 3, establishes that Member States must "ensure at national level the unimpeded transition between the actions carried out under Regulations (EU) 2021/817 and (EU) 2021/888 and those to be implemented under this Programme."